

**Jewish Culture and Religion in the Wake of the Holocaust as
Reflected in Jorge Grundman Isla's *Shoah for Solo Violin*
*and Sacred Temple***

by

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Abstract

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Doctor of Musical Arts in Violin Performance

Title: Jewish Culture and Religion in the Wake of the Holocaust as Reflected in Jorge Grundman Isla's *Shoah for Solo Violin and Sacred Temple*

The *Shoah for Solo Violin and Sacred Temple* by Spanish composer, Jorge Grundman Isla, is a six-movement work that commemorates the atrocities of the Holocaust. Composed in 2017, this piece is massive in scope and takes 90 minutes to perform. It is informed by historical events and is inspired by the Jewish people's celebration of the Arts and humanity, in the midst of their genocide. In this document, I will analyze Grundman's work and discuss its commemorative elements. I will approach the *Shoah* in three areas: historical breakdown, thematic analysis through the inspiration from J.S. Bach's "Chaconne" from his *Partita no. 2 in D minor* and Philip Glass *Violin Concerto no. 1*, and Grundman's inspiration from Holocaust Museums. A deep dive into the background of this large-scale work enhances a better understanding of the work by performer and listener alike. Elements such as the Shoah songbook, wartime sound effects, and harmonic chaos cultivate the listening experience.

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I. Commemoration and Historical Framing

Jorge Grundman Isla (b. 1961) is an award winning composer from Madrid, Spain. His works have been performed in major concert halls around the globe by renowned musicians such as Alisa Weilerstein, the daughter of famed violin pedagogue and performer Donald Weilerstein, Guy Braunstein, the former concertmaster of the Berlin Philharmonic, and the internationally acclaimed Brodsky Quartet. His success as a composer allowed him to create the Non-Profit Music Foundation, an organization whose focus was to both promote contemporary composers and to collect funds for humanitarian causes, which include Doctors Without Borders.

Grundman wrote the *Shoah for Solo Violin and Sacred Temple* in 2016 as a commemoration of the Holocaust. The work is composed in six movements and each movement begins with a preface that the performer is meant to read aloud. The work is 90 minutes in length, or 60 minutes, should one perform the work without the readings.

Shoah and Commemoration

Commemoration can take many forms. In music, composers commemorate by writing music for a specific time, place, or to evoke an event. Jorge Grundman Isla capitalizes on all these forms of commemoration in his *Shoah for Solo Violin and Sacred Temple*. He informed his composition by traveling to museums and Holocaust sites and listening to recordings of music written in the camps. The work commemorates different events of the Holocaust and includes Hebrew melodies, war sirens, and concentration camp lullabies into its texture. Grundman states,

It is a solo recital which can tour through synagogues, cathedrals, and museums. And there are two very important dates to be performed: January 27th, the International Day of the Holocaust; and the Yom HaShoah day which changes every year. For the year 2022 it will take place April 27th afternoon through April 28th afternoon.”¹

¹ Jorge Grundman, Email from Grundman to the Author about the *Shoah*, September 2, 2021.

While Grundman's work is one of many that commemorates the Holocaust, it is one of the few works for solo violin. The work is full of power and passion and Grundman's work requires a virtuosic technique, and deep musical understanding of the piece's origins.

Grundman's work is a musical narrative of the Holocaust. The first movement is an oversight of the Holocaust, the second movement focuses on the Warsaw Ghetto, the third movement commemorates the Terezin internment camp and the art created by the prisoners, the fourth movement memorializes the massacre in Kiev, and the final movement portrays the camp at Bergen-Belsen and the capture of Alma Rosé (niece of famed composer Gustav Mahler) and her experiences there with the Schutzstaffel (SS).

Yom HaShoah: The Day of Remembrance

One of the most important parts of Yom HaShoah is the telling of the Holocaust events. The telling of stories is an important ritual in the Jewish religion, and in the Jewish Passover celebration. For the celebration, it is one's duty to retell the story of Passover each year. The *Shoah* begins with a musical observance of the holiday and then a musical retelling, in the subsequent movements.

Yom HaShoah begins with air raid sirens filling the air, followed by a two-minute moment of silence during which all activities must halt. Ceremonies are also held at synagogues, schools, universities, civic centers, and shopping areas. Radios perform music written in the concentration camps and television programs broadcast Holocaust mindfulness throughout the day. All of this encompasses the commemoration, filling every mind with constant remembrance.² Yom HaShoah,

² Jorge Grundman, *Shoah for Solo Violin and Sacred Temple*, Madrid: Non-Profit Music Foundation, 2016, 9.

...is the Day of Commemoration of the Holocaust in Israel. On that day, at 10am, the air raid sirens sound. People embrace silence and transportation comes to a halt. On motorways, drivers get off their vehicles and stand up while the sound propagates through the air they breathe,³

The first movement, entitled “Yom HaShoah,” starts with the violin imitating air raid sirens (see figure 1).

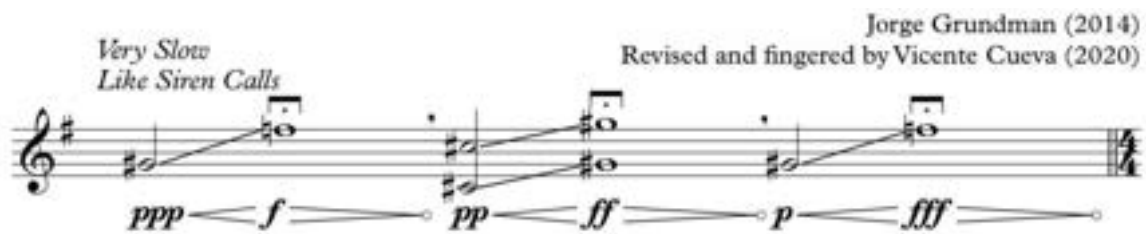


Figure 1. The *glissandi* provide a sound similar to an air-raid siren.⁴

After the sirens, there is a simple, yet haunting, two-minute melody that serves as a sense of quiet. The use of *bariolage* offers a harmonically static sequence that serves to instill calm.

The Story Behind the *Shoah*

The rise of Nazism was encouraged by a radical political movement in Germany marked by economic depression. Looking for a scapegoat to channel their misery, Hitler, a persuasive military personality of the time, targeted the Jews, the group of educated and successful businesspeople. He rallied on the emotional depressions and turmoil of the people, and, perhaps with a personal vendetta, Hitler’s powerful hyperbole fed the rise of the German downtrodden. What followed was one of the worst moments in history with the target of extermination of one

³ Jorge Grundman, *Shoah for Solo Violin and Sacred Temple*, 9.

⁴ Jorge Grundman, “Yom HaShoah,” in *Shoah for Solo Violin and Sacred Temple*, 13, m. 1.

of the largest and most prosperous groups of people. The invasion of Poland signified the start of WWII which also marked the construction of the concentration camps. It is here that Grundman focuses his monumental work. The second, third, fourth and fifth Movements of Grundman's *Shoah* focus on the Warsaw Ghetto, Theresienstadt, the Babi Yar Massacre, and Bergen-Belzon, the locations of the War's worst atrocities, respectively. Musical ideas reflect life in the camp and the feeling of anxiety throughout. This section will serve to explore each of these stories and put each movement in a historical context.

The Warsaw Ghetto

The Warsaw Ghetto, one of the first and most horrific of the Nazi occupations, was established in 1940. Warsaw, a thriving center of European culture, was decimated by the Nazi invasion. However, in a desperate attempt to hold on to their civility, the Warsaw citizens strove for life. Concerts, theater, and other cultural events were deliberately maintained, despite the unusually harsh living conditions. UK music historian Shirli Gilbert writes,

The musical landscape of the Warsaw ghetto was one of impressive scope: it offered more performances, of more varied range and subject matter, and in a greater number of locations than any of its counterparts. It boasted a symphony orchestra, several Polish and Yiddish theatres, choral groups, and cafes, and hosted countless concerts and informal events.⁵

Warsaw Ghetto resident, Ya'akov Tselemensky recalls,

When we reached the nightclub the street was dark. My escort suddenly said to me: 'Be careful not to step on a corpse.' When I opened the door the light blinded me. Gas lamps were burning in every corner of the crowd cabaret. Every table was covered by a white tablecloth. Fat characters sat at them eating chicken, duck, or fowl. All of these foods would be drowned in wine and liquor. The orchestra, in the middle of the nightclub, sat on a small platform. Next to it a singer performed. These were people who once played

⁵ Shirli Gilbert, *Music in the Holocaust: Confronting Life in the Nazi Ghettos and Camps*, New York: Oxford University Press, 2005, 25.

before Polish crowds. Now they were reminded of their Jewish heritage... The audience ate, drank and laughed as if it had no worries.⁶

Their solace in the Arts turned into their nightmare. After a while, the musicians were forced to play for Nazi guards, and not their countrymen. Long hours of playing and the constant threat of punishment, should the music not please the guards, made for a scary and miserable existence. An elegant and sophisticated aspect of pre-war life in Warsaw turned into a mockery.

Grundman shows this in his second movement, "Getto Warszawskie," through his juxtaposition of musical motives: minor versus major tonalities; resonate key areas for the violin versus muted key signatures; extreme dynamic changes; melodic expansion and diminution; and dramatic uses of double stops to create tension (see Figure 2).

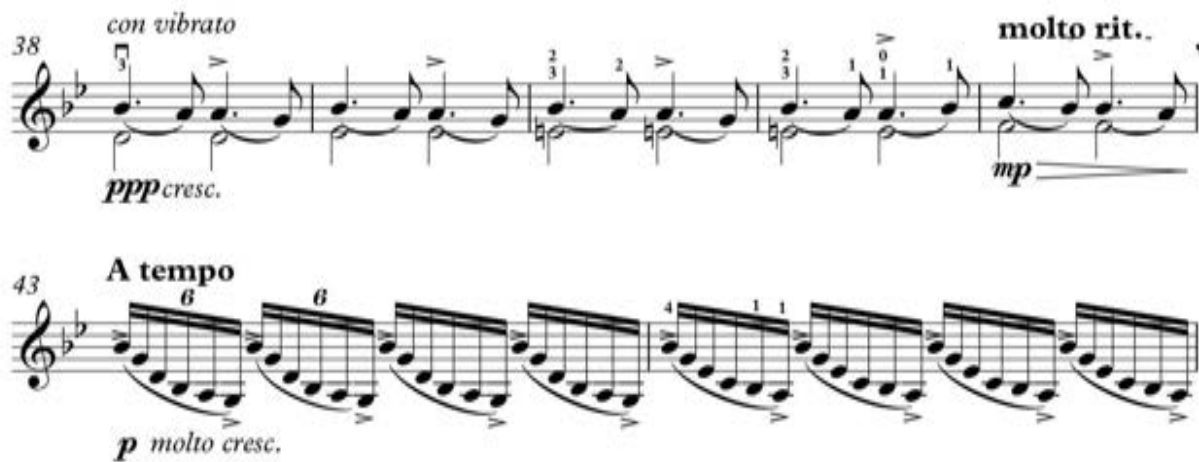


Figure 2. The tense suspension figure that interrupts each section followed by the arpeggiated figure of the second section.⁷

The movement begins with a beautiful G major melody which quickly changes to G minor in the eighth measure. The major sections are static in character while the minor sections are

⁶ Shirli Gilbert, *Music in the Holocaust*, 29.

⁷ Jorges Grundman, "Getto Warszawskie," in *Shoah for Solo Violin and Sacred Temple*, 26, mm. 38-44.

interrupted by explosive dynamic changes. The first instance of the suspension figure happens in m. 38, interrupting the melodic material present in the beginning of the piece, only to last five measures before being interrupted by another musical figure in minor arpeggiations.

The second interruption, m.64, is signaled by the harmonic suspension. Arpeggiated figures next obstruct double stops for eight measures. A sudden glissando from the note F5 on the E string to F6 provides dynamics dot to the landscape. The third suspension obstruction occurs in m. 100 by the arpeggiated figure. This lasts twenty measures with dynamic changes ranging from *pianississimo* to *fortississimo*.

The final statement of the suspension theme reflects the hardships of the Ghetto prisoners in a musical way by presenting in the key of G-flat major (a difficult key to execute and one that does not resonate well on the instrument), the implementing of playing fifths, and putting the music in the very high register of the violin. These techniques create an uneasiness and tension in sound that is to reflect life in the Warsaw Ghetto.

Theresienstadt

The Terezin Concentration Camp was specifically populated with important European Jewish musicians, writers, and artists and its purpose was to show to the outside world that life in concentration camps was humane and just. This was, of course, wartime propaganda. As Grundman mentions in his preface to the third movement:

When reports on extermination camps came to light, the Nazis decided to submit Theresienstadt to an investigating commission by the International Red Cross. In preparation for the visit, more deportations to Auschwitz took place with the aim of reducing overcrowding. Fake stores were opened, a cafeteria, a bank, a school, kindergartens and the like, and flower gardens were planted all over the place. After the visit, the nazis produced a propaganda film about the new life of Jewish people under auspices of the Third Reich. When the filming ended, most of the actors, including nearly

all the independent leaders and the majority of the children, were sent to the gas chambers at Auschwitz-Birkenau.⁸

How were these prisoners who were starving, poorly clothed, exhausted, able to create art with artistic freedom? Marjorie Lamberti, in her article, “Making Art in the Terezín Concentration Camp,” states,

Gerald Green wrote that the artist had “a will to create” that the Nazis could not destroy. Lucy Dawidowicz stated that the artists were “impelled” to bequeath to posterity “a documentary record” of the destruction. “Their art was art for history’s sake,” she concluded.⁹

While the goal of the Terezin camp was propaganda to show compliance with the Red Cross and the European nations, make no mistake that conditions for the inmates were harsh. Still, prisoners produced an enormous amount of Art, including the renowned drawings by children which depicted their lives in the camp. These drawings, haunting and devastating to view, survived the War and eventually traveled to Holocaust museums around the globe and they serve as the inspiration for Grundman’s third movement,

This is how the idea or the partita originated. In order to celebrate our silver wedding anniversary, my wife presented me with a vacation in Prague. We visited the Jewish Museum, where we saw an exhibition by the name “Children’s Drawings from the Terezin Ghetto.” Nazi propaganda, to mark the visit of the Danish Red Cross, filmed the concentration camp in a way that would depict life there as sheltering, protecting, safeguarding. Work, concerts, education, clothes, cleanliness, leisure. Everything was thoroughly set up.¹⁰

The movement begins with a simple melody set in a high register of the violin; the high register representing the voices of children (see figure 3).

⁸ Jorge Grundman, *Shoah for Solo Violin and Sacred Temple*, 33.

⁹ Marjorie Lamberti, “Making Art in the Terezin Concentration Camp,” *New England Review*, 17, no. 4 (1995): 104–11, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/40243120>, 105.

¹⁰ Grundman, *Shoah for Solo Violin and Sacred Temple*, 33.

♩ = 40
dolce et melancholic
 Jorge Grundman (2012)
 Revised and fingered by Vicente Cueva (2020)

8^{va}
 ppp

7

Figure 3. The haunting melody in the upper register of the violin.¹¹

The melody is marked *dolce et melancholic* but an interrupting figure that appears three times throughout the movement signals unrest (see figure 4).

Rubato ma non troppo

cresc.

19

23

f **p**

Figure 4. The interrupting juxtaposing figure.¹²

¹¹ Jorge Grundman, "Terezin Through the Eyes of the Children," in *Shoah for Solo Violin and Sacred Temple*, 37.

¹² Grundman, "Terezin Through the Eyes of the Children," 37.

This obsessive sequence of accented chords continues and gains intensity. The piece is in ABA form, with the B section highlighting the use of bariolage to emulate the feeling of a ticking clock (see figure 5).



Figure 5. Harmonically static bariolage.¹³

The movement plays with thematic augmentation in m. 54, with each note twice as long as in previous iterations. Sudden interruptions of the theme create a sense of urgency. As the piece continues, it restates the material but in a lower register. The melody is hauntingly played in double-stops and fades to *niente* on the final note. Grundman reflects, “That collection of drawings is all that remains of those children’s souls,”¹⁴ (See figure 6).

¹³ Jorge Grundman, “Terezin Through the Eyes of the Children,” in *Shoah for Solo Violin and Sacred Temple*, 38, mm. 36-37.

¹⁴ Grundman, *Shoah for Solo Violin and Sacred Temple*, 33.

The image shows three staves of musical notation. The first staff begins with the tempo marking "A tempo" and the dynamic marking "ppp cresc.". It features a series of double-stops on a single string, with fingering numbers (0, 1, 2, 3, 4) written above the notes. The second staff is numbered "94" and includes a "V" marking, continuing the double-stop pattern with various fingering numbers. The third staff is numbered "99" and includes the dynamic marking "p", the tempo marking "rall.", and "ppp" at the end. It shows the continuation of the double-stop pattern, ending with a double bar line and a final "ppp" marking.

Figure 6. Double-stop restatement of the theme decrescendo to *niente*¹⁵

Babi Yar

The fourth movement, “Babi-Yar,” is an event that lasted three days, from September 28-30 at the Babi Yar ravine in Kiev, Ukraine. The capture of Kiev by the Germans on September 19, 1941, was preceded by the Soviet secret police bombing and burning buildings occupied by the German military. The resultant declaration stated:

[Jews] of the city of Kiev and vicinity! On Monday, September 29, you are to appear by 7:00 A.M. with your possessions, money, documents, valuables and warm clothing at Dorogozhitshaya Street, next to the Jewish cemetery. Failure to appear is punishable by death.¹⁶

¹⁵ Jorge Grundman, *Shoah for Solo Violin and Sacred Temple*, 39.

¹⁶ “The Babi Yar Massacre (September 29-30, 1941),” The Jewish Virtual Library, 2007, <https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/babi-yar>.

What followed was “The Holocaust by Bullets.”¹⁷ Jews were led to Babi Yar, or “Old Woman’s Ravine,”¹⁸ stripped, searched, and killed. Quoted in the Jewish Virtual Library article written on Babi Yar, one German soldier recalls,

On that day I may have shot some 150 to 250 Jews. The whole shooting episode went off without a hitch. The Jews surrendered to their fate like sheep to the slaughter.¹⁹

By October of 1941, it was said that not one of the approximately 350,000 Jews in Kiev remained due to the events at Babi Yar.²⁰

This movement is fast and furious (quarter note = 138) and marks the speed of which the onslaught of the Jewish people occurred. Grundman musically conceives the anxiety and dread of the situation. The three elements of this movement: half-step melodic motions, the use of double stops and an inner delineation of sections shows the personal chaos of the event.

The beginning melodic figure shows the half-step motion (see figure 7), a statement that emphasizes the half-step motion between the fifth and sixth scale degrees (see figure 8), ascending arpeggiations that outline the i and diminished ii chords (see figure 9) and the running sixteenth note figure that is restated in a different key (see figures 10 and 11).

¹⁷ Patrick Desbois, *The Holocaust by Bullets: A Priest’s Journey to Uncover the Truth Behind the Murder of 1.5 Million Jews*, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008.

¹⁸ Karel C. Berkhoff, “Babi Yar Site of Mass Murder, Ravine of Oblivion,” J.B. and Maurice C. Shapiro Annual Lecture, Washington DC: The Center for Advanced Holocaust Studies, 2012, https://www.ushmm.org/m/pdfs/Publication_OP_2011-02.pdf, 1.

¹⁹ “The Babi Yar Massacre,” The Jewish Virtual Library, <https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/babi-yar>.

²⁰ Karel C. Berkhoff, “Babi Yar Site of Mass Murder, Ravine of Oblivion,” 8.

Jorge Grundman (2016)
Revised and fingered by Vicente Cueva (2020)



Figure 7. The roving melodic material beginning the fourth movement of the *Shoah*²¹



Figure 8. The emphasis of half-step motion²²



Figure 9. The arpeggiations emphasizing the i and diminished ii chords²³

²¹ Jorge Grundman, "Babi Yar," in *Shoah for Solo Violin and Sacred Temple*, 45, mm. 1-5.

²² Grundman, "Babi Yar," 45, mm. 8-10.

²³ Grundman, "Babi Yar," 46, mm. 62-69.



Figure 10. The sixteenth-note runs²⁴.



Figure 11. The roving material from the beginning of the movement, but in A-flat minor.²⁵

The key map is as follows: G minor, A-flat minor, G major, and C minor (written in the key signature of G major/E minor). There is one exception to this rule of repetition in the third section where everything halts for a prayer-like melody in G major, nowhere else found in this movement. Grundman says,

They were split into groups of ten. No matter whether they belonged to different families or a whole family was present. They were taken to the ravine, and once there, they ran into the ugly truth. I can picture them begging, embracing each other or saying goodbye while blows and screams urged them to undress. After the bursts of gunfire, the naked

²⁴ Jorge Grundman, "Babi Yar," in *Shoah for Solo Violin and Sacred Temple*, 46, mm. 70-76.

²⁵ Grundman, "Babi Yar," 45, mm. 77-79.

bodies fell into the ravine, all heaped up on top of one another. They thought they were going to be deported. Then, another group of ten. And another one. And another one.²⁶

In the first section, measures 17, 35, 36, and 37 present “bursts” of double sixteenth notes that stick out from the rest of the notes. These bursts are important to resemble the “bursts of gunfire”²⁷ (see figure 12).



Figure 12. The accented sixteenth-notes that resemble the “bursts of gunfire.”²⁸

The second section follows the same layout but in the key of A-flat minor, another nod to Grundman’s use of a “dull” key to signal feelings of distress and despair. It is worth nothing that this key appears only twice in the piece, here and during the last measures of the piece.

The third section presents a new melody, (see figure 13).



Figure 13. The unique material that contrasts the rest of the movement.²⁹

²⁶ Jorge Grundman, *Shoah for Solo Violin and Sacred Temple*, 41.

²⁷ Grundman, *Shoah for Solo Violin and Sacred Temple*, 41.

²⁸ Jorge Grundman, “Babi Yar,” in *Shoah for Solo Violin and Sacred Temple*, 45, mm. 34-35.

²⁹ Grundman, “Babi Yar,” 48, mm. 153-161.

The tempo slows from quarter-note = 139 to quarter-note = 72, and uses longer note values to focus the listener to this prayer-like melody, for the “souls that departed from Earth at Babi Yar.”³⁰ The final section returns to previous melodic material and ends on a repeated four-note figure: F, G, A-flat, G (see Figure 14).



Figure 14. The repeated four note figure that brings the movement to the end.³¹

The movement ends in great sadness in the unexpected key of C minor.

Auschwitz and Bergen-Belsen

The fifth movement of Grundman’s piece musically represents the story of Alma Rosé, the niece of Gustav Mahler, who was imprisoned at Auschwitz, one of the most horrific concentration camps. “[Alma Rosé] rose above the terror of Birkenau to bring music to her fellow prisoners,” Richard Newman wrote in his article.³² The story of Alma Rosé is both tragic and inspiring, as not only did she rise above the odds that were against her to survive in both Auschwitz and Bergen-Belsen, but also managed to rise above her status in the camps, holding command over even the soldiers of Bergen-Belsen, as Newman writes,

³⁰ Jorge Grundman, *Shoah for Solo Violin and Sacred Temple*, 41.

³¹ Jorge Grundman, “Babi Yar,” in *Shoah for Solo Violin and Sacred Temple*, 50, mm. 258-264.

³² Richard Newman, “Alma Rosé: The Violinist Who Brought Music to Auschwitz,” *The Strad*, January 27, 2014, <https://www.thestrad.com/alma-rose-the-violinist-who-brought-music-to-auschwitz/341.article>.

According to one report of a concert in the bath-house, a number of SS women were joking and interrupting the performance in which Rosé was playing a solo. She stopped and angrily said: 'Like that I cannot play.' Silence followed; Rosé then played, and no one disciplined her.³³

Rosé's rise to fame began when she founded the *Die Wiener Wazermädeln*, The Viennese Waltzing Girls. This group toured Pre-War Europe and performed, rising to such a fame that allowed them to make sizable profits, even in the Great Depression.³⁴ After Hitler came to power in 1933, Rosé continued to tour Europe as a violinist shortly after she moved to Holland until she was arrested in Dijon, France, and transported to Auschwitz in 1943. That is where Rosé's status as a violinist became important to her survival. She was given a violin by the guards to perform. Her great skill was recognized, and she was transported to Birkenau to lead the women's orchestra there which was created by prisoners Zofia Czajkowsk and Stefania Baruch. Quoted in Newman's article, Sylvia Wagenberg, a member of the orchestra, said, "She turned the orchestra upside down on its head... We played from morning to night."³⁵

The orchestra was Rosé's pride and family within the camp, and she treated them as such. Amid the orchestra's purpose to serve the German's and play to their desire, the orchestra created art from their hearts and played for themselves and each other. Newman includes a quote by Violette Jacquet Silberstein who was in the orchestra under Rosé. She had just recovered from Typhus and was stopped by SS Franz Hössler after falling behind the orchestra while parading to the gate. She was too weak after recovery, as she recalled,

Alma answered truthfully. I had had typhus and was still weak. But she also lied for me, saying : "This is one of my best violinists." Hössler responded: "Very well. I will see that she gets extra rations for the next three months for her rehabilitation." I was by no means even a good violinist.³⁶

³³ Richard Newman, "Alma Rosé: The Violinist Who Brought Music to Auschwitz."

³⁴ "Alma Rosé," World ORT, 2000, <https://holocaustmusic.ort.org/places/camps/death-camps/birkenau/alma-rose/>.

³⁵ "Alma Rosé," World ORT, 2000.

³⁶ Newman, "Alma Rosé: the violinist who brought music to Auschwitz."

Rosé worked tirelessly and created a quality that would meet her father's Viennese standards. Her work was greatly respected to the point that German soldiers would ask for advice on their compositions or would have conversations with her regarding her tours.³⁷ Just nine months and twenty-two days prior to the liberation of Auschwitz by the Soviet army, on the night of April fourth into April 5th, 1944, Rosé died of what is thought to be botulism from a birthday party for a fellow prisoner functionary at Birkenau that happened two nights earlier.³⁸ Grundman states,

In October, 1944, the women's orchestra was sent to Bergen-Belsen. To coexist with the deepest misery was a new experience for them. Two bands played all day long while two thousand men, whipped to the beat of Lehár and Strauss, dragged corpses towards the pits. In the end, the orchestras were broken up.³⁹

The movement presents violinistic figures, ranging from double-stop thirds and octaves, to arpeggios in the third octave of the violin and techniques like *pizzicato* and *col legno* (see figure 15).

³⁷ Richard Newman, "Alma Rosé: The Violinist Who Brought Music to Auschwitz."

³⁸ Newman, "Alma Rosé."

³⁹ Jorge Grundman, *Shoah for Solo Violin and Sacred Temple*, 51.

The image shows a musical score for a violin piece, specifically focusing on the alternation between *col legno* and *pizzicato* techniques. The score is written in G minor and consists of three staves. The first staff (measures 93-98) features a melodic line with dynamics ranging from *p* to *ppp*, alternating between *col legno* and *pizz.* with a '+' sign above the notes. The second staff (measures 99-102) continues this pattern, with dynamics *ppp* and *p*, and includes a *Meno mosso* tempo change and a *pizz.* section with triplets. The third staff (measures 103-106) shows a more rhythmic, arpeggiated texture with dynamics *pp* and *p*.

Figure 15. Alternation between *col legno* and *pizzicato*.⁴⁰

The virtuosic techniques presented only serves as an homage to Rosé and her violin prowess, as Grundman’s goal is not to “lift up violin music to summits dreamt of by Ysaÿe,”⁴¹.

The movement is divided into seven different sections, each presenting separate material. The first section is played at a fast tempo and begins with a haunting melody in G minor. The dynamics are extreme and create a sense of wild unrest (see Figure 16).

⁴⁰ Jorge Grundman, “Bergen-Belsen,” in *Shoah for Solo Violin and Sacred Temple*, 56, mm. 90-102.

⁴¹ Jorge Grundman, *Shoah for Solo Violin and Sacred Temple*, 2.

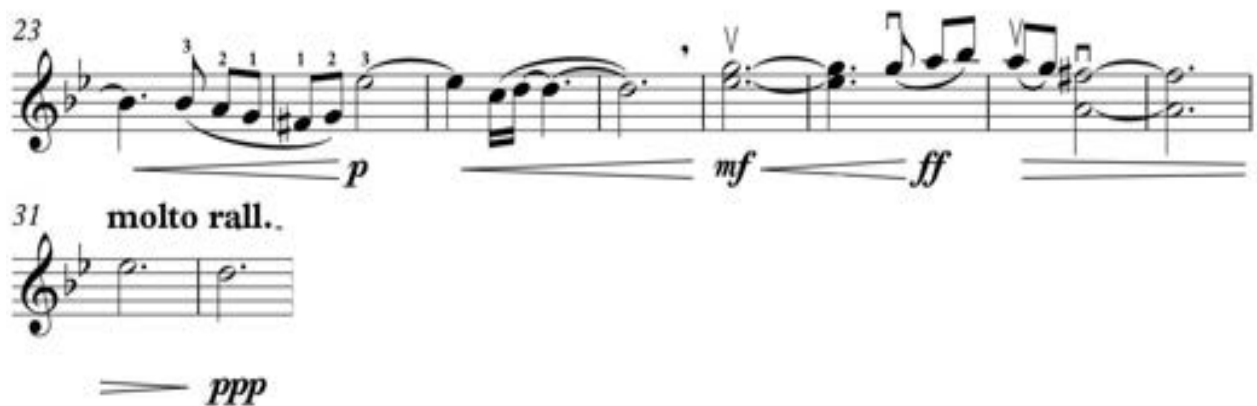


Figure 16. The haunting melody rising and falling with extreme dynamics.⁴²

This section starts with descending G-minor arpeggios in both single-notes and double-stop octaves (see figure 17).



Figure 17: Descending arpeggios with double-stop octaves.⁴³

⁴² Jorge Grundman, "Bergen-Belsen," in *Shoah for Solo Violin and Sacred Temple*, 55, mm. 23-32.

⁴³ Grundman, "Bergen-Belsen," 55, mm. 33-49.

Like the previous movement, Grundman uses half-step motion to emphasize anxiety within this insistent motive (see figure 18).



Figure 18: The ‘anxious’ half-step motion leading into the octave-higher restatement of the etude-like material.⁴⁴

The section ends with an obsessive sixteenth note ‘hammering’ that repeats for nine bars, utilizing the violin’s open strings for resonance (see Figure 19).



Figure 19: The ‘hammering’ of G octaves.⁴⁵

⁴⁴ Jorge Grundman, “Bergen-Belsen,” in *Shoah for Solo Violin and Sacred Temple*, 56, mm. 60-69.

⁴⁵ Grundman, “Bergen-Belsen,” 56, mm. 81-89.

Grundman States,

I doubt that Lily Mathé, who achieved success in Hungary by playing the violin, would not write on the inside while trying to hide her magic from the SS so that they would only hear the notes and not the art behind them.⁴⁶

The *pizzicato* continues the obsessive nature of the previous section set, this time in descending three-note figures (see Figure 20).



Figure 20: The obsessive descending three-note figures.⁴⁷

The fourth section, in contrast, states a hymn-like melody in long sustained tones (see Figure 21).

⁴⁶ Jorge Grundman, *Shoah for Solo Violin and Sacred Temple*, 51.

⁴⁷ Jorge Grundman, "Bergen-Belsen," in *Shoah for Solo Violin and Sacred Temple*, 56, mm. 98-104.

Musical score for violin, measures 118-159. The score is in G minor (one flat) and 4/4 time. It starts at measure 118 with a tempo of quarter note = 100. The first section (measures 118-134) is marked "come un lamento represso arco" and "accel.". Dynamics range from *ppp* to *p*. The second section (measures 135-155) is marked "molto cresc." and "molto rall.". Dynamics range from *mf* to *f*. The third section (measures 156-159) is marked "molto rall." and "mp dim.". It features complex fingering and bowing techniques indicated by "V" and "III" with numbers.

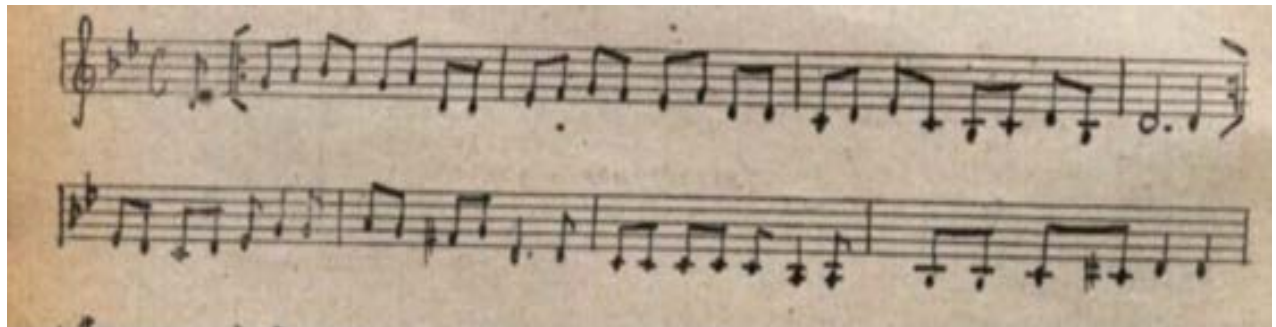
Figure 21: The comparison of the hymn-like material (mm. 118-134) with the violinistic figures (mm. 155-159).⁴⁸

Cantor sections throughout the piece makes it important to compare this piece with songs written in the camps.

The Fourteen Shoah Songbooks included in Bret Werb's article were written in the concentration camps about everyday life in the camps. The songs are short in length and reflect the rhythm of language. A quick observation of the songbooks makes it clear that Grundman's sectionalization format and vocal-styled writing are meant to imitate these songs. Consider the step-wise motion and phrase length of the Yiddish Holocaust song, "Tonie," from *Zamlung fun katset un gheto lider* (Anthology of Songs and Poems from the Concentration Camps and

⁴⁸ Jorge Grundman, "Bergen-Belsen," in *Shoah for Solo Violin and Sacred Temple*, 57, mm. 118-134; Grundman, "Bergen-Belsen," 57, mm. 155-159.

Ghettos) (see Figure 22) and the clear four-bar phrases delineated by rests in “Minutn fun bitokhn,” from *S'brent* (It’s Burning) as prime examples (see Figure 23).



Jorge Grundman (2016)
Revised and fingered by Vicente Cueva (2020)

$\text{♩} = 139$

A printed musical score for the same piece. It features a treble clef, a key signature of two flats, and a 3/4 time signature. The tempo is marked as quarter note = 139. The score is written in a clean, modern font. The first few measures are marked with *dolcissimo* and *pp* (pianissimo). The final measure is marked with *ppp* (pianississimo). The melody is characterized by a series of eighth notes with a consistent intervallic pattern.

Figure 22: “Tonie,” from *Zamlung fun katset un ghetto lider* compared to the fourth movement of Grundman’s Shoah, “Babi Yar”⁴⁹

⁴⁹ Bret Werb, “Fourteen Shoah Songbooks,” *Musica Judaica* 20 (2013): 39–116, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/26454583>, 48; Jorge Grundman, *Shoah for Solo Violin and Sacred Temple*, 45.



Figure 23: Rests separating four-bar phrases⁵⁰

The Vilna Ghetto

The final movement, titled “The Last Breath,” is written in the style of a Shoah lullaby. It is based on the song “Shtiler, Shtiler,” about a mother who tells her son to stop crying about the disappearance of his father.⁵¹ Written by Alexander Volkovitski in the Vilna Ghetto, this song was written to accompany the lyrics by poet and author, Kaczerginski. It was composed concerning the Ponary massacre which took place in German-occupied Vilna, Lithuania on June

⁵⁰ Bret Werb, “Fourteen Shoah Songbooks,” 53.

⁵¹ Werb, “Fourteen Shoah Songbooks,” 61.

24, 1941. German soldiers led Jews from Vilna to the Ponary Forest and slaughtered them in similar fashion to the Babi Yar Massacre. During the massacre, approximately 75,000 Jews were killed and dumped into mass graves.

During the Holocaust, the words of lullabies were often a mother calming her child because of a missing father. It became “fertile ground for a new kind of lullaby based either on popular melodies or new ones,” as is the case with “Shtiler, Shtiler.”⁵² The lullaby was written for a music competition within the ghetto, of which Alexander Volkovitski won, making this lullaby one of the most performed songs to remember the Holocaust. Although not fully borrowing directly from the melody of the lullaby, “The Last Breath” shares some similarities.

Grundman writes,

Not directly based on the melody, but in a rather close style, I tried to imagine a wordless song whispered by a mother to her daughter in order to calm her down. Only she was aware that their fate would take them to the gas chamber...⁵³

Grundman’s music shares the tonality of the lullaby. He imitates the use of scale degrees two, three, raised seven, and one to end a phrase (See figure 24).



Figure 24: Top - “The Last Breath” from Grundman’s *Shoah*. Bottom - “Shtiler, Shtiler”⁵⁴

⁵² “Shtiler, Shtiler (Quiet, Quiet): Music of the Holocaust,” Yad Vashem, <https://www.yadvashem.org/yv/en/exhibitions/music/shtiler-shtiler.asp>.

⁵³ Jorge Grundman, *Shoah for Solo Violin and Sacred Temple*, 61.

⁵⁴ Jorge Grundman, “The Last Breath,” in *Shoah for Solo Violin and Sacred Temple*, 65, mm. 13-14; “Shtiler, Shtiler (Quiet, Quiet): Music of the Holocaust,” Yad Vashem.

Although this chord progression is common in traditional tonal music, it is a rarity for Grundman.

The rhythm of the chant-like lullaby instructs the performance practice of this final movement. There are two recordings available of Volkovitski's lullaby on the Yad Vashem website, "Music of the Holocaust," and both "swing" or "chant" the eighth-notes figures. Here is an example of the swung rhythm in a Shoah songbook (see Figure 25).

The image shows two musical excerpts. The top excerpt is a single staff of music in G major, marked 'Più mosso'. It begins with a melodic line of eighth notes: G4-A4-B4-C5, then a descending line: B4-A4-G4-F4-E4-D4. The dynamics are marked 'dim.', 'ppp', 'cresc.', 'mp dim.', and 'ppp'. The bottom excerpt consists of four staves of music in G major, featuring a similar eighth-note rhythmic pattern. The lyrics are written in Hebrew below the notes.

Figure 25: Top - "The Last Breath" from Grundman's *Shoah*. Bottom - Excerpt from "S'iz shoyn bald a yor avek"⁵⁵

Music of War and Remembrance

Music can commemorate, reflect, or comment on life-changing world events to encompass from the celebratory to the appalling. Grundman's *Shoah* is a stunning homage to the Holocaust, but

⁵⁵ Jorge Grundman, "The Last Breath," in *Shoah for Solo Violin and Sacred Temple*, 65, mm. 27-29; Bret Werb, "Fourteen Shoah Songbooks," 78.

other composers have undertaken similar endeavors. Consider Beethoven's *Wellington Victory*, Handel's *Music for the Royal Fireworks*, and Richard Strauss's, *A Hero's Life*; all important works composed for just this reason. Contemporary composers continue this tradition. A look at Krzysztof Penderecki's work, *Threnody for the Victims of Hiroshima* (1960) shows this well.

Originally named, *8'37"* after John Cage's *4'33"* and was designed to "create a new musical language."⁵⁶ Looking at the notation of this work, the experimentation of music composition is easy to notice (see figure 26).

⁵⁶ Robert Charles Kavanagh, "'Threnody for the Victims of Hiroshima (1960)' by Krzysztof Penderecki (1933–2020)," *Medium*, October 29, 2022, <https://medium.com/@strengthfromscars/threnody-for-the-victims-of-hiroshima-1960-by-krzysztof-penderecki-b44ae9c52e36>.

6

24Vn
1-4
5-12
13-18
19-24

10VI
1-5
6-10

10Vc

8Cb
1-4
5-8

15''

Figure 26: The new musical language of *Threnody*⁵⁷

⁵⁷ Krzysztof Penderecki, *Threnody to the Victims of Hiroshima for 52 Strings*, New York: Deshon Music Inc. and PWM Editions, 1961, 6.

As James Keller writes in the San Francisco Symphony program notes about the piece,

Details of his *Threnody* did indeed become much imitated. As part of his composition, Penderecki invented various symbols to signify the effects he envisioned; these became standard in new music graphic notation, just as the sounds themselves became adopted by other composers who worked at the outer limits of acoustic possibilities. No live performance of the *Threnody* can be replicated exactly; although the piece is written out in careful detail, Penderecki allows the musicians some leeway in interpreting the score, the aleatoric aspects to extending even to letting the players decide in what order they may play certain groupings of notes. There are no bar-lines in the score; instead, the duration of pitches or gestures is indicated by timings, in seconds. The piece can seem to stand on the brink of chaos at many moments, yet the composer keeps it under attentive control much as composers have always done.⁵⁸

Its performance in San Francisco drove Penderecki to rename his work as a dedication to the victims of Hiroshima. In 1964, Penderecki's piece was performed in Hiroshima. He, afterwards, wrote a letter to the mayor of the city stating that this was a "tragedy of mankind," and, later stated, "This was not really political music that I was writing but it was music that was appropriate to the time during which we were living in Poland."⁵⁹

Norwegian composer Kim André Arnesen, in his choral piece *Even When He is Silent*, uses words that were carved in the wall of a cellar in Cologne, Germany by a Jewish individual who was hiding from the German soldiers during World War II. Arnesen wrote the music to capture the haunting text of the quote. As Arnesen writes,

The composition begins in stillness, reflecting the profound depth of the words. It gradually builds to a dramatic climax on the phrase "I believe in love," embodying the intense and conflicting emotions of holding onto it in difficult times. The piece then fades into a more contemplative ending, culminating in a serene acceptance of faith in God, even amidst the silence...The composition reflects on what can be taken away from us, like the sun and love, but it reminds us that even in the bleakest of circumstances, we can hold onto our hope and faith.⁶⁰

⁵⁸James M. Keller, "Penderecki, Krzysztof: Threnody for the Victims of Hiroshima," San Francisco Symphony, September 2017, <https://www.sfsymphony.org/Data/Event-Data/Program-Notes/P/Penderecki-Threnody-for-the-Victims-of-Hiroshima>.

⁵⁹ James M. Keller, "Penderecki, Krzysztof: Threnody for the Victims of Hiroshima."

⁶⁰ Kim Andre Arnesen, "Even When He Is Silent," Kim Andre Arnesen Composer, 2011, <https://kimarnesen.com/products/even-when-he-is-silent/>.

The quote that this piece uses has been used in other choir pieces, one of which was written by Michael Horvit to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of *Kristallnacht*, or “Night of Broken Glass.” The night of November 9th into the early morning hours of November 10th, 1938, brought destruction of Synagogues and Jewish-owned businesses by the German Nazi party in response to a declaration of war against German and Austrian Jews. The name, *Kristallnacht*, refers to the broken glass of windows that littered the streets following the destruction.⁶¹

Observing both pieces brought attention to the fact that they use different versions of the quote. Arnesen’s piece has the words,

I believe in the sun even when it’s not shining.
I believe in love when I feel it not.
I believe in God even when he is silent.⁶²

In Horvit’s version, the quote is:

I believe in the sun, though it be dark;
I believe in God, though He be silent;
I believe in neighborly love, though it be unable to reveal itself.⁶³

According to Debi Simons, a Denver-based author, teacher, and choral performer, the sun can be shining even if the speaker is in the dark, changing the meaning of the quote from ‘the sun is not shining because there is no hope’ to ‘the sun is still shining, but I cannot see it while I am hiding.’⁶⁴ One other change is that Arnesen switched the lines “I believe in love,” and “I believe

⁶¹ Jason Dawsey, “The Night of Broken Glass, Never to Be Forgotten,” The National WWII Museum | New Orleans, December 1, 2023, <https://www.nationalww2museum.org/war/articles/night-broken-glass-never-be-forgotten#:~:text=Kristallnacht%2C%20or%20the%20Night%20of,Administration%2C%20College%20Park%2C%20MD.>

⁶² Kim Andre Arnesen, “Even When He Is Silent.”

⁶³ Everett Howe, “I Believe in the Sun, Part V: The Source,” *The Humanist Seminarian*, April 10, 2021, Accessed May 2, 2024, <https://humanistseminarian.com/2021/04/04/i-believe-in-the-sun-part-v-the-source/>.

⁶⁴ Debi Simons, and Ronnie McKay, “The True Story behind the Text of ‘Even When He Is Silent,’” *Behind the Music*, September 19, 2022, <https://www.debisimons.com/the-true-story-behind-the-text-of-even-when-he-is-silent.>

in God,” putting more emphasis on the person’s faith in God.⁶⁵ With these changes, an important issue is brought to the surface regarding commemoration: is it ethical to change artifacts from the past, such as direct quotes, to fit commemoration? Even with this issue brought to the forefront, Arnesen is not the only composer to come under scrutiny for altering artifacts from the past to fit his own musical desires.

Steve Reich’s *Different Trains* (1988) creates an eerie narrative of the transport trains that transported Jews to their waiting concentration camps through his own memories of traveling on trains as a child Jew in America. He writes,

The concept for the piece came from my childhood. When I was one year old, my parents separated. My mother moved to Los Angeles and my father stayed in New York. Since they arranged divided custody, I traveled back and forth by train frequently between New York and Los Angeles from 1939 to 1942 accompanied by my governess. While the trips were exciting and romantic at the time, I now look back and think that, if I had been in Europe during this period, as a Jew I would have had to ride very different trains. With this in mind I wanted to make a piece that would accurately reflect the whole situation.⁶⁶

Different Trains creates musical fragments from the pitch contour of Holocaust survivors recorded interviews. This minimalistic work combines six different layers of music: pre-recorded fragments of the interviews featuring the survivors, three pre-recorded tracks by the Kronos Quartet, a track featuring recorded samples of train whistle and air raid sirens, and finally the last layer of the piece through a live performance by the quartet.⁶⁷ The result is an attempt to bring the listener to the experience of the survivors through careful scoring of live music, pre-recorded music, and artifacts from the past.

⁶⁵ Everett Howe, “I Believe in the Sun, Part V: The Source.”

⁶⁶ Alan Kozinn, “Different Trains / Electric Counterpoint,” Kronos Quartet, February 22, 2020, <https://kronosquartet.org/recordings/detail/steve-reich-different-trains/>.

⁶⁷ Amy Lynn Wlodarski, “The Testimonial Aesthetics of Different Trains,” *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 63, no. 1 (2010), 101.

In *Different Trains*, Reich “steers their memories into chronological templates that benefit the staging of *Different Trains*.”⁶⁸ This creates a controversy of Reich’s attempt at objectivity. The piece is divided into three movements, each movement for a stage of the memories: pre-war, war time, and post war and each of the interviews are curated to reflect this.

It is worth noting that all the works mentioned aim to recreate the horrors of WWII, but each composer puts their own personal stamp on their musical commemoration which can alter the information presented. Wlodarski, scholar of the relationship between Jewish music, trauma, memory, and the tragedies of the Holocaust, writes,

As the witnesses stumble through the “ruins of their memory,” they frequently encounter narrative gaps, inconsistencies, and contradictions created by psychological phenomena such as post-traumatic repression, blackouts, and humiliation. Just as often, they seem genuinely frustrated at their own inability to translate their Holocaust experience into words and images that the non-survivor would understand.⁶⁹

Psychological trauma presents a problem for Reich’s objectivity, as it makes all information that is included in *Different Trains* subject to the effects of trauma.

Awareness of the composer’s place after WWII, and their motivation in writing their works, brings a nuance to experiencing these compositions to the modern listener. Grundman’s *Shoah* is the most recent work in the survey and offers a more informed yet distant account of the experience. Musical commemorative works, especially those composed to observe catastrophic human events, bring a consideration to the genre. Some pieces of this kind, such as the Penderecki work, were re-purposed by the composer to empower their works’ intentions. The Arnesen and Reich compositions modify their original content to better suit the musical flow. Grundman shows how commemoration as remembrance can be the first focus of a composition. Because the *Shoah* was composed specifically as a Holocaust keepsake, it has allowed me, as a

⁶⁸ Amy Lynn Wlodarski, “The Testimonial Aesthetics of *Different Trains*,” 111.

⁶⁹ Wlodarski, “The Testimonial Aesthetics of *Different Trains*,” 109.

performer, to bring my research, my sensibility, and my own experiences with the Holocaust to personalize my performance. I know that as I continue to perform the *Shoah*, the piece will evolve with my impassioned awareness towards human oppression.

II. Influence of Bach and Glass

The *Shoah* offers two melodic approaches. The first approach is slow, prayer-like melody and the second is the arpeggiated bariolage. This chapter will examine how Grundman incorporates other genres into his style through comparisons of works by Bach (the works' stated inspiration) and the Philip Glass Violin Concerto, a stylistic similarity. Through this examination, the nature of the bariolage material will become clear.

Influence of the Baroque

The influence of the Bach solo sonatas and partita is evident throughout *Shoah*. This set of Bach's works represent the pinnacle of the genre and have inspired other composers to fashion their works in this style. The technical feats, the harmonic explorations, and the melodic inventiveness are awe-inspiring, and Grundman models his work on all three aspects.

Grundman writes,

What most people don't know is that, in the baroque, music hadn't yet reached its highest degree of emotional expression, at least as we know it nowadays...It is obvious that Bach did not write those dances with the aim of stirring people's emotions. Much has been said about the Chaconne in D minor. It has been speculated that Bach, at some point between 1718 and 1720, placed his notes on the stave after returning from a trip and finding that his wife, Maria Barbara, had died. But the master of masters did not write music as an emotional vehicle to the enjoyment of art, but as a part of his civic or religious task, as a Lutheran organist.⁷⁰

And,

Even though a sarabande or a gavotte may be performed at a slow tempo, it seems rather inappropriate to see dance music as a way of lifting up the spirituality of the soul to remembrance...Because, among other things, and although Bach's music transcends spirituality and is written to the glory of God, most grieves are usually paying attention to their memories...I have tried to have to have Bach's presence in a subliminal way while writing this work. I have also tried to take Jewish music in my heart so that it mixes with

⁷⁰ Jorge Grundman, *Shoah for Solo Violin and Sacred Temple*, 2.

my way of writing music. Therefore, it is not a suite of dances. Quite the opposite, it is a suite of memories of abominable events.⁷¹

Bach's "Chaconne," is considered one of the most extraordinary movements of the set, exceeding 15 minutes in duration. The length of a piece serves as a statement of mastery over musical form as well as being "associated with an artist's ability to capture an audience's attention on a grandiose scale."⁷² It should be noted this movement alone exceeds the length of full concertos written by Bach, placing importance in the work's role in the Baroque era.

The overarching A-B-A form of the "Chaconne," is set in three distinct sections: D minor, D Major, and D minor, delineated by strong cadences. The beginning statement of the "Chaconne" serves as its harmonic and rhythmic foundation (see figure 27).



Figure 27: The beginning rhythmic and harmonic motive of the "Chaconne."⁷³

The movement is composed of four-bar phrases, with the rhythmic energy stemming from beat two (also see Figure 26) and later changing beat emphasis (see Figure 28).

⁷¹ Jorge Grundman, *Shoah for Solo Violin and Sacred Temple*, 2.

⁷² Joel Lester and Richard Jonathan, "Bach: Partita No. 2 in D Minor, Chaconne: Analysis," Mara Marietta, June 12, 2019, <https://www.maramarietta.com/the-arts/music/classical/bach/>.

⁷³ Johann Sebastian Bach, "Ciaccona," in *6 Sonatas and Partitas for Violin Solo*, New York: International Music Company, 1971, 33, mm. 1-5.



Figure 28. Measures 57 through the downbeat of 61 emphasize beats one and three.⁷⁴

The use of bariolage is a virtuoso bow technique that is utilized in both the Bach work and Grundman’s work. Bariolage comes in two forms in the “Chaconne:” the rapid sweeping of the bow across three or four strings seen in the A and B sections (See figure 29), or a repeated note alternating against a rising or falling line (see figure 30).



Figure 29: Bariolage from the A-section⁷⁵

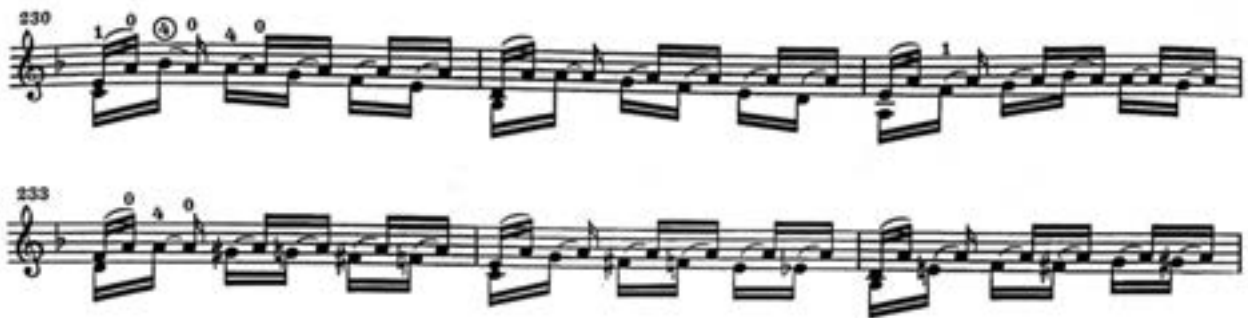


Figure 30: Bariolage from the A’-Section⁷⁶

⁷⁴ Johann Sebastian Bach, “Ciaccona,” 34, mm. 57-61.

⁷⁵ Bach, “Ciaccona,” 36, mm. 92-3.

⁷⁶ Bach, “Ciaccona,” 45, mm. 230-35.

The melody lies in the first note of each bariolage set in both sections, the A'-section reflecting the descending bass line on which the "Chaconne" is based. The use of bariolage serves as emotional insistence in Grundman's music, whereas the use of bariolage in the "Chaconne" is used more for harmonic insistence.

Form

The first movement of the *Shoah* is organized in A-B-A' form but Grundman delineates his sections with references from the Shoah songbook. (See figures 31 and 32).



Figure 31: The A-section of the *Shoah*, showing a slow Shoah songbook-like melody⁷⁷

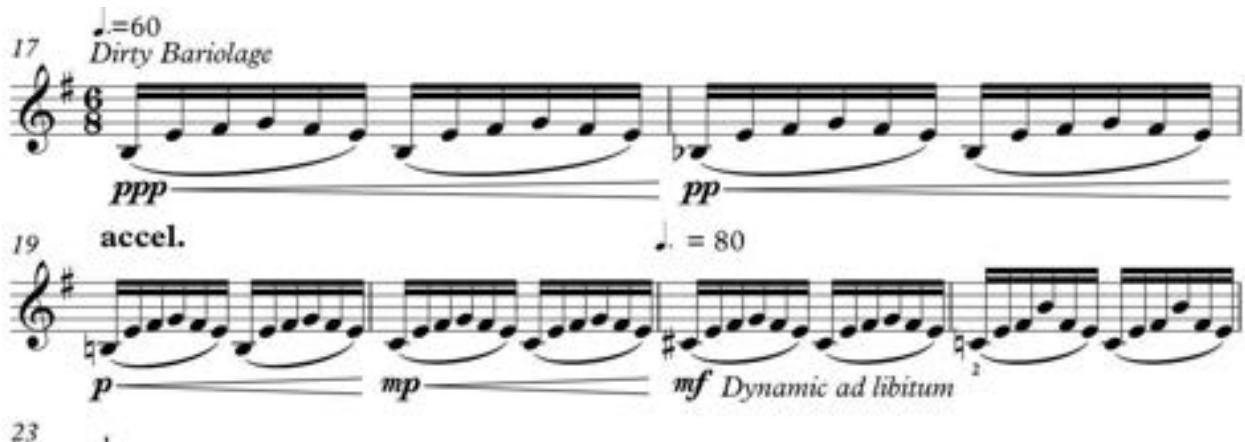


Figure 32: the quick-paced bariolage of the B-section.⁷⁸

⁷⁷ Jorge Grundman, "Yom-HaShoah," in *Shoah for Solo Violin and Sacred Temple*, 13, mm. 4-8.

⁷⁸ Grundman, "Yom-HaShoah," 13, mm. 17-22.

The bass line that forms the basis of the B-section is present in the first note of the bariolage groupings and changes every two beats. The bass line notes are, B, B-flat, B, C, C#, C, B. As the bariolage continues, another bass line appears that shows relation to the “Chaconne”. Starting in m. 42, this section has two distinct bass lines: a chromatic neighbor motif (marked in red) and a descending four-note bass line (marked in blue) (see Figure 33).

The image shows a musical score for three staves. The top staff is marked "Poco a poco a tempo" and "staccato". It features a "Chromatic Neighbor" motif, which is a sequence of notes: B, B-flat, B, C, C#, C, B. This motif is highlighted with red boxes. The middle staff is marked "44" and "simile". It features a "Descending 4-note figure", which is a sequence of notes: B, B-flat, B, C. This figure is highlighted with blue boxes. The bottom staff is marked "47" and "49". It features a descending four-note figure, which is a sequence of notes: B, B-flat, B, C. This figure is highlighted with blue boxes. The score includes various musical notations such as stems, beams, and slurs.

Figure 33: The chromatic neighbor figures versus the descending four-note figure.⁷⁹

There is a notable rhythmic comparison between the “Chaconne” and the second movement of the *Shoah*, (See figures 34 and 35).

⁷⁹ Jorge Grundman, “Yom-HaShoah,” in *Shoah for Solo Violin and Sacred Temple*, 14, mm. 42-49.



Figure 34: The beginning measures of Bach’s “Chaconne”⁸⁰



Figure 35. The second movement of the *Shoah* with rhythmic similarity to Bach’s “Chaconne”⁸¹

Additionally, the shift from strong second beat to either beat one or beat three, is a shared rhythmic shift that creates forward motion and instability. The principal melody in Grundman’s work returns three times throughout the movement, but modifies the landing beats in each (see figures 36, 37, and 38).

⁸⁰ Johann Sebastian Bach, “Ciaccona,” 34, mm. 1-3

⁸¹ Jorge Grundman, “Getto Warszawskie,” in *Shoah for Solo Violin and Sacred Temple*, 25, mm. 11-17.

Lentamente Jorge Grundman (2015)
 ♩ = 56 Revised and fingered by Vicente Cueva (2020)
sul G

Figure 36: Main melody from m. 1.⁸²

con rubato

Figure 37: The return of the main melody from m. 72.⁸³

121

126

Figure 38: The final statement of the main melody in m. 121.⁸⁴

⁸² Jorge Grundman, "Getto Warszawskie," in *Shoah for Solo Violin and Sacred*, 25, mm. 1-4.

⁸³ Grundman, "Getto Warszawskie," 27, mm. 72-75.

⁸⁴ Grundman, "Getto Warszawskie," 30, mm. 121-126.

Like the first movement, this movement’s bariolage section has a melody that is informed through the movement notes from arpeggio to arpeggio. After ten measures of bariolage, the music halts before an obsessive appoggiatura motif, which reveals another four-note descending figure (See figure 39).

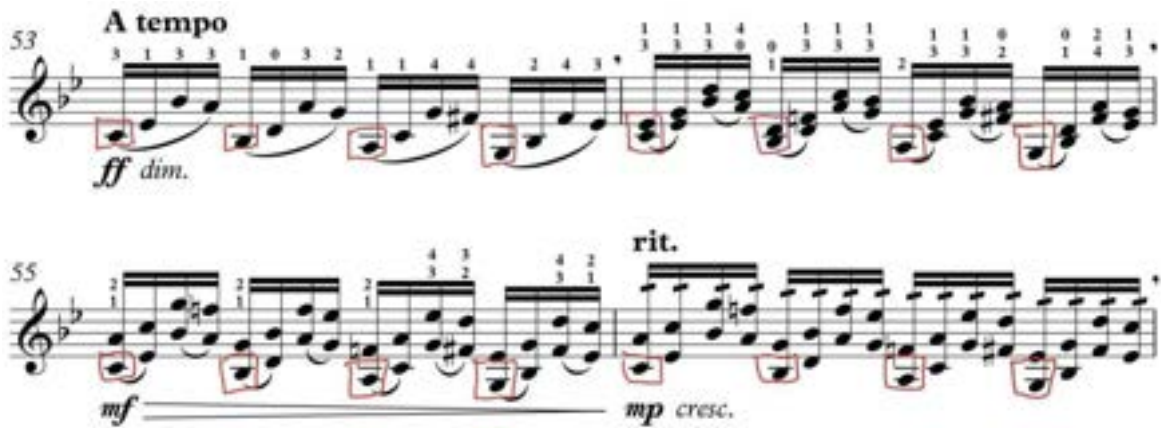


Figure 39: The descending four-note motive present in the appoggiatura section.⁸⁵

The third movement of the *Shoah* is formatted similarly to the second movement, with a slow melody starting the movement and sections divided by an obsessive interrupting figure. The large B-section provides seventeen measures of static bariolage. In previous movements, bariolage sections had dynamic variation and a climax, but this section is written entirely in *pianississimo* and *flautando*, with a very gradual and lengthy crescendo to the *fortissimo* in the next section. The largely unmoving harmonic structure of this section gives a sense of stasis to the musical direction.

The bariolage in the A’ section of the “Chaconne,” has a similar clock-ticking motion between strings and a drone note that stays static against a rising and falling line to what is written in the third movement of the *Shoah* (see figure 40).

⁸⁵ Jorge Grundman, “Getto Warszawskie,” in *Shoah for Solo Violin and Sacred Temple*, 26, mm. 53-56.



Figure 40: The rising and falling line over a drone note⁸⁶

Influence of the 20th Century

While the influence of the Bach Chaconne is inherent in the composition, consideration of another large-scale 20th century minimalistic work, the Phillip Glass *Violin Concerto no. 1*, further informs Grundman’s violin composition process.

Philip Glass is considered one of the cornerstone American composers of the minimalist genre. Glass wrote his *Violin Concerto no. 1* as his first major work for a conventional symphony orchestra and it presents many musical ideas that make his musical signature: “broken chords, repeated motifs, [and] wafty atmospherics.”⁸⁷ The purpose of the violin in this concerto is “as part of the ensemble rather than showboating,”⁸⁸ as opposed to other virtuoso works that herald “summits dreamt of by Ysaÿe.”⁸⁹

Philip Glass was inspired by Bach throughout his compositional style, writing pieces such as his *Partita for Solo Violin* (2011), which is loosely based on Bach’s solo violin partitas and includes

⁸⁶ Jorge Grundman, “Terezin Through the Eyes of the Children,” in *Shoah for Solo Violin and Sacred Temple*, 38, mm. 36-37.

⁸⁷ Daniel Ross, “Here’s Why Philip Glass’ Violin Concerto No. 1 Is the Best Concerto of the Last 50 Years,” *Classic FM*, January 31, 2017, <https://www.classicfm.com/composers/glass/guides/violin-concerto-best-50-years/>.

⁸⁸ Daniel Ross, “Here’s Why Philip Glass’ Violin Concerto No. 1 Is the Best Concerto of the Last 50 Years.”

⁸⁹ Jorge Grundman, *Shoah for Solo Violin and Sacred Temple*, 2.

two chaconnes, so the chaconne is no stranger to Glass’s compositional skill set.⁹⁰ In some way, Glass has Bach subliminally in his music just as Grundman does. Glass said regarding the fact that he played the violin,

for some reason the violin didn’t ‘take,’ which is odd to imagine, given that I’ve written so much string music-solo, quartets, sonatas, symphonies - since then. Though I never became a decent violinist, I learned what I needed to write for the instrument. I’ve always worked closely with string players and feel confident now when I compose for them.⁹¹

The first movement of the concerto relies heavily on lower and upper neighbors to create tension and incorporates bariolage to define tonal centers. (See Figure 41).



Figure 41: Harmonic rhythm of Glass’s *Violin Concerto no. 1*⁹²

Compare this harmonic treatment to Grundman’s *Shoah* (see Figure 42).

⁹⁰ Brian Wise, “Repetitive Mystique: Appreciating the String Music of Philip Glass,” *Strings Magazine*, February 1, 2022, <https://stringsmagazine.com/appreciating-the-string-music-of-philip-glass/>.

⁹¹ Brian Wise, “Repetitive Mystique: Appreciating the String Music of Philip Glass.”

⁹² Philip Glass, *Violin Concerto (1987)*, Brighton, Sussex: J&W Chester Ltd., 1987, 2, mm. 13-18.



Figure 42. Harmonic rhythm of the first movement of the *Shoah*.⁹³

The use of motivic repetition is a characteristic of Glass' music to create stagnation and insistence. Grundman uses this idea as well (see figure 43).



Figure 43. Harmonic stagnation in the *Shoah*.⁹⁴

Glass's *Violin Concerto* also has static repetition as a key trait (see Figure 43).

⁹³ Jorge Grundman, "Yom-HaShoah," in *Shoah for Solo Violin and Sacred Temple*, 16, mm. 99-104.

⁹⁴ Grundman, "Yom-HaShoah," 16, mm. 87-95.



Figure 44. Harmonic stagnation in Glass's work.⁹⁵

The second movement of the concerto is built around a bass line that is reminiscent of Bach's "Chaconne" (See Figure 45).

Figure 45. The beginning measures of the second movement of Glass's *Violin Concerto no. 1*⁹⁶

Throughout the movement, Glass has two bass lines that appear. The first one is the ever-present descending five-note C minor motion and the other a transitional four-bar note pattern that appears on the fourth iteration of the bass line: C, C, G, F, F-sharp. This reveals a macro phrase of sixteen measures that serves to give motion to the larger picture of the movement. The treatment of dynamics throughout the concerto is also important to understanding Grundman's compositional style, as Glass also writes extremes only to end each movement decrescendoing to nothing.

⁹⁵ Philip Glass, "Movement I," in *Violin Concerto (1987)*, 5, mm. 49-50.

⁹⁶ Philip Glass, "Movement II," in *Concerto for Violin and Orchestra*, New York, NY: Dunvagen Music Publishers Inc., 1987, 54, mm. 1-4.

Identifying contextual similarities to other works helps with tying the movements of the *Shoah* together into one cohesive work, instead of approaching it as six different movements. It provides stylistic context as well as an understanding of compositional techniques Grundman uses. Having Bach as an influence and Philip Glass as a stylistic similarity, it can help bring options to the presentation of this piece.

III. The *Shoah* and the Holocaust Museum

Grundman's specific request to have this piece performed in churches, synagogues, and museums strongly encourages a spiritual connection between the piece and the use of space. The piece is based on Grundman's experience at the Holocaust Museum in Prague. The third movement of the *Shoah* states that the whole piece was conceived during his visit.⁹⁷

It is a solo recital which can tour through synagogues, cathedrals, and museums. And there are two very important dates on which it should be performed: January 27th, the International Day of the Holocaust; and the Yom HaShoah which changes every year. For 2022 it will take place on the afternoon of April 27th through the afternoon of April 28th.⁹⁸

In this section, I will discuss the work's compositional organization as it relates to Grundman's goal to have it serve as a museum's multi-room exhibit.

The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum - Washington D.C.

I had the opportunity to visit the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington D.C. firsthand, which helped me understand Grundman's feelings when he viewed the exhibit that inspired the *Shoah*. The Hall of Witness is a Holocaust inspired place architecturally intended to "separate visitors from the outside world and prepare them to experience the museum."⁹⁹ The metal beams surround the outside structure of the hall like bars of a cell, strengthening the oppressive feeling the hall creates. The doorways leading into the exhibit rooms are shaped identically to the doorways of the entrance of Auschwitz (See figure 46).

⁹⁷ Jorge Grundman, *Shoah for Solo Violin and Sacred Temple*, 33.

⁹⁸ Jorge Grundman, Email from Grundman to Me about the Shoah, September 2, 2021.

⁹⁹ "The Holocaust: History and Memory," *The Holocaust: History and Memory Virtual Tour*, accessed April 26, 2024, <https://artsandculture.google.com/story/bwVReA5AY3zn9g>.



Figure 46: The doorways of Auschwitz (left) and the Holocaust Memorial Museum (right).¹⁰⁰

The map of the museum states:

This story-telling exhibition begins with life before the Holocaust in the early 1930s and concludes with the aftermath of the Holocaust after 1945. To begin your tour, take the first-floor center elevators to the fourth floor. The exhibition spirals downward through the main and tower spaces of the fourth, third, and second floors.

The concourse's main attraction is the Wall of Remembrance, a wall covered in tiles remembering the children who died in concentration camps. Here, identification cards, like those required of the Holocaust victims, are offered, and enable the visitor to experience the crisis of a Holocaust life. From the concourse, visitors take an elevator to the top floor to begin their journey through history.

One part of the exhibit focuses on the years 1933-1939, the rise of the Nazi assaults on Jews. Included in this exhibit is *Kristallnacht*, the burning of Jewish books, and the decision to boycott Jewish businesses. *Mein Kampf*, an autobiography, and political treatise, discusses the

¹⁰⁰ "The Holocaust: History and Memory."

“key components of Nazism: rabid antisemitism, a racist world view, and an aggressive foreign policy geared to gaining Lebensraum (living space) in Eastern Europe.”¹⁰¹

Artifacts of the exhibit include a Roma wagon, a synagogue arch that was destroyed in *Kristallnacht*, and replicas of border posts, separating the German and Polish border. The way this exhibit is designed tells a continuous narrative that describes the rise of Nazism in Europe. There are recordings of Nazi rallies and other recordings from World War II playing loudly on speakers and televisions throughout the floor, designed to help visitors experience the events rather than simply read about it.

The Tower of Faces is a three-story column of portraits of Jews who perished in the Holocaust (see figure 47).



Figure 47. The Tower of Faces.¹⁰²

In 1933, Jews lived in every country of Europe. The largest Jewish populations were in Eastern Europe where many lived in predominantly Jewish towns or villages, called

¹⁰¹ United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, “Mein Kampf,” *Holocaust Encyclopedia*, <https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/article/mein-kampf>

¹⁰² Encyclopedia Britannica, “The Tower of Faces,” Image. *Encyclopedia Britannica*, <https://www.britannica.com/event/Holocaust#/media/1/939610/181492>.

shtetls. These photos, taken before the Holocaust, show people from the shtetl of Ejszyszki (Eh-Shish-Kee).¹⁰³

“The Final Solution,” focuses on the years 1940-1944 and refers to Hitler’s plan to exterminate the Jewish population. The term “Final Solution” came from the Wannsee Conference of 1942, a meeting of high-ranking Nazi officials led by Reinhard Heydrich, the head of the Reich Security Main office. Regarding the Jews, Heydrich stated,

Another possible solution [of the Jewish problem] has now taken the place of emigration: evacuation of the Jews to the East...This operation...should be regarded as only provisional...but it is already supplying practical experience of great significance in relation to the coming final solution of the Jewish problem.¹⁰⁴

The centerpiece of this part of the exhibit is a train car that was used for transporting Jews to camps. Inside the car it is completely pitch black, no presentation or display inside to describe what it was like. The floor also focuses on the Warsaw Ghetto and the mass shootings throughout Poland. The path takes the visitor through artifacts like destroyed sections of synagogue windows and a cemetery gate from Tarnow, Poland, where five to ten-thousand Jews were shot and killed during an SS occupation from June 11th to June 15th, 1942. There is a milk jug from the Warsaw Ghetto that preserves political documents and art from the time of war.

The Auschwitz exhibit displays bunkbeds from the barracks, gas chamber doors, a pile of shoes that belonged to the Jews killed in the gas chambers, and a canvas picturing the piles of hair from the heads of Jews that was used to pad the pillows and mattresses in the barracks. This room is laid out to reflect Auschwitz during the Holocaust, although in a much smaller space which amplifies the effect. The overall effect is to make the visitor feel like they are experiencing Auschwitz as well as putting many things into perspective using real artifacts.

¹⁰³ “The Holocaust: History and Memory.”

¹⁰⁴ Wall Text, “The Wannsee Conference, 1942,” 1940-1942, The Final Solution,” United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, Washington D.C.

Finally, “Aftermath - 1945 to Present,” focuses on the Hall of Remembrance, a hexagonal room with candles lining each wall. Remembering the Jewish families who perished in the Holocaust is the purpose of this room. The candles are unlit to invite visitors to light one in memory of one of the families. At the center of the room is an eternal candle with a Bible verse inscribed behind it,

Only guard yourself and guard your soul carefully, lest you forget the things your eyes saw, and lest these things depart your heart all the days of your life, and you shall make them known to your children, and to your children’s children.¹⁰⁵

Just below the fire is another inscription,

Here, lies earth gathered from death camps, concentration camps, sites of mass execution, and ghettos in Nazi-occupied Europe, and from cemeteries of American soldiers who fought and died to defeat Nazi Germany.¹⁰⁶

The hexagonal skylight resembles the Star of David badge that the Jews were forced to wear.

The Musical Confluence of the *Shoah*

Crucial elements of commemoration in the museum are found in the musical construction of the *Shoah*. Each movement of the *Shoah* represents the different rooms of the exhibit. In the *Shoah*, Grundman includes themes that reflect experiences; one as the cantor, as the Holocaust victim.

The first movement of the *Shoah*’s two vastly different textures serve to separate the intentions of the movement. The slow, lush melody serves as the cantor and the minimalistic bariolage brings the listener to the time of the Holocaust, reflecting the anxiety and the fear of the victims. This movement has a clear-cut separation between each section, but as the piece continues, the lines are blurred and even dissolved, such is the case with the last two movements.

¹⁰⁵ Deut. 4:9

¹⁰⁶ Wall Text, “Eternal Fire,” Hall of Remembrance, United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, Washington D.C.

The second movement begins with a cantor-like melody but throughout the movement several artifacts serve to bring the listener into the story. This movement is the one that resembles Bach's "Chaconne" the most. Grundman states several times that the "Chaconne" serves as an inspiration for this piece. Of note, world-renowned soloist, Maxim Vengerov performed the "Chaconne" at the Auschwitz Concentration Camp while names of victims who suffered in the camp flash across the screen. Vengerov was in the cold while it was snowing; there were no camera tricks to keep Vengerov from experiencing the harsh reality of the camp. The video was a raw commemoration to those who perished in the camp, ending with Vengerov performing the final bars of the "Chaconne" on the train tracks leading inside the camp.¹⁰⁷ But why the "Chaconne"? In an interview, Vengerov states, "The music of Bach is so pure, so clear. It covers such a range of emotions. It is like coming out of a dark tunnel into the light."¹⁰⁸ It is also used as a symbol of those who performed to survive, including Alma Rosé. As Grundman writes,

However, the ghetto walls could not silence the cultural activities of their inhabitants, and, in spite of the terrible life conditions, artists and intellectuals went on with their creative endeavors. Moreover, Nazi occupation and deportation to the ghetto served as an incentive to the artists and encouraged them to find some form of expression to portray the destruction which pervaded their world. In the ghetto, there were clandestine libraries, subterranean archives, youth movements and even a symphonic orchestra. Books, study, music and theater served as an escape from the harsh realities of life around them and as a reminder of their previous lives.¹⁰⁹

Performing the *Shoah* with the preface read aloud before each movement best relates the work to the museum exhibit. The power of the work might be best performed in a Holocaust museum or synagogue, but the power of the work stands alone in recital.

¹⁰⁷ Victor Apriatin, "Bach - Chaconne - Vengerov," YouTube video, 11:24, May 9, 2011, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fwDCdmD7Nao>

¹⁰⁸ Stuart Jeffries, The Guardian, December 17, 2004, <https://www.theguardian.com/arts/fridayreview/story/0,12102,1374948,00.html>.

¹⁰⁹ Jorge Grundman, *Shoah for Solo Violin and Sacred Temple*, 21.

Conclusion

The goal of Grundman's *The Shoah for Solo Violin and Sacred Temple* is to present a work that is steeped in Jewish history, culture, and religion. To achieve this, Grundman includes World War II sirens, Shoah songbooks, and Hebrew melodies that inform his compositional construction of this piece. In addition to the historical significance of the *Shoah*, Grundman's compositional language stems from Bach's "Chaconne" and minimalistic style, which is reflected in instrumental technique and harmonic and melodic sequences.

Grundman's *Shoah* is a strong example of music that constructs its form around historical and spiritual inspiration to evoke the events of the Holocaust. The work functions in three ways: as a commemorative work, a historical narrative, and as an extension of baroque and modern compositional techniques, which help put the piece in those contexts. Understanding the influences of this piece informs the listener and performer how to better absorb commemorative works of the Holocaust.

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