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The Organ Concerto of Paul Cooper: An analysis

Naylor, Carol Chubb, M.M.

Rice University, 1987
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THE ORGAN CONCERTO OF PAUL COOPER: AN ANALYSIS

by

CAROL C. NAYLOR

A THESIS SUBMITTED
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE

MASTER OF MUSIC

APPROVED, THESIS COMMITTEE:

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May, 1987
THE ORGAN CONCERTO OF PAUL COOPER: AN ANALYSIS

CAROL C. NAYLOR

ABSTRACT

Three features of the musical speech of Paul Cooper figure prominently in his compositions for the organ, and specifically the Organ Concerto (1982). These are a "signature chord", a "Lombardian snap", and the process of pitch centering by assertion. It is a matter of greater importance to see how these features are presented within a much wider context.

The Organ Concerto itself was commissioned in 1982 by Clyde Holloway and Christ Church Cathedral, Houston, Texas, in conjunction with the Cathedral's Whitsuntide services. Cooper chose to pattern the Concerto in the style of a Baroque concerto grosso. It is very simply conceived in four movements with an overall rhythmic design of, I: Fast, II: Slow, III: Fast, IV: Coda(Slow); where alternating movements employ similar material in a formal outline as follows: I:A, II:B, III:A¹, IV:B.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

It is with deep appreciation that I extend my thanks to those who helped to make this thesis a reality.

To George Burt, Director of the thesis, for his patience and insight in the preparation of the document;

to Paul Cooper for his willingness to have his work scrutinized;

to Clyde Holloway for the inspiration to push just a little bit harder;

and, most importantly, to Harold Naylor, Jr. for his undaunted commitment to this end.
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The Organ Concerto
Three features of the musical speech of Paul Cooper figure prominently in the composer's compositions for the organ, and specifically the Organ Concerto (1982). A vertical sonority, labeled here by the analyst as a seven-note chord which we refer to hereafter as the "signature chord" forms a solid referential norm in Cooper's work.

The signature chord at its initial conception, the Concerto for Violin and Orchestra 1967, looked like the example below,

![Musical notation image]

and resembled an eleventh chord with a flat thirteenth and a sharp fifteenth, and a displaced bass (see example 2.)
In working with the sonority the composer discovered that all transpositions of the chord were not satisfactory to his ear. A related chord was used in the *Requiem for Organ and Percussion*, and was first known as the Requiem chord.
This second disposition is common to the Requiem for Organ and Percussion (1978), Organ Concerto (1982), and In Nomine (1984).
The "Lombardian snap", a term coined by the composer to refer to the process of inverted dotting (\( \cdot \cdot \)) which is often called "stile lombardo" or the "Scotch Snap", can be found with great regularity at the opening of sections or works.
IN NOMINE

This figure adds a rhythmic thrust, to what is frequently, the introduction of new material.

Lastly, and of most interest to the analyst, is the process of pitch centering by assertion established in Cooper's craft as a repeated note rhythmic figure usually seen in a descending pattern.
While this figure is aurally and visually appealing, it is most often challenging to produce at the tempi prescribed for both the ensemble and the organ.
These features of musical speech are by no means an exhaustive listing. They are, however, an accumulation of years of personal study, external influences, and a wealth of experience.

Paul Cooper was born on May 19, 1926 in Victoria, Illinois. He was educated at the University of Southern California, Los Angeles, and at the Conservatoire National and the Sorbonne in Paris. His illustrious teachers included Ingolf Dahl, Ernest Kanitz, Roger Sessions, Haley Stevens, and the famed Nadia Boulanger. As a result of a commission from the Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra, the composer made his professional debut in 1953.

The Organ Concerto itself was commissioned in 1982 by Clyde Holloway and Christ Church Cathedral, Houston, Texas, in conjunction with the Cathedral’s Whitsuntide services.

Cooper chose to pattern the Organ Concerto in the style of a Baroque concerto grosso. It fits neatly into a Fast-Slow-Fast-(CODA) format and utilizes the baroque principles of contrast (tutti/concertino), ritornello, recitative and aria, and, in addition, a melody borrowed from a Johann Sebastian Bach Chorale. Far-reaching complexities, disguised in the simplicity of structure, are the hallmarks of Paul Cooper’s style and this composition is no exception to that philosophy.
Before examining the individual movements of this concerto, a step back to view the larger picture, the concerto as whole, is in order. We move forward on the basis of the knowledge that Paul Cooper set out to write in reference to a baroque concerto. A brief look at the form would show that some of the earliest examples come to us from Arcangelo Corelli (1653-1713) who employed the use of solo/tutti contrast but with no differentiation in style between the opposing factions.

The greatest contributions to the concerto grosso were made by Giuseppe Torelli (1658-1709). Among Torelli's contributions were the use of:

1. Fast-Slow-Fast: three movement structure
2. Tutti: "solid thematic quality"\(^1\)
3. Solo passages: "lively, diversified, idiomatic figuration"\(^2\)
4. Ritornello style: thematic material returns at the end of the movement in the original key.

The Organ Concerto is very simply conceived in four movements with an overall rhythmic design of:

I: Fast (Molto Agitato \( \frac{4}{4} = 132 \))
II: Slow (Molto Adagio \( \frac{4}{4} = 60 \))
III: Fast (Presto \( \frac{4}{4} = 152 \))
IV: Coda: Slow (Molto Adagio \( \frac{4}{4} = 52 \))
where alternating movements employ similar material
(a formal outline as follows):

I: A
II: B
III: A'
IV: B'

The succeeding chapters will canvass each movement for
formal structure and the compositional processes
employed.
Movement I assumes the following formal diagram:

\[
\begin{array}{cccccc}
& X & A & X_1 & A_1 & X^2 \\
\hline
(1-6) & (7-17) & (18-21) & (22-29) & (30-33) & (34-38) \\
T2 & T9 \\
\hline
A^2 & y & X^2 & A^3 & \text{Coda}(A^4) \\
(39-52) & (53-66) & (67-72) & (73-88) & (89-103) \\
\end{array}
\]

The Concerto opens with a fortissimo statement of the signature chord

\[
\text{II.}
\]

\[
\begin{array}{cccc}
\text{C} & \text{G}^\# & \text{E} & \text{C}^\# \\
\text{F} & \text{G} & \text{F} & \text{G} \\
\text{G} & \text{A} & \text{B} & \text{C} \\
\text{A} & \text{B} & \text{C} & \text{D} \\
\text{D} & \text{E} & \text{F} & \text{G} \\
\end{array}
\]

on the downbeat of measure one by the pizzicato strings as the solo organ presents a sixty-fourth note arpeggiation of the chord. Winds, brass and timpani stress the importance of this opening with an entrance on the second beat (off-beat) of the first measure.
At the tempo indicated ($\frac{4}{4}$=132), these factors work together to achieve the aural effect of a "Lombardian snap" and to create an atmosphere of molto agitato.  

In its most common form, the signature chord may be regarded as a thirteenth chord, which is not to say that it functions as such; however it serves as a point of reference for this movement.

As we shall see, Cooper's "mystic chord" is presented in endless ways in this work as well as in other compositions.

Measures 1 through 6, here labeled x, represent the first tutti (full ensemble) statement of this movement.
This section functions as an introduction to the succeeding A (concertino) rather than following the Baroque pattern where the theme is stated initially to be developed further.

It should be observed at the outset that the solo organ does not function (strictly speaking) as a soloist in this composition, but as a member of both the concertino and tutti ensembles.

The concertino, measures 7 through 17 (labeled A), begins with a dialogue in the pedal and left hand within the solo organ part based on a nine-note source set.

\[ \text{14.} \]

\[ \text{\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{music notation}} \]

In response, the string basses and solo trumpet commence a subsequent dialogue three measures later, the melodic material now at transpositions 2 and 12 respectively (see measures 10-14).
Accompanying this A material is a closed position voicing of the signature chord

in the reverse-dotted rhythmic pattern common to the composer's work. In addition, the violincellos carry an expressive elaboration of the trumpet line, achieved by the use of chromatic passing notes and a triplet figure creating a sense of floating buoyancy.

The melodic material referred to as a nine-note pitch set that forms the basis for the sections designated as A, consists of pitches from the signature chord (i.e. pitches d, a, c and e, b). More importantly, in the analysts's view, is the apparent similarity to the melodic style of the composer's friend and mentor, Ross Lee Finney.

In Paul Cooper's January 1967 Musical Quarterly article "The Music of Ross Lee Finney", the composer states "the indirect influence of folksongs...[on] Finney's melodic ideas... are mainly comprised of scale fragments and intervals of thirds and perfect
fourths..."⁴. Similar characteristics exist in the melodic material of this movement and the following example from Cooper's Requiem for Organ and Percussion (1978).

Measure 17, which is toward the end of the first section A, is representative of another important characteristic of the style of Paul Cooper, that of elision. With regard to the recurrence of elision throughout this composition and the other organ works referenced, it would seem that the composer's use of the device is not merely out of an aversion to sectionalization per se, but out of a desire to prolong
the vitality of a melodic or harmonic idea to the fullest extent.

The solo organ, and to some extent the contrabass line, at this point (m. 17) conclude a presentation of the A material as the strings, winds and brass interrupt to announce the return of the x sonority, the signature chord.
The sudden change from pizzicato to arco bowing in the strings, a fortissimo dynamic indication, and the aural illusion of the reverse dot rhythm signal the reappearance of this tutti section. The addition of a triplet figure into the string lines vitalizes this short exclamation.

The fourth section (A₂) of this first movement (see measures 22-23) is a fine example of the late sixteenth century practice of a firm bass and florid treble found in many Baroque concertos. Representing the firm bass idea are the violins doubled by the winds carrying a variation of the A source set at transposition 2,

![Musical notation image]

appearing off the beat instead of on.

Representing the florid treble (here seen as florid bass) is the solo organ part. This contrapuntal line is comprised of stepwise and the perfect fourth features mentioned previously.

![Musical notation image]
In addition, these fluid lines are particularly playable for the organist and a good illustration of the "singing" quality of the instrument.

In the next section, measures 22 through 33 illustrate another aspect of seventeenth century style, and that is the exchange of phrases from instrument to instrument as diagrammed below:

```
MEASURE: (22) (25) (30) (33)

WINDS
xxxxxxx
       (T10)

ORGAN

STRINGS
(T2) (T72) xxxxxxx

KEY:
xxxxx = DOUBLINGS OF SET FRAGMENTS
------ = NINE NOTE SOURCE SET
-------- = CONTRAPUNTAL ACCOMPANIMENT LINE
```

The melodic material of this second portion of A1 is the nine note source set at transpositions 12 and 10. The former transposition is seen below to illustrate yet another rhythmic presentation of this set.
The tutti returns in measures 34 through 38 again employing the x material, and functioning as an abrupt ending to the lyrical character of the previous section and as a brief introduction to the third treatment of A (measures 39 through 52).

The use of stretto; an overlapping of fugal entrances before completion of a statement, is another device used by Cooper to continue the forward motion of this work. In what unfolds to be a seven-voice fugato, the composer weaves the melodic material, the source set at T12, through the contrabass, organ, violincello, vibraphone, viola, celesta and violins before abruptly ending in measure 52 (see measures 39 through 52).
The processes of registral partitioning of the set and continuous adjustment of the rhythmic element, contribute to the subtle crafting of this fugue (see example below).
An unexpected change in dynamics; from mezzo piano to fortissimo at measure 53, occur as the solo organ introduces the new tutti—here labeled Y (measures 53 through 66). In contrast to the Baroque idea of tutti material, section Y reveals the versatility of a solo instrument, the organ, by employing a florid contrapuntal line. As before, the counterpoint spotlights the use of the perfect fourth and chromatic intervals.

The orchestral role in this portion is similar to that of a paddle wheel in a river stream. As the counterpoint begins its journey to the climax, the ensemble periodically interjects a chord into the stream of sound. These vertical sonorities draw mainly from a stacking of perfect fourths, with a sprinkling of thirds. Although each sonority the orchestra plays is marked fff and with a down bow (\(^\text{m}\)), the chords serve to generate momentum rather than to punctuate it.

The final drive (measures 65 through 67) is powered by a cascading thirty-second note pattern propelling the ensemble in to the next section, a return of x.
The final concertino portion of this first movement, labeled A³, takes its rise in measure 73 with the contrabass and violincello entrance of the set at T12. The solo organ quickly follows suit in measure 76 with a canonic treatment of the set at transpositions 12 and 10. The canon is then repeated in measures 80 through 85 (see measures 76 through 85).

The most interesting feature of this section, however, is the use of the repeated note figure, a familiar articulator in Paul Cooper's style.
Beginning in the clarinet line this figure, which makes use of a well-known perfect fourth and chromatic interval outline, descends through the winds and brass and then ascends through the winds. It is a visually, as well as audibly, appealing technique.

Measures 85 through 88 represent an elision of the final statement of the A material and the section labeled CODA (or A4). These four measures are characterized by the sustaining of the signature chord by the solo organ and the strings while the winds and brass wind down the previous accompaniment figure.

An example of the Ritorrenello principle— the return of the A material in its original form or key— mentioned earlier in this chapter is found in the CODA (measures 89-103). Segmentation of the nine note set at the original level form the basis for this section.

The set fragments are carried by the winds and doubled by the strings and tubular bells. A softly sustained presentation of the signature chord by the organ is the foundation for this final statement of A.

The aura of serenity surrounding the closing portion of this movement is created by the tempo change in measure 89 (from $\frac{3}{4}=132$ to $\frac{4}{4}=104$) and a pianissimo dynamic marking in measure 96.
Paul Cooper has pointed out that this second movement was composed with reference to the chorale tune "Christ Lag in Todesbanden". This becomes a unique aspect, one which impacts on both the choice and use of pitch material and the resultant feeling of emotionality.

30. Christ Jesus Lay in Death's Strong Bands

The tune is based on the sequence "Victimae Paschali Laudes" (ca.1050) and on the hymn "Christ ist erstanden" (XII century).
The chorale was borrowed by Martin Luther in 1524 and this version was harmonized by Johann Sebastian Bach.

It is the text (specifically the first verse), however, that is of great significance to the formal structure of this movement. The text can be divided into four patterns of thought.

1. **Sorrow**: Christ Jesus lay in death's strong bands, for our offenses given;

2. **Realization**: But now at God's right hand He stands, And brings us life from Heaven;

3. **Joy**: Therefore let us joyful be. And sing to God right thankfully Loud songs of Alleluia!

4. **Praise**: Alleluia!

As we shall see, this second movement can be divided into four major sections, each creating an atmosphere to correspond with the text.
Let us assume the following formal analytical scheme as a basis for this movement:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1st Section</th>
<th>2nd Section</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>B x B¹ x B² x B¹/B</td>
<td>(1-14) (15-17) (18-22) (23-25) (26-39) (40-42) (43-51)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>3rd Section</th>
<th>4th Section</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>B³ B¹ x B B¹ x</td>
<td>(52-59) (60-65) (67-71) (72-77) (78-84) (85-95)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The principle thematic idea is first presented by the violincellos in measures 1 through 14 (labeled B) in an elaborated linear presentation resembling a vocal line spinning forward with intense sorrow.
The text at this point is: "Christ Jesus lay in death’s strong bands, for our offense given." A note by note comparison (shown below) of the first phrase of the chorale tune shows the similarity in the outline of both melodies.

The chorale tune spans a perfect fourth and uses only half steps and whole steps in the process. The Cooper melody encompasses a major sixth and includes thirds and a perfect fourth in the stepwise motion. The vibraphone and celesta accompany this lament with a somber chiming of the opening tone F#. As if to portray a gathering of mourners, the flutes, vibraphone, celesta and organ periodically interject to echo the feeling of grief.

The basis for the accompanimental figures consists of two 5-note unordered source sets as follows:

\[ #1 \]
\[ #2 \]
These sets are treated in four different ways in the course of the movement, but are found only in the two sections labeled B.

An interesting detail in the accompaniment at this point (measures 6-10) is a brief statement by the celesta of the source set A from the first movement. The set is at T12 and exhibits the same registral partitioning of the set found in section A² (measures 39-52).
The example below shows that the source set at T12 begins on c⁰ and ends on b⁰, amplifying the wedge shape ( △ ) created by the flute and cello. The pitches, c⁰ and b⁰, are presented an octave lower and an octave higher thus contributing to their importance.
This melancholy environment finds reprieve for a brief moment (measures 15 through 17) through a pianissimo sustaining of the signature chord, labeled as x. This functions as a plateau within a larger context.

This sonority then serves to lead in to the next portion (B¹) of the first section (measures 18 through 22).

B¹ consists of another variant of the principle thematic material (Christ Lag in Todesbanden) in a chorale style presentation by the solo strings.
The significance of the $B^1$ section stretches far beyond measures 18 through 22. As stated earlier, the movement divides into four sections, each of which divide further into two parts.

1st Section

$B \quad B^1$

2nd Section

$B^2 \quad B^1/B$

3rd Section

$B^2 \quad B^1$

4th Section

$B \quad B^1$

The symbols $B$, $B^2$, and $B^3$ represent solo or duet presentations of the thematic material, while the symbol $B^1$ delineates the four-voice chorale style presentation of the chorale melody. In the first portion of each section the melody is set with slight inflections and irregular rhythms as might be found in a solo vocal line. The setting in the second portion is senza vibrato and bears a closer resemblance to the Bach chorale setting. In combination these features are suggestive of a type of recitative and aria.
The second section of movement two, labeled B² (measures 26 through 39) begins with the text "But now at God's right hand He stands, and He brings us life from Heaven"⁸. The realization in this text is brought to life by a viola and oboe duet of the B material at T10.

A most absorbing feature of this setting of the chorale melody is the undulating rhythm produced by a recurring triplet figure in the organ accompaniment.

This motion carries the duet along until it is briefly interrupted by a tutti announcement of the signature chord (measures 40-42). The sonority fades away and, most importantly, prepares for a return to the chorale by the winds and horns.
This chorale statement is now intensified by the statement of the principle thematic material at the original pitch level carried by the violincellos and, the presence of the consequent phrase of the chorale for the first time in the movement (measures 43 through 51).
The undulant feeling resumes in measure 52 as the solo organ carries the contrapuntal accompaniment line using thirty second note quadruplet figures this time, instead of triplets.

The third section of the movement is joyfully announced by the solo trumpet (measures 52 through 71), using a variant of the chorale melody in another rhythmic presentation.
The contrabass section adds to the impetus already established with a climbing, chromatic, pizzicato line (measures 55-59).

Without notice we are thrust into the next portion of section three; the return of B♭ (measures 60 through 68). In this treatment the chorale melody is deeply embedded in the first violincello line and is surrounded by a thick texture of divisi strings in their low registers. The clarinet part gives the contrapuntal line a position of aural prominence while employing a new rhythmic gesture.

The oscillation, which contains the chorale melody, is created by half step movement in the strings. It is labeled by the composer as his "dirge" music, and was first seen in Liturgies (1968). This passage features an ascending bassline and is usually accompanied by snare drums.
Poco a poco crescendo in measure 60 leads this tutti section to a fff climax in measure 68. A sustained pianissimo presentation of the signature chord in measures 69 through 71 serve to gently release us from the fevered pitch.

The fourth and final section of this movement portrays the serenity of the text "Alleluia" (measures 72 through 95). Returning to the original pitch level, the first violins carry the chorale melody high in their range, accompanied only by the 5 note unordered pitch sets in the celesta part. The effect is expressive, yet serene.
The chorale style treatment of the thematic material (B¹: measures 78 through 82) is tranquilly set in the viola and violincello line, and played by four instrumentalists only. The calm is completed by a sustained signature chord from measures 84 through 95 broken only by the chiming of the tubular bells. A solo trumpet holds a pianissimo F⁰, like a sound from the distance, and elides movements two and three.
The third movement of Paul Cooper's Organ Concerto is described by the composer as a scherzo. It indeed displays some of the characteristics of a scherzo: rapid tempo (presto \( \text{\textbullet}=152\))*, vigorous rhythm, a certain abruptness of thought, and elements of surprise.

This movement is the longest of the four movements of the Concerto. It can be partitioned into three large divisions C-D-C or a ternary formal structure. For purposes of clarity, the symbols C-D-C are used to describe this ternary form so as not to be confused with the A and B symbols used earlier in this text.

The movement can be seen most succinctly in the formal diagram that follows:

```
Division C

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>C Section 1</th>
<th>C¹ Section 2</th>
<th>A Section 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>mm 1-6 c (subsection)</td>
<td>mm 17-22 c</td>
<td>mm 34-45 A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mm 6-12 c¹</td>
<td>mm 22-29 c¹</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mm 13-16 d</td>
<td>mm 30-33 e</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

D

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section 1</th>
<th>Section 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>mm 46-51 c</td>
<td>mm 62-67 d¹</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mm 51-57 c¹</td>
<td>mm 68-72 d¹</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mm 58-61 d</td>
<td>mm 73-77 d¹</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
```
C

C Section 1         C¹ Section 2         A Section 3
mm 78-83  c         94-99  c             111-118  A
mm 83-89  c¹        99-106  c¹
mm 90-93  d         107-110  e

Coda
119-124

The thread that binds the movement together is a rhythmic motive. This familiar articulator discussed in the Preface is now seen in an ascending melodic pattern of half steps, thirds and fourths.

The solo organ first presents this rhythmic and melodic idea, here labeled subsection c, in measures 1 through 6 at a tempo of $\frac{3}{8}=152$. 
The tempo marking in this movement is critical as it is the maximum speed at which the organ will speak effectively, and the maximum speed before which the repeated note figure loses its identity and becomes a slow four-beat measure.

The ascending pattern is further orchestratorially elaborated in the next subsection of C (measures 6 through 12) where it begins in the contrabass line and it is taken through the ensemble to the solo flute.
The string section at this point is marked "mutes arco sul pont." - mute with the bow near the bridge, and thus results in a sound that is glassy and eerie in quality.

The four measures that constitute d of the first section (measures 13 through 15) function as an interlude between the two larger sections C (measures 1 through 16) and C₁ (measures 17 through 33). This interlude is characterized by a contrapuntal line carried by the solo organ that utilizes the accompanimental material lifted from the first movement (measures 22 and 23).
Pizzicato strings accent the motion by doubling with pitches from the contrapuntal line on each beat (see previous example).

The second large section (measures 17 through 33) labeled C1 of the division C (measures 1 through 45), contains the same melodic and rhythmic material that is in the previous section with a few changes. The strings are instructed to cancel the earlier special effects (arco ord.), and the winds drop the triplet rhythmic figure in favor of a more legato line.

The final one third of the second section is indicated by the symbol subsection e (measures 30 through 33). This portion of the movement serves the same function as measures 13 through 16, that of an interlude.
between the two larger sections. A full ensemble fortissimo presentation of the signature chord opens this interlude, and a decrescendo reduces the dynamic to pianissimo over the course of the four measures. A change of meter (from $\frac{12}{8}$ to $\frac{4}{8}$) marks the transition into the section labeled A.

As an associative device, the A material from the first movement is incorporated into the third movement in this next section (measures 34 through 45). The nine note source set (A) is carried by the string section beginning in the first violins at T1.
The contrapuntal organ accompaniment is lifted from measures 22 and 23 (see below).

Additionally, the descending repeated note rhythmic figure is found again in the winds enhanced by an interesting staccato/slur articulation.

The middle division of movement three, designated D (measures 46 through 77), is a montage of borrowed material, appearing at the outset to be developmental in nature. It serves to create a frenzied atmosphere that is halted abruptly by the return of C (the third division: measure 78).
The first section of D (measures 46 through 61) again contains three subsections labeled c, c', and d respectively. These subsections contain the melodic and rhythmic material found in the first division C, but now at the T8 level.
As shown below,
the second and third sections of division D present what looks like entirely new material. Upon closer examination it can be seen that the figure carried by the wind section has been extracted from measure 3 of this movement.

The first portion of the melodic material in the flute part is treated by the characteristic pitch-centering-by-assertion triplet figure. The second portion is a retrograde of the first portion without the pitch-centering technique.

The solo organ beginning in measure 62 employs the contrapuntal figure first found in measure 13. New instructions—senza misura or without strict time—contribute to the frenetic feeling.

The last of the borrowed material can be seen in the string section and is found in movement one (measure 85 through 89) and movement two (measures 60 through 71).
It is a nine part chorale style setting with a rising bassline. In this case, as in the two previous movements, it serves as a link between two important sections.

Measure 77 is an significant measure in the proportion of the entire third movement. It is the only time in the course of the Concerto that the composer uses the notation \[\text{15"} \] (meaning 15 seconds) to direct the actions of the ensemble. Additionally, measure 77 ranges in dynamic from fff to ppp as it signals the return of large division C. Most importantly, measure 77 is the Golden Mean of the third movement.
The third division, C (measures 78 through 118), contains duplicate material of division C (measures 1 through 45).

The Coda to this movement is clearly designated by a tempo change to "Mezzo tempo \( \frac{\text{~}}{\text{~}} \) = 76". It is characterized by a pizzicato final statement of the principle thematic material, A, (from movement one) in the contrabass and organ pedal line, accompanied by the signature chord.

The organ pedal and the violincello and contrabass line sustain a D through into the fourth movement creating an elision between movements, similar to the second and third movements.
The fourth and final movement of the Organ Concerto, designated as [CODA] by the composer and marked Adagio \( \frac{1}{4} = 52 \), functions as a release for the entire concerto. The dynamic level never reaches beyond a mezzo forte while spending the majority of time at a pianissimo level, and the movement is replete with such terms as mysterioso, mutes, molto legato, molto espressivo, and niente.

The thematic basis for the movement is threefold:
1. Restatement of the principle thematic material from the second movement (B), 2. An accompanimental figure from movement two that is further developed and, 3. The use of the signature chord.

The first fifteen measures of this fourth movement are restated from the first fifteen measures of the second movement.
The violins set the eerie stage by trilling an F♯ low in their range as the organ pedal and contrabass lines continue the pedal point D from movement three, thus functioning as a connection. The violincello section interjects with a soulful statement of the chorale tune.

The next large portion of the movement (measures 16 through 37) functions as a link between two solo presentations of the chorale tune, and as an associative device between the second and fourth movements. The section begins with a restatement, in the solo organ, of the accompanimental triplet figure from measure 27 of the second movement.
In measure 20 the pattern repeats, up one whole step, in the solo organ, as the violas begin the pattern at the first level, followed by a variation of the figure in the cello basses.

The imitation continues through measures 25 through 30 as the melodic and rhythmic figure is carried through the winds.

This swell seems to subside for a brief moment (measures 31 through 33) as the strings sustain a D♯ and the organ triplet figure changes to quadruplets.
The reprieve is short lived, however, as the string section presents a two voice fugato (measures 34 through 37) utilizing the triplet figure.

As shown above, the quadruplet figure in the organ remains as an accompaniment to the fugal section.

These measure (16 through 37 and 38 through 43: to be discussed later) represent two of the more common characteristics of the composition style of Paul Cooper. The first, the process of the blurring of the line in the trumpet, is achieved by the artful use and development of the accompanimental triplet figure. The second process, elision, is cleverly displayed throughout measures 34 through 41, where the quadruplet organ figure continues as the triplet fugato begins, and the triplet fugato is maintained at the commencement of the restatement of the
chorale tune.

In measures 38 through 43 a solo trumpet states the chorale tune in a variant and diminished form. At this point the recitation is almost inaudible due to the triplet fugato and the random rhythmic presentation of a revoicing of the signature chord.
The next section of this movement employs the four voice chorale statement of the "Christ Lag in Todesbanden" melody in the strings. The antecedent and consequent phrases radiate a silvery flute-like quality produced by the natural string harmonics indicated by \[ . \]

The coda portion of movement four (measures 54 through 78) is sustained by the signature chord throughout the ensemble. The violincello and violin interject briefly with molto espressivo fragments of the chorale tune as the movement fades to a close.

The classic simplicity of the formal structure of The Organ Concerto disguises the complexities contained within the formal boundaries. For both the analyst and performer, this work brings insight into the musical speech of the composer, Paul Cooper.
To The Organist

The choice of registration is a major consideration for all organ pieces. It is frequently one of the chief identifying features of the period or school of composition. Specifications for twentieth century organ works range from, no suggestions at all, to registration in general terms, to the most minute change, subtraction or addition, to be made at only one precise instant.

70.

VARIANTS
FOR ORGAN

Paul Cooper

\[ \text{Sw. 4', 2 \frac{2}{3}, ppp 5} \]

\[ \text{Ped 16' (32' if ppp)} \]

\[ \text{4', ppp} \]

\[ \text{20''} \]

\[ \text{4', (ppp)} \]

\[ \text{20''} \]

\[ \text{pp 3} \]

\[ \text{16', reduce to 16' + 8', red. to original 16'} \]

\[ \text{pppp} \]
Variants for Organ (1973) is Paul Cooper’s first piece for organ and the only one that he chose to register specifically. With the help of Edwin Domb, Roberta Gary, and Ritter Werner, Variants is registered in the most minute detail (see example 70). From that time forward Cooper chose to set forth general guidelines to the organist, such as tempi, dynamics, orchestral color, rather than to designate specifics.

The "organ" that the composer "visualized" during the composition of the Organ Concerto was a large romantic American organ, one capable of a variety of romantic and orchestral colors such as soft strings, clarinet, English horn, and so on. Specifications of the organ at Christ Church Cathedral, Houston, are given below as one example of the resources available. The Cathedral Organ is the instrument on which the premier performance was made.
Christ Church Cathedral

THE CATHEDRAL ORGAN

GREAT ORGAN
16' Violon
8' Principal
8' Holz Gedeckt
4' Principal
4' Rohrfloete
2' Super Octave
3 1/5' Cornet II-III
1 1/3' Fourniture IV
2/3' Cymbale IV
Chimes

POSITIV ORGAN
8' Gedeckt
4' Nachtorn
2' Blockfloete
1' Siffloete
2 2/3' Sesquialtera II
1/2' Scharf III
1/4' Zimbel III
Tremulant

CHOIR ORGAN
16' Quintaton
8' Viola Pomposa
8' Viola Celeste
8' Concert Flute
8' Dolcan
8' Dolcan Celeste
4' Zaubersfloete
2' Flageolet
8' Cromorne
8' Corno di Bassetto
8' Trompette Harmonique
Tremulant

SWELL ORGAN
8' Geigen Principal
8' Stopped Diapason
8' Viole de Gambe
8' Viole Celeste
4' Octave Geigen
4' Flute Harmonique
2 2/3' Nasard
2' Doublette
1 3/5' Tierce
1 1/3' Kleine Mixture II-III
1' Plein Jeu III
1/3' Cymbel II-IV
16' Fagotto
8' Trompette
8' Voix Humaine
4' Clairon
Tremulant

PEDAL ORGAN
32' Soubasse (Bourdon; lower 12 resultant)
16' Principal
16' Bourdon
16' Violon (Great)
16' Quintation (Choir)
8' Principal
8' Flute Conique
8' Quintaton (Choir)
8' Violoncello (Great)
5 1/3' Quint
4' Choral Bass
4' Nachthorn
3 1/5' Tierce
2' Blockfloete
2 2/3' Fourniture IV
16' Bombarde
8' Trompette
4' Clairon
Chimes

Built in 1939 and
Revised in 1957 and 1967
by the Aeolian-Skinner Organ Company
Some of the choices for registration in the Organ Concerto may be more obvious than others. However, the aforementioned guidelines—tempi, dynamics, and orchestral color—are helpful in most instances. As an example, the opening of the concerto calls for full orchestra at a fortissimo dynamic marking which would suggest a registration of full organ at that point. At measure 22 of the first movement the composer would have orchestrated this contrapuntal organ using bass clarinets and clarinets. On the other hand, Cooper would orchestrate the similar contrapuntal passages in the second and fourth movements, (measures 54 and 34, respectively) using the strings, and specifically the cello to carry the rising bassline. With few exceptions, these suggestions for stop selection will require augmentation with 4' or 2' stops or mixtures to add clarity to the organ line.

Measures 99 through 103 suggest the use of string stops by the ppp dynamic marking and the orchestral color. The opening organ passage of the third movement suggests flute stops because the answer is set high in the woodwind section, and by the use of a ppp dynamic marking.

It should be observed at the outset that the Organ Concerto is not a concerto for the solo organ. The organ functions strictly as another color(s) in the ensemble,
and in some cases is not audible.

The final choices of registration will be a function of the size (specifications) of the organ and the place of performance, the proximity of the organ to the orchestra and the entire ensemble to the audience.
ENDNOTES


2 IBID.

3 *Harvard Dictionary of Music*, 2nd ed., s.v. "mystic chord" - a chord invented by A. N. Scriabin that formed the harmonic basis for several of his works.


6 IBID.

7 IBID.

8 IBID.

9 IBID.

BIBLIOGRAPHY


Mezzo tempo \( \frac{\text{b}}{\text{76}} \)
Molto adagio $\frac{b}{4} = 52$