

THESIS

A GUIDE TO THE PERFORMANCE OF *LOVE AND LIGHT* BY BRIAN BALMAGES

Submitted by

Ryan James Middleton

School of Music, Theatre, and Dance

In partial fulfillment of the requirements

For the Degree of Master of Music

Colorado State University

Fort Collins, Colorado

Spring 2022

Master's Committee:

Advisor: Rebecca L. Phillips

K. Dawn Grapes

Dawn Mallette

Jayme Taylor

Copyright by Ryan James Middleton 2022

All Rights Reserved

ABSTRACT

A GUIDE TO THE PERFORMANCE OF *LOVE AND LIGHT* BY BRIAN BALMAGES

Brian Balmages is a renowned American composer in the band profession. This thesis is the first formal study of Brian Balmages and his compositions. The author provides a detailed biographical account of the composer's musical background as well as an overview of his works and contributions to music education, both derived from an interview and written communication with Balmages. Although Balmages is well known for his significant contributions to the repertoire of developing ensembles, his 2020 composition *Love and Light* exemplifies his ability to express his compositional voice in a more intricate and expansive setting. The piece was commissioned in January 2019 by Elizabeth Elliott. This document provides a detailed account of the inception and premiere of the piece, based primarily on interviews with Elliott and Balmages. These personal accounts are vital in understanding the impact of the piece both within and beyond the music community. A detailed theoretical analysis of *Love and Light* completes this study, covering a wide array of musical elements, including form, melody, harmony, rhythm, orchestration, texture, dynamics, and use of borrowed musical material. Throughout the theoretical analysis, rehearsal and performance considerations for conductors and ensemble members are highlighted.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

To Brian Balmages: Thank you for sharing your time and insight. The band repertoire is richer because of the contributions you have made and will continue to make.

To Elizabeth Elliott: Thank you for sharing your story. Your willingness to share your experience resulted in a beautiful piece of music and is an invaluable component of this document.

To Dr. Rebecca Phillips: Thank you for your support and guidance on this project and throughout my time at Colorado State University. Your commitment to operating at the highest standard has a tremendous impact on your students.

To my parents, Steve and Eileen: Thank you for your never-ending support on my musical and professional journeys. You have always been my biggest supporters and I am forever grateful.

To the professors who I had the pleasure of studying with and who served on my graduate committee, Dr. Grapes, Dr. Taylor, Dr. Mallette, Professor Kenney, Professor Sommer, and Professor Swindler: Thank you for all of the musical and non-musical lessons. Colorado State University is fortunate to have such outstanding musicians and educators on faculty.

To my fellow graduate conducting students, Myron, Matt, Ben, Maddy, Christina, and Aaron: Thank you for the conversations and comradery. I have learned a great deal from working and studying alongside you all, and I hope our paths cross again in the future.

To Mariah: Thank you for your unwavering support and patience throughout this process. I could not imagine doing this without you.

DEDICATION

In memory of Jack Steven Middleton

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT.....	ii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	iii
DEDICATION.....	iv
LIST OF TABLES.....	vi
LIST OF EXAMPLES.....	vii
INTRODUCTION	1
Literature Review.....	1
Justification for Research.....	3
CHAPTER 1: BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH AND COMPOSITIONAL STYLE	6
Biographical Sketch.....	6
Compositional Style and Output.....	9
Educational Materials	13
CHAPTER 2: BACKGROUND AND SOURCE MATERIAL OF <i>LOVE AND LIGHT</i>	15
Background.....	15
Premiere	19
Outside Source Material	21
CHAPTER 3: THEORETICAL AND REHEARSAL ANALYSIS.....	22
Section 1.....	22
Section 2.....	32
Section 3.....	40
CONCLUSION.....	51
BIBLIOGRAPHY	53
APPENDIX A: PERMISSION FOR USE OF COPYRIGHTED MATERIALS	54
APPENDIX B: LIST OF CONSORTIUM MEMBERS AND SUPPORTERS.....	55
APPENDIX C: <i>SALVATION IS CREATED</i> BY PAVEL TCHESNOKOV	56
APPENDIX D: <i>ALL CREATURES OF OUR GOD AND KING</i>	60
APPENDIX E: FACSIMILE OF ORIGINAL SKETCHES OF <i>LOVE AND LIGHT</i>	61
APPENDIX F: AUTHOR BIOGRAPHY	66

LIST OF TABLES

Table 3.1. Formal design	22
Table 3.2. mm. 44–59 chord progression comparison.....	30
Table 3.3. mm. 60–64 chord progression comparison.....	30

LIST OF EXAMPLES

Example 3.1. mm. 1–2, Bb clarinets, <i>Salvation</i> motive.....	23
Example 3.2. m. 19, horns in F, <i>All Creatures</i> motive	26
Example 3.3. mm. 44–47, oboe, opening of lullaby theme	29
Example 3.4. m. 69, first Bb clarinet, D minor transitional device	31
Example 3.5. mm. 137–138, horns in F, transitional melodic figure	38
Example 3.6. mm. 148–151, bells and vibraphone, lullaby theme in A minor	40
Example 3.7. m. 161, vibraphone, <i>Salvation</i> ostinato	41

INTRODUCTION

The American composer Brian Balmages has written no fewer than 185 works for winds, seventy works for string orchestra, eight works for full orchestra, and eight works for chamber ensembles. These statistics on his compositional output demonstrate his ability to express his compositional voice in a variety of settings.¹ With a high level of name recognition in the band profession, Balmages has made significant contributions to the repertoire of both educational and professional level ensembles. For wind band he has written no fewer than sixteen compositions at difficulty Grades 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 according to the FJH Music Company grading scale. His music is often highly programmatic and easily accessible to both performers and audience members. Balmages's name appears frequently in scholarly lists of wind band music as well as in various state repertoire lists.² The purpose of this thesis project is to provide conductors with an analysis of his 2020 composition, *Love and Light*, so they might more effectively rehearse and perform it, and to provide an in-depth biographical sketch, developed through an interview with the composer.³

Literature Review

There is little scholarly writing on Balmages. Matthew McCutchen, director of bands at the University of South Florida, wrote a short article announcing Balmages as the winner of the

¹ "Brian Balmages," The FJH Music Company, accessed August 26, 2021, <https://www.fjhmusic.com/composer/bbalmages.htm#1>.

² Andrew Donald Pease, "An Annotated Bibliography of Symphonies for Wind Band" (Doctoral diss, Arizona State University, 2015), 74; "State and Festival Lists," J. W. Pepper, accessed September 14, 2021, <https://www.jwpepper.com/sheet-music/services-state-festival.jsp>.

³ Brian Balmages, *Love and Light* (Canzonique Music Company, 2020).

2020 NBA/William D. Revelli Composition Contest for his composition *Love and Light*.⁴

McCutchen provided a short biographical background on Balmages and included the composer's program notes for the piece. McCutchen also provided some brief programming considerations, but confined his analysis and commentary on the piece to the scope of a short journal article. To date, there are no theses or dissertations written specifically on Balmages or any of his compositions.

In 2016, Balmages participated in a five-part video series, hosted by sheet-music retailer J. W. Pepper.⁵ Each video lasts between three and ten minutes, and each highlights a different aspect of his compositional career. The first video, "The Inside Voice," focuses on how Balmages found his compositional voice through his experiences as an undergraduate student at James Madison University and as a graduate student at the University of Miami. Balmages speaks about his various teachers and mentors who gave him the tools necessary to begin expressing himself first as a trumpeter and later as a composer. In particular, Balmages talks at length about Gary Green, director of bands at the University of Miami, saying Green unlocked a number of musical concepts he was able to incorporate into his compositions.

In the second video, "Motivating the Muse," Balmages talks about his compositional process and the ways that he finds inspiration. He also discusses the balance of composing, conducting, and studying the music of other composers. The third installment in the series, "Composing Organically," centers on the idea of composing idiomatically for different types and levels of ensembles. Balmages discusses his opinions on transcribing orchestral music for wind

⁴ Matthew McCutchen, "Brian Balmages' *Love and Light*," *NBA Journal* 61, no. 1 (Winter 2021): 22–24.

⁵ "Interviews," Brian Balmages personal website, accessed August 27, 2021, <https://www.brianbalmages.com/copy-of-videos>.

band and vice-versa. In his mind, it rarely makes sense for him to transcribe his own music. In this video, Balmages also speaks about his love of conducting. He explains how conducting satisfies his continuing desire to perform and how it ties into his compositional process. In the fourth video, “Music Improves the Individual,” Balmages discusses his views on the impact that music has on a person. In particular, he argues for music education in public schools. He offers the notion that, although a positive influence on education, there is too much emphasis placed on music education’s impact on standardized test scores. He believes that the more important benefit is the impact that music has on the individual’s ability to think creatively and collaborate with others. In the fifth and final video, “Musical Guidance,” Balmages offers advice to young performers, composers, and conductors. He stresses the importance of professionalism and the importance of producing quality work—whether a score, a performance video, or a personal website. This video series is entertaining and provides an overview of Balmages’s personal views on a variety of topics; however, it provides little depth or detail regarding Balmages’s career, and thus no substitute for a thorough biographical account in a study such as this.

Justification for Research

Balmages’s composition *Love and Light* was the winner of the National Band Association’s prestigious William D. Revelli award for composition in 2020. This recognition places Balmages on a sizeable list of significant wind band composers, including Michael Colgrass, James Stephenson, Ron Nelson, Phillip Sparke, Donald Grantham, and Frank Ticheli.⁶

⁶ “NBA/William D. Revelli Memorial Composition Contest,” National Band Association, Accessed August 27, 2021, <https://nationalbandassociation.org/composition-contests/>.

The selection committee for this contest includes a diverse array of active and retired conductors and educators.⁷

Scholars and practitioners alike often discuss the importance of the relationship between conductors and composers. In his forward to Mark Camphouse's *Composers on Composing for Band*, Volume 2, Gary D. Green writes, "It is my firm belief that we, as teacher-conductors, act simply as conduits through which the composer's spirit (intent) flows."⁸ Green continues,

The notes written by the composer are mere symbols and do not contain the meaning or the feeling of the music. In reading these pages, I believe that you, like me, will find greater understanding and ability to become a composer's advocate.⁹

Green alludes to the idea that to simply study a score, with no regard for the context in which it was produced, is not enough to gain the necessary understanding for conducting a piece to its full effect. Conductors must strive to build relationships with composers in order to understand their lives and background, as well as what has inspired them to write a specific piece of music. In some instances, for example, when the composer is deceased, the conductor must attempt to gain this understanding via historical artifacts, such as letters written by the composer. In other instances, when dealing with living composers, conductors have the opportunity to reach out to these individuals so as to accurately bring their music to life. However, it is not realistically possible for composers to have individual relationships with every conductor who will perform their work. Some highly prolific or popular composers may find themselves on thousands of concert programs each year. Therefore, a thorough, formal conductor's analysis

⁷ Matthew McCutchen, interview by author, December 2021.

⁸ Mark Camphouse, *Composers on Composing for Band* (Chicago: GIA Publications, 2004), ix.

⁹ Camphouse, *Composers on Composing for Band*, xi.

made available for public use helps to bridge the gap between composers and those who recreate their music.

The structure of this paper is organized into the following chapters. Chapter 1 contains a biographical sketch of Balmages and an overview of his compositional output. Chapter 2 provides background information on *Love and Light*. This includes information on the commission and the premiere performance. Chapters 1 and 2 are primarily based on interviews with Balmages and the commissioner and conductor of the premiere, Elizabeth Elliott. Chapter 3 contains theoretical and rehearsal analyses of the piece. The theoretical analysis considers form, melody, rhythm, harmony, dynamics, orchestration, texture, and use of borrowed musical material. This analysis is based on thorough score study and an interview with the composer. Embedded within this theoretical analysis are rehearsal considerations related to potential challenges players and conductors may encounter.

CHAPTER 1: BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH AND COMPOSITIONAL STYLE

Biographical Sketch

Born on January 24, 1975 in Baltimore, Maryland, Brian Balmages has emerged as one of the leading composers of modern wind band music. Balmages grew up in a very musical household. His mother and father met as music education students at Peabody Conservatory in Baltimore. His father was a trumpet player, his mother an opera singer and piano player, and both taught music after graduating from Peabody. When Balmages first began playing the trumpet in elementary school, his father was his band director. In a recent interview, Balmages reminisced about playing duets with his father at an early age.¹⁰ A common pastime in the Balmages household was to put on a drum machine and play pop tunes and musical numbers at the piano. Balmages indicated that both he and his parents had a natural ability to play and recall melodies by ear. His preferred way of saving his early compositions was to record them on a tape recorder. He could then go back and listen to these recordings and recall what he had played. It was not until later, when he was in high school that he began notating his compositions.

Balmages enrolled at James Madison University (JMU) in the fall of 1993 as a Music Industry major. He was serious about playing the trumpet, but also very interested in audio recording, which led to his decision to enroll in this program. Although the degree was centered around the technology of recording music, Balmages took the opportunity to build a strong musical foundation for himself. While at JMU, he studied trumpet with James Kluesner and composition and arranging with Robert W. Smith. Balmages recalls his time at JMU as very formative, especially for his trumpet playing. He noted that during his undergraduate career, he

¹⁰ Brian Balmages, interview by author, October 2021.

was fully devoted to playing trumpet and had dreams of becoming an orchestral trumpet player. Balmages notes that he went over three years without taking a day off from practicing his instrument.

While at JMU, he also had the opportunity to play second trumpet in the faculty brass quintet. When asked about his experience playing in this ensemble, Balmages immediately brought up the group's trombone player, Jeanie Little. "Every so often [she] would lean over to me and say, 'Man, you sound great!' and I'd say 'Thank you!' and she goes, 'Yeah, but are you ever going to play a phrase?'" Balmages admitted that, at the time, he was unsure of what she meant by that question. It was not until he began his graduate studies that he understood that playing a complete musical phrase requires more care than physically executing the individual notes. Balmages took a full five years to graduate from JMU because of all of the extra courses he chose to take. In total, he finished with 204 credits—well over the 120 required to graduate.

These extra credits came from a number of areas, most notably counterpoint and conducting. Given the amount of freelance conducting jobs Balmages currently accepts, these extra credits were a worthwhile investment. Balmages's guest conducting appearances have included ones at such notable events and places as the MidWest Clinic, Western International Band Clinic, National Association for Music Educators, American School Band Directors Association, College Band Directors National Association, the Kennedy Center, and Myerhoff Symphony Hall.¹¹

Following his graduation from James Madison, Balmages began a master's degree in media writing and production at the University of Miami. While at Miami, Balmages worked

¹¹ "Brian Balmages," The FJH Music Company, accessed November 9, 2021, <https://www.fjhmusic.com/composers/Brian-Balmages.htm>.

closely with Director of Bands Gary Green and credits Green as a major influence on his compositional voice.

Gary Green is the one who kind of reached into my soul, into this door that was closed and just ripped it open. All of a sudden all this stuff that had been waiting there for decades suddenly came spilling out.¹²

Balmages remains thankful that Green was open to programming his music and allowed him to remain involved with the wind ensemble even after he had completed his degree in 2000. In addition to playing in the wind ensemble, Balmages also played with the university's symphony orchestra. Despite playing in these university ensembles and other organizations, like the Henry Mancini Institute in Los Angeles and the Disney College Program in Orlando, Balmages says that during this time he began to migrate away from trumpet playing and toward composing and publishing. Consequently, he turned down the opportunity to play a second year at the Mancini Institute.

Also during his time at the University of Miami Balmages met Frank J. Hackinson, founder, CEO, and president of The FJH Music Company. Hackinson signed Balmages to the company as a graduate student at Miami, two years before Balmages published his first piece of music. Hackinson's belief in Balmages was based on a recommendation from Balmages's mentor and teacher at JMU, Robert W. Smith, and music that Hackinson had heard Balmages write for ensembles at the University. In 2003, after spending three years working for FJH, Balmages and his wife Lisa moved back to the Baltimore area. Balmages was able to continue working remotely for FJH and his relationship with the Fort Lauderdale-based publication company has continued to grow over the years. Currently, he holds the position of Director of Instrumental Publications.

¹² Balmages, interview by author, October 2021.

The move back to Baltimore opened up a number of new opportunities for Balmages, including an important partnership with Towson University. Since his arrival, he has served in a variety of roles at the school. In 2003, the University approached him with an opportunity to teach an undergraduate conducting course, and, in 2006, he assumed the role of Director of Bands while then-Director Dana Rothlisberger was on sabbatical. He continues to teach conducting courses when his schedule allows, and holds the position of Assistant Director of Bands and Orchestras. This role is flexible and allows him to accept commissions, travel to guest conducting jobs, and fulfill his responsibilities at FJH. Balmages currently resides in Baltimore with his wife, Lisa, and their two sons.

Compositional Style and Output

Brian Balmages has composed 185 works for winds, seventy works for string orchestra, eight works for full orchestra, and eight works for chamber ensemble. Well known in the band profession, Balmages has made significant contributions to the repertoire of both educational and professional level wind bands. On FJH Music Company's six-point grading scale, Balmages has written no fewer than sixteen compositions at each of the first five levels, and one piece at the Grade 6 level. His music is often programmatic and easily accessible to both performers and audiences. Balmages has completed commission projects for a wide array of ensembles including the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra, Miami Symphony Orchestra, University of Miami Wind Ensemble, Boston Brass, and Dominion Brass Ensemble.¹³

Due to the programmatic nature of many of his pieces, a large majority of Balmages's compositions use outside source material. This type of writing appears in Balmages's popular

¹³ "Brian Balmages," The FJH Music Company, accessed November 9, 2021, <https://www.fjhmusic.com/composers/Brian-Balmages.htm>.

work for educational ensembles, *Moscow 1941*.¹⁴ The piece, written in 2006, tells the story of the Soviet Union's defense of Moscow against the German army during World War II. Balmages achieves the Russian nationalist character via the use of a popular Russian folksong, known in English as "Meadowlands." Balmages introduces the song in a somber character during the introduction before transitioning into a more traditional march-like style.

Invictus, written in 2000, also demonstrates Balmages's use of outside source material, and holds a higher degree of difficulty, thus evaluated as a Grade 5 composition.¹⁵ The piece is written in memory of Balmages's grandfather. Instead of using a folksong or other outside melodic or harmonic devices, this composition is based on the poem by William Ernest Henry with the same title.¹⁶ *Invictus*, despite its unifying thematic material and sectional organization, is also an example of through-composed music.

Another common element in Balmages's writing is his creative and expansive use of percussion instruments. In Balmages's 2009 composition *Arabian Nights*, he evokes a Middle Eastern character via the use of many rhythms and instruments from this region. The percussion instruments utilized in this piece include timpani, shaker, marimba, low tom, two sets of finger cymbals, two suspended cymbals, frame drum, bongos, two darbukas, wind chimes, crash cymbals, large tam-tam, tambourine, and shekere.¹⁷ In the program notes at the beginning of the score, Balmages takes great care to provide detailed explanation of the darbukas and the shekere, and instruction on how those instruments should be played. He goes so far as to use authentic

¹⁴ Brian Balmages, *Moscow 1941* (Fort Lauderdale: The FJH Music Company, 2006).

¹⁵ Brian Balmages, *Invictus*, The FJH Music Company, 2000.

¹⁶ "Invictus," The FJH Music Company, accessed November 15, 2021, <https://www.fjhmusic.com/band/B1002.htm>.

¹⁷ Brian Balmages, *Arabian Dances* (Fort Lauderdale: The FJH Music Company, 2009).

terminology to describe the sounds that the instruments are capable of producing. This meticulous attention to detail is an example of Balmages's commitment to providing musicians with a high-quality experience when rehearsing and performing his music.

From a commissioning standpoint, Balmages makes a concerted effort to keep “lanes” open for both orchestral and wind band commissions.¹⁸ He also makes a point to compose music at a variety of grade levels each year. Balmages says that composing music for different types of ensembles and different grade levels is necessary for him to feel creatively satisfied. He also looks at composing music at lower grade levels as a way of giving back to the field of music education.¹⁹ In regard to his works written at lower grade levels, Balmages maintains that it is purely coincidental that younger ensembles can perform this music. The integrity of the musical material is not comprised in order to accommodate younger musicians. One example of this type of composition is *Rippling Watercolors*, labeled as Grade 2 and written in 2015.²⁰ In the program notes at the beginning of the score, Balmages writes:

This was not meant to be a lyrical piece for younger ensembles; rather, it was written as a fully expressive lyrical work that *happens* to be playable by younger ensembles. I believe there is a significant difference. No phrases were truncated, no ranges were “limited,” and no rhythms were watered down for the sake of playability. This piece just happens to be attainable by younger groups, yet the music exists exactly as it would even if I had written this for a college group.

This statement indicates that Balmages is comfortable expressing his voice in a variety of ways, and not needing to alter his compositional process in order to perform music at levels attainable by younger musicians. Thus, Balmages can accept commissions from a

¹⁸ Balmages, interview by author, October 2021.

¹⁹ Balmages, interview by author, October 2021.

²⁰ Brian Balmages, *Rippling Watercolors* (Fort Lauderdale: The FJH Music Company, 2015).

wide array of organizations, allowing him to produce a large quantity of music on a yearly basis.

One of Balmages's most recent compositions for wind ensemble—*Stages*—came about as a result of *Love and Light*.²¹ Kelsey Burch, a Fairfax County, Virginia music teacher, reached out to Balmages in the summer of 2020 after hearing *Love and Light* and asked him to write a composition that grapples with the subject of cancer. Burch, at age thirty-four, had just been diagnosed with stage four colon cancer and was looking for a piece that would reflect her cancer journey. Balmages commented on the difficulty of thinking about taking on another highly emotional commission immediately following *Love and Light*, but he soon came to the conclusion that if he was able to help somebody feel comfort and at peace, he would find a way to do it.

You ask yourself, "Wait a minute, here is a girl who has stage four colon cancer, who may not make it another year, how can I say that it's too emotionally taxing for me to do that piece for her?" It puts things in perspective.²²

Stages was premiered by the JMU's Wind Symphony on April 26, 2021. Burch was able to watch the live-stream with her family. She died on May 2, 2021—just six days following the premiere.

In addition to his contributions to the large ensemble repertoire, Balmages has also written three pieces for brass ensemble, two pieces for brass quintet, one piece for trumpet ensemble, and one piece for tuba-euphonium quartet. These chamber works are all listed as

²¹ "Stages," Brian Balmages, accessed February 1, 2022, <https://www.brianbalmages.com/stages>.

²² Balmages, interview by author, October 2021.

Grade 5 or 6, typically associated with collegiate level ensemble.²³ Most of these works also exemplify Balmages's affinity for programmatic themes. However, one exception to this trend is his *Symphony No. 1 for Brass*.²⁴ Written in 1998, this piece was composed very early in Balmages's career. *Symphony No. 1* is scored for four trumpets, four horns, three trombones, bass trombone, tuba, and percussion, which includes bells, crash cymbals, snare drum, and suspended cymbal. Structured in three contrasting movements, this piece presents a wide variety of challenges for the musicians, and is comprised of engaging, original themes.

Educational Materials

In addition to his vast contributions to scholastic repertoire, Balmages has authored or co-authored a number of publications focused on developing student musical growth. In 2010, Balmages co-authored the two-part beginning band method series, *Measures of Success: A Comprehensive Musicianship Band Method*.²⁵ Balmages also co-authored a string orchestra adaptation of the same series—*Measures of Success for String Orchestra: A Comprehensive Musicianship String Method*.²⁶ The *Measures of Success* series seeks to foster musical

²³ “Brian Balmages,” The FJH Music Company, accessed November 15, 2021, <https://www.fjhmusic.com/composers/Brian-Balmages.htm>.

²⁴ Brian Balmages, *Symphony No. 1 for Brass*, The FJH Music Company, 1998.

²⁵ Deborah A. Sheldon, Brian Balmages, Timothy Loest, Robert Sheldon, and David Collier, *Measures of Success: A Comprehensive Musicianship Band Method* (Fort Lauderdale, FL: The FJH Music Company, 2010).

²⁶ Gail V. Barnes, Carrie Lane Gruselle, Michael Trowbridge, and Brian Balmages, *Measures of Success for String Orchestra: A Comprehensive Musicianship String Method* (Fort Lauderdale, FL: The FJH Music Company, 2015).

development through the use of exemplary musical content. Compositions and arrangements by both Balmages and Robert Sheldon are featured extensively throughout the band method books.

In 2011, Balmages partnered with Gregg Gausline to write the daily concert band warm-up routine, *Warm-up Fundamentals for Concert Band*.²⁷ This book covers a number of important fundamental concepts, including breathing, long tones, interval slurs, articulation, flexibility, chord studies, chorales, balance, and phrasing.²⁸ The product comes with a one-page sheet of paper for each student, allowing for easy use during daily school rehearsals or honor-band settings.

In 2018, Balmages partnered with Robert Herrings, a middle school educator in Cedar Park, Texas, to write *Tuned In: A Comprehensive Approach to Band Intonation*.²⁹ The book features studies in every major and minor key and explores chromatic intervals, interval tuning, chorales, and drone exercises. In addition to the printed material, this product also comes with downloadable drone tracks, which students and teachers can use in a variety of ways.

²⁷ Gregg Gausline and Brian Balmages, *Warm-up Fundamentals for Concert Band* (Fort Lauderdale, FL: The FJH Music Company, 2011).

²⁸ “Warm-up Fundamentals for Concert Band,” The FJH Music Company, accessed February 2, 2021, <http://www.fjhmusic.com/band/B1494.htm>.

²⁹ Brian Balmages and Robert Herrings, *Tuned In: A Comprehensive Approach to Band Intonation* (Fort Lauderdale, FL: The FJH Music Company, 2018).

CHAPTER 2: BACKGROUND AND SOURCE MATERIAL OF *LOVE AND LIGHT*

Background

Love and Light was commissioned by 1st Lieutenant Elizabeth Elliott, of the United States Army. Originally from Huntsville, Alabama, Elliott was raised in Orlando, Florida, where she began her musical journey playing flute and piano. After completing a Bachelor of Music Education degree from the University of Florida, Elliott earned a Master of Music degree in Instrumental Conducting from the University of Miami, in 2013. While at the University of Miami, Elliott studied conducting with long-time Director of Bands Gary Green. Following the completion of her master's degree, she spent three years teaching middle school and high school bands in Florida. In 2016, Elliott won a conducting audition with the United States Army Band "Pershing's Own," becoming the fifth female commissioned band officer in Army history. During her tenure with the Army, Elliott served as the Executive Officer and Conductor of the United States Training and Doctrine Command Band at Fort Eustis, Virginia and as the Executive Officer of the 82nd Airborne Division Band and Officer in charge of the All-American Chorus at Fort Bragg, North Carolina. In 2021, Elliott retired from the Army to spend more time with her husband Scott and their son Oliver. Elliott continues to accept guest conducting and speaking engagements around the country.

An excerpt from Elliott's letter, inserted at the beginning of the *Love and Light* score, tells the story of the tragic loss of their daughter, Madison Hope Elliott:

On November 8th, 2018, our daughter Madison Hope Elliott was born. Her heart had stopped beating the day before and I labored for 12 hours to get to hold her for the first and last time that day. It was the worst and best day of our lives. If you've never kissed your child goodbye forever in a hospital room or held your child's lifeless body in your arms, or felt the deep dark hole that losing a child leaves in your heart, then I hope you never do.

While I was in labor, knowing that it was just the beginning of our pain, I knew I wanted to commission a piece for her. I didn't want Madison's name to be forgotten. She made me a mom for the first time. After we left the hospital and word spread about what happened, many people reached out to us. Oftentimes people wanted to help us but didn't know what to say. Stillbirth isn't openly discussed. It happens to one percent of babies born in the United States. That translates to 24,000 stillborn babies a year. The number is much higher when you include the one in four pregnancies that are lost due to miscarriage, and the many infants that are lost due to SIDS and other causes. For tragedies like this, there really are no words.³⁰

Elliott reached out to Balmages on January 4, 2019—less than two months after Madison had died.³¹ Her initial message was as follows:

Hey Brian, I wanted to put out a feeler to you about a commissioning project. I want to commission a five-minute piece for our daughter Madison who passed away. I've always loved your music and the messages you choose to carry, as well as your voice in the music education world. I know you are incredibly busy so I would understand if you don't have the time right now—even if it's something we could get on your calendar for later. We are in no rush. What is your price for a five-minute-long lyrical piece? I would like to feature the horns and honor our baby as well as other parents who have lost a baby. My hope is to get the Army Band Pershing's Own or the Field Band to record it. Maybe I'll even get to conduct it. I think the most special thing we could do for her and her memory is to put something beautiful out into the world. I appreciate you getting back to me even if the answer is no. Thanks.³²

In the interview, looking back at the message, Elliott was amused at the notion of the five-minute time constraint. Her reason for initially requesting this was for Army band programming considerations. However, as Elliott commented later, "It just ended up being the length it had to

³⁰ Brian Balmages, *Love and Light* (Canzonique Music Company, 2020), program notes by Elizabeth Elliott.

³¹ Elizabeth Elliott, interview by author, December 2021.

³² Elizabeth Elliott, personal correspondence with Brian Balmages, January 4, 2019.

be in order to tell the story that it needed to tell. It takes up as much space as it needed to take.

It's just an amazing piece of art."³³ Balmages responded later that day:

Hi Elizabeth. To be honest, I don't even know what to say. I've been following everything going on with Madison and simply do not have the right words to indicate how sorry I am for what you have gone through. I have prayed for you and will continue praying for you, though I am sure Madison has the whole prayer thing locked up and is taking care of it. In answer to your question, I would be more than happy to discuss this further with you. Would May or so of 2020 be acceptable? I may be able to do something sooner, but hesitate to commit because of current commitments . . . I could see a few scenarios that we could work through to get other folks involved and let you do the premiere, but significantly remove the financial burden from you. I just can't in good conscience ask that directly from you, but I will certainly do the piece and we can figure out the logistics of it all. So I guess the answer is yes, absolutely, and as soon as my schedule allows me to do so, and in a way that doesn't cost you much (or at all). Let me know your thoughts.

Elliott and Balmages continued to exchange messages throughout the course of the afternoon of January 4, 2019. After making several logistical decisions, Balmages drafted the following message to post on his Facebook page:

Reaching out to high school and college band director friends:

On November 8, 2018, Elizabeth Elliott delivered her baby, Madison Hope, and got to hold her for the first, and last time. A day prior, she and her husband found out that Maddie's heart had stopped and she was unable to fight any longer (she had been fighting a long time). Elizabeth describes it as the happiest and saddest day of her life.

Elizabeth has decided she wants to spearhead a consortium for a piece that touches on the experience of losing a baby. In part to help with her own healing process, but also to help shine a light on the experience and let people know they are not alone. Her dream is to have a piece that helps people heal - even strangers she does not know.

The piece is probably going to be in the grade 4–5 range (playable by many high school and college bands). I am planning to complete it by May of 2020 (earlier if possible). If you are interested in joining, please feel free to message me or

³³ Elliott, interview by author, December 2021.

Elizabeth directly. This is going to be a very special piece for a special little angel.³⁴

After Elliott shared Balmages's post on the "Band Directors" Facebook page, the post drew hundreds of reactions, comments, and personal, private messages to her and Balmages.³⁵ It took her weeks to read and respond to each of the messages. The next step of the consortium process was to establish a non-profit organization to collect the incoming money. Elliott and Balmages both reached out to a number of friends with experience running such organizations. Ultimately, Rachel Maxwell, of Traugher Junior High School in Oswego, Illinois, was chosen to host the non-profit. The full list of consortium members, which ranges from colleges and universities to high schools and individual donors, is included at the beginning of the score (see Appendix B). Elliott hopes this project will serve as an example of how commissions and consortiums can be done by any person, at any level, and about a variety of topics.

Throughout the compositional process, Elliott and Balmages spoke frequently over the phone—sometimes on a daily basis. Balmages commented that it was vital for him to understand what she was experiencing in order for the piece to truly reflect her journey through the grieving process. This level of communication is not typical of the majority of the commissions that Balmages accepts. He recalls, "This one was so personal and everything had to be very intentional about it. I had to keep communicating with her, and the more I communicated with her the more I found myself being inspired."³⁶ Meanwhile, Balmages's own journey of

³⁴ Brian Balmages, Facebook post, January 4, 2019, 4:11PM, EST.

³⁵ Elliott, interview by author, December 2021.

³⁶ Balmages, interview by author, October 2021.

converting to Catholicism was taking place simultaneously. He recalls that the last section of the piece became just as personal for him as it was for Elliott.³⁷

Premiere

The premiere of *Love and Light*, by the United States Army Band “Pershing’s Own,” took place on February 22, 2020 at Schlesinger Hall in Alexandria, Virginia. Lt. Elliott—pregnant with her “rainbow baby”—Oliver James Elliott—conducted the premiere.³⁸ The original target date for the premiere was set for May, 2020, but when Elliott and her husband Scott found out they were expecting, it became clear that the premiere needed to occur sooner. Elliott called Balmages and asked if there was any way for him complete the piece ahead of the due date. Balmages was able to oblige, and the premiere served as the finale of the February 22, 2020 program.³⁹ Leading up to the first performance, Elliott and the piece received a great deal of press. An article by Victoria Chamberlain, a reporter from NPR affiliate WAMU 88.5, created awareness of the project in the stillbirth and miscarriage community.⁴⁰ Elliott recalls:

³⁷ Balmages, interview by author, October 2021.

³⁸ “Rainbow baby” is a term used to refer to a healthy baby, born after a baby is lost due to miscarriage, stillbirth, or other form of infant loss.

³⁹ Also included on the program were *Rocky Point Holiday* by Ron Nelson, *Symphony in B-flat* by Paul Hindemith, *Florentiner March* by Julius Fucik, *Brooklyn Bridge* by Michael Daugherty, *Forged in Fire* by Mark Watters, *Rusty Air in Carolina* by Mason Bates, and *You Will Be Found* (from “Dear Evan Hansen”) by Benj Pasek and Justin Paul, arr. by Master Sgt. James Kazik. The United States Army Band “Pershing’s Own,” “The U.S. Army Concert Band at Schlesinger Hall,” 22 February 2020, video, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GP0peo08ink>.

⁴⁰ Victoria Chamberlain, “‘What Am I Going To Do To Keep Her With Me?’: Army Officer Commissions Music To Honor Stillborn Daughter,” February 19, 2020, <https://dcist.com/story/20/02/19/what-am-i-going-to-do-to-keep-her-with-me-army-officer-commissions-music-to-honor-stillborn-daughter/>.

It [Chamberlain's interview] was getting shared on a lot of miscarriage pages, so the audience became a mishmash of what you would not normally have at a concert band concert. You have the normal audience of standard concert-goers, and then you have these people who are just here to hear *Love and Light*. They're about to sit through the Hindemith Symphony, but they're here to hear *Love and Light*. It was like being in a big hall of a support group of hundreds of people who had gone through miscarriage and stillbirth. There are no words to describe what that felt like.⁴¹

Regarding the moments leading up to the performance, Elliott commented:

Brian [Balmages] gave this ten-minute introduction to the piece about the three questions. I was standing in the wings, listening, and I'm choking up. Col. [Andrew] Esch was standing right next to me, and he put his hand on my shoulder and asked, "Are you ok? Are you going to be ok?" I'm just sitting here like, "I've got to get through this," and he gave me great advice. He said, "just take care of the music. Just take care of the music and the musicians," and that really helped.⁴²

The performance of the piece was very well received. A standing ovation broke out immediately following the release of the final chord as Elliott wept. Once the audience left the hall, a receiving line formed, that stretched from the front of the stage to the back of the hall.

Elliott noted:

These families were waiting on me. They wanted to say something. Whether it was, "I was supposed to have a brother" or "these are my two children and we had another son who didn't make it." Everybody had a personal story so I wanted to give each person their time. It probably took an hour or more to get through the whole receiving line, and those people were willing to stand there and just wait. But that's how you know this piece is so impactful. I've never seen anything like it and I don't think I will again. Great band pieces get written all the time, but not one in which you see it transcend the band world. It reached out to the community.⁴³

Elliott remarked how grateful she remains for the February 2020 premiere, given the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic the following month.

⁴¹ Elliott, interview by the author, December 2021.

⁴² Elliott, interview by the author, December 2021.

⁴³ Elliott, interview by the author, December 2021.

Outside Source Material

Balmages utilizes three outside sources for musical material throughout the piece. The first and most prominent is Pavel Tchesnokov's *Salvation is Created* (see Appendix C). The main three-note motive of the piece, introduced in the first measure, is derived from this melody. In the third section of the piece, the motive expands and eventually gives way to full melodic phrases from Tchesnokov's famous choral work. The second source is an English hymn, *All Creatures of Our God and King* (see Appendix D). Balmages utilizes a fragment from the Alleluia section of the hymn as a recurring motive throughout the piece. The third source is Ben Folds's song, "The Luckiest." Balmages uses Folds's chord progression—transposed to the key of C from the original key of D—as the accompaniment to an originally composed lullaby theme. Folds's song is especially meaningful to Elliott as she played it on piano for her daughter Madison throughout the course of the pregnancy.

CHAPTER 3: THEORETICAL AND REHEARSAL ANALYSIS

Love and Light is comprised of three large sections (see Table 3.1). Each section seeks to musically answer a different, as he calls it, “impossible question,” posed by Balmages: “What does unconditional love sound like?”; “What does it sound like when that love is shattered?”; and “What does it sound like when a child first sees the face of God?” These questions drive the musical material in each section and should be kept in the performer’s mind as the piece progresses.

Table 3.1.
Love and Light by Brian Balmages, ©2020, Canzonique Music Co.
Formal design.

Section	1	Transition	2	Transition	3
Measures	1–68	69–73	74–142	143–155	156–255

Section 1

The piece opens with a three-note motive that becomes the basis of the entire piece (see Example 3.1). This motive is introduced and developed from m. 1 through m. 43. The intervallic relationship of the three notes—an ascending perfect fifth, followed by a descending major second—is borrowed from m. 17 of Pavel Tchesnokov’s *Salvation is Created*.⁴⁴ (See Appendix C). Balmages explores Tchesnekov’s famous choral work further in Section 3 of *Love and Light*.

⁴⁴ From this point forward, the author is referring to the three-note motive of an ascending perfect fifth followed by a descending major second as the *Salvation* motive.

During the first eleven measures, he presents and alters the motive, underscoring its importance to the listener.

The *Salvation* motive is introduced in m. 1 by the clarinets, starting on concert Bb (see Example 3.1).⁴⁵ As in subsequent iterations of the *Salvation* motive, not all players play all three notes. In this example, the third clarinets play only the first note, the first clarinets play the first two notes, and the second clarinets play all three notes. Players should be aware of the complete *Salvation* motive and understand their part in its presentation. Due to the nature of the intervals in the motive, the three notes create a suspended chord when sustained together. In m. 2, the three clarinet parts all sustain one note from the *Salvation* motive, creating a Bb suspended chord. Due to the dynamic level and range of the clarinets, the texture of the opening is transparent, but warm. The tempo and character designation at the beginning—*Largo affettuoso*—indicates a loving, affectionate mood.

The image shows musical notation for three Bb clarinets (Clarinet 1, 2, and 3) in 4/4 time. The notation is for measures 1 and 2. Clarinet 1 plays a half note in measure 1 and a whole note in measure 2. Clarinet 2 plays a half note in measure 1, a quarter note in measure 2, and a whole note in measure 3. Clarinet 3 plays a half note in measure 1 and a whole note in measure 2. The notes are Bb, D, and F. The intervals between the notes are labeled P5 (Perfect Fifth) and M2 (Major Second). The notes are sustained across measures 1 and 2, creating a suspended chord.

Example 3.1.
Love and Light by Brian Balmages, ©2020, Canzonique Music Co.
mm. 1–2, Bb clarinets, *Salvation* motive.

⁴⁵ From this point forward, all pitches referred to in text are in concert pitch. Pitches in notated examples are transposed.

Measure 3 begins the same way as m. 1, with the clarinets restating the *Salvation* motive in the key of Bb. The three clarinet parts all retain their respective roles when presenting the three notes. However, on beat 3 of m. 3, the flutes and solo oboe enter on an elongated version of the *Salvation* motive, beginning on G. In m. 4, the piano plays an ascending gesture outlining the Bb suspended chord created by the clarinets. At the top of the gesture is a single note for triangle. The percussionist responsible for playing the triangle must be aware of what the pianist is playing in order for the two parts to align. In m. 5, the flute and oboe settle to create a G suspended chord over the Bb suspended chord of the clarinets and piano.

After the chord in m. 5 is released, the oboes take over sole responsibility of the *Salvation* motive in m. 6. This iteration in m. 6 is a diminution of the original. The three notes are presented as two eighth notes followed by a dotted half note. On beat 3 of m. 6, the clarinets enter with harmonic accompaniment. The clarinets play the first chord—an F major triad in first inversion—and then crescendo to a G major triad in first inversion on beat 1 of m. 7, creating a 4–3 suspension with the sustained oboe note. Measure 7 also marks the first of many meter changes that occur throughout the piece. Balmages comments that the meter changes are not part of a systemic plan, but rather the way that he heard the phrases stretching and condensing.⁴⁶

On beat 4 of m. 7, the first oboe plays what at first seems to be a restatement of the *Salvation* motive. However, after the ascending perfect fifth, Balmages alters the motive by ending with an ascending major second. This intervallic surprise does not last long, as the complete *Salvation* motive returns in the clarinets on beat 2 of m. 8, beginning on C. Measure 8 also marks the first entrance of the saxophone section. The saxophones enter on beat 3 with harmonic accompaniment underneath the sustained clarinets. As indicated by the dynamic

⁴⁶ Balmages, interview by author, October 2021.

marking, the saxophones must enter very softly so as not to disturb the color and texture of the opening.

On beat 3 of m. 9, the trombones enter with what appears to be another statement of the *Salvation* motive in the key of F. However, after playing the ascending perfect fifth, the baritone saxophone moves to an A, which creates a descending minor third. This interval provides a moment of unease in what has otherwise been a tranquil opening. The texture and color continue to shift in mm. 10 and 11 with the entrance of first horn and euphonium, respectively.

In m. 12 the harmonic implications of the three notes of the motive start to change. The trombone section enters along with other low brass voices. Although the dynamic is still soft, this demonstrates a full shift from the transparent upper-woodwind color of the opening measures to low brass timbres. Measure 12 is also the next iteration of the *Salvation* motive, which is played by the euphonium, starting on G. The tonal center still sounds very open and suspended, but the chordal accompaniments become more colorful.

Starting in m. 13, the music becomes more rhythmically focused with the introduction of eighth-note triplets. The triplets are initially played by the first clarinets, but are soon passed to the alto saxophones, vibraphone, and second and third clarinets in m. 14. The triplets played by the vibraphone and clarinets on beat 3 of m. 14 create rhythmic dissonance with the eighth notes played by the flutes, second oboe, and lower horns. Similarly, the eighth-note triplets played by the alto saxophones and vibraphone on beat 1 of m. 15 are set against eighth notes played by the upper woodwinds.

In addition to increased rhythmic agitation, m. 14 also marks a change in harmonic color. The melodic material played by the flutes and second oboe occurs over an E-major triad with an added ninth in the trombones. This E-major tonality shifts to D minor in m. 16, creating a dark,

ominous character. The melody played by the piccolo in mm. 16 and 17 will later be transformed into the lullaby theme at m. 44, albeit in a major key. This brief shift in character foreshadows the pain to come in Section 2 of the piece. It also reminds the listener that unconditional love does not come without challenge.

At m. 18, the tonal center settles briefly on Bb minor before the trumpets enter on beat 3 with a restatement of the three-note motive in the key of C. Although the Bb-minor chord is still being sustained in the upper woodwinds, the return of the *Salvation* motive creates a sense of familiarity and optimism. In addition, the timbre of the cup mute adds a new, fresh color to the texture. This warm feeling is reinforced by the muted horns in m. 19 as they present the first reference to the English hymn *All Creatures of our God and King* (see Example 3.2) The motive introduced here will return later in the piece. Measure 18 also marks the first use of pitched percussion as the chimes play an ascending perfect fourth on beats 3 and 4.



Example 3.2.

Love and Light by Brian Balmages, ©2020, Canzonique Music Co.
m. 19, horns in F, *All Creatures* motive.

Measure 20 offers a brief moment of silence on beats 1 and 2 before the saxophones enter on beat 3 with the *Salvation* motive in the key of C. Measures 21 and 22 feature a brief interlude by the trombones and euphonium in the key of Eb before a solo trumpet enters on beat 3 of m. 22 with a statement of the *Salvation* motive in the key of C. As opposed to m. 18, the trumpet at m. 22 is without mute. The open timbre combined with the clear two-quarter-note rhythm make this

iteration of the *Salvation* motive particularly clear and recognizable to the audience. In m. 24, after a brief reference to the original tonality of Bb, the euphoniums and string bass propel the piece forward with a descending scalar line, arriving on the downbeat of m. 25 in the new key of A. The suspended cymbal supports this motion, adding another new color not yet heard at this point in the piece.

Measure 25 features two consecutive iterations of the *Salvation* motive—one in the key of D, by the oboes on beats 1 and 2, and one in the key of A, by the remaining upper woodwinds on beats 3 and 4. The latter statement is elongated and lingers on the upper note of the motive before finally resolving on the second half of beat 2 in m. 26. This feeling of stretching continues to develop in m. 27 as the horns play the longest statement of the *Salvation* motive yet—one half-note followed by two half notes tied together. In addition to elongating the notated rhythm, Balmages marks “poco rit.” in m. 27.

Measure 28 features the return to “a tempo” as the low brass arrive to deepen the texture and support the horn motive already in motion. After the horns complete the *Salvation* motive in m. 28, the bells, vibraphone, and piano enter with shimmering chords on beat 1 of m. 29. After another statement of the *Salvation* motive in mm. 29 and 30, by the horns, the percussion chords return in m. 31. The timbre of the mallet instruments combined with the distant harmonic relationship to the low brass chord creates a particularly bright, fresh sound.

A new melodic idea is introduced in mm. 32 and 33 by the first and second horns and euphonium. Although the material only lasts for two measures, it contrasts the *Salvation* motive, which has been at the forefront until this point. In addition to new melodic material, the tonality begins to shift. The first alto saxophone answers the horn and euphonium melody in m. 34 as the tonality continues to shift to an A suspended chord. This suspended sound resolves to A major in

m. 35. The resolution to A major also marks the return of the *Salvation* motive by the upper trumpets, altered this time to end with a descending minor second. As the texture continues to thicken, the dynamic level increases as well. The horns restate the *Salvation* motive in m. 37 followed immediately by another statement from the trumpets that ends in the same descending half-step interval from m. 36.

There is a great deal of tension and dissonance building at m. 38. On beat 1, a vertical half-step interval appears in the first and second trumpets, and a vertical whole-step interval appears in the third and fourth horns. As these dissonances resolve on beat 3, the baritone saxophone and euphonium play a soaring ascending perfect fifth—the beginning of the *Salvation* motive. While the upper note of the motive sustains, the remaining low brass and low woodwinds introduce the first instance of accented, articulated sixteenth notes. This new rhythmic device creates an entirely new character. Following these sixteenth notes, the horns enter on beat 1 of m. 39 with heroic fanfare material before the euphonium and baritone saxophone resolve the *Salvation* motive on beat 3. At this point, the full ensemble is quickly crescendoing to a full *forte* dynamic as they reach the high point of the opening of the piece—the end of m. 39.

At m. 40, a four-measure transition into what Balmages describes as the lullaby theme begins. A new character indication of “Dolce” appears, the marked tempo increases to quarter note = 72, and the time signature shifts to 3/4. The dynamic level resets suddenly and the texture is trimmed down to one flute, bells, and a light piano accompaniment. At m. 42, the clarinets offer one final statement of the *Salvation* motive before the lullaby theme begins at m. 44 (see Example 3.3).



Example 3.3.

Love and Light by Brian Balmages, ©2020, Canzonique Music Co.
mm. 44–47, oboe, opening of lullaby theme.

Measure 44 marks the beginning of new melodic and harmonic material. Balmages places an original melody, played by solo oboe, over a chord progression borrowed from a song called “The Luckiest”, by popular American singer-songwriter Ben Folds. As Balmages indicates in the program notes, Elliott played this song on the piano every day for Madison during her pregnancy. The chord progression found in measures 44 through 59 is borrowed directly from the first verse of Folds’s song (see Table 3.2). Although Balmages utilizes some different inversions and adds non-chord tones, the intervallic relationship between the roots of the chords remains the same. The oboe melody creates and resolves suspensions over the underlying chords at several points during this sixteen-measure segment. The first example of this tension and release is found in m. 46, as the D in the melody creates a 2–3 suspension with the C chord. Subsequent examples are found in measures 49, 54, 56, and 57. In each of these examples, the suspended notes resolve to the expected chord tone.

Table 3.2.

Love and Light by Brian Balmages, ©2020, Canzonique Music Co.
Chord progression comparison to “The Luckiest” by Ben Folds, mm. 44–59.

Measure	44	45	46	47	48	49	50	51	52	53	54	55	56	57	58	59
Balmages, <i>Love and Light</i>	C	G	C	F	C	A-	Bb	Bb	G	G	C	F	C	A-	E-	G
Folds, “The Luckiest”	D	A	D	G	D	B-	C	C	A	A	D	G	D	B-	F#-	A
Roman Numeral	I	V	I	IV	I	vi	bVII	bVII	V	V	I	IV	I	vi	iii	V

Beginning at m. 60, Balmages’s chord progression follows the first portion of the chorus of Folds’s “The Luckiest” (see Table 3.3). Here, a solo flute joins the solo oboe providing a long, sustained accompaniment to the oboe melody. However, in m. 65, Balmages returns to the tonic instead of continuing on as Folds does in the original. Measures 66 through 68 feature an elongated plagal cadence as the flute leaves the texture and the lullaby section concludes softly with the solo oboe and piano.

Table 3.3.

Love and Light by Brian Balmages, ©2020, Canzonique Music Co.
Chord progression comparison to “The Luckiest” by Ben Folds, mm. 60–64.

Measure	60	61	62	63	64
Balmages, <i>Love and Light</i>	A-	F	A-	D	G
Folds, “The Luckiest”	B-	G	B-	E	A
Roman Numeral	vii	IV	vii	V/V	V

Measure 69 marks the beginning of a five-measure accelerando into Section 2 of the piece—at m. 74. During this transition, a new three-eighth-note device is introduced (see Example 3.4). The notes—F, E, and D—suggest a minor tonality and are passed between the clarinets and alto saxophones, starting with the first clarinets in m. 69. The idea continues to be passed around to various woodwind instruments, creating a constant stream of eighth notes, which creates a feeling of unease and anxiousness. It is important to note that the third note of this new motive is always sustained. Players should be aware of which instrument enters next, and work to ensure that the sustained note does not obscure their entrance.



Example 3.4.

Love and Light by Brian Balmages, ©2020, Canzonique Music Co.
m. 69, first Bb clarinet, D minor transitional device.

In m. 71, the flutes enter with eighth-note triplets, creating a new rhythmic layer. This faster rhythm, coupled with the ongoing accelerando and increasing dynamic level, creates forward momentum. The flute material contains the same intervallic relationship as the idea introduced in m. 69, but it starts on Ab instead of F. In m. 72, Balmages adds another layer to the texture as the baritone saxophone and tenor saxophone begin to trade groups of four chromatically ascending sixteenth notes. The final layer of this transitional section is added on beat two of m. 72 in the form of a repeated rhythm consisting of two sixteenth notes followed by an eighth note. The tonality of this transitional section could be described as D minor. However, as the texture continues to thicken, the tonality becomes more unfocused. The tempo and

dynamic level continue to increase throughout mm. 72 and 73 as the chaotic nature of the various rhythmic subdivisions drives the music into the Section 2 of the piece.

Section 2

Measure 74 is marked “con fuoco,” with a tempo designation of quarter note = 144. However, Balmages believes that the tempo of this section should actually be closer to quarter note = 152.⁴⁷ The reason for this shift is because the tempo at m. 135 is meant to be exactly three times as slow as the tempo at m. 74. Balmages commented that m. 74 needs to be slightly faster to prevent m. 135 from becoming too heavy.

As previously stated, in this section Balmages addresses the question, “What does it sound like when that unconditional love is shattered?” Balmages stated that this question led to the decision to leave this section almost entirely void of any melodic material. Section 2 mainly consists of pointed chromatic figures, biting dissonance, and dramatic, sweeping crescendos. In m. 76, the timpani make a bombastic entrance with eighth-note triplets on beat 3. This entrance leads to the downbeat of m. 77, where they are joined by low voices and piano with sustained, accented F naturals in octaves, punctuated by the bass drum. Also in m. 77, the xylophone joins the woodwinds with chromatic sixteenth-note runs and straight-muted trumpets enter with snare drum, piccolo, and flutes with a biting sixteenth-note interjection. The vertical harmony below this figure is highly dissonant and should cut through the woodwind texture.

As this section progresses, the percussion becomes more involved. In m. 79, the snare drum continues with another short burst of sixteenth notes before a mid-tom responds in a similar fashion. In m. 80, the timpani re-enters on the downbeat with more eighth-note triplets.

⁴⁷ Balmages, interview by author, October 2021.

However, instead of leading to the next downbeat, the figure leads to beat 2 of m. 81, where the timpani are joined by the low brass, string bass, and piano playing a *forte* F-natural. Measure 81 also marks the first entrance of the tam-tam, which joins the bass drum to reinforce the low F.

In m. 82, the horns and lower trumpets (now without mute) enter on a C, creating an ascending perfect fifth with the F, still sustained from the previous measure. However, instead of a descending major second to complete the *Salvation* motive, these players move up a half step, creating strong dissonance. The resulting collection of tones—F, C, and Db—crescendo together to the downbeat of m. 84, where it is released. This same idea occurs again four measures later in m. 87. The F, played by the low brass, string bass, timpani, and piano, enters on the downbeat, followed closely by the C on beat 3. This ascending perfect fifth is achingly reminiscent of the *Salvation* motive, but once more it pivots towards extreme dissonance as the horns and trumpets rise one half step. The brass swell as the chord drives forward and is released on the downbeat of m. 92.

Meanwhile, the woodwinds continue their frenzied, chromatic sixteenth-note figures and the chordal brass material reappears once more, starting at m. 95. The crotales make their first entrance in this measure with the horns and third trumpets. The final collection of tones contains a G—played by first trumpet and crotales—in addition to the F, C, and Db. At this point, all of the winds are included in the texture. On the downbeat of m. 98, all players are silent for the entire measure. This sudden silence is a shocking contrast to the dense, layered texture that preceded it. It is important that the percussionists are ready to dampen any instrument that might still be ringing on the downbeat of m. 98.

The silence is interrupted on the downbeat of m. 99 by two *marcato* eighth notes and the beginning of a long strand of repeated sixteenth notes on Db, which lasts until m. 135. Although

there are many chromatic gestures that begin to emerge as this section progresses, the repeated Db is always present, establishing itself as the tonal center. The sixteenth notes begin in the first trumpet (with straight mutes) and snare drum, which Balmages instructs as played with nylon brushes. The snare drum part includes accents over the sixteenth notes, but the trumpet part does not. Dynamically, the two eighth notes should be played *forte*, but the sixteenth notes should start *mezzo piano*. Despite the relatively soft dynamic level, the sixteenth-note material should still be played with great intensity and rhythmic vitality.

From measures 99 through 105, the repeated sixteenth-note idea is passed back and forth between the first and second trumpets. It is important that all players with this material strive to match the note length, articulation, tone quality, tempo, and volume of the preceding players, in order to maintain the illusion of one continuous line of sixteenth notes. The repeated sixteenth-note texture is disrupted in m. 101 by short, staccato interjections from the marimba and upper woodwinds. This disruption continues to build in the next measure as alto and tenor saxophones enter on beat 1, followed by string bass and timpani, and finally contrabass clarinet and low brass, who sustain their lines through the end of m. 105.

Measure 103 marks the return of the *Salvation* motive in the horns, starting on Db. In m. 104 the piccolo, flutes, and bells answer the *Salvation* motive with a fragment of the lullaby theme from m. 44. The use of thematic material from the opening section offers a glimmer of hope in this dark, disorienting section.

In m. 106, the first trombone and third trumpet (both with cup mutes) take over the repeated sixteenth-note line. The third trumpet stays on a Db and passes it to the fourth trumpet in m. 107, but the first trombone begins on a C and descends chromatically before passing the idea to the second trombone in m. 107. The lower trumpets and upper trombones continue

trading the sixteenth-note material until m. 111. Meanwhile, in m. 107, the timpani—instructed to play with rute sticks on the rim—takes over the repeated sixteenth-note material from the snare drum.⁴⁸ In the same measure, the upper trumpets enter with sixteenth-note material that ascends chromatically. This creates contrary motion with the upper trombones and further adds to the feelings of chaos and anger. In m. 108, the first clarinets enter with slurred, chromatically descending sixteenth notes, which are passed to the second clarinets in m. 109. In m. 110, the time signature shifts to 4/4 as the bassoons and clarinets make staggered entrances of cascading sixteenth-note figures, which abruptly stop on beat 4.

In m. 111, the time signature reverts to 3/4 and the musical material resets to repeated sixteenth notes in the trumpets and snare drum, a *staccato* eighth-note accompaniment in the alto saxophones, and a disjunct Db pedal in the marimba. In m. 114, the contrabass clarinet, horns, low brass, and string bass enter with a soft dotted-half note, which has a slight crescendo leading to m. 115. The collection of notes played by the low brass is comprised almost entirely of Fs and Cs. However, the euphonium plays a lone Gb, which creates dissonance with both F and C. The conductor must give careful attention to the balance of these notes to ensure that the Gb creates the proper amount of tension. In m. 115, the brass harmony shifts to become even more dissonant. The new chord consists of D, Gb, C, Db, and Ab. Also in m. 115, the clarinets and piano enter with a restatement of the *All Creatures* motive, introduced in m. 19. Care should be taken to prevent the brass chordal accompaniment from burying this melodic material.

At m. 119, the texture and dynamic level are scaled back. This is the beginning of a sixteen-measure phrase that leads to m. 135. The gradual addition of players over the course of these sixteen measures should create an organic crescendo. The sixteenth-note Db pedal in the

⁴⁸ A rute is a type of multi-rod beater, often constructed by fastening a bundle of wooden dowels or cane rods to a handle.

marimba is reinforced by the timpani, which is playing a triplet-based Db ostinato. Above the percussion, the contrabass clarinet, horns, euphonium, tuba, and string bass sustain an open interval consisting of C# and G#, and the first bassoon plays an eighth-note triplet pattern outlining the tonality of C# (Db) minor. In m. 120, the upper horns move up one whole step to a D#. This stepwise ascension continues to occur on each downbeat until m. 127, where it is taken over by the trumpets who continue the rising line until m. 135. In m. 121, the low woodwinds, low brass, and string bass rearticulate the open interval on beat 3. This is a surprising rhythmic event as the first four measures of this passage, beginning at m. 119, have been entirely downbeat-oriented. In m. 123, the eighth-note triplet line in the bassoons ends and a sixteenth-note figure, outlining a Db natural-minor scale, beginning in the clarinets and lower saxophones. In m. 126, the contrabass clarinet, lower trombones, tuba, and string bass rearticulate beat 3, mirroring what happened in m. 122.

In m. 127, the sixteenth-note line becomes more prominent as the alto saxophones and bass clarinet join the rest of the clarinets and low saxophones. In addition to this growing texture, Balmages adds another layer of syncopation as the third and fourth horns and euphonium begin playing consecutive dotted-quarter notes alternating between A and G#. The second trombone also begins alternating between A and G# with dotted-half notes on every downbeat. The result is a great deal of dissonance between the second trombone and the third and fourth horns and euphonium. In m. 130, the oboes, flutes, and piccolos join the sixteenth-note texture and, as expected, another beat-3 rearticulation occurs of the open interval from the low voices. In m. 131, the upper trumpets enter to take over the ascending dotted-half-note line from the lower trumpets, and the bassoons enter to complete the full woodwind sixteenth-note texture. Also in m. 131, the marimba abandons the repeated Db sixteenth-note material to join the woodwinds

with the C# natural-minor scalar sixteenth notes. At this point, the ensemble should be at a *forte* dynamic level, with room to grow to *fortissimo* at m. 135. In m. 133, the suspended cymbal enters to give a final push towards the climax of Section 2—at m. 135.

At m. 135, the tempo plummets. Balmages gives an indication of “molto agitato con moto,” and a designation that the previous dotted-half note equals the new quarter note. If the tempo of the preceding section reaches Balmages’s preferred tempo of quarter note = 152, the tempo at m. 135 will be closer to quarter note = 51 than the marked tempo of quarter note = 48.

The majority of the ensemble releases on the downbeat of m. 135, save for trumpets, horns, and chimes. This texture comes as a surprise, given the presence of the full ensemble in the previous measure. The trumpets, horns, and chimes sustain a collection of perfect fourth intervals, which could be analyzed as an Ab suspended chord in the trumpets over a Db suspended chord in the horns. However, the effect is simply an open sound that results from the lack of a third. The low woodwinds, low brass, timpani, and piano enter with a quarter note on beat 2, followed by a half note on beat 3. The chord on beat 2 is an F major triad. It should be noted that the third of this chord—A—is only found in the first trombone and piano. The chord on beat 3 is a D-major triad. Both of these chords create dissonance with the sustained open-interval chord played by the trumpets and horns on beat 1. There should be a considerable amount of weight and clarity of articulation each of these notes. On beat 4 the trumpets, horns, and chimes move to a quarter note on a Cb-major triad. Again, this creates a significant amount of dissonance with the D-major triad in the low brass and low reeds. With regard to texture and rhythmic motion, m. 136 is nearly identical to m. 135. Thus, the listener should hear rhythmic motion and shifting harmony on each beat of both of these measures. The harmonic landscape in m. 136 is slightly different than that of m. 135. Instead of an open-interval chord on beat 1, the

horns and trumpets play a Db-major triad. The low reeds and low brass enter with a Bb-major triad on beat 2, followed by an E-major triad on beat 3. On beat 4 of m. 136, the trumpets move to an F-major triad with a minor sixth (Db), while the horns move to an F triad that contains both the major and minor thirds.

The motion on every beat continues in m. 137, but the music begins to move away from the climactic arrival at m. 135. The low reeds, low brass, string bass, and timpani enter on beat 1 with a C-minor triad. The piccolo, flutes, oboes, and horns provide the motion on beat 2 with octaves on D-natural. These octave D-naturals also form the opening of the main melodic interest of mm. 137–144. The idea is presented in mm. 137 and 138 (see Example 3.5). Following this initial statement, the idea is echoed three times—once in mm. 139 and 140, once in mm. 141 and 142, and once in mm. 143 and 144. The final two statements are rhythmically elongated. The combination of the C-minor triad in the low voices and the melody, which incorporates D, B, G, and Ab, creates a C harmonic-minor tonality during this passage.



Example 3.5.

Love and Light by Brian Balmages, ©2020, Canzonique Music Co.
mm. 137–138, horns in F, transitional melodic figure.

Another element of interest occurs in mm. 138 and 140. In m. 138, the upper trumpets enter with two eighth-note triplets, followed by a half note. This gesture is echoed by the horns in m. 140. In both instances, the idea is marked with a *decrescendo*, suggesting the character of a distant call. Beginning at m. 138, the entire ensemble begins to decrescendo. In m. 145, the

texture is now reduced to solo oboe, bassoons, lower horns, and euphonium. While these players are sustaining a chord consisting of Eb, B, and Ab, the euphonium enters on the downbeat of m. 145 with a restatement of the *Salvation* motive, starting on Eb. The second note of the motive, Bb, will create dissonance with the B-natural in the second bassoon part. The dissonance is resolved on beat 4 as the euphonium completes the motive by descending to an Ab. However, on beat 1 of m. 146, the solo alto saxophone enters on a G, briefly rekindling the dissonance before descending to an F. Solo first and second clarinets enter on beat 3 of m. 146, providing a restatement of the *Salvation* motive, starting on G. On beat 4, the solo first clarinet and alto saxophone appear a half step apart, establishing tension on the second note of the motive. On beat 3 of m. 147, the first clarinet completes the motive by descending to a C and the second clarinet and alto saxophone move to an A and E, respectively, creating an A-minor triad.

In m. 148, the meter changes to 3/4 and the textural focus shifts to keyboard percussion. The A-minor triad created by the clarinets and alto saxophone is sustained but fading out, it eventually dissipates by the end of m. 149. The piano begins to play an arpeggiated accompaniment outlining an A-minor triad, while the bells and vibraphone play a haunting version of the lullaby theme, also in the key of A minor (see Example 3.6). Balmages gives both the vibraphone and piano specific pedaling instructions during this four-measure phrase. In m. 152, the mallet percussion instruments and piano give way to solo bassoon, first clarinet, and horns. The first clarinet enters on the second half of beat 1 with an ascending eighth-note figure, which retains the A-minor tonality. The string bass enters on beat 3 of m. 152, with a soft *pizzicato* on A. Measure 153 is an echo of m. 152—differing only in the ascending eighth-note figure, which now appears in the bass clarinet and the string bass *pizzicato* A now an octave lower. Measure 154 is marked “poco rit.” The texture becomes more transparent as the bassoon,

bass clarinet, and horns exit, and the tuba and euphonium enter, sustaining octaves on A-natural. The timpani also enter in m. 154 with two quarter-note A-naturals, marked *piano*. These quarter notes are repeated more softly, in m. 155, before the tuba and euphonium fade to nothing.



Example 3.6.

Love and Light by Brian Balmages, ©2020, Canzonique Music Co.
mm. 148–151, bells and vibraphone, lullaby theme in A minor.

Section 3

Measure 156 forms the beginning of the third and final section of *Love and Light*. Marked “Light,” with a tempo indication of quarter note = 56, Section 3 is the only explicitly marked section with a reference to the over-arching programmatic theme. From mm. 156–160, the meter alternates between 4/4 and 6/4, before settling on 5/4 at m. 161. The A-minor tonality of the previous section shifts to an A-suspended sound, reminiscent of the opening measures of the piece. The clarinets enter on beat 1 with a restatement of the *Salvation* motive, starting on A. In m. 157, the bells and bowed vibraphone answer the clarinet motive with quarter notes on beats 2 and 4. The vibraphone player must be very accurate with the bow in order to align with the bells. The clarinets make an identical restatement of the *Salvation* motive in m. 158, this time joined by solo alto saxophone with an accompaniment in half notes. In m. 159, the bassoon answers the clarinet motive on beat 1 with a brief melodic idea. In this melodic response, Balmages uses the note C as a source of tension on beats 2 and 3, reminding the listener of the A-minor tonality of the previous passage. The C resolves to B on beat 3, where the bells also

enter with a descending half-note line outlining an A-major scale. The C# is critical as it pivots the tonality from A minor to A major. The descending half-note line is resolved on beat 1 of m. 161, as the solo bassoon and first clarinets settle on a sustained A. The vibraphone enters with a pedaled quarter-note ostinato, which fully establishes the A-major tonality (see Example 3.7). This figure is a development of the *Salvation* motive.



Example 3.7.

Love and Light by Brian Balmages, ©2020, Canzonique Music Co.
m. 161, vibraphone, *Salvation* ostinato.

Balmages commented that although m. 156 has a definite shift in character, he delays addressing the third and final question—“What does it sound like when a child first sees the face of God?”—until m. 163, when a solo flute enters with the full phrase from Tchesnokov’s *Salvation is Created*. In m. 165, a single note (for triangle) marks beat 1 as the first and second flutes settle on sustained E and A, respectively, and the first and second bassoons enter on the same pitches (respectively) one octave below. In this passage, in order for phrases to connect, it is critical that players remain conscious of the 5/4 meter, and maintain energy and direction throughout the duration of the sustained notes.

In m. 167, the clarinets join the solo first flute with a developed restatement of the Tchesnokov material. In m. 169, the bassoons and second flute re-enter with the same sustained open fifth from m. 165. However, the first clarinet plays a C#, now creating an A-major triad. Also in m. 169, the bells enter with a diminution of the vibraphone figure and the piano enters

with the root and fifth of the A-major triad one octave above the flutes. All of this is accompanied by another soft note in the triangle. In m. 171, the eighth-note material in the bells stops as the second flute and first clarinet continue expanding upon the *Salvation is Created* theme, while the alto saxophones offer a statement of the *Salvation* motive, starting on A. On beat 3, solo bassoon enters with melodic material, which evolves into a return of the *All Creatures Alleluia* motive, first introduced in m. 19 (Section 1). This material is passed from the first bassoon to the second bassoon on beat 1 in m. 173, followed by its appearance for solo alto saxophone on beat 2. Also in m. 173, the bells resume the eighth-note ostinato. In m. 174, the meter switches briefly to 3/4, which allows the bells to complete a full statement of the ostinato before the downbeat of m. 175, where the meter returns to 5/4.

Measure 175 marks a shift in texture and tempo as the upper woodwind and upper mallet voices give way to low brass; here Balmages marks an indication of “*piu mosso*.” Horns enter on beat 1, further developing the *Salvation is Created* material. In addition to the “*piu mosso*” indication, the rhythm of this melodic material is also condensed, generating forward momentum. The dynamic level begins to climb as these new voices are marked *mezzo piano* with a crescendo to *mezzo forte* in the following measure. In m. 176, the euphonium joins the horn melody on beat 1. On beat 3 of this measure, the tuba begins to descend toward a new tonality of C minor. This tuba motion, supported by a suspended cymbal roll and a crescendo in the upper voices, should be strong and purposeful in order for the downbeat of m. 177 to feel secure.

In m. 177, the meter changes to 3/4 as the lower trumpets are added to the horn and euphonium melody, and the contrabass clarinet and marimba enter to join the low brass chordal accompaniment. The dynamic level, now marked as *mezzo forte*, should continue to grow as more instruments are added to the texture. In m. 179, the meter shifts to 4/4. The upper trumpets

enter to take over responsibility of the melodic material along with the trombones and euphonium, while the horns assume an accompaniment role with the rest of the low brass. On beats 3 and 4, the contrabass clarinet, lower trombones, and tuba make another descent toward the new tonal center of Ab. This constant shifting of the tonal center, combined with the upward motion of the melodic material and the rising dynamic level, slowly increases the tension as the ensemble pushes towards an arrival point at m. 182.

Before this arrival occurs, however, at m. 180 the meter shifts to 7/8. The low reeds join the texture on beat 1, followed by the piccolo and flutes on beat 4. The harmony also continues to evolve in m. 180, moving through tonal centers D to G, on beat 6. In m. 181, the meter changes to 4/4 and a suspension—located in the piccolo, flutes, and upper trumpets—resolves on the last sixteenth note of beat 3 to a powerful E-major triad. This E-major chord serves as the dominant in a perfect authentic cadence, which brings the harmony back to A major on the downbeat of m. 182.

At m. 182, the meter switches to 5/4, where it will remain until m. 190. The horns and chimes enter with the *All Creatures* motive, while the rest of the winds sustain a full open-fifth interval on A and E. Also beginning at m. 182 is a pedal A, played by the low winds and low percussion. This pedal continues—with some brief pauses—until m. 191. The vibraphone resumes the quarter-note ostinato from m. 161, and the bells and right-hand piano resume the eighth-note ostinato from m. 169. In m. 183, the oboes, bassoons, trumpets, and upper trombones enter on beat 1 with melodic material from *Salvation is Created*. Beat 1 is also marked with a note ringing out on the crash cymbal. On beat 2, the low woodwinds, low brass, timpani, and piano enter with sustained octaves on A-natural. In m. 184, the harmony shifts slightly to an A suspended sound, comprised of sustained A and D pitches below the ongoing ostinato in the

mallet instruments. It would be beneficial to position the bells, vibraphone, and piano as close together as possible on the stage in order for these players to hear each other well during this passage.

In m. 185, the harmony changes to an A-major triad as the horns and clarinets enter with a syncopated, fanfare treatment of the lullaby material, from m. 44. The marked accents in this measure help to provide rhythmic clarity to this idea. In m. 186, the piccolo, flutes, alto and tenor saxophones, and euphonium reprise the *All Creatures* motive. The timpani connects m. 186 to m. 187 with two eighth notes, leading to another statement of the *Salvation is Created* material by the oboes, bassoons, trumpets, and upper trombones. On beat 2 of m. 187, the low woodwinds, low brass, timpani, crash cymbal, and piano fill out the bottom of the texture with another powerful pedal A. The beat 2 entrances in measures 183 and 187 are important in terms of textural foundation and rhythmic momentum. In m. 188, the oboes, bassoons, trumpets, and upper trombones sustain a D-major triad until beat 5, when they move to an A-major triad.

In m. 189, the A pedal in the low winds pauses briefly to allow a suspended chord in the winds and a continuation of the mallet ostinato. The timpani enters again with two accented eighth notes, leading to a return of the A pedal and a restatement and conclusion of the *All Creatures* motive. Measures 182–191 express a major culminating point, as Balmages cycles through the various themes introduced and developed throughout the piece. However, the ensemble should be aware that bigger moments are yet to come.

The vibraphone and bar chimes play a sweeping gesture on beat 3, which propels the music into m. 191. While the texture has thinned out, Balmages indicates “con moto” as the tempo increases. Third trumpet and all horns begin a full restatement of the lullaby theme, which lasts until m. 203, where upper trumpets take it over. Underneath the lullaby theme, the low

woodwinds, low brass, and string bass provide chordal accompaniment, and the bassoons, tenor saxophone, and euphonium play an eighth-note counter-line that outlines the sustained harmony. This counter-line is crucial in allowing the tempo to move forward.

In addition to these harmonic accompaniments, the flutes contribute two thirty-second note flourishes on beat 3 of mm. 191 and 192. These quick runs outline an E-mixolydian scale, which sets up the A-major chord in m. 193. In m. 195, the upper woodwinds enter with a sweeping downward chromatic run. Balmages commented that this run needs to be executed within the context of the music, thus not overtake the lullaby theme occurring in the trumpets and horns.⁴⁹ In m. 198, the texture continues to thicken, with all wind players, string bass, and suspended cymbal playing. The main focal point continues to be the lullaby theme, now played by the second clarinets, third trumpet, and first trombone.

At m. 202, the horns enter with an extremely important counter-melody as the lullaby theme passes to the first trumpet and euphonium at m. 203. In particular, Balmages indicates, the ascending perfect fifth in the first and second horns in m. 205 should soar above the texture.⁵⁰ This passage at m. 203 is transitional in nature, leading to m. 212. Harmonically, at m. 203, an F-major triad supports the lullaby theme. The B-natural on beat 2 of m. 203 creates a form of dissonance more nostalgic than harsh or clashing. The melodic material is sequenced and developed in mm. 203–210, as the harmony continues to shift. In m. 210, Balmages finishes sequencing the melodic material as the winds play two *tutti* half notes—a B suspended chord on beat 1, followed by a B-major seventh chord on beat 3. Both chords in m. 210 are supported by crash cymbals, and a roll for tam-tam and timpani begins on beat 3. In m. 211, the meter shifts

⁴⁹ Balmages, interview by author, October 2021.

⁵⁰ Balmages, interview by author, October 2021.

back to 5/4 as the winds arrive on a triumphant E-major chord and the mallet percussion figure returns in the key of E. The beginning of this measure is marked again by crash cymbals and tam-tam and timpani rolls. The winds are marked *fortissimo* in this measure, but they should not cover up the moving figures in the percussion section.

In m. 212, a harmonized version of the *Salvation is Created* material is presented by a majority of the winds. On beat two of m. 212, contrabass clarinet, baritone saxophone, fourth trombone, tubas, string bass, and timpani enter with a sustained E pedal, supported by crash cymbals. This group of low reeds, low brass, and timpani re-articulate the E pedal multiple times from m. 213 to m. 217. The re-articulation of the pedal serves to compliment the melody above. On beat four of m. 215, the alto saxophones and horns take over responsibility of the melodic material. Meanwhile, the amount of metallic percussion continues to increase as the bells, chimes, and piano resume the eighth-note motive, from m. 211, and triangle and suspended cymbal begin a roll. In m. 218, the lower trumpets echo the timpani, followed by another echo in first and second trumpets, and upper woodwinds. In m. 219, the meter shifts to 6/4 as alto and tenor saxophones, lower trumpets, horns, trombones, bells, chimes, and piano begin one final statement of the *Salvation is Created* material. The *Salvation* phrase is answered by upper trumpets, who enter on beat five with an ascending figure, which leads to the downbeat of m. 220. Here, the winds settle on an E-major triad while the percussion closes out this climactic section with a final iteration of the descending eighth-note figure.

At m. 221, the tempo pulls back and the triumphant E-major triad vanishes, revealing a soft, transparent texture of flutes and clarinets. These upper woodwinds create a breathtakingly intimate setting, in stark contrast to the previous material. Balmages commented that the tempo here should feel very natural, and that, as the section develops, the oboe soloist should have

some freedom to establish a tempo that feels appropriate for their melodic material. On beat 4 of m. 221, a solo bassoon enters with a soft iteration of the *Salvation* motive, beginning on E. In the following measure, the bass clarinet enters, sustaining a C#, thus the sustaining pitches here are E, F#, G#, A, B, C#, and D#. Despite the great number of pitches sounding simultaneously, there is no feeling of unease or tension.

The focus turns to the solo bassoon at the end of m. 223 as they play a variation of the *Salvation* motive. Simultaneously, the flute tremolo fades away and a poignant E-major seventh chord is established on the downbeat of m. 224. This chord gives way to another cluster of pitches from the E-major tonality on beat 3, resetting the harmonic landscape for the oboe soloist to enter on beat 1 of the next measure. The oboe soloist and a single first flute enter on a unison G# in m. 225. As the flute sustains, the oboe descends a major third to an E. On beat 1 of m. 226, a solo muted horn enters on a B, continuing the oboe line from the previous measure. On beat 3, both the horn and oboe move to a half note on E, completing an E-major arpeggio that started in the previous measure.

On beat 1 of m. 227, the horn and woodwinds fade from the texture, leaving a lone oboe. This solo voice is not alone for long before being joined by the clarinets. The oboe solo and clarinet chordal accompaniment continue to develop until m. 234. Other voices, including bassoons, piano, and bass clarinet, join along the way as the oboe blossoms into a stunningly lyrical melody. The bass clarinet takes over the motion at the beginning m. 235 before the alto and tenor saxophones enter on beat 3 on a unison E. The previously sustaining woodwinds fade out of the texture on beat 1 of m. 236, leaving only the alto and tenor saxophones. The first alto saxophone plays a restatement of the *Salvation* motive, beginning on the E from the previous measure, while the tenor saxophone sustains the E through the end of m. 236. The second alto

descends to an Eb on beat 1 of m. 236, which acts as a leading tone, resolving back to the E natural on beat 3. Also on beat 3 of m. 236, the clarinets re-enter with a soft, diatonic cluster of pitches in E major. On beat 1 of m. 237, the bassoons enter on a sustained G# and E-natural, and the baritone saxophone enters on an A, creating an open, suspended sound while the tenor saxophone echoes the second alto from the previous measure. The gravitational pull of the leading tones in the saxophones adds to the emotional intensity of this section.

In Elliott's view, the third question—"What does it sound like when a child first sees the face of God?"—mm. 221–238 represent the moment when Madison passed.

When you're in an ultrasound room, and there's no heartbeat, the tech will leave the room. That usually doesn't ever happen unless something's wrong. They're going to go get the doctor because only the doctor can tell you that your child is gone. In that moment it's completely quiet. It's like she had slipped away without us even knowing. It was not some huge moment. It just happened. You can only imagine that when she went to Heaven, it was quiet and peaceful.⁵¹

Measure 238 represents a more traditional representation of ascension to Heaven. The lower trumpets, horns, and first trombone enter with a *forte* statement of the *Salvation* motive, starting on E. In m. 239, the upper trumpets enter with a fanfare-like, sixteenth-note interjection. On beat 3 of this m., timpani and bass drum answer the brass with two accented eighth notes. The call and response between the brass fanfare and the timpani and bass drum continues until m. 244. Energy builds, clearly demonstrating that the climax of the piece is near. In m. 244, the upper woodwinds enter to join the upper brass with a quarter-note melodic figure, and in m. 245, the remaining winds and timpani enter with a dotted-half-note outlining an A triad. Measure 246 is marked "rall." as the entire ensemble crescendos.

Measure 247 is the climax of the entire piece. The energy level here is very high and should remain consistent until the end. The tension created by the *rallentando* and the A chord in

⁵¹ Elliott, interview by author, December 2021.

the previous measure is released as the entire ensemble arrives on a joyous E-major triad. The final nine measures can be separated into phrases of four and five measures respectively. Texturally, there are multiple layers in the first phrase. The melodic material—the lullaby theme—is found in the tenor saxophone, horns, upper trombones, and euphonium. The lullaby theme is the only melodic material present during the final nine measures. Meanwhile, the upper woodwinds play septuplet flourishes and the low woodwinds, brass, string bass, and left-hand piano sustain an E-major triad. The E pedal, created by the tubas, string bass, and left-hand piano, is rearticulated several times and lasts until the end of the piece. Finally, in the percussion section, the chimes and piano play the *Salvation is Created* eighth-note figure from m. 169, and bells play a sixteenth-note figure related to the chimes and piano material, while the triangle articulates a roll. The E-major chord and pedal are rearticulated on beat 3 of m. 248. This rearticulation is supported by a tam-tam and timpani note, which should ring for as long as possible as the melodic material, flourishes, and percussion ostinatos continue.

Measure 251 marks the beginning of the final five measures. The upper woodwinds abandon the flourishes and the tenor saxophone, trombones, and euphonium leave the melodic material to join the sustained E-major chord. Meanwhile, the trumpets fill the void of the lost melodic voices, joining the horns with the lullaby theme. The pedal is re-articulated again in mm. 251 and 252. In m. 253, the clarinets, trumpets, horns, trombones, and bells change pitches. Notably, the first clarinets and first trumpet rise to an A, creating a suspension in the E-major chord, which has been sounding since m. 247. The pedal is re-articulated a final time in m. 253, as the bass drum begins a roll, joining the timpani and triangle. At m. 254, the suspension is resolved as the entire ensemble arrives on an E-major triad. This final chord is tied to a fermata

in the last measure. Balmages commented that there should be as much ringing metal as possible during the final nine measures.⁵²

⁵² Balmages, interview by author, October 2021.

CONCLUSION

Brian Balmages has made and will continue to make significant contributions to all levels of wind band repertoire. As garnered by the analysis in this document, *Love and Light* stands as a well-crafted composition of serious artistic merit. The piece is worthy of academic study based on the substantial depth of the musical material and the manner in which that material relates to the subject matter at hand. *Love and Light* is an example of the versatility, skill, and craftsmanship that Balmages has displayed throughout his compositional career. However, the piece also represents an important milestone in his journey as a composer who still has more to say with his compositional voice.

The commitment to music education by composers like Balmages is necessary if wind bands are to continue to evolve in the years to come. His ability to compose original music inspired by a variety of topics makes his music accessible and intriguing to both performers and listeners. The programmatic nature of Balmages's compositions creates opportunities for cross-curricular conversations in educational settings, as well as deeper connections with audiences in performance settings. Further study on Balmages's total compositional output and compositional style would be justified as an entirely separate topic of scholarly research.

The minute details of *Love and Light* are necessary in understanding how the composition was constructed. The true impact of this piece, however, cannot be quantified, graphed, or articulated in any sort of analysis such as the one provided. The value of the music is not found in the upper extensions of complex chords or in the rhythmic displacement of motivic material. This is a piece of music that deals with the human experience. The range of emotions invoked throughout the three sections of the composition is vast. Stillbirth is a subject often

treated as taboo in many parts of society—one only discussed in hushed voices behind closed doors. Elizabeth Elliott’s courage to share her story and Balmages’s willingness to embrace it led to the creation of a piece of music that truly reaches out to a broader community. The piece itself is a space in which a listener or performer can feel safe confronting the many feelings brought on by a tragic loss—despair, anger, confusion, loneliness, and finally, most importantly, hope. As Elliott stated so eloquently, “. . . time eventually reveals the ‘love and light’ on the other side.”

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Balmages, Brian. *Love and Light*. Fort Lauderdale: Canzonique Music Company, 2020.
- Barnes, Gail V., Carrie Lane Grusselle, Michael Trowbridge, and Brian Balmages. *Measures of Success for String Orchestra: A Comprehensive Musicianship String Method*. Fort Lauderdale: The FJH Music Company, 2015.
- “Brian Balmages.” The FJH Music Company. Accessed August 26, 2021.
<https://www.fjhmusic.com/composer/bbalmages.htm#1>.
- Camphouse, Mark. *Composers on Composing for Band*. Chicago: GIA Publications, 2004.
- Chamberlain, Victoria. ““What Am I Going To Do To Keep Her With Me?": Army Officer Commissions Music To Honor Stillborn Daughter.” February 19, 2020.
<https://dcist.com/story/20/02/19/what-am-i-going-to-do-to-keep-her-with-me-army-officer-commissions-music-to-honor-stillborn-daughter/>.
- Gausline, Gregg, and Brian Balmages. *Warm-up Fundamentals for Concert Band*. Fort Lauderdale: The FJH Music Company, 2011.
- Herrings, Robert, and Brian Balmages. *Tuned In: A Comprehensive Approach to Band Intonation*. Fort Lauderdale: The FJH Music Company, 2018.
- “Interviews.” Brian Balmages personal website. Accessed August 27, 2021.
<https://www.brianbalmages.com/copy-of-videos>.
- McCutchen, Matthew. “Brian Balmages’ *Love and Light*.” *NBA Journal* 61, no. 1 (Winter 2021): 22–24.
- “NBA/William D. Revelli Memorial Composition Contest.” National Band Association. Accessed August 27, 2021. <https://nationalbandassociation.org/composition-contests/>.
- Pease, Andrew Donald. “An Annotated Bibliography of Symphonies for Wind Band.” DMA diss., Arizona State University, 2015.
- Sheldon, Deborah A., Brian Balmages, Timothy Loest, Robert Sheldon, and David Collier. *Measures of Success: A Comprehensive Musicianship Band Method*. Fort Lauderdale: The FJH Music Company, 2010.
- “State and Festival Lists.” J. W. Pepper. Accessed September 14, 2021.
<https://www.jwpepper.com/sheet-music/services-state-festival.jsp>.
- The United States Army Band “Pershing’s Own.” The U.S. Army Concert Band at Schlesinger Hall. February 22, 2020. Video. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GP0peo08ink>.

APPENDIX A: PERMISSION FOR USE OF COPYRIGHTED MATERIALS



Ryan Middleton <middletr@rams.colostate.edu>

Love and Light Thesis Copyright Letter

Brian Balmages <brian@brianbalmages.com>
To: Ryan Middleton <middletr@rams.colostate.edu>

Mon, Nov 15, 2021 at 8:00 AM

Hi Ryan,

Thank you for contacting me about this. By way of this email, I am granting you permission to use examples from my score in your thesis paper. Should you need a more formal approval, please let me know and I am happy to get that to you as well.

All the best,

Brian Balmages
www.brianbalmages.com

[Quoted text hidden]

APPENDIX B: LIST OF CONSORTIUM MEMBERS AND SUPPORTERS OF *LOVE AND*

LIGHT BY BRIAN BALMAGES

Women Band Directors International
West Forsyth High School (Clemmons, NC)—Patricia Ball
Centennial High School (Boise, ID)—Brittany Brings
Vista Ridge High School (Roundrock, TX)—Bryan Christian
Timber Creek High School (Orlando, FL)—Rhett Cox
Eastern Arizona College—Geoff DeSpain
Bob and Peggy Gravitz
Herndon High School (Fairfax County, VA)—Kathleen Schoelwer Jacoby
Caldwell High School (Caldwell, TX)—Cody Knott
Converse College (Spartanburg, SC)—Susie Lalama
Denham Springs High School (Denham Springs, LA)—Carlye Latas
Kearney High School (Kearney, NE)—Nathan LeFeber and Rick Mitchell
Auburn High School (Auburn, NY)—Michael Miller
Lloyd C. Bird High School (Chesterfield, NY)—Emily Oyan
Hardin Valley Academy Wind Ensemble (Knoxville, TN)—Alex Rector
USAF Heritage of America Band Joint Base Langley—2nd LT David Regner
Miami Arts Studio (Miami, FL)—Erich Rivero and John Bixby
Brian Rivers, in memory of Maya Olivia Rivers (10/23/12)
Carthage High School (Carthage, MO)—Jennifer Sager
Eastern New Mexico University (Portales, NM)—Dustin Seifert
Homestead High School (Fort Wayne, IN)—Bryen Warfield
Fond du Lac High School (Fond du Lac, WI)—Chris Barnes and Matt McVeigh
Paetow High School (Katy, TX)—Greg Redner
Traughber Junior High School (Oswego, IL)—Rachel Maxwell
Terry and Tracia Austin
Rachel Steckler
Boise Senior High School (Boise, ID)—Meghan Fay Olswanger
Big Spring High School (Big Spring, TX)—Rocky Harris
Maryland Winds—Timothy Holtan
Mr. David Starnes, Director of Athletic Bands; Western Carolina University

APPENDIX C: *SALVATION IS CREATED* BY PAVEL TCHESNOKOV

Spaséniye, sodélal

(Salvation is Created)

Pavel Tschesnokoff
(1877-1944)

Quietly

Soprano

Alto

Tenor

Bass

p *mf*

Spa - - - - - sé - ni - ye, so - - - - - dé - - -

Spa - - - - - sé - ni - ye, so - - - - - dé - - -

7 *p* *p*

Spa - - - - - sé - ñi ye

Spa - - - - - sé - ñi - ye

8 lal ye - - - si Spa - - - sé - ñi - ye

7 lal ye - - - si

13 *mf* *mf*

so - - - - - dé - - - lal ye - - - sí Spa - - - - -

13 *mf* *mf*

so - - - - - dé - - - lal ye - - - sí Spa - - - - -

13 *mf* *mf*

so - - - - - dé - - - lal ye - - - sí Spa - - - - -

13 *mf*

Spa - - - - -

Copyright © 2002 by the Choral Public Domain Library (<http://www.cpd.org>)
Edition may be freely distributed, duplicated, performed, or recorded.

20 sé - ñi - ye, so - - - dé - - - lal ye - sí. Pos - - -

20 sé - ñi - ye, so - - - dé - - - lal ye - sí. Pos - - -

20 sé - ñi - ye, so - - - dé - - - lal ye - sí. Pos - - -

20 sé - ñi ye, so - - - dé - - - lal ye - sí. Pos - - -

27 re - dé zie - - mli, Bó - - - -

27 re - dé zie - - mli, Bó - - - -

27 re - dé zie - - mli, Bó - - - -

27 re - dé zie - - mli, Bó - - - -

34 zhe. Zie - mli, Bó - - - - zhe. *pp*

34 zhe. Zie - mli, Bó - - - - zhe. *pp*

34 zhe. Zie - mli, Bó - - - - zhe. *pp*

34 zhe. Zie - mli, Bó - - - - zhe. *pp*

42

42

42 *p* *mf*

Al - - - - li - lú - i - ya, Al - - - li - - -

42 *p* *mf*

Al - - - - li - lú - i - ya, Al - - - li - - -

48 *p*

Al - - - - li - lú - i - ya,

48 *p*

Al - - - - li - lú - i - ya,

48

lú - - - i - - - ya, Al - li - lú - i - ya,

48

lú - - - i - - - ya,

54 *mf* *mf*

Al - - - li - - - lú - - - i - - - ya, Al - - - - li -

54 *mf* *mf*

Al - - - li - - - lú - - - i - - - ya, Al - - - - li -

54 *mf* *mf*

Al - - - li - - - lú - - - i - - - ya, Al - - - - li -

54 *mf*

Al - - - - li -

61 lú - i - ya, Al - - - li - - - lú - i - ya, Al - - -

61 lú - i - ya, Al - - - li - - - lú - i - ya, Al - - -

61 lú - i - ya, Al - - - li - - - lú - i - ya, Al - - -

61 lú - i - ya, Al - - - li - - - lú - i - ya, Al - - -

68 - li - lú - - - i - - - ya, Al - li - lú - - - i - - -

68 - li - lú - - - i - - - ya, Al - li - lú - - - i - - -

68 - li - lú - - - i - - - ya, Al - li - lú - - - i - - -

68 - li - lú - - - i - - - ya, Al - li - lú - - - i - - -

75 ya, *pp* Al - - li - - - lú - - - i - ya.

75 ya, *pp* Al - - li - - - lú - - - i - ya.

75 ya, *pp* Al - - li - - - lú - - - i - ya.

75 ya, *pp* Al - - li - - - lú - - - i - ya.

SOURCE: 1913 edition (J. Fischer & Bro.)
transcribed by Rafael Ornes (3/19/02)
Chuch Slavonc Lyrics added as listed on CPDL.org. (04/01/2018)

APPENDIX D: ALL CREATURES OF OUR GOD AND KING

All Creatures of Our God and King



1 All cre - atures of our God and King, lift up your voice and with us
 2 O ru - shing wind that art so strong, you clouds that sail in heaven a -
 3 O flo - wing wa - ter, pure and clear, make mu - sic for your Lord to
 4 All you who are of ten - der heart, for - gi - ving o - thers, take your
 5 Let all things their Cre - a - tor bless, and wor - ship him in hum - ble -

sing Al - le - lu - ia, Al - le - lu - ia! Thou bur - ning sun with gol - den
 long, O — praise him, Al - le - lu - ia! O ri - sing morn in praise re -
 hear, Al - le - lu - ia, Al - le - lu - ia! O fire so mas - ter - ful and
 part, sing prai - ses, Al - le - lu - ia! All you who pain and sor - row
 ness, O — praise him, Al - le - lu - ia! Praise, praise the Fa - ther, praise the

beam, and sil - ver moon with sof - ter gleam, O — praise him, O —
 joyce, O lights of eve - ning, find a voice: O — praise him, O —
 bright pro - vi - ding us with warmth and light, O — praise him, O —
 bear, praise God and on him cast your care, O — praise him, O —
 Son and praise the Spi - rit, Three in One, O — praise him, O —

praise him, Al - le - lu - ia, Al - le - lu - ia, Al - le - lu - ia!

Text: St. Francis of Assisi (1182-1226);
 tr. William H. Draper (1855-1933), alt.
 Tune: Geistliche Kirchengesänge, Cologne, 1623
 arr. Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872-1958)



LM Alleluias
 LASST UNS ERFREUEN
www.hymnary.org/text/all_creatures_of_our_god_and_king

This hymn is in the public domain. You may freely use this score for personal and congregational worship. If you reproduce the score, please credit *Hymnary.org* as the source.

Handwritten musical score for "Love and Light" by Brian Balmages. The score is written on ten staves, featuring a variety of musical notations including notes, rests, and chords. The title "LOVE AND LIGHT" is written in large, bold letters at the top center. The composer's name "BRIAN BALMAGES" is written in the top right corner. The score includes several annotations and markings, such as "Gtr 3-4-5-6-7-8", "Gtr 3-4-5-6-7-8", "Gtr 3-4-5-6-7-8", "Gtr 3-4-5-6-7-8", "Gtr 3-4-5-6-7-8", "Gtr 3-4-5-6-7-8", "Gtr 3-4-5-6-7-8", "Gtr 3-4-5-6-7-8", "Gtr 3-4-5-6-7-8", and "Gtr 3-4-5-6-7-8". The score is marked with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a time signature of 4/4. The piece concludes with a double bar line and a final chord.

Handwritten musical score on six staves. The notation includes various notes, rests, and accidentals. Chord symbols are written above and below the staves, including "C", "B \flat /D", "E", "D", "G", "C/E", "A", "D/F \sharp ", "G", "Esus", and "(E)". A circled "A major" is written at the top left. The score concludes with a double bar line and a repeat sign.





Handwritten musical score on manuscript paper, consisting of seven systems of staves. The notation includes various musical symbols such as notes, rests, accidentals, and dynamic markings.

Key markings and annotations include:

- System 1:** First system of staves.
- System 2:** Second system of staves.
- System 3:** Third system of staves.
- System 4:** Fourth system of staves, featuring notes with accidentals and dynamic markings like *ff* and *ffz*.
- System 5:** Fifth system of staves, featuring notes with accidentals and dynamic markings like *ff* and *ffz*.
- System 6:** Sixth system of staves, featuring notes with accidentals and dynamic markings like *ff* and *ffz*.
- System 7:** Seventh system of staves, featuring notes with accidentals and dynamic markings like *ff* and *ffz*.

At the bottom left, the text "Carta NO. 8" is visible, indicating the manuscript paper used.

Handwritten musical notation on a five-staff system. The notation includes various musical symbols such as notes, rests, and accidentals. A handwritten note "(lead) Apt." is written above the first staff. The notation is written in a cursive, handwritten style.

Staff 1: (lead) Apt. (Handwritten note above the staff)

Staff 2: C, D, C (Handwritten notes above the staff)

Staff 3: D, F, B^b, E/6^o, A, F[#] (Handwritten notes above the staff)

Staff 4: D (Handwritten note above the staff)

Intro D G D A^{sus} A B⁻ F^{#-} G

D/A A ^{Vers-}D A D G D

B⁻ C D/C C A A/C[#] D G

D B⁻ F^{#-} A B⁻ G B⁻

E A F^{#-} G A/G G D/A A

D A B⁻ F^{#-} G D/A A D

D ^{Trunk}A D G D A^{sus} A

APPENDIX F: AUTHOR BIOGRAPHY

Ryan Middleton served as a graduate teaching assistant in the Masters of Music (wind conducting) program at Colorado State University. At CSU, he was active in all aspects of the band program including the concert, athletic, and jazz bands. Middleton studied conducting with Dr. Rebecca Phillips and saxophone with Professor Peter Sommer.

Originally from Sioux City, Iowa, Middleton graduated from the University of Northern Iowa with a Bachelor's degree in instrumental music education in 2015. While at UNI, he studied conducting with Dr. Ronald Johnson and Dr. Rebecca Burkhardt and saxophone with Dr. Ann Bradfield and Professor Christopher Merz. During the 2014–15 academic year, Middleton served as principal saxophone in the Northern Iowa Wind Symphony and lead alto saxophone in UNI's Jazz Band One. In March of 2014, Middleton toured Brazil with the Northern Iowa Symphony Orchestra and Jazz Combo. The tour included stops in Porto Alegre and Caxias do Sul where he had the opportunity to collaborate with student musicians and professors from the Universidade de Caxias do Sul. Winner of the 2015 Northern Iowa Wind Symphony Concerto Competition, Middleton performed the 2nd movement of Ingolf Dahl's *Concerto for Alto Saxophone and Wind Ensemble* with the Northern Iowa Wind Symphony in November of 2015.

Prior to attending CSU, Middleton served as Director of Bands at Okoboji High School in Milford, IA where he upheld a longstanding tradition of excellence in instrumental music. Under Middleton's direction, the Okoboji Concert Band received superior ratings at the Iowa High School Music Association Large Group Festival in 2018 and 2019, the Okoboji Jazz Band earned first place in class 2A at the 2018 and 2019 Iowa Jazz Championships, and numerous students were selected to the Iowa All-State Music Festival and Iowa All-State Jazz Band. In

July of 2018, the Okoboji Concert Band performed at the United States Navy Memorial Plaza in Washington, D.C. While teaching in Iowa, Middleton maintained a private studio comprised of saxophone students from various schools in Northwest Iowa.

At the 2019 Iowa Bandmaster's Association conference, Middleton participated in the Young Conductor's Symposium where he worked with Dr. Paula Holcomb, Director of Bands at the State University of New York at Fredonia. Middleton has served on the faculty of the Reggie Schive Summer Jazz Camp at Iowa Lakes Community College since 2019 and maintains an active role in the Jazz Educators of Iowa.

As a saxophonist and woodwind specialist, Middleton toured throughout Europe, North America, the Caribbean, and South America as a member of Cunard Line's Royal Court Theater Orchestra and Regent Seven Seas Cruises' Regent Signature Orchestra. During these tours, he played alto saxophone, flute, and clarinet in a wide variety of theater shows as well as jazz and ballroom dance sets. In Iowa, Middleton has performed regularly with the Dick Baumann Big Band, the Jazzed Up Big Band and Sextet, and the Stephens College Theater pit orchestra. Middleton has performed with a number of influential musical artists including The Temptations, Dave Douglas, Dick Oatts, Nachito Herrera, and Gabriel Mervine.

Middleton's professional affiliations include National Band Association, North American Saxophone Alliance, Iowa Bandmasters Association, and Jazz Educators of Iowa.