

# A style discussion of *Kahlolo*, *Letšatši*, and *Vocalise Africa* by Alexander Frederick Johnson

by

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# **Declaration**

I, Oluwakayode Samson Ibiayo, hereby declare that this dissertation submitted for the degree MMus (Composition) at the University of Pretoria, is my work and it has not been hitherto submitted by me for the purposes of obtaining a degree at neither this university nor any other tertiary institution.

SIGNED: _			
DATED:			

# Acknowledgements

I expressly show my utmost gratitude to the composer and my supervisor, Professor Alexander Johnson for his supervision, counsel, and for being an inspiration to me. To my wife and son, as well as my mum and dad, many thanks for their continuous support.

## Summary

South African composer, Alexander Johnson is a prolific and outstanding figure among his contemporaries. His numerous works and contributions to South African classical and indigenous music is worthy of mention. Over the years, he has been recognised both locally and internationally for his contributions by receiving numerous awards, honorary positions, as well as commissions. His works have been performed both locally and internationally. Johnson's compositional style mostly features diverse musical elements and devices from the post-tonal era. He also utilises special and unique compositional techniques in his works which give him a 'signature.'

This study discusses and disseminates brief information on Johnson's biography, as well as a catalogue of the composer's published works.

Most importantly, the three works in this study namely *Kahlolo, Letšatši*, and *Vocalise Africa* feature Johnson's unique interpretation of South African music in the twenty-first century. This study focuses on exploring the background of the three chosen works, and the inspiration behind the creation of these works. Furthermore, the compositional techniques employed by the composer, as well as the distinguishing features of his compositional style are also discussed.

This study additionally aims to trace and disseminate similarities between the three respective works as well as analyse the three selected pieces with regard to mostly harmonic devices and techniques, melody, rhythm, form structure, texture, and registration for organ music. Each piece is comprehensively discussed separately, with emphasis on the above topics.

Further research in the future could entail a study on style discussion of Johnson's more recent compositions in other genres and instrumentation.

# **Keywords and phrases**

Alexander Frederick Johnson

Idiomatic writing

Kahlolo, Letšatši, and Vocalise Africa

Organ and piano music

Piano accompaniment in vocal music

Registration of organ music

Style characteristics: melody, harmony, rhythm, texture, and form

Compositional style

Synthetic scales

Stylistic signature

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# Chapter 1

#### Introduction

# 1.1. Background and personal motivation

The renowned Italian composer Giacomo Puccini (Art Quotes, n.d.) said: "Inspiration is an awakening, a quickening of all man's faculties, and it is manifested in all high artistic achievements." The significance of this quotation from a personal perspective, stems from having studied music theory and composition under Alexander Johnson while being an undergraduate scholar at the University of Pretoria. Throughout, his compositional style has been of great inspiration. As a composer, an important lesson has been learned from Johnson – a lifelong lesson – and that is to strive to create own style in one's compositions.

Johnson's works and compositional style comprise a distinctive original sound world employed by twenty-first century composers. In her description of Johnson's unique compositional abilities, which were already evident in the composer's early works, Petronel Malan (2001) states that "Alexander Johnson is considered the most prolific young composer of his day." During the same period, a review by renowned critic Paul Boekkooi in the Pretoria News describes Johnson's compositional creative abilities as "mentally engrossing, pleasurable to the senses and [seemingly] refreshingly free from dogmatic formulas" (Boekkooi, cited in Malan, 2001, n.p.).

Johnson's compositions are performed locally and internationally because of his unique compositional style and technique which has developed over about twenty-four years. The Academic website, Academia.edu (n.d.), attests to the vast range of piano pieces that, for many years now, have been included in the examination syllabi of the University of South Africa (Unisa) and Trinity College of Music in London. The same researchers point out that Johnson's compositions are frequently performed worldwide. In 1994, for example, the Seventh Unisa-Transnet International Piano Competition featured Johnson's *Jazz Impromptu* as the commissioned work, while his woodwind composition, *Colour-keys for Clarinet in B flat*, featured as the prescribed work in the first round of the First Unisa International Flute and Clarinet Competition in 2014. Johnson's works for orchestra have been featured by various international orchestras, including the Zürich

Camerata Orchestra, Lucerne Festival Strings, Niš Philharmonic Orchestra (Serbia) and the South African National Symphony Orchestra (Academia.edu, 2018). Johnson furthermore has an undeniable impact as Chairman and founder of the Stefans Grové National Composition Competition (Academia.edu, 2018). *Vocalise Africa* was commissioned by the South African Music Rights Organisation (SAMRO) for the 2018 Unisa International Singing Competition (Johnson, 2017).

As a composer who has studied under Johnson, this author deems it significant in this dissertation to present to concerned music scholars and researchers, the distinctive compositional techniques involved in the chosen works of the composer. It is believed that the younger generation of composers in South Africa as well as worldwide can learn from Johnson's style and technique.

It is intended through this dissertation, to provide insight into the existing literature for audiences seeking to know more about the styles and sound world of the South African composer - Alexander Johnson. Although the stylistic elements of Johnson's compositions have been discussed in several theses, dissertations, and academic studies, to date the compositional styles of the three works I elected to present in my dissertation, namely *Kahlolo* (2016), *Letšatši* (2016), and *Vocalise Africa* (2017), have hitherto not been the subject of academic discussions. In this regard, the proposed dissertation seeks to address some gaps in the knowledge about Johnson's work, style, and technique.

While pursuing a Diploma in Music in Nigeria, I studied with other composers and composed several works myself, which earned me the accolade as the 'best composition student' when I graduated in 2010 from the Musical Society of Nigeria (MUSON) School of Music. Yet I was ignorant of a totally different level of composition until I encountered Johnson's works and studied with him. This prompted me to research and discuss style and technique as evidenced in *Kahlolo* (2016), *Letšatši* (2016), and *Vocalise Africa* (2017). Other compositions by Johnson also merit detailed research and discussion. I hope that my proposed dissertation will encourage such study and research.

# 1.2. Purpose of the study

• To study the background of *Kahlolo* (2016), *Letšatši* (2016), and *Vocalise Africa* (2017), and what prompted the creation of these works.

- To discuss the compositional techniques employed by Alexander Johnson, which reflect his musical style in Kahlolo (2016), Letšatši (2016), and Vocalise Africa (2017).
- To determine and explore the distinguishing features of Johnson's compositional style.
- To trace and disseminate similarities between the three respective works.
- To ascertain appropriate methods to analyse Kahlolo (2016), Letšatši (2016), and Vocalise Africa (2017).

### 1.3. Research questions

#### Main research question

What are the distinctive stylistic features of Alexander Johnson's works *Kahlolo, Letšatši,* and *Vocalise Africa?* 

#### **Sub-question**

How does Alexander Johnson employ stylistic signatures in *Kahlolo, Letšatši*, and *Vocalise Africa*?

#### 1.4. Literature review

The literature consulted for the purposes of this study includes (but is not limited to) books, online articles and publications, the transcript of an interview with Johnson, and the composer's personal website and other websites. All the sources listed under 'References' were consulted in relation to post-tonal music, musical analysis, and Johnson and his works.

Although this dissertation focuses on musical style, all the sources listed are relevant because they lay the foundation for subsequent exploration of the works discussed here.

Dallin's *Techniques of twentieth century composition* (1974:29–30) discusses inter alia twentieth century melodic practices. He points out that modern composers utilise all twelve pitches unlike the traditional seven tonal pitches with the remaining pitches as ornaments. As a result, key signatures are often omitted due to the rapid changes in keys and modes as well as the frequent presence of atonality (Persichetti, 1961:41). Simms

(1996:12) supports the view that composers made use of innovative "Harmonic sequences" that is; "...repeated patterns consisting of recurrent bass figures and chordal successions" to lessen the effect of a perceived tonal centre. This technique is evident in Johnson's work *Letšatši* (2016).

Forte (1973:1) concerning atonality in music, supports Persichetti's views and notes that the existence of pitches, amalgamated in an unconventional manner depicts a feature of atonal music. Furthermore, if conventional pitch combinations or chords are used in an unconventional way, it denotes the presence of atonality (Forte, 1973:1).

Dallin (1974:29–30) also discusses post-tonal melodic lines, which are not suitable to be sung like the traditional vocal-friendly melodies. Instead, melodic lines in post-tonal compositions are deliberately disjunctive, non-lyrical and extend to unusual ranges. Johnson's *Vocalise Africa* (2017), especially clearly portrays this modern tradition of non-lyrical melodic lines.

Kamien (2002:287–293) shares Dallin's opinion in his discussion of the features of twentieth century music. Composers became creative in finding their unique sound by employing unusual elements to create diverse tone colour. Kamien notes that other modern composers employed uncommon noisy and percussive sounds, unusual playing techniques, as well as non-musical elements such as clacking typewriters, sirens, and vehicle brake drums. Johnson's combination of organ registrations in *Kahlolo* (2016) and *Letšatši* (2016) show intent for pre-planned tone colour.

Concerning harmony, Kamien (2002:287–288) points out how early twentieth century composers abandoned the traditional differences between consonant and dissonant harmonies; chords that were once stacked together and perceived as 'unstable' are now perceived as stable, regardless of being consonant or dissonant. New chord constructions began to emerge and composers started utilising polychords, i.e., two or more chords combined and heard simultaneously. Kamien also discusses stacking nontertian chords, namely quartal chords (chords stacked in fourths). Yet another harmonic device employed by twentieth century composers is the use of tone clusters, which are stacked chords with pitches as close as possible (separated by a half step or a whole step). Persichetti (1961:129) however cautions that "A cluster is not always introduced by sounding all its tones simultaneously." The effect of a cluster played in a consecutive manner is achieved when each note is sustained until the final note is heard. Examples of cluster techniques are evident in Johnson's selected works namely *Kahlolo* (2016), *Letšatši* (2016), and *Vocalise Africa* (2017). Lastly, rhythm in the vocabulary of post-tonal

composers also saw a rapid transformation as rhythmic patterns became increasingly irregular and unpredictable. Composers now utilised unconventional meter in five or seven time-signatures, as well as polyrhythm - two or more different rhythmic lines utilised at the same time (Kamien, 2002:287–288).

However, not every composer in the post-tonal era abandoned tonality in its entirety. Burkholder, Grout and Palisca (2010:805) contend that: "For all composers of the time, tonality was an unavoidable issue: the demand for originality made conventional chord progressions seem stale, yet if they strayed too far they might lose their audience." Composers such as Ravel, Vaughan Williams, Strauss, and Rachmaninov continued employing tonality in their works despite being aware of the vast possibilities and transformations available to them. Others, including de Falla, Janáček, Debussy and Scriabin, abandoned the concept of tonality in their works in a bid to develop their own unique sound. Although a tonal centre can be perceived in some of their works, calling such works 'tonal' would be inaccurate due to the excessive and extended harmonic language employed; that is, an excessive divergence from the common traditional practice of harmony. It is for this reason that their compositions are termed 'post-tonal.'

Kostka (2012:126), shares the sentiment of Burkholder *et al.* (2010:805) regarding some musical characteristics of the tonal era, that are still evident in the post-tonal era: "All of the formal structures and procedures found in the tonal era survived in post-tonal music." He is of the opinion that post-tonal compositions still employ the old traditions of form such as "sonatas and rondos, canons and fugues, sectional and continuous variations, and binary and ternary forms."

The above-mentioned authors clearly indicate that post-tonal composers exercised their own preferences as to the sound of their compositions, and the traditions they followed. Hence, in line with the main research question and sub-question, it shall be investigated during the course of the dissertation, which tradition Johnson followed in *Kahlolo, Letšatši* and *Vocalise Africa*.

In the second edition of their book, Beard and Gloag (2016:13) define analysis as "a subdiscipline within musicology that is concerned with a search for internal coherence within a musical work." In other words, when the structure of a musical score is examined and broken down into smaller units or themes, the work is said to be analysed. It therefore entails the search for unity in a musical structure. Analysis is also associated with form, style and genre, which means that a musical score is examined in terms of its technical and formal features.

Cook (1987) presents a comprehensive discussion of music analysis. He identifies different approaches to analysing musical scores, including the "traditional methods of analysis."

These two sources on analysis comprise the foundation for a discussion on the same topic, as well as the analysis of the three pieces selected for the purposes of this study.

In line with the main research question and sub-question, the concept of style comes to the fore. The literature mentioned below, discusses style in relation to the personal style of a composer.

Pascall (2001:1) defines style as the "manner, mode of expression, type of presentation" while Beard & Gloag (2016:237–238) argue that style is characterized by texture, rhythm, melody and harmony, and the way these features are interconnected, disjointed, or categorized in their usage. Pascall (2001:1) however notes that personal style, being a widespread topic for discussion among contemporary critics, is influenced by various factors. A composer's personal style is vital to technical analysis, while social views may contribute to a composer's distinctive style. Pascall (2001:6) furthermore notes that in the Western tradition, personal style is an important factor, as evidenced by the rapid change in creating new musical notations. Hence, the composer's stylistic techniques often change over time, developing and building on previous compositional style. This implies that the concept personality highly influences the composer's style due to the 'personality' changes he/she encounters at the different stages of his/her career. These changes thus become evident in the composer's works (Beard & Gloaq, 2016:238).

Stylistic change (that is how the composer has developed and remodelled his/her compositional style overtime) however, is unique to each composer and influenced by various factors such as the composer's lifespan, temperament, creative ability, culture and economic conditions (Pascall, 2001:6). Personal style may also be influenced by with whom the composer studied – he or she may develop an own style or have a predecessor's style imposed (Pascall, 2001:6). Lastly, Pascall (2001:11) notes that distinctive sounds depict the style: "By the application of stylistic questions one may arrive at a deeper view of musical utterance, and intellectual interpretation of music which enriches the response to it."

These views of Pascall clearly show that every composer possesses his or her own style. During the study, the distinctive compositional styles employed by Johnson will be discovered.

Johnson's official website <a href="http://www.alexjohnson.co.za">http://www.alexjohnson.co.za</a>, accessed 16 May 2018, was consulted for biographical information, as well as lists of publications and compositions.

# 1.5. Research methodology and approach

According to Morgan (2014:2) and Creswell (2014:3), "qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods research" are the three main ways of research approaches "in the social sciences," and Antcliffe (1932:406) contends that music can be categorised as a social science. Therefore, this research being 'qualitative' in nature, is based on the qualitative research method. It is imperative to note that the qualitative research approach comprises various sub-types of research methodology. Nevertheless, all methods categorized under the qualitative research approach, as well as the research data gathered and utilised, jointly depend on information formats in texts and images as well as observation of events (Abawi, 2008:9; Creswell, 2014:183). Additionally, it is suitable when the researcher needs to create a theory from observations and a waypoint towards discovery and exploration, as well as to demystify certain objectives or goals at hand (Morgan 2014:4, 6). According to Abawi (2008:5), the purpose of qualitative research is "to develop an understanding of a social or human problem from multiple perspectives."

Having established that qualitative research can be approached by utilising different submethods, the following sub-sections shall discuss in detail, the exact research submethod(s) and design that is employed in this dissertation, as well as its application to the main research question and sub-question.

### 1.5.1. Research design

Creswell (2014:187) notes that the focal point of research design under qualitative methods and approaches include analysis, collected data, as well as texts. Additionally, case study, another component in research design, deals with a 'case' in which it may be a person, an incident, category of people, a country, etc (Kumar, 2014:155).

Therefore, the chosen research design for this dissertation is 'content analysis' and 'case study'. These designs align respectively with the main research question (content analysis), and the sub-question (case study). Worthy of note is that both content analysis and case study fall under Qualitative research (Abawi, 2008:11).

The following paragraphs provide details to support the chosen research designs.

Mouton (2001:165) classifies content analysis as empirical and defines it as a research design used in studies that deal with the analysis of the "content of texts or documents (such as letters, speeches, annual reports)." Leedy and Ormrod (2001:155) clarify that content analyses are usually implemented in "forms of human communication" such as written communication mediums, audio-visual mediums, human communications and, of course, music.

Although content analysis will be the main research design utilised in this dissertation, it should be noted that content analysis can be both qualitative and quantitative (Leedy & Ormrod, 2001:156; Mouton, 2001:166) Hence, content analysis in a qualitative research setting deals with the detailed interpretation of text that hitherto seems ambiguous with a goal to enlighten hidden elements in the text that are otherwise impossible to extract (Julien, 2008:2; Atkinson, 2017:84).

It is imperative to reiterate that the use of the case study as a supporting component of the research design, and in line with the research sub-question, is employed in this dissertation.

Yin (1994:9), like Mouton (2001:165), classifies the case study as empirical. According to Yin (1994:1), whenever a 'how' or 'why' question is presented in research, the ideal strategy would be to use case studies. Yin continues that case studies are used by researchers who strive to get a clearer picture of intricate social situations and also affords them the flexibility to completely preserve "the holistic and meaningful characteristics of real-life events" such as personal life experiences (Yin, 1994:3).

Given that there are different categories of case study, three major types include exploratory, descriptive, and explanatory case studies (Zainal, 2007:3).

As its name implies, exploratory case study deals with the focused exploration of events or occurrences, in a given 'case', descriptive case study provides a description of the events or occurrences, while explanatory case study involves a close examination of the data with the main purpose of providing an explanation of findings in relation to the data or case being studied (Zainal, 2007:3).

Therefore, following Yin (1994:6), who opines that a 'how' research question (which in this dissertation is employed in the sub-question) is mostly explanatory and used considerably researching case studies, the explanatory case study subsequently best

fits the research sub-question. Hence, the focus is on Johnson as an individual, and how he has employed the use of 'signatures' in the selected works to be studied.

Finally, the use of the case study to solve the research sub-question is a deliberate decision supported in documentation by Yin (1994:13), who states that:

you would use the case study method because you deliberately wanted to cover contextual conditions – believing that they might be highly pertinent to your phenomenon of study (Yin, 1994:13).

Choosing the research design requires determining how data will be collected to find answers to the main research questions. This will be discussed in section 1.5.2.

#### 1.5.2. Data collection techniques

According to Leedy and Ormrod (2001:158), collecting data in qualitative research entails, but is not limited to, the use of written documents and interviews. In section 1.5.2.1 the data collection techniques that correspond with the research approach and designs discussed above shall therefore be discussed in detail.

#### 1.5.2.1. Content analysis

The appropriateness of content analysis research to address the main research question necessitates the use of written documents as a source of data (Leedy & Ormrod 2001:158). Since data sources already exist, "the only methodological issues concern the principles and procedures of selecting the data or documents" (Mouton, 2001:166).

The data or documents in question are the selected compositions of Johnson. The selected data or documents as indicated by Mouton, are Johnson's published compositions *Kahlolo* (2016), *Letšatši* (2016), and *Vocalise Africa* (2017). These texts serve as the 'written documents' used in conducting the research. The documents were acquired in person from the composer himself. The scores are analysed to explore the compositional styles and techniques employed, as required by the main research question. Existing recordings of the three pieces, which are used as a supplementary guide to the analysis, were also acquired from the composer.

Section 1.5.2.2 will discuss the data collection technique that corresponds with the research approach and design, i.e., the case study.

#### 1.5.2.2. Case study

Yin (1994:21) describes a "classic case study" as "a case whom may be an individual." In this case, the individual is Johnson.

Since this study employs the qualitative research approach and design, the main data collection technique utilised is the qualitative interview as discussed by Morgan (2014:10). Supplementary data collection techniques are documents by other writers, based on the composer's biographical overview (Leedy & Ormrod, 2001:157). Other documentation includes the Internet, educational websites, magazine, and newspaper articles, as well as media reports. These documents primarily serve to supplement biographical information and testimonies about Johnson and his works.

Leedy and Ormrod (2001:159) caution that interviews in a qualitative study may be open ended or semi-structured. Hofstee (2006:135) discusses other types of structured interview, either where all participants are asked similar questions, or where focus groups are asked more detailed questions. Here, the open-ended interview is used, referred to by Hofstee (2006:135) as a "one-on-one" interview. Morgan (2014:10) provides another important reason for the choice of interview questions saying that the "most obvious strength that open-ended interviewing brings to an inductive research is the ability to pursue topics that emerge during the course of the conversation."

Leedy and Ormrod (2001:159) give guidelines as to conducting successful interviews. These guidelines are utilised for the purposes of this study. Johnson is the interviewee and, the interview takes place in his office. It starts with a pre-discussion to establish a warm, friendly ambience. The nature of and plans for the study are explained before the participant signs the informed consent form. Johnson's responses are recorded verbatim through a phone voice recorder and a laptop using Screen Recorder Movavi software that records both sound and video. However, for this interview, only sound is recorded.

#### 1.5.3. Data analysis

It is imperative to reiterate that this study utilises the qualitative research approach, and addresses two questions: the main research question and the sub-question. Hence, data collected is analysed in two parts, as discussed below.

Data collected for content analysis comes from documents, namely the scores of *Kahlolo, Letšatši*, and *Vocalise Africa*, as well as supplementary audio recordings, mainly to serve as guidance during analysis.

According to Mouton (2001:166), qualitative data analysis involves applying the themes in the data. Hence, each piece is explored and analysed to seek out the distinctive stylistic features applied by Johnson in relation to thematic style characteristics such as melody, harmony, rhythm, texture, and form. Registration – an important feature in organ music – is also discussed. The analytical approach to each theme is discussed below:

- Melody (horizontal dimension): Burkholder et al. (2010:A11) define melody as the "[s]uccession of tones perceived as a coherent line", or as a 'tune', or as the "principal part accompanied by other parts or chords". Kennedy and Kennedy (2007:485) state that the notes in a melody are perceived one after the other, also referred to as the horizontal dimension. The term "horizontal dimension" therefore relates to melodic lines in post-tonal compositions, as noted in Kostka (2012:68). The melodic use of post-tonal composers varies from the traditional usage. Interesting aspects to be discussed include "twelve-tone melody," "avoidance of traditional harmonic implications," "less emphasis on melody," "more leaps," "wider range," "more chromaticism," and "motivic use of pitch-class cells" (Kostka, 2012:83). Johnson's compositions Kahlolo, Letšatši, and Vocalise Africa are scrutinised in accordance with the information gleaned from the above-mentioned sources significantly, his stylistic features such as scale formations, motifs, intervals, and form.
- Harmony (vertical dimension): Burkholder et al. (2010:A8) define harmony as the "aspects of music that pertain to simultaneous combinations of notes, the intervals and chords that result, and the succession of chords." Kennedy and Kennedy (2007:331) refer to harmony as 'vertical' because the notes sound at the same time, in contrast to melody. Many post-tonal composers have utilised the vertical dimension in a unique way. Kostka (2012:41) explains that the tonal era utilised "tertian harmonies", i.e. chords stacked in thirds. According to Kostka (2012:41), although some post-tonal composers also employed tertian harmonies, it was done

completely differently from the traditional usage in that they utilised new kinds of tertian sounds, as well as chords created from seconds and fourths. In this study, the harmonic content, and the formation of chords in the three pieces is closely studied to determine the techniques employed by Johnson.

- Rhythm: Kamien (2002:32) defines rhythm as "the flow of music through time." However, rhythm is interconnected with other musical aspects including beat, meter, accent, syncopation, and tempo (Kamien, 2002:32). Post-tonal composers created various new ways of rhythmic organisation in contrast to the traditional methods. They emphasised irregular and unpredictable rhythms, which posed new challenges for the performer in that the rhythms are not easily read on sight as is the case with the traditional rhythmic setup of the tonal era (Kamien, 2002:291; Kostka, 2012:121). In this study, post-tonal rhythmic elements as outlined in Kostka (2012:121), including syncopation, non-traditional time signatures, complex meters, and polymeter will be discussed in relation to Johnson's selected works.
- **Texture**: According to Burkholder *et al.* (2010:A19), when a musical work or a section in a musical presentation employs a blend of components, it is referred to as the 'texture' of the work or section. These components, namely monophonic, polyphonic, or homophonic, may be presented as thick, thin, dense, transparent, heavy or light; and they are employed to stimulate "contrast and drama" (Kamien, 2002:48). *Kahlolo, Letšatši*, and *Vocalise Africa* will therefore also be analysed for texture, as well as idiomatic writing; an important technique that contributes to texture.
- Form: Kennedy and Kennedy (2007:269) define form as "the structure and design of a composition." However, as with the rapid changes of the post-tonal compositions, form is not perceived as 'simple.' Kamien (2002:352) points out that post-tonal composers during the early twentieth century employed 'conventional meters' in seven and five time-signatures, whereas later composers discontinued the use of both beats and meters altogether, thus creating a totally different 'form' of music. Many composers also abandoned the use of traditional musical forms in their works; the sonata, ABA, rondo, and similar traditional forms were totally discontinued (Kamien, 2002:352). Kostka (2012:126), however, contends that all traditional forms from the tonal era continued into the post-tonal era. Taking into consideration the opinions of these two authors, the selected works in this study are scrutinised to determine which formal tradition the composer followed.

• Registration: According to Grapenthin (n.d.) organ registration is chosen by a composer depending on two factors, namely "the type of sounds appropriate for that particular composition," and "the organist's understanding of how the instrument works to create these sounds." In two of the pieces to be studied (Kahlolo and Letšatši), Johnson supplies a series of well-outlined registration markings with some unconventional combinations. Therefore, this study will explore the combinations in these pieces, as well as the resultant tone colour effect and mood that the composer communicates. Online organ sources are used to determine the effects created by each combination employed by the composer.

Each piece is discussed in a chapter of its own. Observations are grouped in subsections, in correlation to each feature. Examples of music notation are included where appropriate, and all findings are summarised in the conclusion.

The data collection technique for the case study comprises a qualitative (open-ended) interview with a view to soliciting information from the composer based on the sub-question. The interview being open ended, other sub-questions arose from the composer's replies.

Therefore, the interview data is analysed in accordance with the approach suggested by Rubin and Rubin (2005:2). The analysis begins right at the start of the interview to ensure that the research is comprehensible and encompasses vital issues relating to the respondent. Rubin and Rubin (2005:2) further advise as follows: "As you complete each interview, you examine its content to see what you have now learned and what you will still need to find out." While the analysis continues, main questions may be modified and follow-up questions may be presented to enlighten developing topics. Advice from Rubin and Rubin (2005:2) notes:

when you are done interviewing, you then examine all the interviews together to pull out coherent and consistent descriptions, themes, and theories that speak to your research question (Rubin and Rubin, 2005:2).

Notes taken from the interview are immediately documented by typing up, and the audio recorded version transcribed verbatim (Rubin & Rubin, 2005:4). Upon completion of the transcription, the content of the interview is summarised. The name of the respondent, the time, and location of the interview, the reasons why the respondent was included in the research, and how long the interview lasted is also stated (Rubin & Rubin, 2005:6).

Key points that address the sub-question of the research are then included, as well as other ideas that have emerged (Rubin & Rubin, 2005:6).

According to Rubin and Rubin (2005:7), the proper analysis begins once the researcher possesses transcripts, summaries, and memos. They note that analysis comprises a few steps, many of which overlap:

The first stage is recognition, in which you find the concepts, themes, events, and topical markers in your interviews. Next, you systematically examine the different interviews to clarify what is meant by specific concepts and themes and synthesize different versions of events to put together your understanding of the overall narrative. After you find, refine, elaborate, and integrate your concepts and themes, you begin to code them, that is, figure out a brief label to designate each and then mark in the interview text where the concepts, themes, events or topical markers are found. Once you have systematically coded your interviews, you try to figure out what these coded data mean. You begin by clarifying and summarizing concepts and themes, grouping information around particular events or stories, or sorting information by groups of interviewees (Rubin & Rubin, 2005:2, 7).

These steps outlined by Rubin and Rubin (2005:2) are followed systematically to arrive at a satisfactory conclusion. The researcher may utilise computer software as advised by the authors.

To complete the analysis, data obtained from both sections (content analysis and interview) is combined and compared using the technique of 'constant comparisons' to show how the main research question and sub-questions have been answered (Rubin & Rubin, 2005:7; Corbin & Strauss, 2015:85).

#### 1.6. Ethical considerations

This study includes an interview with Johnson, whose works are the subject of the study. Bak (2004: 28) stresses the importance of ethical statements if empirical research involves people. Hence, in order to abide by the University of Pretoria's Code of Ethics for Research (n.d.), page 25, section 6.2.2, a letter of information is sent to the interviewee. Upon acceptance by the interviewee, a letter of informed consent is signed by both the researcher (interviewer) and the interviewee. A copy of the information letter and the letter of informed consent will be included in Appendices A and B.

# 1.7. Delimitations of the study

- The main focus of this study is on three compositions by Johnson, namely Kahlolo, Letšatši, and Vocalise Africa. Therefore, a brief discussion of the time period and the distinctive stylistic features of each composition will be presented.
- This study will only discuss Kahlolo, Letšatši, and Vocalise Africa. No other works of
  the composer will be discussed or compared. Should there be any mention of his
  other work(s), it will be only for the purpose of brief reference.
- The study will not discuss or compare works by other South African and international composers or contemporaries of Johnson. Any mention of other composers will only serve to support the point being made.
- This dissertation is non-comparative with any external factor. Hence the aim is to
  provide a brief discussion of Johnson's style as employed in the three selected works,
  supporting the conclusion with an interview with the composer.
- This study will analyse only the melody, texture, rhythm, and form structure of the pieces. No harmonic analysis will be provided due to the composer's use of original synthetic scales in building harmonic and chordal accompaniments. However, harmonic devices and techniques employed by the composer will be addressed briefly and discussed if necessary and where applicable.
- The form and structure of the three selected pieces will be discussed briefly.
- It is noted that there is a dearth of Anglophonic literature on Johnson. For example, Le Roux (2014) was written in Afrikaans.

# 1.8. Value of the study

Because literature about Johnson and his compositions is somewhat limited, I believe this dissertation will contribute significantly towards documentation about Johnson, his compositional style and, most importantly, the three selected pieces – *Kahlolo, Letšatši,* and *Vocalise Africa*.

While collecting data for this study, it became clear that there is a huge amount of literature about composers beyond the borders of South Africa, and that only a few South African composers have been researched, which makes this task even more important. For this reason, I include an interview with the composer (a privilege not available to all

researchers) to strengthen the findings based on my research in respect of the research question and sub-question of this dissertation.

Composers and music scholars who seek to understand the composition styles of Johnson as a South African composer will find this study to be a meaningful contribution to their research.

Finally, I hope this dissertation will make a meaningful contribution towards international exposure of Johnson's work.

# **Chapter 2**

# Alexander Frederick Johnson: a biographical overview

#### 2.1. Introduction

Born on the 2nd of February 1968 in Pietermaritzburg, South African composer, Alexander Frederick Johnson made his first concert appearance as a pianist in 1990 in the performance of the Concerto for the Left Hand by Maurice Ravel, accompanied by the Natal Philharmonic Orchestra and the performance was a live broadcast in South Africa (Johnson, 2018). From then onwards, various major concert halls in South Africa have featured and hosted Johnson's performances; numerous recordings of Johnson's works have been commissioned for television as well as radio by the Republic of South Africa's official broadcasting organization - the South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC) while featuring Johnson as a pianist (Johnson, 2018).

# 2.2. Biography and educational background

Johnson studied composition with Henk Temmingh and piano with Joseph Stanford at the University of Pretoria (Johnson, 2018) and in 1990, he completed his Bachelor's degree in music and graduated with a BMus *cum laude* (performing arts) (Johnson, 2018). In the same year, the Performer's Licentiate in Music (Piano), with a *cum laude* was conferred on him by the University of South Africa (Johnson, 2018). In 1991, Johnson continued his postgraduate studies at the University of Pretoria and acquired his BMus (Hons) in Performing Arts, and graduated with a *cum laude* (Johnson, 2018).

Being an obviously gifted and bright student, he once again graduated *cum laude* (University of Pretoria) when he completed his Master's Degree (MMus) in Composition in the year 1999 and later obtained his DMus (Composition) at the University of Pretoria in the year 2000 (Johnson, 2018).

#### 2.3. Positions held

- Johnson co-founded and directed the one-time 'Artium' Symphony Orchestra (Johnson, 2018).
- Associate Professor at the University of Pretoria (Johnson, 2018).
- Head of the Department of Music (Faculty of Humanities), University of Pretoria (Academia.edu, 2018).
- NRF rated researcher (Academia.edu, 2018).
- Founder and director of the Stefans Grové National Composition Competition (Johnson, 2018).

#### 2.4. Awards

- Foundation for Creative Arts national composition prize in 1993 and 1994 (Johnson, 2018).
- University of Pretoria research scholarship in 1999 (Johnson, 2018).

# 2.5. Compositions

During his stay in Belgrade, Serbia in 1994, Johnson composed his first Piano Concerto titled *Niš*, which was named after the Serbian city, Niš, and premiered in the same city. The debut performance of *Niš* was conducted by Anatoli Novitski, accompanied by the Niš Philharmonic Orchestra, while Dorian Leljak from Croatia was on the piano (Johnson, 2018).

Around the same period in 1994, the International Festival of Contemporary Music in Serbia featured the performance of *Sonatina for Clarinet and Piano* composed by Johnson, at the SAVA Centre in Belgrade (Johnson, 2018).

In 1994, Johnson returned to South Africa and during that period, the European Union delegates in the Republic of South Africa commissioned him to compose for the festivity of the first South African 'Europe Day' scheduled for the 9th of May 1995. This event led to the creation of a Concerto titled *Monyanya*, composed for two pianos, a violin, choir chorus and orchestra (Johnson, 2018).

He also composed a *Sonatina for Clarinet and Piano*, which has been performed by French clarinettist, Gilles Swierc, throughout regions in Europe and in South Africa (Johnson, 2018).

Johnson's ballet, *Thunderbird*, (from a Canadian myth), was composed and first performed in the year 2000 in Pretoria after having received a scholarship from the University of Pretoria to research the same ballet one year earlier in 1999 (Johnson, 2018).

In 2002, Pretoria graced the world premiere of Johnson's work for solo and orchestra (presented by Lucerne Festival Strings) titled "Suite South Africa for violin and string orchestra" while in 2010, the Zürich Camerata Orchestra conducted by Marc Kissoczy, performed Johnson's Afro-disiacs (Johnson, 2018).

In 2009, South Africa was honourably represented at the world's first Commonwealth Pianorama held in Trinidad and Tobago where Johnson's *Miniature Incantation for Piano* was performed. The same piece was also performed in London and Edinburgh by Sean Jackson (Johnson, 2018).

September 2010 witnessed the premiere performance of Johnson's *imicabango for Flute and Piano* with South African Cobus du Toit on flute; Jannie le Roux on piano while in 2014, SAMRO commissioned Johnson to compose for the 2014 Unisa International Woodwind Competition. This led to the creation of *Colour-keys for Clarinet* which was also the prescribed composition for the competition (Johnson, 2018).

#### 2.6. Conclusion

As discussed earlier, Johnson's achievements and musical contributions did not only give him honourable accolades but also created an opening for numerous South African works by the composer from where knowledge could be gained, both locally and internationally.

According to a renowned critic, Paul Boekkooi, in the Pretoria News, Johnson's compositional creative abilities are "mentally engrossing, pleasurable to the senses and [seemingly] refreshingly free from dogmatic formulas" (Boekkooi, cited in Malan, 2001, n.p.). Up till this day, his works are still performed frequently and broadcasted worldwide (Academia.edu, 2018).

# **Chapter 3**

# **List of Compositions**

#### 3.1. Introduction

Malan (2001) attests to Johnson's ability to create a balance of musical satiation between musicians, and those who simply appreciate music, and are not necessarily trained musicians. His compositions are being performed regularly and made popular both locally and abroad due to the accessibility of his works (Malan, 2001).

# 3.2. List of compositions

Below is a comprehensive list of Johnson's compositions received via e-mail with brief information on each work:

#### • ANTANA for Flute and Piano (2018)

In production (E-mail correspondence, 09 June 2019).

#### VOCALISE AFRICA for Soprano and Piano (2017)

- A work for soprano and piano commissioned and published by SAMRO Foundation
- Prescribed composition by UNISA in 2018 for the International Singing Competition (E-mail correspondence, 09 June 2019).

#### KAHLOLO for Organ (2016)

- Premiere performance by Theo van Wyk in November 2016 at St. Albans Cathedral in New York, United States of America
- Performed in Westminster Abbey (United Kingdom), Texas (USA), and South Africa (E-mail correspondence, 09 June 2019).

#### LETŠATŠI for Organ (2016)

- Premiere performance by Herman Jordaan (winner of the St. Albans International Organ Competition, United Kingdom) in 2017
- Performed in Westminster Abbey (United Kingdom), Texas (USA), and South Africa (E-mail correspondence, 09 June 2019).

#### TWEE AL GALIDI LIEDEREN for Soprano and Piano (2015)

#### Mijn bestaan

Vredesbespreking van het hart van Zorro met de rust

- Commissioned by the Colloquium Neerlandistiek in collaboration with the Nederlandse Taalunie
- First performed by soprano singer, Hanli Stapela (E-mail correspondence, 09 June 2019).

#### STIL AAND for SATB Choir (2015)

Text by N.P. van Wyk Louw (E-mail correspondence, 09 June 2019).

# AFRO DIZZY for Soprano and Alto Saxophone, Piano, String Quintet and Drumkit (2015)

- Commissioned and published by the SAMRO Foundation
- Premiere performance by Evolution String Quartet (E-mail correspondence, 09 June 2019).

#### NP VAN WYK LOUW LIEDERE (2013 - 2014)

Grense (Borders)

Dat alle liefde (That all love)

Gebed (Prayer)

- Commissioned by the SAMRO Foundation for the National Arts in 2013
- First performed by Melissa Gerber (Soprano) and Misha Meyer (Piano) on 25th
   September 2013 in Musaion at the University of Pretoria
- Published by Studio 83 (E-mail correspondence, 09 June 2019).

#### TERGLIEDJIE (2014)

- Prescribed and published for the UNISA Piano Examinations (2014–)
- Published in the UNISA Piano Examinations Albums (E-mail correspondence, 09 June 2019).

#### SAD (2014)

- Prescribed and published for the UNISA Piano Examinations (2014–)
- Published in the UNISA Piano Examinations Albums (E-mail correspondence, 09 June 2019).

#### NOVI (2014)

Prescribed and published for the UNISA Piano Examinations (2014–)

- Published in the UNISA Piano Examinations Albums
- Recorded on CD-SE3-01 (E-mail correspondence, 09 June 2019).

#### • GEBED (2014)

- Premiere performance by soprano singer, Melissa Gerber and pianist, Misha
   Melck
- Recorded on CD-SE3-01 (E-mail correspondence, 09 June 2019).

#### GEBEDJIE (2014)

- Prescribed and published for the UNISA Piano Examinations (2014–)
- Published in the UNISA Piano Examinations Albums
- Recorded on CD-SE3-01 (E-mail correspondence, 09 June 2019).

#### COLOUR-KEYS for Clarinet in Bb (2014)

- Commissioned by the SAMRO Foundation for the 2014 UNISA International Wind Competition
- Published by SAMRO (E-mail correspondence, 09 June 2019).

#### 3 INCANTATIONS for Piano Trio (2013)

- Commissioned by the SAMRO Foundation for the National Arts
- First performed by the Taffanel Trio at Endler Hall in Stellenbosch University and in Musaion at the University of Pretoria, on 16th October 2013
- Published by Studio 83 (E-mail correspondence, 09 June 2019).

#### • JAZZ IMPROMPTU No. 1 (Version for Two Pianos) (2013)

- Published by Volume 10, IJCC
- Prescribed piece for the UNISA Grade 8 Piano examinations (E-mail correspondence, 09 June 2019).

#### KHALAGHARI for Flute and Piano (2013)

Okavango

Omuramba

Khoi

- Commissioned by the SAMRO Foundation for the National Arts in 2013
- Published by sibeliusmusic.com and Studio 83 Editions (E-mail correspondence, 09 June 2019).

#### A SNOWY AFTERNOON (2012)

Prescribed for the UNISA Jazz Piano Examinations (2012)

 Published in the UNISA Jazz Piano Examinations Album (E-mail correspondence, 09 June 2019).

#### MOUSE WALTZ FOR TINNY (2012)

- Prescribed for the UNISA Jazz Piano Examinations (2012)
- Published in the UNISA Jazz Piano Examinations Album (E-mail correspondence, 09 June 2019).

#### BERCEUSE (2012)

- Prescribed for the UNISA Jazz Piano Examinations (2012)
- Published in the UNISA Jazz Piano Examinations Album (E-mail correspondence, 09 June 2019).

#### 11 PIANO PIECES FOR CHILDREN (2012)

- 'Sad Song' published by Trinity College of Music, London in Grade 3 Piano Examination Album (2014)
- Published in UNISA Piano examinations Albums (1989–2012)
- Performed in the Republic of South Africa, USA, Europe (and Eastern Europe), as well as the United Kingdom
- Broadcasted on Radio France, Radio Belgrade and SABC
- Performed and recorded abroad in 2013 at Zhukovsky Concert Hall in Moscow, Russia, and at Sochaczew School Concert Hall in Poland. Also performed at the Royal Northern College of Music in Manchester, United Kingdom in 2012, Nettles Auditorium in Sumter, SC, United States of America in 2013, Tampa in (USA), Steinway Piano Series, in Barness Recital Hall (April 2013), St. Petersburg, United States of America, SPC Piano Concert Series on Gibbs Campus in April 2013, and Teatro Municipal Baltazar Dias (Funchal, Madeira, Portugal) in 2008 (E-mail correspondence, 09 June 2019).

#### 3 INCANTATIONS for Piano (2012)

- Published by Studio 83 Editions
- Prescribed piece for the Unisa Grade 8, and the Licentiate Piano examinations from 2011 till current (E-mail correspondence, 09 June 2019).

#### • FIVE QUIRKY DANCES for Marimba and Vibraphone (2012)

 Premiere performance at the KKNK in 2012 by Magda de Vries and Frank Mallows  Prescribed piece for the Unisa Grade 8, and the Licentiate Piano examinations from 2011 till current (E-mail correspondence, 09 June 2019).

#### • JAZZ IMPROMPTU 2 for Piano (2011)

- Published by sibeliusmusic.com and Studio 83 Editions
- Prescribed piece for the Unisa Licentiate Piano examinations from 2011 till current (E-mail correspondence, 09 June 2019).

#### IMICABANGO for Flute and Piano (2010)

Impumalanga

Isiduduzo

Isikhwishikazana

- Commissioned by the SAMRO Endowment for the National Arts in 2010
- Published by sibeliusmusic.com and Studio 83 Editions
- Prescribed piece for the Unisa Grade 8 and Licentiate Flute examinations (2011)
- First performed by Cobus du Toit at Musaion, University of Pretoria, and at Hugo Lampbrecht auditorium in Cape Town in 2010
- Selected for a performance at the 'Sounds of Lyons' concert series in United States of America and in Texas Flute Festival, USA in 2012
- Performed in Paris, France in 2016 (E-mail correspondence, 09 June 2019).

#### MINIATURE INCANTATION for Piano (2009)

- Featured as the South African representation piece at the debut (worldwide)
   edition of the Commonwealth Pianorama
- Included as part of a series of 53 piano pieces representing each different Commonwealth country
- Subsequent performances at the South Bank Centre in London (UK) in January 2010 (E-mail correspondence, 09 June 2019).

#### TWO AFRO-DISIACS (2009)

- In 2009, the Camerata Zürich (Switzerland) commissioned Johnson to compose a work for a string orchestra. This event led to the creation of the work "Two Afro-Disiacs"
- First performed by the Camerata Zürich, and the Zürich Hochshule für Musik in January 2010
- Published by sibeliusmusic.com and Studio 83 Editions (E-mail correspondence, 09 June 2019).

# • TWEE AFRIKAANSE LIEFDESLIEDJIES vir Sopraan en Klavier (TWO AFRIKAANS LOVE SONGS for Soprano and Piano) (2008)

Dink aan my (George Louw)

Naglied (W E G Louw)

- Premiere performance by soprano singer, Melissa Gerber and pianist, Misha
   Melck
- Recorded on CD-SE3-01 (E-mail correspondence, 09 June 2019).

#### ELEGY for Piano (2007)

- Prescribed for the UNISA Piano Examinations (2008–)
- Published in the UNISA Piano Examinations Album (E-mail correspondence, 09 June 2019).

#### FIVE JAZZY PIECES – for Symphonic Wind Orchestra (2006/7)

- Commissioned by the South African National Symphonic Wind Orchestra
- Premiere performance in Cape Town by the National Symphonic Wind Orchestra, conducted by Leon Hartshorne (E-mail correspondence, 09 June 2019).

#### INCANTATION No. 2 for Piano (2003)

- Commissioned in Pretoria in 2003 for IASA (International Association of Sound and Audiovisual Archives) conference
- First performed on 21st September 2003 in Musaion at the University of Pretoria
- Performed in Serbia, Italy, USA and South Africa
- Published by sibeliusmusic.com and Studio 83 Editions (E-mail correspondence, 09 June 2019).

#### • LITTLE WALTZ (KLEIN WALS) (2002)

- Prescribed for the UNISA Piano Examinations (2002 )
- Published in the UNISA Grade 2 Piano Examinations Album (E-mail correspondence, 09 June 2019).

#### LULLABY (SLAAPLIEDJIE) (2002)

- Prescribed for the UNISA Piano Examinations (2002)
- Published in the UNISA Grade 1 Piano Examinations Album (E-mail correspondence, 09 June 2019).

#### • SUITE SOUTH AFRICA for Solo Violin and String Orchestra (2002)

- The Lucerne Festival Strings (Switzerland) commissioned Johnson to compose the work
- Premiere performance in September 2002 by the Lucerne Festival Strings and conducted by Achim Fiedler (Email correspondence, 09 June 2019).

#### ARABIA – Concerto No.2 for Piano and Orchestra (2000)

First performed on 21st and 22nd July 2000 at the University of Pretoria (AULA hall), with Pieter Grobler on piano, accompanied by the Artium Symphony Orchestra, and conducted by Henk Temmingh (E-mail correspondence, 09 June 2019).

#### • THUNDERBIRD – Native Canadian Ballet in Two Acts (2000)

- First performed on 21st and 22nd of July 2000 at the University of Pretoria (AULA hall), and conducted by Henk Temmingh
- Performed during the Rentmeester Festival at the State Theatre in Pretoria (E-mail correspondence, 09 June 2019).

#### KABOUTERTJIE (LITTLE DWARF) (1996)

- Prescribed for the UNISA Piano Examinations in 1996.
- Published in the UNISA Grade 2 Piano Examinations Album (E-mail correspondence, 09 June 2019).

#### • WIEGELIEDJIE (CRADLE SONG) (1996)

- Prescribed for the UNISA Piano Examinations in 1996.
- Published in the UNISA Pre-grade 1 Piano Examinations Album (E-mail correspondence, 09 June 2019).

#### • TREURIGE WALS (DOLEFUL WALTZ) (1996)

- Prescribed for the UNISA Piano Examinations in 1996.
- Published in the UNISA Grade 4 Piano Examinations Album (E-mail correspondence, 09 June 2019).

#### MONYANYA (1995)

- Written (Concerto) for double pianos, one violin, a choir chorus, and the orchestra
- The European Union delegates commissioned Johnson to compose the work for the debut celebrations of both the 'Europe Day', and 'Democracy' South Africa
- Premiere performance (1995) on the 9th of May in the AULA hall at the University of Pretoria

- The European Union delegates and the Foundation for the Creative Arts in South Africa both published the work in 1995
- On May 9, 1995, the Sebokeng Teachers' Training College Choir and the Artium Symphony Orchestra both recorded the music live (on CD ATM 02) with Henk Temmingh as the conductor
- Broadcasted by the South African Broadcasting Corporation (Email correspondence, 09 June 2019).

#### NIŠ (1994)

- A Concerto composed for the piano and orchestra
- Premiere performance in Serbia (23rd June 1994) with the Niš Philharmonic Orchestra
- Published by both the Foundation for the Creative Arts, and Studio 83 Editions
- CD ATM 01 (recording) was made in 1995. Johnson played the piano while being accompanied by the orchestra (Artium Symphony Orchestra), which was conducted by Henk Temmingh
- CD recording by the University of South Africa (UNISA) was made in 1997. The orchestra (National Symphony Orchestra, South Africa) was conducted by Richard Cock while the piano was played by Mareli Stolp
- Broadcasted by the SABC (E-mail correspondence, 09 June 2019).

#### JAZZ IMPROMPTU No. 1 for Piano (1993)

- A piano piece prescribed (compulsory) in 1993 for an international piano competition in Pretoria, organised by Transnet and UNISA
- The Foundation for the Creative Art published the work while it was reprinted by both UNISA in 1996, and Studio 83 Editions in 2011
- CD ATM 01 (recording) was made in 1993 and Johnson played the piano
- CD recording facilitated by Transnet and UNISA and Russian pianist (winner of the best performance of the prescribed South African composition) Marina Evreison, played the piano
- Recorded on CD at the University of Pretoria with Inette Swart on piano
- Performed and broadcasted on radio and television in South Africa, Europe,
   Russia, USA, UK, and the People's Republic of China
- Prescribed piece issued for Teachers' Licentiate in Music (UNISA)
- Prescribed piece for the LTCL (London) (Email correspondence, 09 June 2019).

#### JAZZ SONATINA (1990)

- A work written for clarinet in Bb and piano
- Published by both the Foundation for the Creative Arts (1990), and Studio 83 (2011)
- Performed in 1994 at the Belgrade International Festival of Contemporary Music
- Subsequent performances: South Africa, Russia, Austria, France, United Kingdom as well as Serbia
- Broadcasted on radio and television in South Africa, Europe, as well as Eastern Europe
- Issued piece for the UNISA Grade 8 Clarinet examinations from 1994
- CD ATM 01 (recording) was made and Johnson played the piano while the clarinet was played by Robert Pickup (Email correspondence, 09 June 2019).

#### • LAAT SOMER (1993)

- A work composed for soprano and piano
- Foundation for the Creative Arts commissioned Johnson to compose the work in 1993
- The Foundation for the Creative Arts published the work as part of an album of South African Art Songs (Email correspondence, 09 June 2019).

#### • THREE JAZZY SONGS (1992)

- A work composed for the piano and orchestra
- Broadcasted and performed on radio and television in both South Africa as well as China
- Performed during a tour with both Johnson (piano), and the Artium Chamber Orchestra
- CD ATM 01 (recording) was made and Johnson played the piano, while being accompanied by the Artium Chamber Orchestra (Email correspondence, 09 June 2019).

#### • AFRICAN MOODS – for Violin and Piano (1992)

- Performed and broadcasted on radio and television
- CD ATM 01 (recording) in 1993 with both Johnson (piano) and violinist André Swanepoel (Email correspondence, 09 June 2019).

#### • PRELUDE No.2 for Piano (1992)

- Published by UNISA in MUSICUS, Volume 20:2
- Recorded by Alexander Johnson on CD ATM 01

Broadcasted by SABC (E-mail correspondence, 09 June 2019).

#### • ELEGY (1991)

- A work composed for piano and violin
- UNISA published the work in the MUSICUS (Journal), Volume 19:1
- Performed and broadcasted by the South African Broadcasting Corporation featuring André Swanepoel on Violin (Email correspondence, 09 June 2019).

#### • NAGLIED – for Piano (1992)

- Prescribed as a compulsory piece (Hennie Joubert Piano Competition) in 1992 at Wellington
- The Foundation for the Creative Arts published the piece in 1993
- Performed and broadcasted by Charl de Villiers at SABC (E-mail correspondence, 09 June 2019).

# **Chapter 4**

# Post-tonality in Johnson's works – an overview of post tonal stylistic trends to be ascertained in his music

#### 4.1. Introduction

To portray a better understanding of post-tonality in Alexander Johnson's works, it is of utmost importance that general references be made to the music practices, techniques, and trends in the post-tonal era.

Deri (1968:14) concerning post-tonal music, as opposed to the general perception of the listener, asserts that music is not necessarily for relaxation; furthermore, need not be perceived as beautiful and pleasing to the ear. Integral to the main trends in post-tonal music, tonality being the most crucial element in musical comprehensibility has thus been hugely abandoned in modern music (Deri, 1968:14). Kamien (2002:287–288) similarly agrees with Deri's position. However, Cope (1989: 5), Kostka (2012:126) and Burkholder, Grout and Palisca (2010:805) present a different opinion as they contend that tonality is still utilised in most contemporary music of the post-tonal era.

Nevertheless, it is evident from the views and opinions above that post-tonal composers can be arguably categorised into three main groups—those who have completely abandoned tonality, those who held (and are holding) on to the traditions of tonality, and those who engage(d) in both (Hanning, 2006:546). The choice eventually lies with the composer. Given that Johnson is a post-tonal composer, which of the groups above does he fall? Perhaps, a combination of all? The next paragraph continues a brief discussion of other musical trends in post-tonal music.

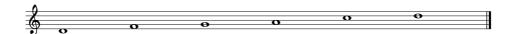
# 4.2. Stylistic trends in the post-tonal era

Because this dissertation is centred around Johnson and his three selected works, posttonal stylistic trends will only be briefly discussed with relevant examples.

#### 4.2.1. Scale formations

In the quest for the exploration of new techniques, post-tonal composers began to utilise new scales; either originally formed or new ones derived from traditional scales (Cope, 1989:8; Kostka, 2012:16). Some scale materials of post-tonal music include: five note (pentatonic) scales, six-note (hexatonic) scales, seven-note (heptatonic) scales in 'diatonic' modes, and eight-note (octatonic) scales (Kostka, 2012:16–27). Noteworthy is that there are other scales utilised in post-tonal music such as the chromatic scale<sup>1</sup> and micro-tonal scale<sup>2</sup> (Kostka, 2012: 27–30). The following examples have been adapted from the examples in Kostka (2012: 17–25).

Example 1: Five-note scale (Pentatonic with D tonal center)



The pentatonic scale can be rotated into five different modes. Example 1 is mode 2 with 'D' as the tonal center. Mode 1 would begin on C, mode 3 on E. and so forth. The pentatonic scale can also be transposed into different modes (Kostka, 2012:17). Johnson utilised the use of the pentatonic scale in the three works being studied. This is discussed in chapter 5 from section 5.3.

Example 2: Six-note scale (Whole-Tone scale 'WT-0')



The whole-tone scale is the most widely used six-note scale in post-tonal music. WT-0 means that this whole-tone scale contains C being the pitch class 0 (Kostka, 2012:17).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> The **chromatic scale** comprises every semitone found within an octave (Persichetti, 1961:60).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> A **microtonal scale** involves the use of "microtones," that is intervals smaller than a minor 2nd as used by post-tonal composers like Alan Berg, Béla Bartók, and Witold Lutoslawski (Kostka, 2012:28).

Example 3: Seven-note scale (Diatonic scale mode-Mixolydian)



Long forgotten, modal scales re-emerged in the twentieth century as post-tonal composers began to utilise them in their works. The scale (in example) 3, is the fifth mode called the **Mixolydian** mode (Kostka, 2012: 21). Johnson however, in his work *Kahlolo*, did feature the use of the **Phrygian** mode. This is discussed in chapter 5, section 5.5.2.

Example 4: Eight-note scale (The Octatonic scale)



The octatonic scale is otherwise referred to as the 'diminished scale' because it can be divided into two diminished 7th chords. It is also known as a whole-step-half-step scale (but can be arranged in the alternative half-step-whole-step) (Kostka, 2012: 25).

Lastly and mostly important post-tonal trend to be ascertained in Johnson's music is the use of synthetic scales. Also referred to as 'original' scales; quite several synthetic scales are built by random placement of major, minor, and augmented seconds (Persichetti, 1961:43). The first four notes of Johnson's original synthetic scale share the exact construction with the octatonic scale in example 4, discussed in detail in chapter 5, section 5.2.1.

# 4.2.2. Melody (Horizontal dimension)

Kennedy and Kennedy (2007:485) state that the notes in a melody are perceived one after the other, also referred to as the horizontal dimension. Hence, 'horizontal dimension' relates to melodic lines in post-tonal compositions, as noted in Kostka (2012:68). The melodic use of post-tonal composers varies from the traditional usage.

These include 'non-vocal melodic lines'<sup>3</sup>, 'melodic doubling'<sup>4</sup>, 'wider range'<sup>5</sup>, 'twelve-tone melody'<sup>6</sup>, 'more chromaticism'<sup>7</sup> (Dallin, 1974:29–30; Kostka, 2012:83).

In the three works being studied, Johnson features the use of the above-named techniques except for the twelve-tone row melody. These are discussed in chapter 5, from section 5.3.

#### 4.2.3. Harmony (Vertical Dimension)

DeLone, Kliewer, Reisberg, Wennerstrom, Winold and Wittlich (1975:322) note that twentieth music is not just a period of time like other older periods, but rather a "diversity of practices" where all harmonic material is utilised in new ways. Before 1900, chords were grouped into two different categories: consonant and dissonant; in which the former is perceived as stable and relaxed, while the latter unstable and full of tension seeking a forward motion, or a resolution to a more stable chord (Kamien, 2002:288). In tonal music, the tradition is to consider triads as consonant while any added note would be deemed dissonant (Kamien, 2002:288). By the dawn of the twentieth century, there was no longer any distinction between consonance and dissonance as composers had abandoned the use of such categorised concepts (Kamien, 2002:288). Hence, post-tonal composers began to build chords from 2nds, 4ths, as well as from diverse types of intervals (Kostka, 2012:41). Before the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century, composers never placed vital emphasis on tertian sonorities<sup>8</sup> larger than the 7th chord but now in post-tonal music, more sonorities like 9th, 11th and 13th chords are important.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> unlike instrumental and more especially vocal music from the Classical and Romantic eras, post-tonal composers utilise very disjunct and non-singable melodic lines (Dallin, 1974:29–30; Kostka, 2012:68). Melody use has become "less lyrical" as seen in the works of Hindemith, Boulez, and Bartók (Kostka, 2012:70).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Post-tonal composers utilised "melodic" doubling of melodic lines at the 3<sup>rd</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup> and octave as this was a very common practice in post-tonality (Dallin, 1974:50). Melodic doubling is employed for "special effects" thus used every now and then by composers (Dallin, 1974:54). An example of melodic doubling is found in Béla Bartók's *Giuoco delle coppie* from his *Concerto for Orchestra* (Dallin, 1974:50).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> since 1900, melodic passages have been presented in extreme ranges (Kostka, 2012:70). An example is found in the flute part of Boulez'z *Le Marteau sans maître* (Kostka, 2012:68).

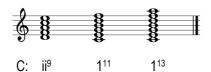
<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> developed by Schoenberg, twelve-tone melody involves the use of a single set of twelve different tones of the chromatic scale (Deri, 1968:112).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> an important aspect of any post-tonal melody is its use of chromaticism, that is the chromatic scale being employed in the organization of such melody (Kostka, 2012:70).

<sup>8</sup> Same as chords (Kotska, 2012:41).

The following example adapted from Kostka (2012:42) shows 9th, 11th and 13th sonorities.

#### Example 5: Tertian (triads) chord extensions



Certain post-tonal composers formulated new harmonies by combining two different chords with the aim of the sonorities being heard simultaneously, thus resulting in what is called **polychord**<sup>9</sup> as seen in example 6 below from Copland's *Appalachian Spring* (Kamien, 2002:289).

#### Example 6: Copland, Appalachian Spring



Another harmonic stylistic trend in post-tonal music is the employment of non-tertian harmony where chords are stacked in fourths<sup>10</sup> hence the term 'non-tertian' as illustrated in example 7 below (Kamien, 2002:259). Other non-tertian chords include: quintal

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> Kamien (2002:289) notes that a polychord may be perceived as one combined sound or separate layers. However, the result of the perception is dependent on the contrast of the two combined chords regarding tone colour and register (Kamien, 2002:289).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> Otherwise referred to as **quartal chords** as noted in DeLone *et al.* (1975:343). For post-tonal composers, due to limited use of quartal chords as the main idea in a composition, they began to utilise different variations of the quartal chord; such variations include combinations of perfect 4ths with tritones as well as other intervals (DeLone *et al.*, 1975:347).

chords<sup>11</sup> (example 8), chords based on 2nds<sup>12</sup> (example 9), open-5th chords<sup>13</sup> (example 10), tone clusters<sup>14</sup> (example 11), and mixed-interval chords<sup>15</sup> (DeLone *et al.*, 1975:350–363). Furthermore, post-tonal music contains chords with added notes<sup>16</sup> (example 12), and whole-tone chords<sup>17</sup> (example 13) (Kostka, 2012:44, 57).

#### Example 7: Quartal chord



The quartal chords in example 7 are stacked in perfect fourths.

#### Example 8: Quintal chord



<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> Post-tonal composers also utilised the **quintal chords**, that is, chords stacked in 5ths (DeLone *et al.*, 1975:350). Noteworthy is that the quintal chord possesses intervallic similarities with the quartal chord because they (quintal and quartal chords) both belong to the same interval class (DeLone *et al.*, 1975:350). Quintal chords possess characteristics that include being more vertically spaced and open with a stable sound (Kostka, 2012:50).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup> Otherwise known as **secundal chords**, Kostka (2012:54) notes that secundal chords are constructed from 2nds (either major 2nds or minor 2nds) with an exception of the chords voiced as 7ths. Notes of the secundal chord are often placed in adjacent positions which thus results to the notes being a "cluster" or otherwise known as "tone cluster" as illustrated in example 11 (Kostka, 2012:54).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup> Otherwise known as **chord of omission**, Kostka (2012:49) notes that the open-5th chord is realised by taking the traditional triad and simply omitting the 3rd of the triad thus transforming the sonority into a strange sound. Kostka (2012:49) however cautions that continuous use of the open-5th chord results in a tiresome sound hence it is rarely used by post-tonal composers except for the use of portraying or imitating ancient moods.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup> DeLone *et al.* (1975:355) state, that **tone clusters** were theoretically first studied and debated by composer Henry Cowell. However, Ives used clusters in his published composition (Concord Sonata) between 1909 and 1910 before Cowell whose first use in a composition was in 1912 (DeLone *et al.*, 1975:355).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>15</sup> Kostka (2012:54) explains that a **mixed-interval chord** is a sonority that is built from neither of the following series: 2nds, 3rds, or 4ths but with the combination of two or more of those interval series which results in an intricate sonority. Such complex chords are mostly found in atonal music (DeLone *et al.*, 1975:368).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>16</sup> Otherwise referred to as **chords of addition**, Kostka (2012:44) discusses that the foundation of the chords are often triads with additions (figured above the root) of 2nds, 6ths and seldomly 4ths.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>17</sup> **Whole-tone chords** are derived from the whole-tone scale hence there are quite several whole-tone chords (Kostka, 2012:57).

The quintal chord in example 8 is adapted from Kostka (2012: 51). Johnson utilised quartal/quintal chords in his work *Vocalise Africa*, discussed later in chapter 5, section 5.3.3.

Example 9: Chords based on 2nds (Secundal chords)



Johnson utilised the use of secundal chords in all three works, which will be discussed in chapter 5, from section 5.3.

Example 10: Open-5th chord



Johnson utilised open 5<sup>th</sup> chords in all three selected works for this study. This is discussed later in chapter 5, from section 5.3.

Example 11: Tone cluster



Tone clusters are notes stacked together and usually played on the piano with the fist or forearm (Kamien, 2002:290). Johnson utilised clusters in his three works to be discussed in chapter 5 from section 5.3.

#### Example 12: Chords with added notes



The illustration in example 12 of chords with added notes is adapted from Kostka (2012:44, 45).

#### Example 13: Whole-tone chords



The illustration in example 13 (whole-tone chords) are adapted from Kostka (2012:57).

#### 4.2.4. Rhythm

Kamien (2002:32) defines rhythm as "the flow of music through time." However, rhythm is interconnected with other musical aspects including beat, meter, accent, syncopation, and tempo (Kamien, 2002:32). Post-tonal composers created various new ways of rhythmic organisation in contrast to the traditional methods; they emphasised irregular and unpredictable rhythms, which posed new challenges for the performer in that the rhythms are not easily read on sight as with the traditional rhythmic setup of the tonal era (Kamien, 2002:291; Kostka, 2012:121). Rhythm in the vocabulary of post-tonal composers also saw a rapid transformation as rhythmic patterns became increasingly complex. Composers now utilised unconventional meters in five or seven time-signatures, as well as polyrhythm, that is, two or more different rhythms utilised

concurrently (Kamien, 2002:287–288). Other types of rhythmic devices utilised in the post-tonal era include:

- Polymeter, also known as multimeter, uses layering two different meters like a seven-eight time, and a three-four time layered together in the same piece of music (Deri, 1968:39).
- Cross-rhythm involves diverse rhythmic values being superimposed over each other (like two against three or three against four) thus resulting in some irregular patterns (Deri, 1968:39). This technique was utilised sparingly in the tonal era but frequently in post-tonal music (Deri, 1968:38).
- **Syncopation** according to Deri (1968:37), has been in existence and used as a rhythmic technique since the ancient times. As mostly mistaken with 'displaced accent,' it is rather characterized by recurring beats being negated by a different musical line while the pulse is fixed, the syncopated note enters while ignoring the pulse (Deri, 1968:36).
- Displaced accent, as explained by Deri (1968:36), involves a temporary shift of accent with emphasis on the weak beat to create tension and for a very short-while, cause a disruption in the flow of rhythm (Deri, 1968:36). The technique was seldomly used during the tonal era but abundantly used in post-tonal music (Deri, 1968:38).
- Another rhythmic technique in post-tonal music is changing meters as described by Deri (1968:40) predominantly used in post-tonal music, with usage emphasis on East-European folk songs. Two types of changing meters; one being utilised for absolute rhythmic effect (as used in Stravinsky's "Sacrificial Dance" from Rite of Spring) where the meter rapidly changes in every measure, thus resulting in a rhythmic obscurity, and the other being utilised with an emphasis on the melody therefore creating a special rhythmic effect (Deri, 1968:40).

#### 4.2.5. Texture

Burkholder *et al.* (2010: A19) state that when a musical work or a section in a musical presentation employs a blend of components, it is referred to as the 'texture' of the work or section. These components, namely monophonic<sup>18</sup>, polyphonic<sup>19</sup>, or homophonic<sup>20</sup>, may be presented as thick, thin, dense, transparent, heavy, or light; and they are employed to stimulate 'contrast and drama' (Kamien, 2002:48). Hence, texture portrays the vertical structure of a music composition; that is, the relationship between parts of a piece of music sounding together over a short-term period (Newbould, 2011:1).

Among the above-named traditional textures, polyphony (previously abandoned in the by the nineteenth century) stands out as the most favoured by post-tonal composers due to their quest for new sounds (Deri, 1968:78–79). Composers who employed polyphony in their works include Stravinsky, Bartók, Schoenberg, Berg, Webern, and Hindemith (Deri, 1968:78–79).

With the break from tradition by post-tonal composers came a new approach in the use of counterpoint – numerous melodies may run side-by-side but neither dependent nor related to each other thus resulting in augmented or diminished intervals (2nds and 7ths) known as 'dissonant counterpoint'<sup>21</sup> (Deri, 1968:79). This led to the texture of post-tonal music being unequivocally contrapuntal, thus farther complicated than that of the tonal era (Deri, 1968:86).

Concerning post-tonal (sound) texture, Kamien (2002:287–288) notes that composers became creative in finding their unique sound by employing unusual elements to create diverse tone colour. Modern composers employed uncommon noisy and percussive sounds, unusual playing techniques, as well as non-musical elements such as clacking typewriters, sirens, and vehicle brake drums (Kamien, 2002:288). The traditional instrumental setup (and usage) of the tonal-era was revolutionised as percussion,

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>18</sup> Monophonic, meaning "one sound" refers to an unaccompanied melody or sound (Kamien, 2002:48).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>19</sup> **Polyphonic**, meaning "many-sounds" refers to the simultaneous sounding of two or more musical elements (Kamien, 2002:48).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>20</sup> **Homophonic** texture is characterized by one melodic line being accompanied by chords (Kamien, 2002: 49). Furthermore, **Heterophony** is closely related with a slight difference of two contrasting melodies being performed simultaneously (Burkholder *et al.*, (2010: A9).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>21</sup> Schoenberg's *Three Piano Pieces*, Op. 11, No. 1 is an example of **dissonant counterpoint**, while other post-tonal contrapuntal works can be found in Hindemith's Fourth Quartet (last movement), Schoenberg's *Pierrot Lunaire* (No.8), Stravinsky's Symphony of Psalms (second fugal movement), Bartók's *Music for Strings, Percussion, and Celesta* (first movement) (Deri, 1968:79).

woodwind and brass took the centre space in the order of importance and emphasis in the works of post-tonal composers – the strings became quite redundant because the woodwind and brass were called upon as foreground instruments, featured in various spheres of chamber music, making them the "virtuosi of the orchestra" (Deri, 1968:84).

There was a huge development in the size and popularity of the percussion instruments, as composers employed the use of non-pitched instruments such as slapstick, woodblocks, thunder stick as well as the wind machine while the vibraphone (employed in the works of Boulez and Berg) and the xylorimba<sup>23</sup> were not left out (Deri, 1968:85). As a result, a vast array of percussion was now available to composers who ultimately wrote for different combinations of percussion instruments as seen in Varese's *lonization*, written for thirteen percussionists, with each performing on twenty instruments and more (Deri, 1968:85). The piano in post-tonal music became revolutionised for percussive uses; composers now perceived the piano as a percussion rather than a "singing instrument" as seen in Bartók's *Allegro Barbaro* (Deri, 1968:85). Nonetheless, the close of the year 1920 witnessed various composers who sought to write for smaller orchestras rather than large ones like Stravinsky and Schoenberg did in their earlier works (Deri, 1968: 85).

#### 4.2.6. Form

Kennedy and Kennedy (2007:269) define form as "the structure and design of a composition." However, as with the rapid changes of the post-tonal compositions, form is not perceived as 'simple.' Kamien (2002:352) points out that post-tonal composers during the early 20<sup>th</sup> century employed 'conventional meters' in seven and five time-signatures, whereas later composers discontinued the use of both beats and meters altogether, thus creating a completely different 'form' of music. Many composers also abandoned the use of traditional musical forms in their works; the sonata, ABA, rondo, and similar traditional forms were totally discontinued (Kamien, 2002:352). Kostka (2012:126), however, contends that all traditional forms from the tonal era continued into

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>22</sup> Notable examples of this newly discovered technique are found in the works of Bartók (*Concerto for Orchestra*), Stravinsky (*Octet* for wind instruments), Stockhausen (*Zeitmasse* for five woodwind instruments) (Deri, 1968:84–85). <sup>23</sup> The **xylorimba** is basically a bigger type of xylophone (Deri, 1968:85).

the post-tonal era but were mostly used by conservative composers.<sup>24</sup> These include: binary form<sup>25</sup>, ternary form<sup>26</sup>, rondo form<sup>27</sup>, sonata form<sup>28</sup>, sectional variations<sup>29</sup>, continuous variations<sup>30</sup>, canon and fugue<sup>31</sup>, and proportion (golden mean)<sup>32</sup> (Kostka, 2012:127–138).

Another type of form employed by post-tonal composers is the **open form**. DeLone *et al.* (1975:59) explains that several compositions since the 1950s took a different turn in the approach of structural design in post-tonal music. Open form relies on composer, the performer, as well as the audience (occasionally) for an overall formal output<sup>33</sup> (DeLone *et al.*, 1975:59).

#### 4.2.7. Conclusion

In conclusion, because composers have always been keen on developing new sounds in their works, the post-tonal era has witnessed a dramatic change in virtually all spheres of music creation (DeLone *et.al.*, 1975:85, 320). One continuous crucial change

<sup>24</sup> According to Kostka (2012:126), other non-conservative composers such as Schoenberg did compose using traditional forms.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>25</sup> **Binary form** (either AA' or AB) as defined by Kostka (2012:127), is employed in short compositions or the sections (movements) of a lengthy work. Examples of binary form are evident in the works of Hindemith ("A Swan"), Cage (Sonatas and Interludes), and Ligeti (Sonata for Solo Viola) (Kostka, 2012:127).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>26</sup> Kostka (2012:127) defines **ternary form** as a flexible idea that can be employed in large or small sections of a composition. However, most full-length works are treated in ternary form such as Britten's *Pastoral* from Serenade for Tenor, Horn, and Strings (Kostka, 2012:127).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>27</sup> Although both "**five-part**" (either "ABACA" or "ABABA") and "**seven-part**" (ABACABA) structures are evident in post-tonal music, they do not always follow the traditional setup (Kostka, 2012:131).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>28</sup> Although the **sonata form** was most prominent during the tonal-era, post-tonal composers do frequently use the movements of sonata form (Kostka, 2012:133).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>29</sup> According to Kostka (2012:134), **sectional variation** is used "to distinguish the theme with variations from the ground bass or continuous variations (passacaglia and chaconne)." Examples are evident in the works of composers such as Ravel (*Bolero*), as well as Babbitt (*Semi-Simple*) (Kostka, 2012:124).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>30</sup> Kostka (2012:135) notes that the passacaglia remains the traditional forms of **continuous variations**, which are characterized by a reiterating bass line known as the "ground" as well as the *chaconne*, characterized by a reiterating harmonic progression.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>31</sup> Kostka (2012:136) cautions that **canon and fugue** are not categorized as "forms" like others such as rondos and sonatas, but are actually "contrapuntal procedures" that can be employed in any chosen series of "formal designs." Nevertheless, canons, unlike in the tonal era, have been largely used by post-tonal composers as seen in the works of composers such as Webern (Five Canons, Op. 16), Schoenberg (trio from Suite, Op. 25), Webern (Variations for Piano, Op. 27) (Kostka, 2012:136).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>32</sup> Otherwise known as "golden section," the **golden mean** (being a proportion) dates to centuries ago and employed in the fields of art and architecture to achieve beautiful designs (Kostka, 2012:138).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>33</sup> For example, a performer is allowed to make a choice of own pitch(es) for a given duration to freely experiment with sounds as well as tone colour (DeLone *et al.*, 1975:59–60).

regarding post-tonal musical construction is **melody**; vast array of techniques and ideas are now being implemented so much so that the predictability of a post-tonal work is far weakened (DeLone *et al.*, 1975:320). Composers have also changed the traditional ideology of **rhythm** in post-tonal music as each composer has made tremendous attempts to "seek out new possibilities" (DeLone *et al.*, 1975:268). Post-tonal composers now have access to a wide array of **harmonic** materials from the past, being used in new ways (DeLone *et al.*, 1975:322). Now, composers are not bound to the harmonic rules, as all traditional rules of tonal harmonic system have been abandoned (DeLone *et al.*, 1975:323).

Post-tonal harmonic texture has become more contrapuntally dense than in the tonalera and composers are less concerned about "sensuous beauty" as a major characteristic of texture due to the new innovations and experimentation of musical sounds that ultimately became the norm in post-tonal music (Deri, 1968:86). Eventually, structural outline relating to 'form' since ages past endured into the post-tonal era as composers built and improved on them, thus resulting in the fusion of long-standing forms and new creations of post-tonal composers (DeLone *et al.*, 1975:4).

Notwithstanding, the twentieth century continued into the twenty-first century without a definitive style due to an array of different techniques and ideas (Kostka, 2012:310). Just like the previous eras possess recognizable sounds that characterized them, the post-tonal era perhaps will be recognized by later generations through the rather obvious stylistic techniques that differentiates each composer, as well the sound that post-tonal compositions encompass (Kostka, 2012:310).

In connection with the above paragraph, Alexander Johnson being a post-tonal composer is no different as his selected works entail approaches and trends evident in post-tonal music. The next chapter discusses Johnson's compositional style and analysis of each selected work.

# **Chapter 5**

# Johnson's compositional style and analysis of *Kahlolo*, *Letšatši*, and *Vocalise Africa*

#### 5.1. Introduction

Pascall (2001:1) defines style as the "manner, mode of expression, type of presentation" and otherwise used to symbolize music characteristics of a composer as an individual. Style is also characterized by texture, rhythm, melody, harmony and form, and the manner these features are interconnected, disjointed, or categorized in their use (Beard & Gloag, 2016:237–238; Pascall, 2001:1). Furthermore, style is demonstrated by the works of "creative personalities" through the distinctive sounds that depict the composer's style (Pascall, 2001:1, 11).

Pascall (2001:1) however, notes that personal style being a widespread topic for discussion among contemporary critics, is influenced by various factors. A composer's personal style is vital to objective analysis, while social views may contribute to a composer's distinctive style. Pascall (2001:6) further notes that in the Western tradition, personal style is an important factor, as evidenced by the rapid ways of creating new musical notations. Hence, a composer's stylistic techniques often change over time developing and building on previous compositional styles. It therefore implies that the concept of personality may be a huge influence on a composer's style due to the 'personality' changes the individual experiences at different stages of his/her career. These changes thus become evident in his/her works (Beard & Gloag, 2016:238).

Stylistic change (which is how a composer has developed and remodelled his/her compositional style overtime) however, is unique to each composer and influenced by various factors such as his/her lifespan, temperament, creative ability, culture, and economic conditions (Pascall, 2001:6). Personal style may also be influenced by whom a composer studied with – he/she may develop an own style or have a predecessor's style imposed (Pascall, 2001:6). Deri (1968:3) supports Pascall's position concerning a composer and the influence his/her environment has on him/her: "Generally, an artist's work will mirror to some extent the cultural climate in which he lives" (Deri,1968:3). This

is true and apparent in Johnson's *Kahlolo*, *Letšatši*, and *Vocalise Africa*. In agreement with Deri's position, Johnson being a South African composer has been greatly influenced by African, European, and Western traditions. The African influence is more evident owning to his being resident in South Africa. *Kahlolo*, *Letšatši*, and *Vocalise Africa* thus portray his African roots, influence, and environment. Therefore, the compositional style of the three selected works portrays a blend of both African, European, and Western post-tonal elements.

From the views of Pascall and Deri, every composer possesses his/her significant compositional style; so, does Johnson. The next paragraph will discuss the distinctive stylistic features of Johnson's *Kahlolo*, *Letšatši*, and *Vocalise Africa*.

# 5.2. Distinctive stylistic features of *Kahlolo*, *Letšatši*, and *Vocalise Africa*

Although some stylistic trends discussed above are quite evident in Johnson's compositions (which will be discussed in the next chapter), his selected works for this study – *Kahlolo*, *Letšatši*, and *Vocalise Africa* possess two distinctive stylistic features attributed only to him. These are namely: **synthetic scales** and **stylistic signature** 

### 5.2.1. Synthetic scales

With a major reference to post-tonal stylistic trends as discussed in chapter 4, section 4.2.1, one distinctive stylistic feature of *Kahlolo*, *Letšatši*, and *Vocalise Africa* is the use of synthetic scales as the overall structural setup of each piece. Johnson explained that in every composition he has written from 1990 until the most recent one, he has always employed the same synthetic scale to create some sort of signature tune in his different work whereby the listener may quickly and readily recognise the composer's sound (Personal interview, 13 March 2019).

Cope (1989:11) elaborates regarding synthetic scales: "Synthetic scales<sup>34</sup> involve the creation, usually by the composer, of unique scales for the purpose of composition." Because the scale does not encompass the characteristics of traditional major-minor scale setup, a construction of the synthetic scale results in an originally built scale being presented for the composer's personalized employment in a piece of composition (Cope, 1989:12; Persichetti, 1961:43).

In the three selected works - *Kahlolo*, *Letšatši*, and *Vocalise Africa*, just like every other previous and later works, Johnson utilised a synthetic scale with two variations. These are illustrated below:

Figure 1: Synthetic scale (Original Version)



In the scale setup in fig.1, Johnson utilises a series of eight different notes divided into two equal groups namely: C-Db-Eb-E / F-F#-Bb-B. This set is referred to as the 'original' version of Johnson's synthetic scale.

Figure 2: Synthetic scale (Var.1)



In the synthetic scale (in fig.2), the green marker indicates the notes from the original version while the red marker shows the notes that have changed to yield the first variation. Hence, the first variation is derived by shifting the last two notes of the second half of the original scale setup a whole-step down.

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>34</sup> Also referred to as "original" scales (Persichetti, 1961:43).

Figure 3: Synthetic scale (Var.2)



The blue marker in the illustration in fig.3 shows the changed notes that determine the second variation, while the green still stands for the notes contained in the original scale setup. Hence, the first two notes of the second half of the original scale setup shift up a whole-step ultimately resulting in the second variation derived from the original version of synthetic scale.

The following illustrations will show how the synthetic scales are implemented in each work.

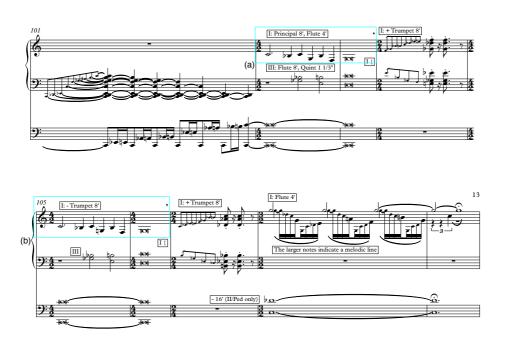
#### 5.2.2. Stylistic signature

Another distinctive stylistic feature of *Kahlolo*, *Letšatši*, and *Vocalise Africa* is the use of stylistic signature (signature tune). Johnson indicated that he created the tune as a distinguishing factor in the immediate recognition of his compositions (Personal interview, 13 March 2019). Just as discussed earlier, Johnson noted that he utilises motivic materials from previous compositions into a new work and thus, there are motivic similarities although each work is unique on its own (Personal interview, 13 March 2019). Each composition from 1990 to date possesses certain similarities that bind a previous work with the newest one, thereby creating a consistent 'stylistic signature.' This element coined by Johnson, is named the 'African *Dies Irae*'<sup>35</sup> (Personal interview, 13 March 2019).

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>35</sup> Johnson noted that the African 'Dies Irae' by him is adapted from the generally known ancient 'Dies Irae' (Personal interview, 13 March 2019). The ancient 'Dies Irae' melody is constructed in mixed modes consisting of the Dorian and the Hypo-Dorian modes with an extended compass (both scales combined) from A to C (tenth above) (Gregory, 1953:133). Johnson's African 'Dies Irae' is built on the minor-pentatonic scale however one instance is seen in *Kahlolo* (bar 96) where the African 'Dies Irae' is shown using the Phrygian (F) mode.

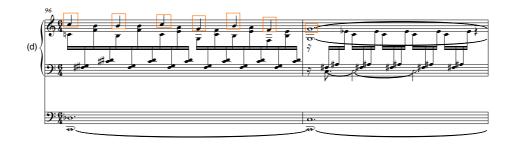
Figure 4: African 'Dies Irae' a-d in Kahlolo (2016)



In fig.4(a) and (b), Johnson's African 'Dies Irae' (bars 102 and 105) is used in minor-pentatonic based on key C minor tonality (C-Eb-F-G-Bb). The minor-pentatonic version of the composer's African 'Dies Irae' will henceforth be referred to as the 'Original' version.



Fig.4(c) shows the composer's use of the African 'Dies Irae' in E-flat minor pentatonic tonality (Eb-Gb-Ab-Bb-Db). Note that although a different tonality is used, the melody remains the same. Hence, this conforms to the original version of Johnson's African 'Dies Irae.'



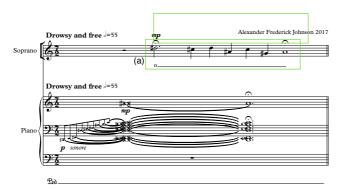
In fig.4(d), Johnson utilises a variation of the African 'Dies Irae' in Phrygian (F) modality. This version is used once amongst the three selected pieces for this study. Perhaps, subsequent compositions by the composer might feature this version of the African 'Dies Irae.'

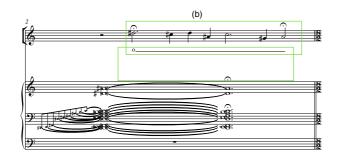
Figure 5: African 'Dies Irae' a-b in Letšatši (2016)

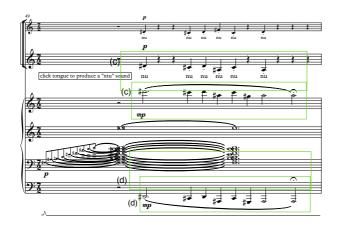


It is important to reiterate that Johnson creates a 'signature' by implementing original synthetic scales and original African 'Dies Irae' regarding the three selected works. In fig.5(a) and (b), the African 'Dies Irae' is seen again in *Letšatši* (bars 250 and 254). Just like fig.4(c), the African 'Dies Irae' is utilised in its original version (E-flat minor tonality).

Figure 6: African 'Dies Irae' a-f in Vocalise Africa (2017)









In Fig.6(a) to (f), the African 'Dies Irae' yet again is featured by the composer in *Vocalise Africa*. Note that although enharmonic notes are implemented, the melody and pitches are presented in its original version (minor-pentatonic).

In summary, just like one of the trends of post-tonal composers (seeking new styles and sounds), and as shown in this section, Johnson's stylistic features are distinctive. This distinction is evident in the composer's creation of his original synthetic scale and stylistic signature through the implementation of original African 'Dies Irae.'

The next section discusses each selected works in line with common post-tonal practices categorised in namely: melody, rhythm, texture, organ registration and form.

### 5.3. Analysis of Kahlolo, Letšatši, and Vocalise Africa

The three selected compositions for this research, composed between 2016 and 2017, are studied to establish Johnson's compositional style and output. The criteria considered comprise melody, harmony (harmonic devices), rhythm, texture, organ registration<sup>36</sup> and form. Hence, these categories form the basis of this study.

#### 5.3.1. Kahlolo (2016)

*Kahlolo* is an organ music composed by Alexander Johnson in 2016. Johnson explained that the composition was dedicated to Theo van Wyk, a professional South African organist who commissioned him to compose it in 2016 (Personal interview, 13 March 2019). Johnson, furthermore noted that *Kahlolo* was performed by Theo at St. Alban's Cathedral on 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue in New York in 2016, it was also performed in Texas, and at the prestigious Westminster Abbey in London (Personal interview, 13 March 2019).

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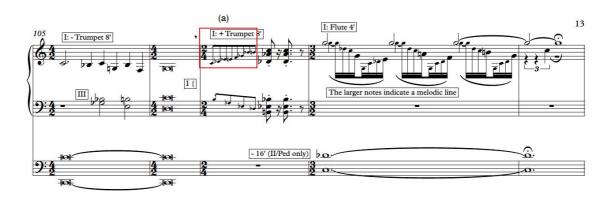
<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>36</sup> According to Grapenthin (n.d.) organ registration is chosen by a composer depending on two factors, namely "the type of sounds appropriate for that particular composition," and "the organist's understanding of how the instrument works to create these sounds." In *Kahlolo* and *Letšatši*, Johnson supplies a series of well-outlined registration markings with some unusual combinations.

*Kahlolo* is mainly based on the original version and permutations (variation 1 and variation 2) of Johnson's synthetic scale. An analysis of *Kahlolo* is discussed below:

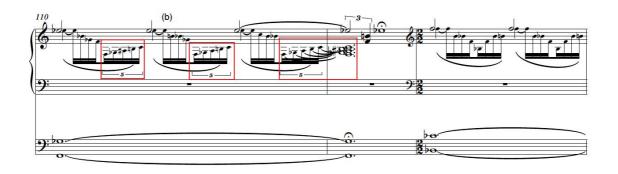
**Melody (horizontal dimension)** in *Kahlolo* mainly consists of minor- pentatonic scale structures and melodies realised from Johnson's original synthetic scale with permutations. Other post-tonal stylistic trends (relating to the horizontal dimension) discussed in chapter 4, which are evident in *Kahlolo* include: melodic doubling and chromaticism.

Examples from the composition are illustrated below:

Figure 7 a-d: Melody utilising original synthetic scale and permutations in Kahlolo



In fig.7(a), bar 107 (marked in red) shows Johnson's synthetic scale in its original form.



Bars 110 to 111 in fig.7(b) (marked in red) shows melodic permutations of the original synthetic scale.

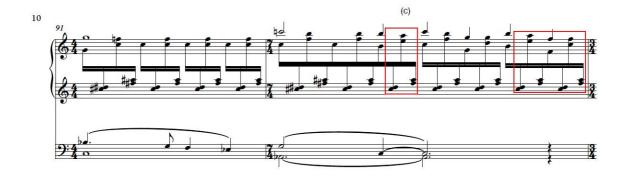


Fig.7(c) shows marked (in red) permutations of variation 1 of the synthetic scale.

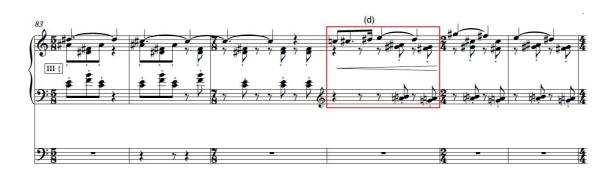


Fig.7(d) (bar 86) marked in red, shows permutations of variation 2 of the synthetic scale.

Figure 8 a-b: Minor-pentatonic melody in Kahlolo





With reference to chapter 4, The melodies in fig.8(a) and (b) marked in red, show melodic lines in minor-pentatonic tonality. Noteworthy is the minor-pentatonic African 'Dies Irae' in (b).

Figure 9: Melodic doubling in Kahlolo



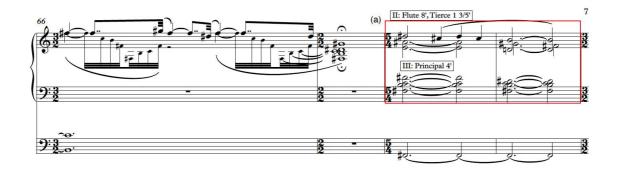
Figure 10: Chromaticism in Kahlolo



As discussed in post-tonal stylistic trends in chapter 4, fig.9 (bar 27) features Johnson's use of melodic doubling while fig.10 features (bar 133-134) chromaticism in *Kahlolo*.

**Harmony (vertical dimension)** in *Kahlolo* features post-tonal harmonic devices namely: sonorities realised from the synthetic scale, secundal chords, whole-tone chords and chord clusters. A few examples from the work are illustrated below:

Figure 11 a-b: Sonorities realised from the synthetic scale in Kahlolo

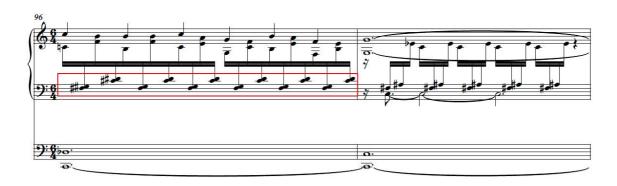


In fig.11(a) (bar 68), chordal harmonies are built by rearranging and stacking notes from the synthetic scale (marked in red), which in this instance is from the original version. This is one of the main ways in which Johnson's harmonic structures are built throughout the entire piece.



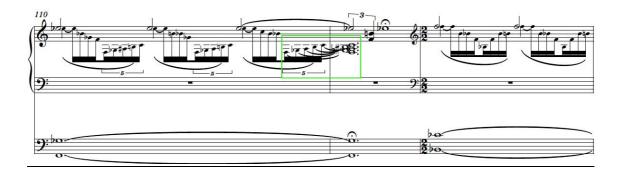
The marked (green and red) notes in fig.11(b), bar 120 feature Johnson's use of the original synthetic scale yet again in an unusual manner. In the treble clef, the green marked notes feature the original form of the synthetic scale coupled in thirds with the same scale construction but starting from Eb onwards to C# thus completing 3rds with the green marked original scale. However, the red marked notes in the bass clef directly below the discussed green marked notes, feature the exact retrograde of the top sets of notes. That is, the synthetic is featured in contrary motion, paired with other notes form the same scale.

Figure 12 a-b: Chords based on 2nds (secundal chords) in Kahlolo



With reference to the post-tonal stylistic trends discussed in chapter 4, the red marked area in fig.12 (bar 96), features chords based on seconds, otherwise known as secundal chords.

Figure 13: Tone cluster in Kahlolo



With reference to chapter 4, Johnson also features tone clusters, another post-tonal stylistic trend, in *Kahlolo*.

Figure 14: Open 5th in Kahlolo

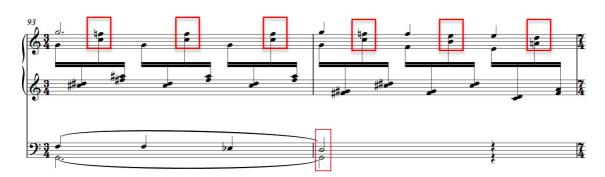


Fig.14 (bar 94), in reference to the discussed post-tonal stylistic trends in chapter 4, features Johnson's use of open 5th in *Kahlolo*. Other instances are found throughout the piece.

**Rhythm** in *Kahlolo* evidently follows some post-tonal stylistic trends as discussed in chapter 4. These are syncopation, displaced accent, and changing meters. Illustrations from the work are presented below:

Figure 15: Syncopation in Kahlolo



In the blue marked measure (bar 51) in fig.15, Johnson utilizes syncopation where the lower (temporary treble clef) rhythms syncopate amid a steady pulse of the rhythms above it.

Figure 16: Displaced accent in Kahlolo



The illustration in fig.16 shows the use of displaced accents in *Kahlolo*. A shift of accent to weak beats is seen in the bass clef that ultimately causes an interference in the rhythmic flow.

#### Figure 17 a-b: Changing meters in Kahlolo

As discussed in chapter 4, and according to Deri (1968:40), changing meters are employed in two ways; one being utilised for absolute rhythmic effect; the meter rapidly changes in every measure, thus resulting in a rhythmic obscurity, and the other being utilised with an emphasis on the melody thus creating a special rhythmic effect.



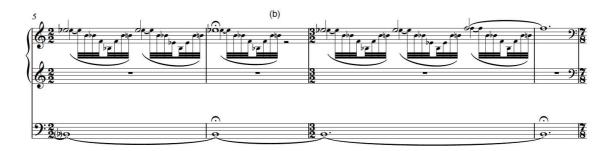


Fig.17(a) (bars 41-47) shows Johnson's use of changing meters for rhythmic effect where the meter rapidly changes in every measure, while the (b) part (bars 5-8) shows changing meters used as emphasis on the melody.

**Texture** in *Kahlolo* being an organ piece contains the following types namely: polyphonic, homophonic and heterophonic. These utilised textures appear as heavy, light, and transparent respectively, ultimately due to the organ registration sounds being

manipulated at specific points to alter the overall texture. Below are illustrations of the textures utilised in the piece:

Figure 18: Polyphonic (heavy) texture in Kahlolo



Figure 19: Homophonic (light) texture in Kahlolo

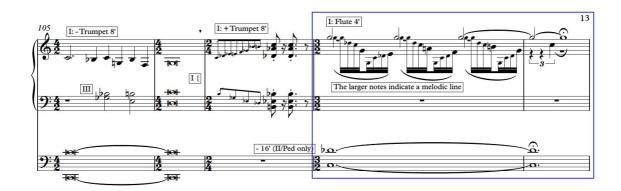


Figure 20: Heterophonic (transparent) texture in Kahlolo



**Organ Registration** in *Kahlolo* as well as *Letšatši* contributes immensely in the structural setup of the piece; that is, specific changes in sound due to the manipulation of the organ stops portray specific sections throughout the piece. There are evident similarities in the registration of each section (either once or recurring). Hence, the different changes in each section will thus be the start-off point for this discussion.

The A-sections have registrations predominantly made up of flutes comprising 4', 8' (with Tierce 1 3/5'), as well as 8' (with Quint 1 1/3) played at different sections in both the Swell and the Great. The pedal in the A-sections is mainly the 16'. Therefore, the sound produced in the different A-sections is mellow and soothing. A3 however, features the Principal 4' on the Choir manual thus creating a slightly different sound that is lighter and brighter.

The B-sections however, contrast the A-sections slightly due to the combinations of the Principal 8', Flute 8' + 4, and the Quint 2 2/3' in B1, Salicional 8', Principal 4', Mixture 1' in the B2. The result becomes a slightly louder dynamic level than the A-sections. The C-sections being quite light in texture, feature the Principal 8', Flute 4', and 16' (+Principal and Bourdon). Lastly, the D-section is similar in sound output to the C-sections with the inclusion of the Quint 1 1/3', and the Trumpet 8' thus creating an emphatic sound in specific measures. The following table shows the sections, and the registrations involved.

Table 1: Representation of Kahlolo sections and registration

Section	Registration	
A1	I: Flute 4'	
	II: Flute 8', Tierce 1 3/5'	
	III: Flute 8', Quint 1 1/3'	
	Ped: Bourdon 16'	

A2	All registrations in A1 - 16', + II/Ped	
A3 (bar 65-67)	I: Flute 4' II: Flute 8', Tierce 1 3/5' III: Principal 4' -16', II/Ped only	
A3 (from bar 79)	III: Flute 8', Quint 1 1/3'	
A4 (from bar 108)	I: Flute 4' -16' (II/Ped only)	
A5	I: Principal 8', Flute 4' + Principal 16', Bourdon 16'	
B1	I: Principal 8', Flute 8' + 4', Quint 2 2/3' + Principal 16', Bourdon 16'	
Link	II: Salicional 8', Principal; 4', Mixture 1' II/Ped	
B2	All registrations from B1	
B2 (from bar 54)	II: Flute 8', Tierce 1 3/5' Ped: Principal 16', Bourdon 16', II/Ped	
C1	I: Principal 8', Flute 4'	

	+ Principal 16', Bourdon 16'
D	I: Principal 8', Flute 4' III: Flute 8' Quint 1 1/3'
D (from bar 104- 108)	I: + Trumpet 8' (bar 104) I: -Trumpet (bar 105) I: + Trumpet 8' (bar 107) I: Flute 4' (bar 108) -16' (II/Ped only)
Coda	III: Flute 4', Quint 1 1/3' - Principal 16'

**Form and structure** in *Kahlolo* will be represented as 'open.' There are four major sections namely: A B C D. However, all (except for D) have subsections in which materials from previous sections are repeated with links introducing a new section. A representation of the overall formal structure is found below:

Table 2: Representation of Kahlolo structure

Section	Bars	Content
A1	1-13	Introduction.

Link	14-18	A short passage to prepare the entrance of the next section. Includes more rhythmic movements with a <i>poco rit</i> . to emphasize the end of the previous section.
A2	19-20	Similar rhythmic contents from A1.
Link	21-23	A short passage to prepare the entrance of the next section. Includes faster rhythmic movements.
B1	24-43	Texture, sound, rhythmic contents, and timesignature changes. The use of <i>staccati</i> creates a rather strict rhythmic movement.
Link	44-49	All contents from B1 remain but with fewer notes, lighter texture and a change of registration to prepare the entrance of the next section.
B2	50-60	Dramatic rhythmic movements due to the use of syncopations and displaced accents. Also contains contents from B1.
Link	61-64	Complete rhythmic and textural diversion due to the change of registration and irregular time signature.
A3	65-67	Contains similar rhythmic and textural contents from A2.
Link	68-69	Contains more notes and dense texture due to the registrations involved. Prepares for the entrance of the next section.
A3	70-72	Same contents from A3 (bars 65-67) are repeated.
Link	73-76	Features some similar contents from previous link (bar 68-69) and prepares the entrance for the next section.

-A3	77-82	Same contents from previous A3 with more developmental materials.
Link	83-88	Prepares the entrance of the next section.
C1	89-96	Fast rhythmic content with a change in registration.
Link	97-101	Rhythmic contents reduce and thus prepares the entrance of the next section.
D	102-107	Introductory material with fluid melody and rapid solo passages.
A4	108-110	Similar materials from A2 with some added developmental materials.
Link	111	Prepares the entrance of the next section.
A1	112-113	Same contents from previous A1.
A5	114-120	Similar rhythmic contents from previous A-sections with more developmental materials.
C2	121-127	Similar rhythmic contents from C1 with more developmental materials.
Coda	128-End	Texture becomes dense due to clusters and change in the registration. Recurring <i>fermatas</i> depict the piece is about to end. The piece ends with a lighter texture, a change in the pedal registration and a final <i>fermata</i> .

#### 5.3.2. Letšatši (2016)

Johnson explained that he was commissioned by the South African Music Rights Organisation (SAMRO) Foundation for the Creative Arts to compose a piece and, this led to the creation of *Letšatši* in 2016 (Personal interview, 13 March 2019). Like *Kahlolo*, it is an organ piece and it was dedicated to yet another professional South African organist, Herman Jordaan who asked for the commission through SAMRO (Personal interview, 13 March 2019). Johnson, furthermore noted that Jordaan played the work at the University of Pretoria chapel on October 2017 (Personal interview, 13 March 2019).

Letšatši is based on the original version and permutations of Johnson's synthetic scale. An analysis of Letšatši is discussed below:

**Melody (horizontal dimension)** in *Letšatši*, (just like *Kahlolo*) is also based on the original version of Johnson's synthetic scale with permutations, as well as minorpentatonic melodies. Examples from *Letšatši* are illustrated below:

Figure 21 a-d: Melody utilising original synthetic scale and permutations in Letšatši

Fig.21(a) shows the original construction of Johnson's synthetic scale (bar 232 marked in red) in *Letšatši*. It is of utmost importance to reiterate Johnson's explanation on the blend and utilisation of the same synthetic scale as well as various permutations in the

three selected works, and all other works of his since 1990 (Personal interview, 13 March 2019).

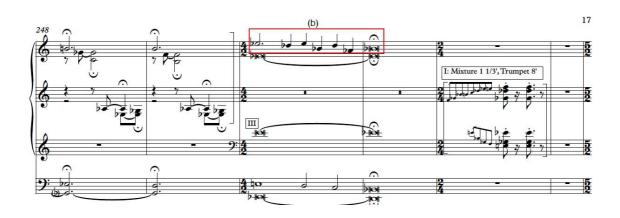
Fig.21(b) to (d) (marked in red) shows permutations of the synthetic scale's original version.



Figure 22 a-b: Minor-pentatonic melody in Letšatši



Just like *Kahlolo*, *Letšatši* also features minor-pentatonic melodic lines as illustrated in fig.22(a), marked in red, bars 39-43 in the pedal section.



The melodic minor line in fig.22(b) bar 250, features the African 'Dies Irae' as also utilised in *Kahlolo*.

**Harmony (vertical dimension)** in *Letšatši*, features post-tonal harmonic devices namely: sonorities realised from the synthetic scale, sonorities based on all versions and notes of the synthetic scale, secundal chords, chord clusters and open 5th. A few examples from the work are illustrated below:

Figure 23: Sonorities realised from synthetic scale in Letšatši



The marked contents in fig.23 feature sonorities which contain notes from the original synthetic scale.

Figure 24: Sonorities based on all versions and notes of the synthetic scale in Letšatši



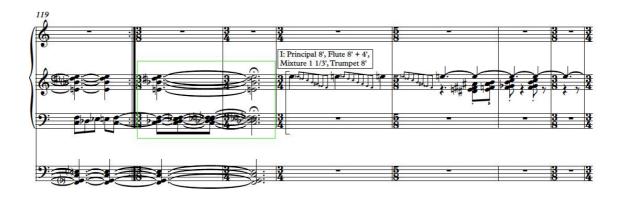
Fig.24 sonorities (bars 114-118) feature all the notes found in the original version as well as the two variations of the synthetic scale.

Figure 25: Chords based on 2nds (secundal chords) in Letšatši



With reference to the post-tonal stylistic trends discussed in chapter 4, the red marked areas in fig.25 (bars 61, 63 and 66), feature secundal chords.

Figure 26: Tone cluster in Letšatši



With reference to chapter 4, and just like in *Kahlolo*, Johnson also features tone clusters, another post-tonal stylistic trend, in *Letšatši*.

Figure 27: Open 5th in Letšatši



As discussed in chapter 4, open 5th is another post-tonal stylistic trend where the 3rd is intentionally omitted thus creating a rather bare and exposed sound. The marked sections feature Johnson's use of open 5ths.

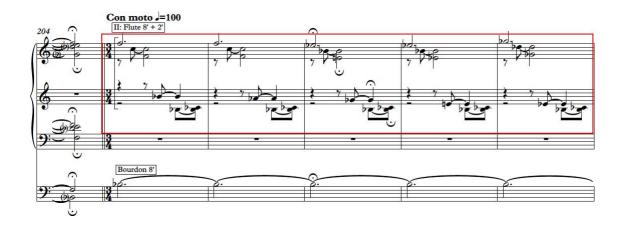
**Rhythm** in *Letšatši*, just like *Kahlolo*, evidently follows some post-tonal stylistic trends as discussed in chapter 4. These are cross-rhythm, syncopation, displaced accent, and changing meters. Illustrations from the work are presented below:

Figure 28: Cross-rhythm in Letšatši



The marked (blue) rhythms in fig.28 are being superimposed over each other, thus creating rhythmic shifts due to the irregular rhythmic phrases in the treble clef.

Figure 29: Syncopation in Letšatši



In fig.29, the red marked measures feature syncopated notes and rhythms.

Figure 30: Displaced accent in Letšatši



The illustration, in fig.30 shows the use of displaced accents in *Letšatši*. A shift of accent to weak beats is seen in the bass clef that causes a dramatic effect.

### Figure 31 a-b: Changing meters in Letšatši

As discussed in chapter 4, and according to Deri (1968:40), changing meters are employed in two ways; one being utilised for absolute rhythmic effect; the meter rapidly changes in every measure, thus resulting in a rhythmic obscurity, and the other being utilised with an emphasis on the melody thus creating a special rhythmic effect.



Fig.31(a) (bars 222-225) show Johnson's use of changing meters for rhythmic effect where the meter rapidly changes in every measure, while the (b) part (bars 46-50) show changing meters used as emphasis on the melody in the pedal section.

**Texture** in *Letšatši*, being an organ piece contains the following types namely: heterophony, polyphony, and homophony. These utilised textures appear as heavy, dense and transparent respectively, ultimately due to the organ registration sounds being

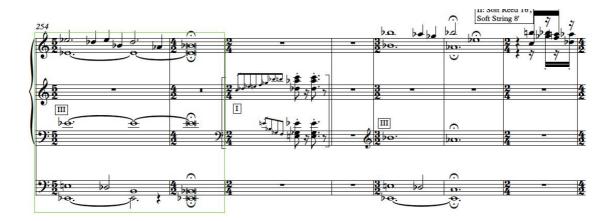
manipulated at specific points to alter the overall texture. Below are illustrations of the textures utilised in the piece:

Figure 32 A-B: Heterophony (heavy) and Polyphony (dense) in Letšatši



Fig.32(a) shows the use of Heterophony where two contrasting melodies in the treble and bass clefs are being played simultaneously, while (b) features the use of Polyphony where there are multiple sounds being performed concurrently.

Figure 33: Homophonic (transparent) texture in Letšatši



**Organ Registration** in *Letšatši*, just like *Kahlolo*, plays a major role in the structural setup of the piece. Like *Kahlolo*, there are specific changes in sound due to the

manipulation of the organ stops portraying specific sections throughout the piece. There are also evident similarities in the registration of each section (either once or recurring).

An overview of the piece's sections will be the basis of this discussion.

The A-sections have quite a few multiple registrations which ultimately result in a dramatic, bright, and loud dynamic level. The B-sections reveal a mellower dynamic level than the A-section as fewer notes and registrations are featured, with the presence of melodic lines. However, towards the developmental parts of the B-section, texture and dynamic levels begin to shift, becoming thicker and louder due to the introduction of more notes and registrations. The C-section is introduced in a lighter and transparent texture with fewer note and registrations thus resulting in a quieter dynamic level while the D-section appearing in contrast with the C-section, reveals yet another dramatic and dense texture with more notes resulting in a louder dynamic level. From the coda to the end, the dynamic level, registration, and texture return to being softer, fewer and lighter respectively.

The following table shows the sections, and the registrations involved.

Table 3: Representation of *Letšatši* sections and registration

Section	Registration
A	I: Principal 8', Flute 4', Principal 2', Mixture 1 1/3', Trumpet 8'
	II: Flute 8', 2', 2 2/3', Mixture 1'
	III: Principal 4', Sesquilaltera 2 2/3'
	Ped: Reed 4', Principal 16' (from bar 19), 8' (from bar 46), Bourdon 8' (from bar 74)
В	All registrations in A (I-II)

	I: Bourdon 16', Principal 8', Flute 8' + 4', Mixture 1 1/3', Trumpet 8' (from bar 122)
	II: + Flute 2' (from bar 100), Flutes 8', 2 2/3', 2', Mixture 1' (from bar 136)
	III: Flute 8', Sesquilaltera 2 2/3', Principal 4' (from bar 157)
	Ped: Flute 2', Principal 16' (from bar 99), Reed 4' (from bar 130)
С	I: Principal 8', Flute 8' + 4', Mixture 1 1/3', Trumpet 8'
	II: Flute 8' + 2'
	Ped: Bourdon 8'
D	All registrations from previous II in C-section
	III: Flute 8', Sesquilaltera 2 2/3'
	Ped: Principal 16', Bourdon 8'
Coda -End	I: All registrations from C-section
	II: Soft Reed 16', Soft String 8'
	Ped: Principal 16', Bourdon 8'

**Form and structure** in *Letšatši* is clearly divided into sections by the composer's use of performance directions and tempo alterations at the beginning of each section. Hence, this piece will be represented as a four-part 'open' form. Like *Kahlolo*, there are four major sections namely: A B C D. However, only the C-section has a subsection where similar materials from the previous section are introduced. A representation of the overall formal structure is found below:

Table 4: Representation of Letšatši structure

Section	Bars	Content
А	1-77	Fast and dramatic introduction as indicated in the performance directions at the beginning of the piece.
В	78-121	Thematic/melodic materials are introduced.
Link	122-130	A passage to prepare for the entrance of the next section.
A	131-204	Materials from previous A-section are re-introduced with very few variations.
С	205-223	New thematic/melodic section with thinner and quieter dynamic levels.
Link	224-230	Registration is changed, and materials are borrowed from the previous C-section to prepare the entrance of the new section.
D	231-245	New developmental material.
C2	246-251	Materials from previous C-section are re-introduced with new thematic, and melodic passages.
Link	252-259	Registration changes while melodic materials are borrowed from the previous C2 section to prepare for the entrance of the next section.
Coda	260-End	Fast rhythmic passages, and melodic lines gradually transform into fewer notes, registration, and lighter texture which ends the piece.

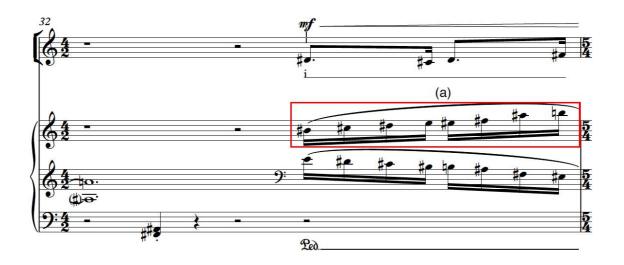
### 5.3.3. Vocalise Africa

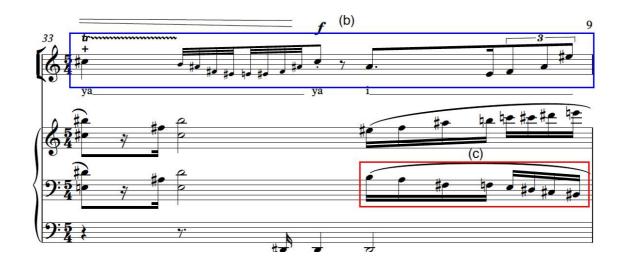
Johnson mentioned that he was commissioned by the South African Music Rights Organisation (SAMRO) foundation for the 2018 Unisa International Singing Competition, to compose *Vocalise Africa* in 2017. The elaborate vocal piece with piano accompaniment was dedicated to Hanli Stapela (Personal interview, 13 March 2019).

*Vocalise Africa* is based on the original version and permutations (original, var.1, and var. 2) of Johnson's synthetic scale. An analysis of *Vocalise Africa* is discussed below:

**Melody (horizontal dimension)** in *Vocalise Africa*, (just like *Kahlolo and Letšatši*) is also based on the original version of Johnson's synthetic scale with permutations, as well as minor-pentatonic melodies. Other post-tonal stylistic trends (in the horizontal dimension) discussed in chapter 4, which are evident in *Vocalise Africa* include: non-vocal melodic lines, wider range, and chromaticism.

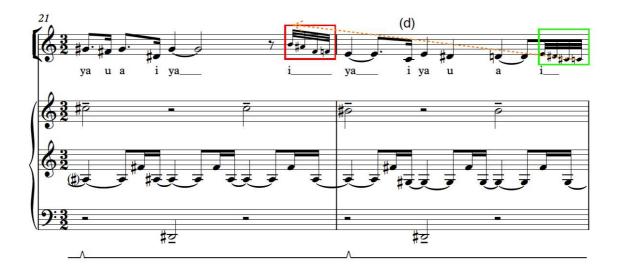
<u>Figure 34 A-E: Melody utilising original synthetic scale and permutations in *Vocalise*<u>Africa</u></u>





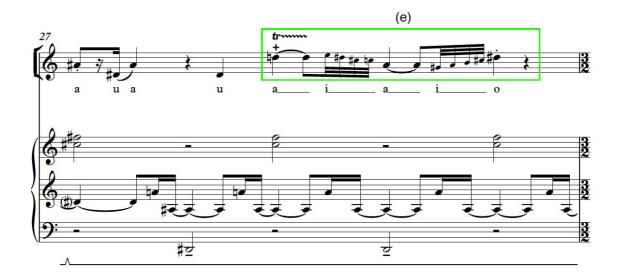
In fig.34(a) to (c), Johnson's synthetic scale is utilised in mainly three different ways. First, the 'a' part (marked in red) shows the original form of the synthetic scale using enharmonic notes while the 'c' part, bar 33 (marked in red) features the retrograde of the original synthetic scale. The 'b' part however (marked in blue), utilises a permutation of the original scale.

A noteworthy technique in the melodic utilisation of Johnson's synthetic scale in its original form is found in the 'd' part below:



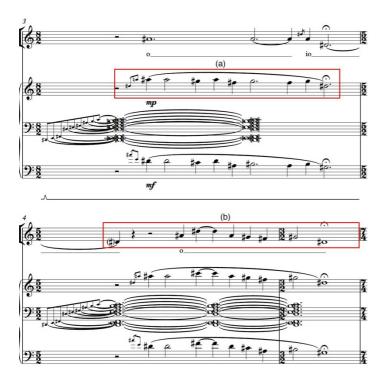
Here, Johnson divides the original form of the scale into two parts – the first part of the original scale (C-C#-D#-E) marked in green is placed in retrograde form at bar 22, while the second part being the completion of the original scale form (F-F#-A#-B) marked in red, is placed in bar 21 also in retrograde form. For a clearer overview, the orange

(illustrated in orange) links the scale to show the original form if played from the last note in bar 22 'C' to the first (of the red-marked) note 'B' in bar 21.



In bar 27, fig.28(e), the marked (green) melodic line features a permutation of the first variation (var.1) of Johnson's synthetic scale.

Figure 35 a-b: Minor-pentatonic melody in Vocalise Africa



Just like *Kahlolo* and *Letšatši*, *Vocalise* Africa also features minor-pentatonic melodic lines as illustrated in fig.35(a) and (b), marked in red, bars 3 and 4. Noteworthy again, is the featured minor-pentatonic African 'Dies Irae' in a melodic line as shown in fig.35(c) below (marked in green) just like it is also featured in both *Kahlolo* and *Letšatši*.

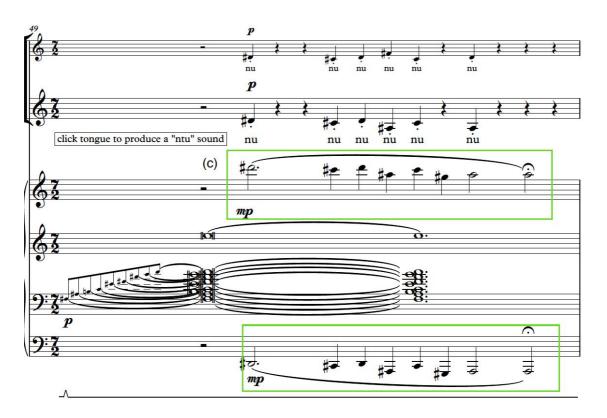
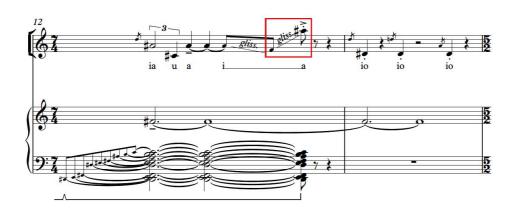


Figure 36: Non-vocal melodic lines in Vocalise Africa



As discussed in chapter 4, a common trend with post-tonal composers is the utilisation of melodic lines that are non-traditional and very difficult to sing. Fig 36 from *Vocalise Africa* shows such a melodic line; a deliberate trill (whole-step) tied to a rhythmic quintet sung to a chant is evidently not a comfortable melodic line for a vocalist.

Figure 37: Wider range in Vocalise Africa



Composers of post-tonal music employed wider ranges in their works. In fig.37, Johnson utilises this technique in bar 12 (marked in red) where the vocal line extends from F up to high A sharp in a glissando.

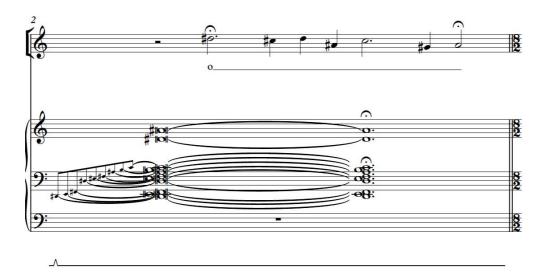
Figure 38: Chromaticism in Vocalise Africa



The marked sections in fig.38 show chromaticism in *Vocalise Africa*. As discussed in chapter 4, this is one of the stylistic trends existent in post-tonal music.

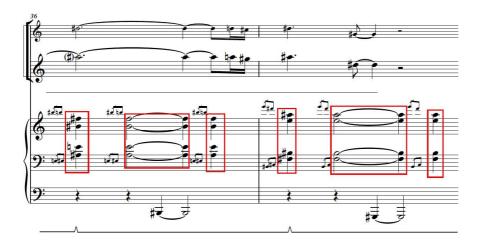
**Harmony (vertical dimension)** in *Vocalise Africa,* features post-tonal harmonic devices namely: sonorities realised from the synthetic scale, tritone, quartal chords, tone clusters, secundal chords, and open 5ths. A few examples from the work are illustrated below:

Figure 39: Sonorities realised from synthetic scale in Vocalise Africa



The accompaniment part of fig.39, shows sonorities realised from Johnson's original synthetic scale.

Figure 40: Tritone in Vocalise Africa



The marked areas in fig.40 show Johnson's use of tritones; a common practice by composers in post-tonal compositions.

Figure 41: Quartal chords in Vocalise Africa



As discussed in chapter 4, post-tonal composers employ the use of chords stacked in fourths. In fig.41, the measures marked in red show quartal chords in *Vocalise Africa*.

Figure 42: Tone cluster in Vocalise Africa

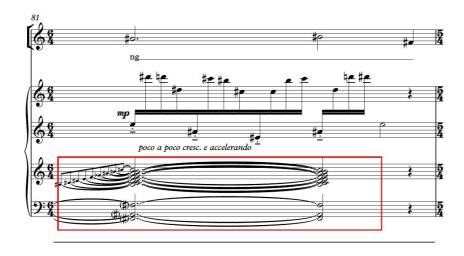
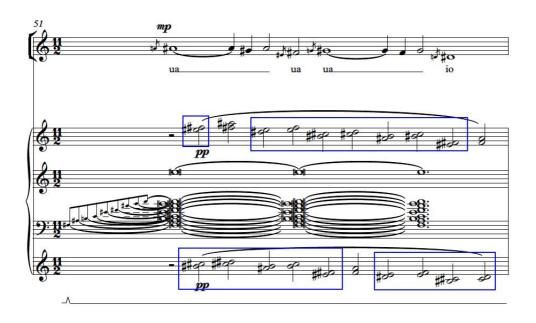


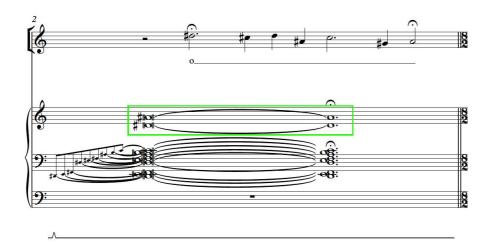
Fig.42 shows the use of clusters. Noteworthy, the marked (red) cluster is made up of the original version of Johnson's synthetic scale.

Figure 43: Chords based on 2nds (secundal chords) in Vocalise Africa



As discussed in chapter 4, amongst other post-tonal stylistic trends is the use of secundal chords. Johnson's use of secundal chords is seen marked (in blue) in fig.43.

Figure 44: Open 5th in Vocalise Africa

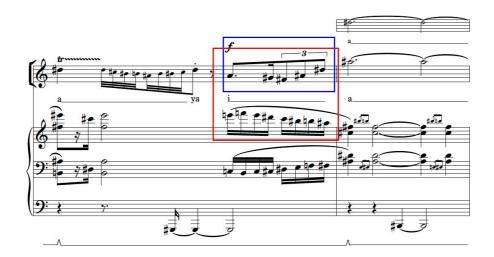


Just like Letšatši, Vocalise Africa also features open 5ths as shown in fig.44.

**Rhythm** in *Vocalise Africa*, evidently follows some post-tonal stylistic trends as discussed in chapter 4. These are: cross-rhythm, syncopation, displaced accent, and changing meters.

Illustrations from the work are presented below:

Figure 45: Cross-rhythm in Vocalise Africa



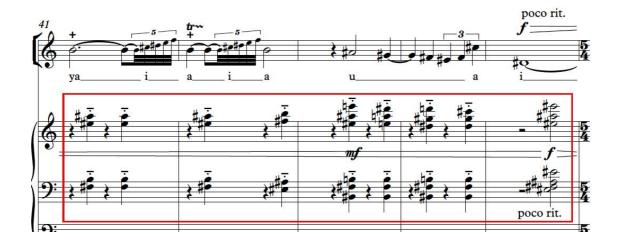
In fig.45, it is seen that the rhythm in the blue area crosses with the rhythm marked in red. The red rhythm is played in against the regular pulse evident in the blue rhythm. This technique is referred to as cross-rhythm.

Figure 46: Syncopation in Vocalise Africa



The rhythm, in fig.46 contains syncopated notes. As discussed in chapter 4, syncopation is characterized by recurring beats being negated by a different musical line – while the pulse is fixed, the syncopated note enters while ignoring the pulse (Deri, 1968:36).

Figure 47: Displaced accent in Vocalise Africa



As often misinterpreted as syncopation, a displaced accent is a shift in accent on a weak beat. Fig.47 shows the red marked areas (bars 41-45) where the notes accents are shifted unto the weak beats.

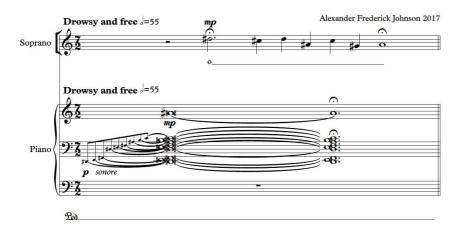
Figure 48: Changing meters in Vocalise Africa



As discussed with *Kahlolo* and *Letšatši*, changing meters occur in two types. However, for *Vocalise Africa*, only the second type is utilised; as Deri (1968:40) describes, it is used to lay emphasis on the melody thus creating a special rhythmic effect. Johnson evidently makes use of the changing meters in bars 87 and 88 of fig.48 to lay emphasis on the flow of the melodic line.

**Texture** in *Vocalise Africa* is arguably mainly homophonic. This is because there is one melodic line being the voice, and accompaniment, being the piano. However, two other types of texture are evident in the piece mainly polyphony and heterophony. Below are illustrations of the textures utilised in the piece:

Figure 49: Homophonic texture in Vocalise Africa



The beginning of *Vocalise Africa* as illustrated in fig.49, shows a homophonic texture where there is one melodic line in the vocal part, accompanied by the piano chords.

Figure 50: Heterophony in Vocalise Africa



Fig.51 shows heterophony in *Vocalise Africa* where there are two contrasting melodies (marked in red) being performed simultaneously.

**Form and structure** in *Vocalise Africa* just like the other two pieces discussed is considered as a 'open form' music. However, due to changes in tempo and performance directions as indicated by the composer, *Vocalise Africa*'s form structure is divided into four parts ABCD with some subsections in A and B.

A representation of the overall formal structure of *Vocalise Africa* is found below:

Table 5: Representation of Vocalise Africa structure

Section	Bars	Content
А	1-17	Introduction.
В	18-44	Development.
Link	45-47	Poco rit. shows the preparation for the entrance of the next section.
С	48-53	New material with minor development.
A2	54-65	Materials from previous A-section are employed with developments on the vocal parts.
B2	66-80	Rhythmic materials from previous B-section are employed with developments on all parts.
Link	81-83	Poco a poco cresc. e accelerando shows the preparation for the entrance of a new section.
D	84-98	A tempo shows the entrance of a new section with new materials. Developmental section with rhythmic materials borrowed from the previous B-section.
Coda	99-End	Poco rit. al fine shows the piece is about to end.

# **Chapter 6**

## Conclusion

The discussion of musical style in Alexander Johnson's *Kahlolo, Letšatši,* and *Vocalise Africa* has illuminated several features that the three pieces similarly possess in melody, harmony, rhythm, texture, form structure as well as registration. In an interview conducted with Johnson on 2019-03-13 (interview questions attached in Appendix D, page 107), he mentioned that all his works from 1990 until now have employed his original synthetic scale as the foundation on which each piece's melodic and harmonic contents are built (Personal interview, 13 March 2019). Thus, every piece composed, one after the other, possesses certain similarities that somewhat binds them together. Although these pieces utilise the same synthetic scale as their foundation, it is virtually impossible to say they sound the same as Johnson's creative abilities come to the fore in the manipulation of the melodic and harmonic format of each piece.

However, the similarities between these pieces are intentional; they allow the composer to achieve distinctive stylistic features that distinguish him from other composers. These features, evident in the three works studied, are namely Johnson's **original synthetic scale**, and his **stylistic signature** called the '**African Dies Irae**.' Both these features have enabled the composer to carve a niche for himself both locally and internationally as a distinctive South African composer. The two elements are seen in all three pieces being cleverly incorporated into the music without losing the overall structure, harmonic content, melodic content or rhythm. As an analogy, every human possesses a signature; either handwritten, or fingerprint, that distinguishes the individual from another. Hence, the melody from Johnson's African 'Dies Irae' serves as his stylistic 'signature' that appears in all three works studied.

Johnson employs numerous post-tonal era techniques in *Kahlolo, Letšatši*, and *Vocalise Africa*. This contributes to the creative and distinctive style he aims to achieve just as it has always been with post-tonal composers since the dawn of the twenty-first century.

For melody, harmony, texture, rhythm, and form structure in the three pieces, Johnson maintains a balance through the utilisation of the various post-tonal elements available to the composer. He employed various elements and thus did not divert from the general practices of twenty-first century music.

**Melody** in *Kahlolo*, *Letšatši*, and *Vocalise Africa* features Johnson's use of original synthetic scale and permutations, minor-pentatonic melodies, non-vocal melodic lines, wider range, melodic doubling, and chromaticism.

**Harmony** in *Kahlolo, Letšatši*, and *Vocalise Africa* features the composer's use of sonorities realised from the synthetic scale, sonorities based on all versions and notes of the synthetic scale, secundal chords, whole-tone chords, tone clusters, open 5ths, tritones, quartal chords.

**Rhythm** in *Kahlolo, Letšatši,* and *Vocalise Africa* features the use of syncopation, displaced accents, and changing meters, cross-rhythms.

**Texture** devices in *Kahlolo, Letšatši,* and *Vocalise Africa* feature the use of polyphony, homophony, and heterophony.

With reference to *Kahlolo* and *Letšatši* being organ music, Johnson explained that he writes idiomatically for each instrument (Personal interview, 13 March 2019). As a trained pianist and prolific composer, he composes equally for other instruments as seen in the two organ pieces in this study. Johnson exploits the instrument's vast sound abilities through the manipulations of the organ registrations which ultimately becomes technically demanding for the performer.

Vocalise Africa being a vocal piece accompanied by piano is not just a conventional vocal piece one would expect; the melodic lines employed by the composer become technically demanding for the performer due to non-vocal melodies, wider ranges, as well as other techniques such as trills and *glissandi*.

Concerning form and structure of the three pieces, Johnson maintains the same format; all three pieces are 'open' in form and structurally divided into four major sections namely ABCD with some subsections involved to develop a previous section.

In conclusion, Johnson's *Kahlolo, Letšatši*, and *Vocalise Africa* have become integral to a substantial and increasing collection of his works. Furthermore, the diverse style characteristics emphasised in this chapter offer enlightenment into his distinctive compositional style.

Perhaps Johnson, in future might stylistically transform yet again as did his works from 1990 to date, or rather remain as is with more compositions in the same style; it shall always be of most worth to study the works of such distinctive composer as Alexander Frederick Johnson.

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### Appendix A

### Letter of information

#### **APPENDICES**

#### Appendix A



Faculty of Humanities Department of Music 14 May 2018

### LETTER OF INFORMATION

Dear Sir,

My name is Oluwakayode Samson Ibiayo. I am a student at the University of Pretoria and I am currently enrolled for a Master's degree in Composition.

Research topic: The study is entitled A style discussion of Kahlolo, Letšatši, and Vocalise Africa by Alexander Frederick Johnson.

Purpose of the study: The purpose of the study are as follows:

- To discuss the compositional techniques employed by Alexander Johnson to establish a unique musical style in Kahlolo, Letšatši, and Vocalise Africa.
- To determine and explore why Johnson's composition style distinguishes him from other composers.
- To explore similarities in Kahlolo, Letšatši, and Vocalise Africa.
- To determine a proper approach towards the analysis of Kahlolo, Letšatši, and Vocalise Africa.
- To explore the background of Kahlolo, Letšatši, and Vocalise Africa, and what prompted the creation of these works in relation to other works by the same composer.

What will be expected of you? Your participation will involve an open-ended interview which will take approximately 45 minutes of your time. The interview will be audio-recorded. The information will be treated with strict anonymity/confidentiality.

**Approval:** The study will only begin after ethical approval by the Research Ethics Committee of the Faculty of Humanities, University of Pretoria, has been obtained.

**Risks and benefits:** Participation in the study is completely voluntary and you are free to withdraw at any time. There are no risks or direct benefits in participating in this project. If you decide to withdraw there will be no negative consequences to you, nor will you need to explain your reason. You are encouraged to ask any questions you might have about the study.

Who will have access to the results of the study? The research will be conducted by myself as principle researcher, and my supervisor. It will be used for academic purposes only. The data will be archived at the department of music for a minimum of 15 years. If any other researchers would like to use this data during this time they may only do so with your consent.

Please feel free to contact me or my supervisor if you require more information about the study.

Kinds regards

(Signature of student)

Researcher name: O.S. Ibiayo email: kayvirtuoso@gmail.com

Tel.: 060 415 2658

# Appendix B

### Letter of informed consent

#### Appendix B



Faculty of Humanities
Department of Music
14 May 2018

LETTER OF INFORMED CONSENT: REPLY SLIP

FULL NAME: Alexander Frederick Johnson

RESEARCH TOPIC: A style discussion of Kahlolo, Letšatši, and Vocalise Africa

by Alexander Frederick Johnson.

I hereby give my consent to participate in the aforementioned research project and acknowledge that the data may be used in current and future research. I confirm that I understand what is required of me in the research project. I am aware that I may withdraw from the study at any time, should I wish to do so.

Signature of participant

Date

29.1.2019:0

Signature of student/principle researcher

# Appendix C

#### Interview schedule

20/06/2019

University of Pretoria Mail - Invitation: Kayode @ Wed Mar 13, 2019 09:30 - 10:00 (SAST) (Oluwakayode Ibiayo)



Oluwakayode Ibiayo <u13046285@tuks.co.za>

### Invitation: Kayode @ Wed Mar 13, 2019 09:30 - 10:00 (SAST) (Oluwakayode Ibiayo)

When

**u02483033@up.ac.za** <u02483033@up.ac.za> Reply-To: u04136373@up.ac.za To: u13046285@tuks.co.za

Tue, Mar 12, 2019 at 8:04 AM

more details »

Kayode

Musaion 3.13 (map)

Joining info meet.google.com/rym-rmme-waj

Or dial: +1 561-614-0398 PIN: 710041602#

Wed Mar 13, 2019 09:30 - 10:00 South Africa Standard Time

Calendar Oluwakayode Ibiayo

Who

• u02483033@up.ac.za - organizer

• u04136373@up.ac.za - creator

· Oluwakayode Ibiayo

Going (u13046285@tuks.co.za)? Yes - Maybe - No more options »

Invitation from Google Calendar

You are receiving this email at the account u13046285@tuks.co.za because you are subscribed for invitations on calendar Oluwakayode Ibiayo.

To stop receiving these emails, please log in to https://www.google.com/calendar/ and change your notification settings for this calendar.

Forwarding this invitation could allow any recipient to modify your RSVP response. Learn More.

This message and attachments are subject to a disclaimer. Please refer to http://upnet.up.ac.za/services/it/documentation/docs/004167.pdf for full details.

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### Appendix D

## Interview questions

#### **INTERVIEW QUESTIONS**

INTERVIEW TYPE: OPEN-ENDED

**INTERVIEWER: OLUWAKAYODE SAMSON IBIAYO** 

**INTERVIEWEE: ALEXANDER JOHNSON** 

- 1. WHAT ARE THE SYNTHETIC SCALES UTILISED IN THE THREE WORKS?
- 2. BASED ON KAHLOLO, LETSATSI, AND VOCALISE AFRICA, WHAT ARE THE FEATURES THAT GIVE YOU A UNIQUE STYLISTIC SIGNATURE IN THOSE WORKS?
- 3. WITH REFERENCE TO KAHLOLO, LETSATSI AND VOCALISE AFRICA, WHAT SIMILARITIES DO THESE WORKS SHARE? FOR EXAMPLE, STYLISTIC TECHNIQUES, TIMELINE, ETC.
- 4. WHAT PROMPTED/INFLUENCED THE CREATION OF THE THREE COMPOSITIONS?
- 5. SEEING THAT TWO OF THE WORKS TO BE STUDIED ARE ORGAN WORKS, WHAT WERE THE MOTIVES AND INFLUENCES BEHIND THE COMPOSITIONS? WERE THEY OUT OF PERSONAL REASONS OR THEY WERE BASED ON EXTERNAL INFLUENCES OR MOTIVES.
- 6. KAHLOLO, AND LETSATSI BEING ORGAN WORKS, HAVE SOME PROVIDED ORGAN REGISTRATIONS. MAY WE DISCUSS THE MANUALS AND HOW THEY CORRESPOND ON THE SHEET MUSIC.
- 7. IS THERE ANYTHING ELSE YOU WOULD LIKE TO COVER BEFORE WE CONCLUDE THE INTERVIEW?

# Akpala for Orchestra, Arcadia, Emotions...tales from a broken heart, Want More? and Harp Prelude

by

# Oluwakayode Samson Ibiayo

A composition portfolio submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree MMus (Composition)

School of the Arts: Music
Faculty of Humanities
University of Pretoria

Supervisor: Prof. A.F. Johnson

**July 2019** 

AKPALA FOR ORCHESTRA

PROGRAMME NOTES

Akpala for Orchestra, composed by Kayode Ibiayo in 2018, is an indigenous piece based

on "Akpala" style from West Africa, specifically Nigeria. The work is a single movement work

for orchestra, and it employs a rather dense set of instruments comprising a blend of African

and Western set up. The entire work (both melody and sonority) is based on a six-note

(hexatonic) scale as used in most Akpala music.

It must be noted that where there are no slurs and phrase marks (especially in the winds), it

is the intention of the composer.

The following section outlines an overview of the work.

Tonal Centre: Bb

Scale: Hexatonic Scale (Derived from Akpala music of West Africa) - Bb-C-Eb-F-G-Ab-(Bb).

**Mode of Composition/Arrangement**: Melodies and chords derived from the scale.

Duration: 10:10.

No of Movements: 1

Form: ABA

Instrumental Outline:

Woodwinds: 1 piccolo, 3 flutes, 1 Oboe, 2 Clarinets, 1 Bass Clarinets, 2 Bassoons, 1,

Contrabassoon.

Brass: 3 Horns, 3 Trumpets, 2 Trombones, 1 Bass Trombone.

Percussion: Player 1: Claves, Player 2: Maracas, Player 3: Cabasa, Player 4: Timpani,

Bass Drum. Player 5: Snare drum, Wind Chimes and Cymbals. Player 6: Glockenspiel and

Vibraphone. Player 7: Bongos and Congas. Player 8: Iya Ilu (mother "big" talking drum).

Player 9: Omele (mini talking drum) 1 and 2.

Percussionist I: snare drum (soft and low pitch tuning), 2 bongos, 1 crash cymbal.

Percussionist II: 2 Congas, Wind Chimes, and Bass Drum.

Percussionist III: Vibraphone and Glockenspiel.

Percussionist IV: Maracas.

Percussionist V: Cabasa.

Percussionist VI: Timpani.

Percussionist VII: 1 Iya Ilu (mother talking drum).

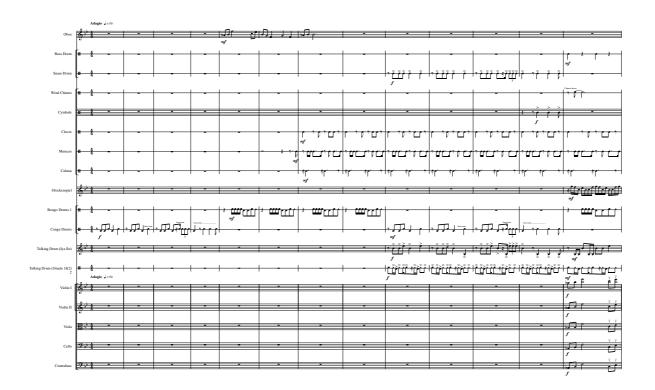
Percussionist VIII: 2 Omele (mini talking drum).

Strings: Violin I, Violin II, Viola, Cello, Contra Bass.

# Akpala for Orchestra

# An Indigenous music from West Africa

Kayode Ibiayo



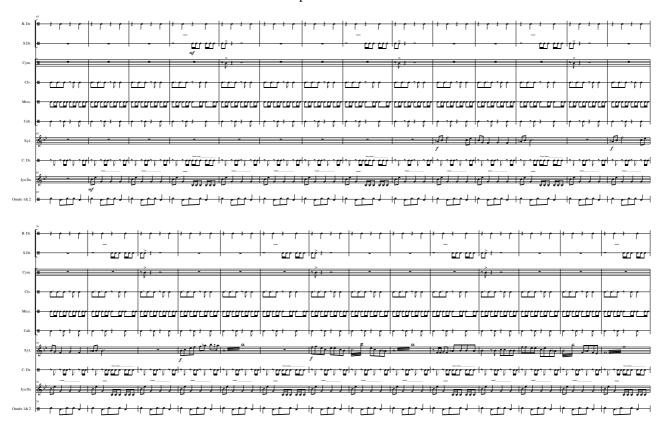
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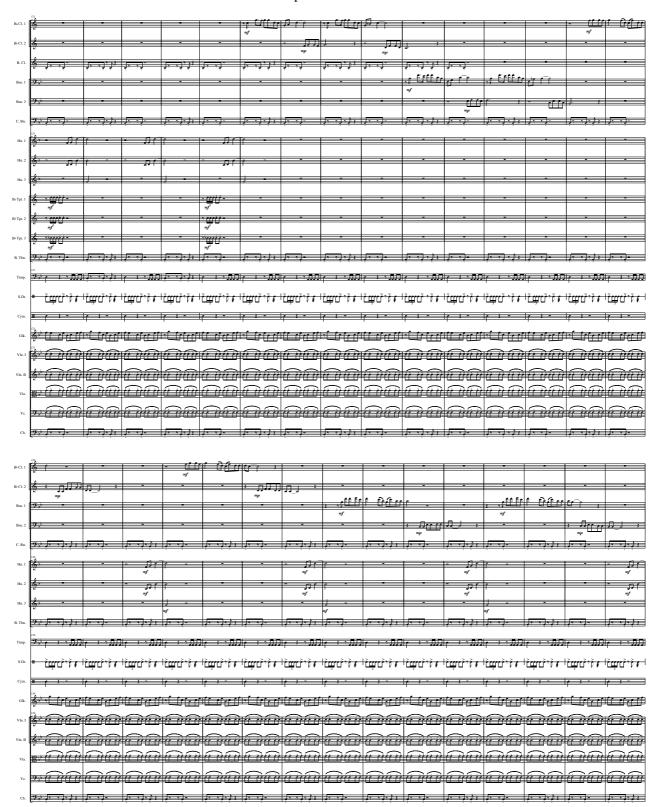
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### **ARCADIA**

# **PROGRAMME NOTES**

**Arcadia** composed by Kayode Ibiayo in 2018 is a three-movement chamber work written for a string quartet. It was inspired by the typical everyday life in a suburb in Pretoria, South Africa called "Arcadia" where the composer lived during the time of composing the work.

The first movement is called "Morning" and in an "Adagio" tempo. The melodies in this movement are played by the four instruments as the composer explores the beautiful sounds of each unique instruments in the string quartet.

The second movement is called "Noon-day" and in an "Allegro" tempo. Again, the composer shares melodic lines among all four players and introduces an irregular time-signature which depicts a rather unsettled time of the day in Arcadia.

The third movement is called "Night" and in an "Adagio" tempo. This movement is unique because the composer merges the melodic lines of both the first and second movements into one, thus depicting a "reflection of the day," playing back into the composer's mind as sleep takes over.

The performance duration of the piece is 8:21.

Morning, Noon-day & Night

Kayode Ibiayo



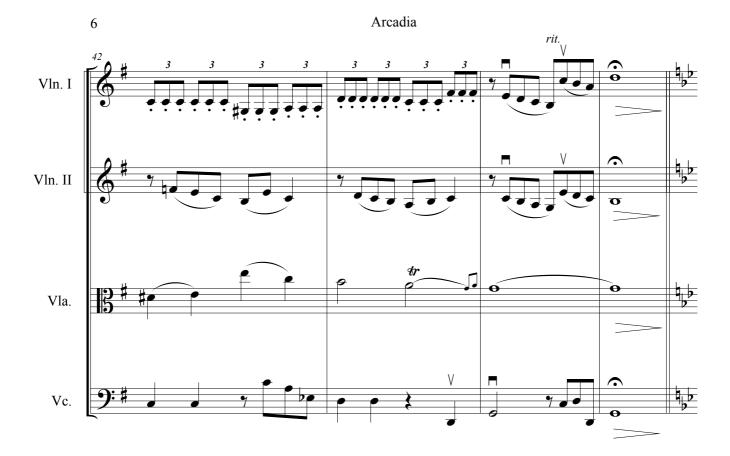












# II. Noon-day

























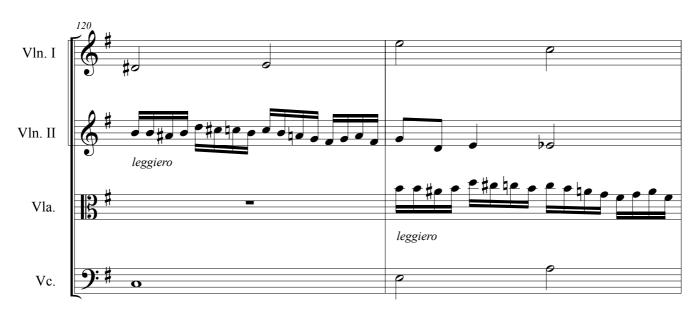


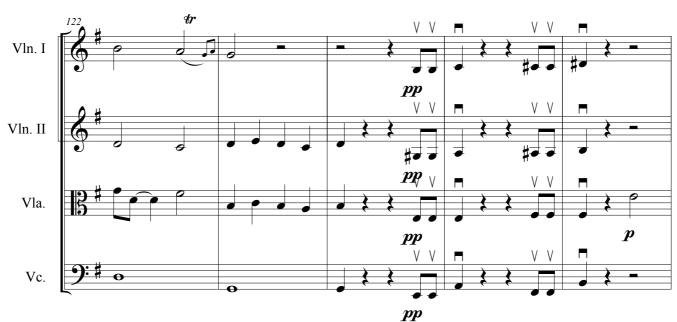
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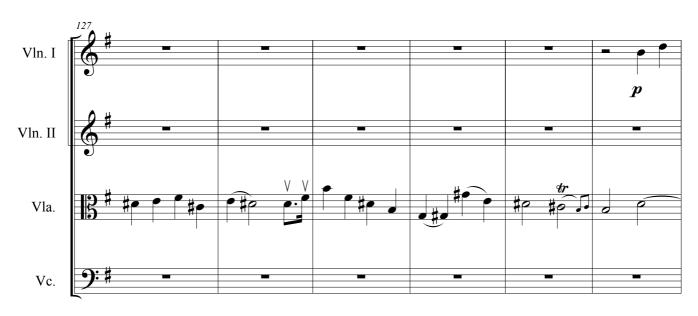
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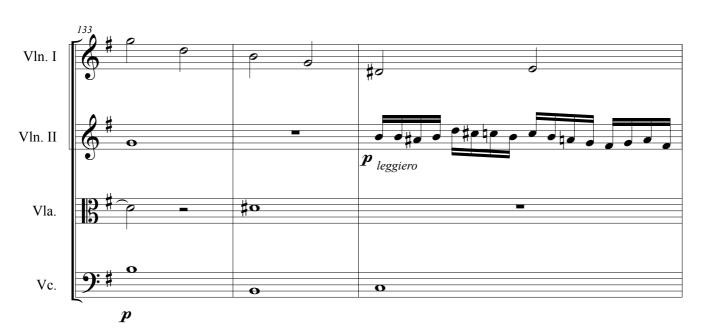
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# PROGRAMME NOTES

**Emotions...tales from a broken heart** composed by Kayode Ibiayo in 2018 is a song cycle comprising female voice and accompaniment in Jazz style. The work is 19 mins and 52 seconds and divided into four sections namely:

- 1. Indecision...how we met.
- 2. Love is Blind...still I let love lead.
- 3. Red Roses and Wine.
- 4. Why oh Why?...still I love him.

The work is a fiction on the love life of a lady. The instrumental set up is a Jazz septet employing Vocal, Piano, Double Bass, Horn Section (Tenor Sax, Trombone and Trumpet) and Drums.

It must be noted that the piece is intended to be performed live hence the improvisation charts and performance arrangements with written out riffs in the music.

#### **EMOTIONS...Tales from a broken heart**

#### 1. Indecision...how we met

#### A:

It was a rainy day
a cloudy day
all wet and cold
I never knew what would be of me

#### **A2**:

Just as I took a sip then he walks in sits in with me and guess what he said to me

#### B:

He said sweet things I've never heard sweet things that swept me off my feet how sweet his voice rang in my ears what do I do, what do I say

#### C:

I'm at a crossroad Indecision he wants my love shall I give him my heart

#### 2. Love is Blind...still I let love lead

#### A:

So after so much thoughts
I give my love
no one knows where love will lead

#### L-O-V-E love

#### B:

Love is blind still I let love lead I don't know but I trust in love

#### **A2**:

So after so much thoughts I give my love

#### 3. Red Roses & Wine...what more?

#### A:

Red roses and wine so much love to celebrate Red roses and wine so much love to celebrate

#### B:

Feeling special all night long with the one whom you adore it feel good when you're in love red roses and wine what more?

#### **A2**:

Red roses and wine so much love to celebrate Red roses and wine so much love to celebrate

#### 4. Why oh Why?...Still I love him

#### A:

I remember that day
He walked into my life
There was no much to say
In - de - ci -sion yes it was

#### B:

Yes I gave my love to him

Though they say that love is blind
I was glad I did cos' we celebrated our love

#### A2:

The red roses and wine perfect scents and perfect taste The feeling all night long so special I can't describe

#### B:

Yes I gave my love to him
Though they say that love is blind
I was glad I did cos' we celebrated our love

#### C:

Why why oh why Why why oh why Why why oh why He is not here (Repeat)

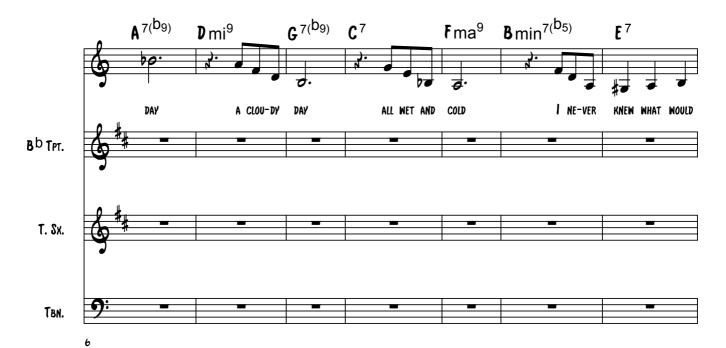
#### Coda:

Even though he's not here I can feel him so near and my heart longs for him Why why oh why...
Still I love him

Words and Music By Kayode Ibiayo

# TALES FROM A BROKEN HEART



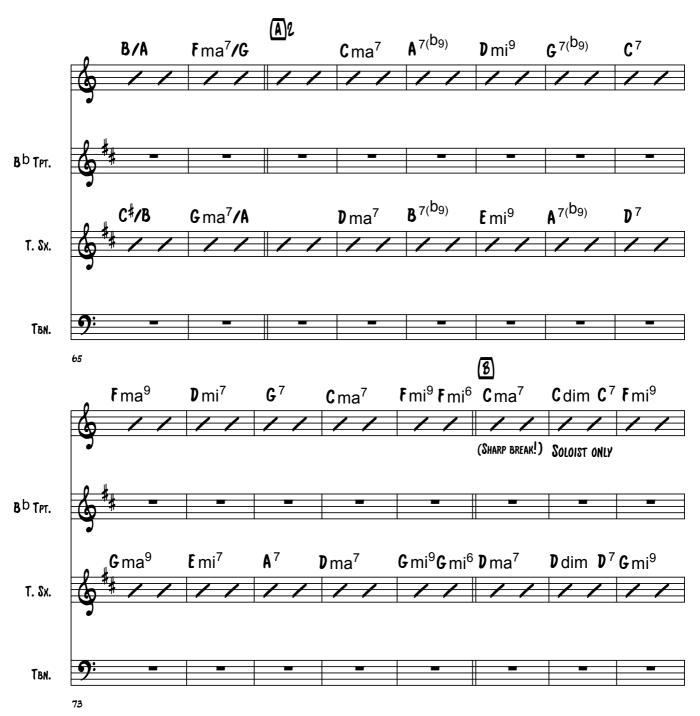




















## 2. LOVE IS BLIND...STILL I LET LOVE LEAD







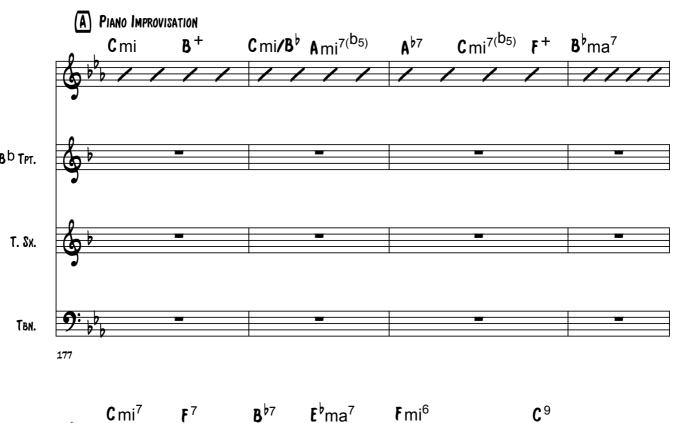


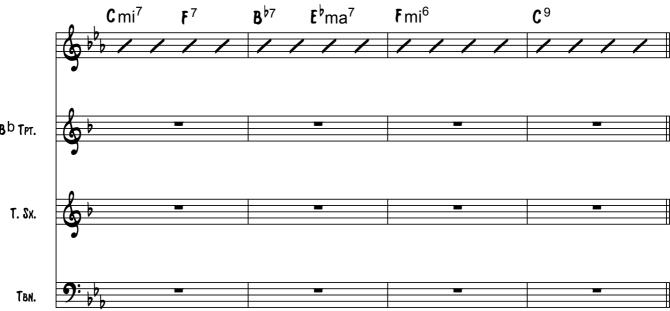
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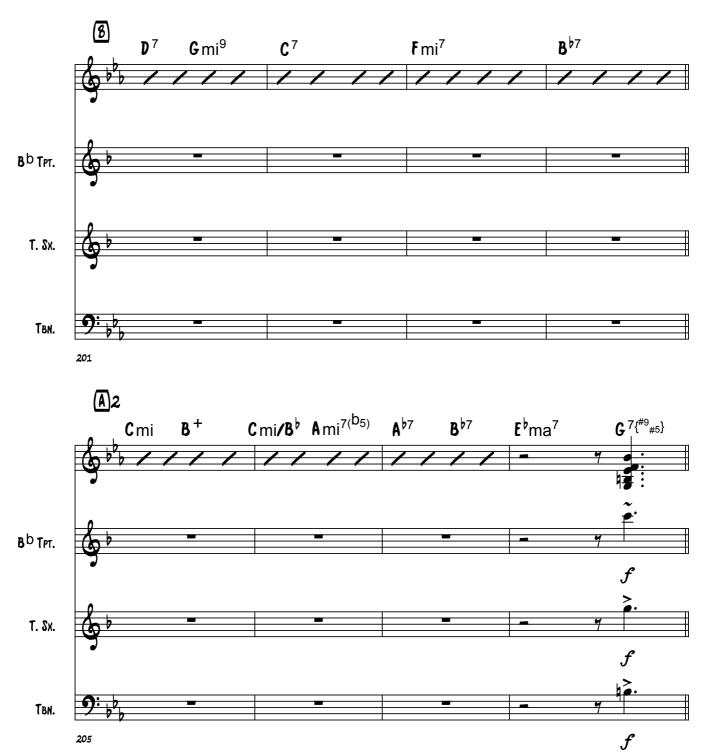
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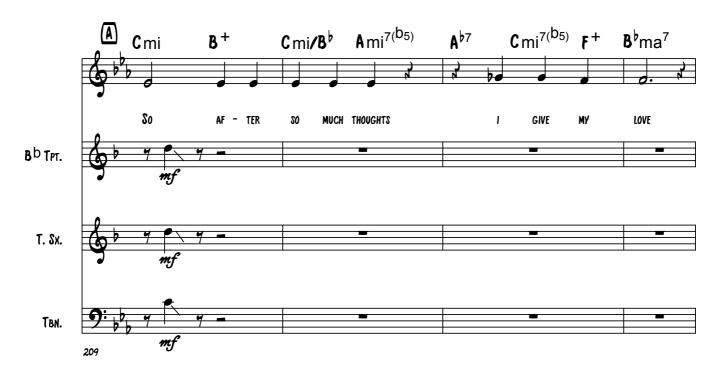


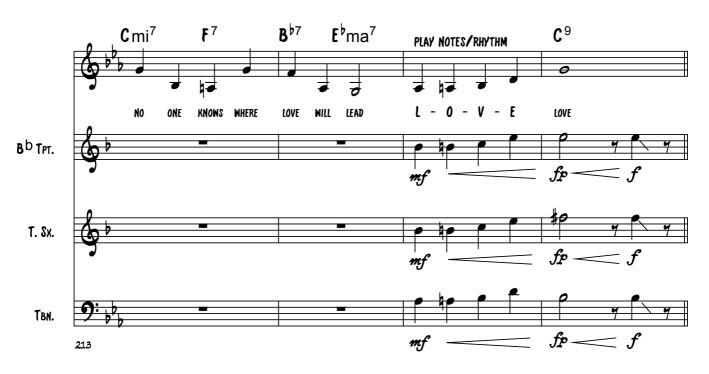
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# 3. RED ROSES AND WINE...WHAT MORE?





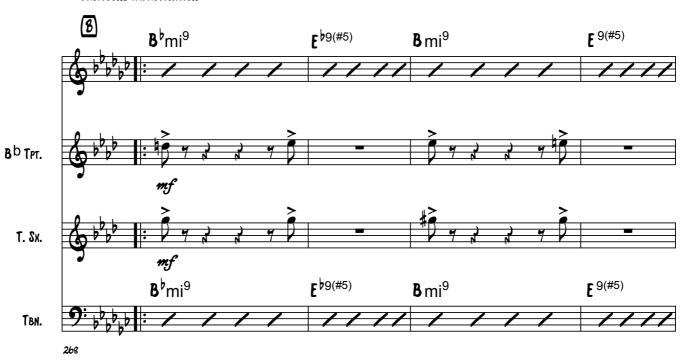


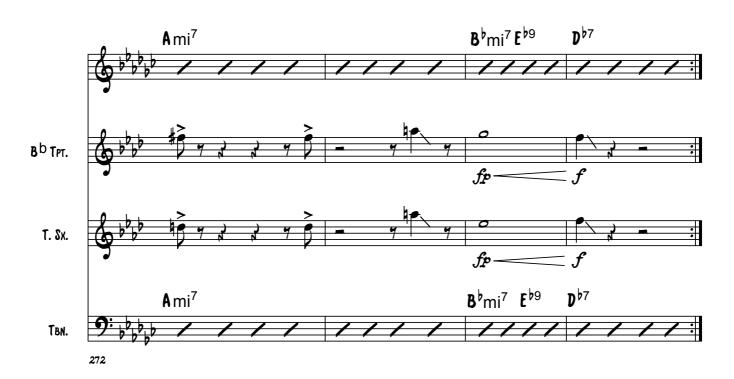






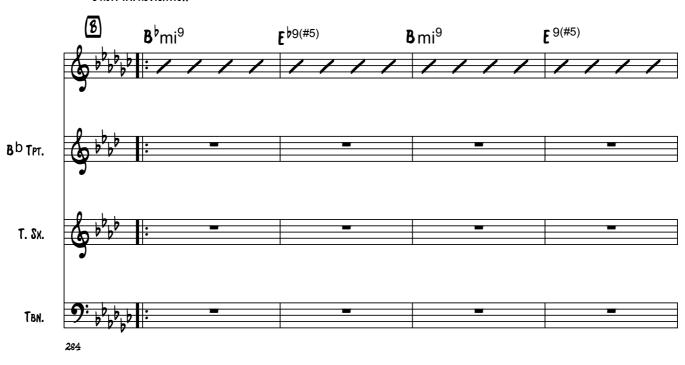
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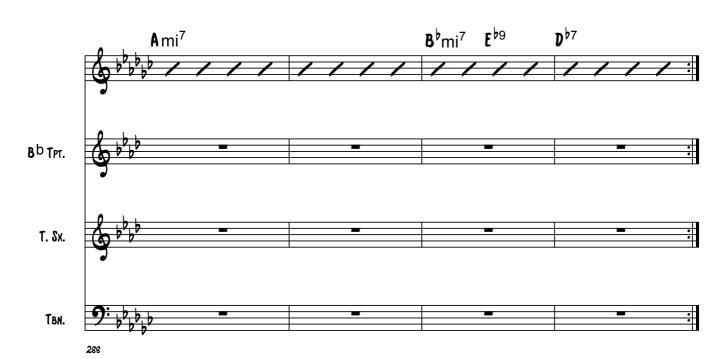




# DOUBLE BASS IMPROVISATION (S) 8 b mi<sup>9</sup> E b<sup>9</sup>(#5) 8 mi<sup>9</sup> E <sup>9</sup>(#5) B TPT. T. SX. Ami<sup>7</sup> B mi<sup>7</sup> E <sup>b9</sup> D b<sup>7</sup>

### Drum improvisation











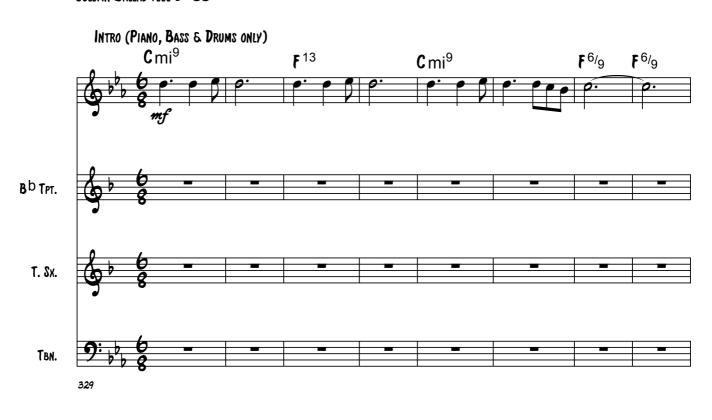


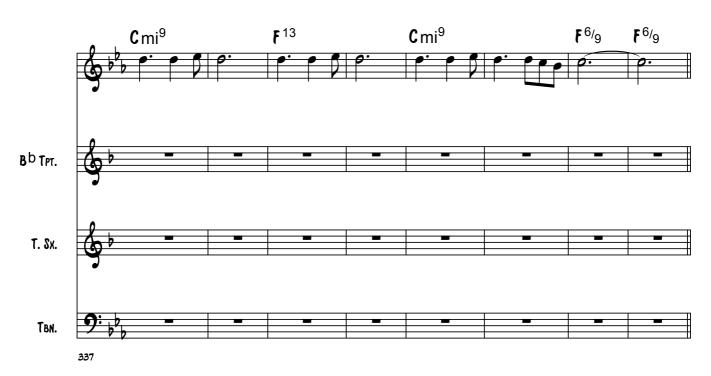




# 4. WHY OH WHY ... STILL I LOVE HIM

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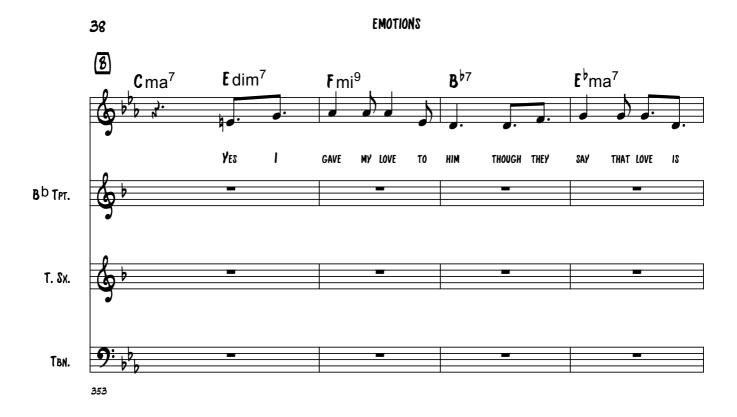


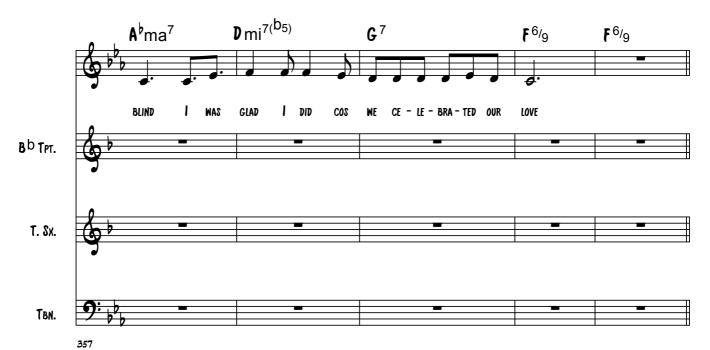




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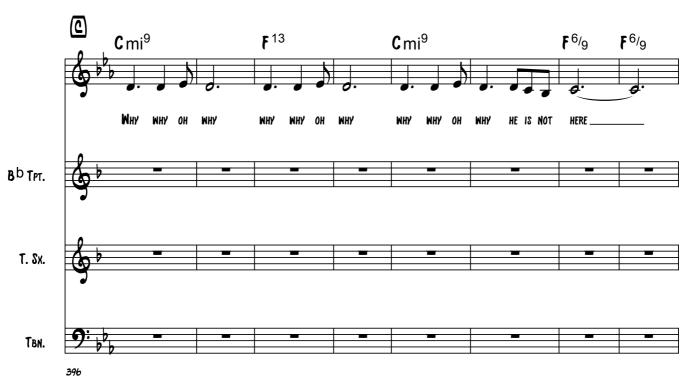


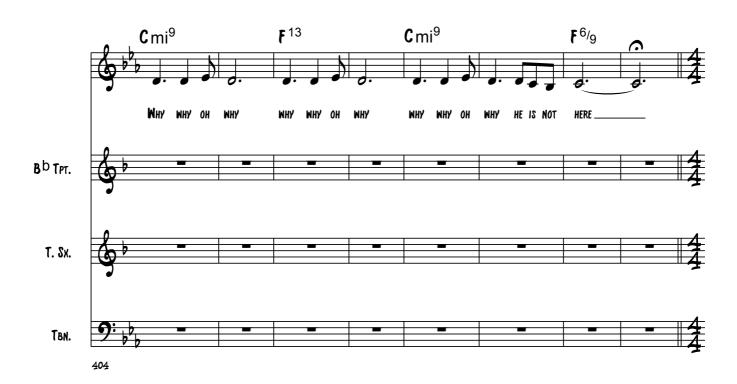






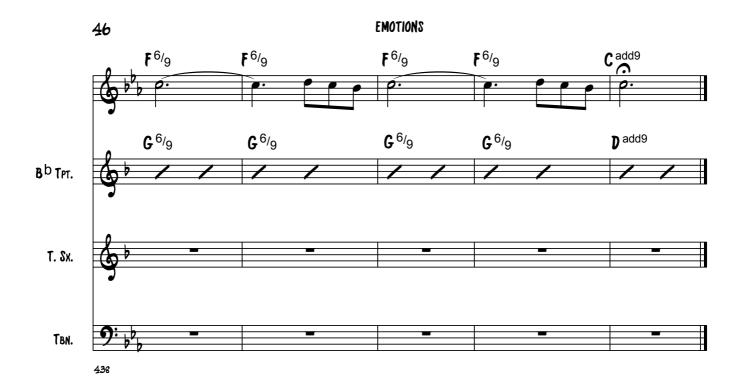












# HARP PRELUDE

# **PROGRAMME NOTES**

**Harp Prelude** was originally composed in 2016 during undergraduate studies of Kayode Ibiayo, and later revised in 2019. The short work is based on a melodic line derived from an original synthetic scale by the composer. The melodic line is heard as an introduction at the beginning of the piece, and also at the end of the piece. The performance duration of the piece is 2:05.

# Harp Prelude No1



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# **WANT MORE?**

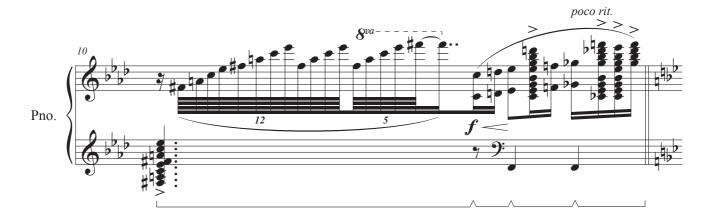
# **PROGRAMME NOTES**

**Want More?** composed by Kayode Ibiayo in 2019 is a Jazz piano piece blended with some classical piano elements. It has a central theme which is heard in different sections of the work amid contrasting sections utilising both post-tonal and jazz elements such as quartal chords, circle of fourths, tritones, transcribed improvisations, as well as walking bass. The performance duration of the piece is 6:35.

Kayode Ibiayo



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## 1st Improvisation

























