

COMPOSITIONAL INNOVATIONS IN CLAUDE T. SMITH'S
MASTERWORKS FOR THE UNITED STATES
AIR FORCE BAND

by

JOSHUA DANIEL WALKER

KENNETH OZZELLO, COMMITTEE CHAIR

DON FADER

MARVIN LATIMER JR.

BLAKE RICHARDSON

THOMAS ROBINSON

ERIC YATES

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ABSTRACT

The United States Air Force Band has long served as a driving force in the commissioning of professional-level wind band literature. By soliciting the most sought-after composers, the Air Force Band ensures that many of their commissions grow into staples of wind band repertoire. Exemplary of this trend are the five service band compositions by Claude T. Smith (1932–1987). Of these, *Festival Variations* (1982) and *Danse Folâtre* (1986) offer the most characteristic representations of his innovative compositional style. Smith's essential compositional traits can be divided into three main areas: first, his unique treatment of motives and variations; second, his frequent use of irregular and mixed meter; and finally, his practice of composing demanding, highly technical parts for each of the wind ensemble's constituent instruments, exemplified especially by his innovative writing for horn.

This document will first provide a brief biography of Claude T. Smith, focusing on his early career as a teacher, composer, and leader in the wind band community. Second, it will explore the compositional influences that led to the development of his mature style. Third, it will discuss the relationships that led him to compose professional-level wind band music. Finally, it will provide a detailed examination of *Festival Variations* and *Danse Folâtre*, highlighting Smith's innovative compositional approach.

DEDICATION

This document is dedicated to my loving partner in life and best friend, my husband John Douglas Fox III. There are no words strong enough to relay the immense support you have given me on this journey and the time you have allowed me to work on my final degree. I thank you from the bottom of my heart. You have kept me going throughout this process and your love has kept me strong.

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First and foremost, I must thank the incredible teachers and mentors I have been blessed to encounter throughout my education. You have provided me with experiences of a lifetime and guided me through this journey. Your support, encouragement, and teachings will follow me throughout my life. I will forever be indebted to the community of educators that showed me my worth and believed in me. You have shown me kindness, strength, resilience, and compassion, among many other things. For this, I say thank you.

To my family and friends, you all have been there for me through this entire process. There is no way I can adequately describe in words how much your love and patience have given me strength. To my brothers and sister: you, like Jay, are my eternal rock. You inspire me to be a better person every day.

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1. PROFILE OF CLAUDE T. SMITH

Claude Thomas Smith (1932–87) was an internationally-recognized composer, music educator, and clinician. Though he was an influential composer of wind band music from 1966 to 1987, most of his early compositions were written for grade school bands. By the end of his career, however, he had produced some of the most difficult wind band literature available at the time.

This chapter focuses on Smith’s early life, including his upbringing as a band performer, his formal training, and his teaching career. Chapter 2 explores Smith’s young band compositions and the influence his teaching career had on them; it also examines Smith’s musical interests and how they contributed to his compositional style. Chapter 3 discusses the genesis and reception of his *Festival Variations* and *Danse Folâtre*. Finally, Chapter 4 examines each composition, identifying and explaining Smith’s signature compositional traits.

For the purposes of this document biographic research focusing on Claude T. Smith is limited to two sources: Mary Louis Jones’ 1992 DMA dissertation titled *Claude Thomas Smith: American Composer, Conductor, and Music Educator*, and the book *Harmony from Within*, by his only daughter, Pam Smith Kelly. In addition to discussing Smith’s personal life, these publications present detailed information about his career as an educator, composer, and influencer in the band community.

Claude Thomas Smith, nicknamed “Tommy” in his early childhood, was born on March 14, 1932 in Monroe City, Missouri, the only child of Claude Melvin Smith and Harriet Thomas

Smith. About five years later, the family moved to his father's familial hometown of Carrollton, Missouri, where they remained through his grade school education.¹ He developed an early interest in music: his paternal grandmother, Nina Smith, encouraged young Claude tremendously as he pursued lessons in dancing and piano.² Smith attended Carrollton Grade Schools for his primary and secondary education.³

In the eighth grade, Smith asked his parents for a cornet for Christmas. They happily obliged, and Smith joined the school's concert band. In 1947 Harold Arehart was hired as the school district's band director. Arehart significantly impacted Smith's early music education, pushing him to excel as a musician and leader.⁴

Smith thrived in the band program. By the end of high school Smith had become a pseudo-assistant to his band director. He co-taught with Arehart at local elementary schools and served as a student conductor and sectional coach at his high school.⁵ He also participated in the local Boy Scout Band and the Carrollton Municipal Band. Smith also met his future wife, Maureen Faye Morrison, at Carrollton High School.⁶ The pair graduated in 1950 and were wed on October 5, 1952.⁷

¹ Pam Smith Kelly, *Claude T. Smith: Harmony from Within* (Overland Park, KS: Claude T. Smith Publications, 2017), 1.

² Mary Louise Jones, "Claude Thomas Smith: American Composer, Conductor, and Music Educator," (DMA diss., University of Missouri, 1992), 2.

³ Pam Smith Kelly, *Harmony from Within*, 5–18.

⁴ Mary Louise Jones, "Claude Thomas Smith," 3.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 3.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 5.

⁷ Pam Smith Kelly, *Harmony from Within*, 36.

After Smith's graduation, he chose to pursue a college degree in secondary music education. This decision was not made lightly, because continuing the family grocery business was also a viable option. With his father's support and Arehart's encouragement, Smith enrolled at his teacher's alma mater, Central Methodist College in Fayette, Missouri. The Central Methodist band program was known for generating top quality music educators under the direction of K. K. Anderson, who led the program from 1927 to 1952. ⁸

Shortly after starting at Central Methodist, Smith changed his primary instrument to horn, committing to the instrument for the remainder of his college education. Smith enjoyed studying music theory and performing in the college's various concert ensembles. He was inducted into Phi Mu Alpha Sinfonia in the spring of 1951.⁹

He continued his studies until the spring of 1952 when he enlisted in the United States Army. With the Korean conflict unfolding and the threat of a draft looming, Smith considered enlisting a necessary and preemptive action in hopes that he would be placed at the Fort Leavenworth Army Base. After basic training, Smith was indeed placed at Fort Leavenworth for his three-year tour of duty. He was assigned to play horn and served as librarian for the 371st Army Band. ¹⁰

Smith's involvement with the Army band sparked an interest in composition, spurred on by the opportunity to arrange small works for the band.¹¹ In a 1980 radio interview, he discussed his time in the Army band and his budding interest in becoming a composer or arranger. In

⁸ Mary Louise Jones, "Claude Thomas Smith," 6.

⁹ Ibid., 7–8.

¹⁰ Pam Smith Kelly, *Harmony from Within*, 33-35.

¹¹ Ibid., 33.

reference to that time in his life Smith said,

When I went into the service band. I was given the opportunity to do some arranging for that band, and I suppose my thoughts to the future began to develop when I was in the service band, that it might be a possibility for me to be an arranger or composer someday.¹²

During Smith's tenure in the 371st Army Band, his immediate supervisor, Chief Warrant Officer Verne Knapp, commented on his character and personal integrity, highlighting his contributions to the ensemble, which included performing on horn, conducting, composing, and arranging:

This musician, in my opinion, is exceptional in every way. He is far above average intelligence, has composed and arranged several marches, ably plays solo French horn parts, is capable of directing concert bands, is unquestionably of the highest caliber morally, and follows orders as well as any soldier I have ever had the pleasure of serving with.¹³

Smith completed his military service at the rank of corporal in July of 1955 and immediately enrolled for the fall semester at the University of Kansas.¹⁴ There, he studied horn with Gerald Carney and played in university ensembles including brass ensembles, band, and orchestra. With faculty encouragement, Smith's interest in composing blossomed and his compositions were played by several ensembles. After three years, he graduated with a bachelor's degree in music education.¹⁵

Though Smith was allowed many opportunities to compose for various ensembles throughout his educational career, he never pursued formal compositional training.¹⁶ Prominent

¹² Ibid., 9.

¹³ Pam Smith Kelly, *Harmony from Within*, 36.

¹⁴ Ibid., 37.

¹⁵ Mary Louise Jones, "Claude Thomas Smith," 10.

¹⁶ Pam Smith Kelly, *Harmony from Within*, 237.

wind band composer and faculty member at the University of Kansas, James Barnes, discussed Smith's lack of formal composition classes and innate skill for constructing tuneful melodies.

Barnes recalled that,

The thing that amazed me the most about Claude was that, so far as I know, he never took a composition lesson at KU. Claude was finishing up a Bachelors in Music Education degree, so he never had time to take orchestration, counterpoint or form. But when you listen to his music, it becomes all the more amazing he was a master of counterpoint and form and also a terrific orchestrator. And most importantly, the man could write a tune. That's more important than anything else. I know a lot of Doctors of Philosophy and Doctors of Musical Arts that couldn't write a decent melody if you held a pistol to their head, which is why I always told my composition students that there are two kinds of composers in this world, melodists and theory teachers.¹⁷

After graduating in the spring of 1958, Smith accepted a position as band director at Cozad High School in Cozad, Nebraska.¹⁸ Pam was born in August of that year, Maureen and Claude Smith's first and only child.¹⁹ In 1963, Claude and his family moved to Kansas City, Missouri, where he served as the band director at Center High School. There he composed his first commercially successful composition, *Emperata Overture*, in 1964.²⁰

Emperata Overture was the beginning of Smith's exploration of irregular meter, mixed meter, and melodic horn writing in young band works. His previous compositions were much more traditional, consisting mainly of marches and ceremonial works in consistent meters with horn parts that played a supportive role.²¹ Because of its exposed horn parts and irregular and mixed meters, *Emperata Overture* was considered a risky composition by many publishing

¹⁷ Ibid., 9.

¹⁸ Mary Louise Jones, "Claude Thomas Smith," 14.

¹⁹ Pam Smith Kelly, *Harmony from Within*, 237.

²⁰ Ibid., 293.

²¹ Ibid., 293

houses, whose young band catalogs focused primarily on transcriptions and music in traditional wind band forms.²² It was difficult for Smith to pursue composition and teaching at the same time, but he persisted, composing in the evenings after work.²³

While living in Kansas City, Smith met Merrill Jones, a local music salesman, publisher of band music, and partner at the music publisher Wingert-Jones. Smith and Jones quickly developed a close friendship through frequent community gatherings for band directors at the publisher's storefront. In 1964, Wingert-Jones published Smith's *Emperata Overture* for concert band.²⁴ The work gained immediate local popularity and Wingert-Jones decided to use *Emperata Overture* to launch their publishing company nationally by attending the Mid-West International Band and Orchestra Convention in Chicago, Illinois.²⁵

Wingert-Jones took a risk at their first Mid-West exhibit and exclusively displayed *Emperata Overture*, which contained passages in 7/8 and was unconventional for young band works. Merrill Jones discussed this exhibit in a 1988 letter:

We took this one piece to Chicago Mid-West in December 1964 and ended up being the talk of the exhibits. The publisher with just one number showing. That incident rather launched Claude in certain circles; then, of course, more writings and word of mouth promoted his career along.²⁶

Emperata Overture was performed at the same event by the University City Missouri High School Band, the first of many performances of Smith's compositions at the event.²⁷

²² Ibid., 62.

²³ Mary Louise Jones, "Claude Thomas Smith," 18.

²⁴ Pam Smith Kelly, *Harmony from Within*, 129.

²⁵ Mary Louise Jones, "Claude Thomas Smith," 19.

²⁶ Ibid., 18.

²⁷ Ibid., 18.

In 1966, Smith's high school friend Bill Maupin offered him a position in the band programs of the Chillicothe School System, about thirty miles from Smith's home town of Carrollton, Missouri. Smith accepted the offer and remained at Chillicothe with Maupin until the spring of 1976. While at Chillicothe, Smith's reputation as a quality educator and a talented composer continued to grow.²⁸

During his career as a grade school band director, Smith taught all levels of concert band, marching band, and orchestra, and was often responsible for conducting high school musical theatre productions. By the time he retired, Smith had published eighteen works for various ensembles, including chamber groups, concert band, choir, and orchestra. Many more pieces remained in manuscript.²⁹

In the fall of 1976, Claude and Maureen Smith relocated to Springfield, where Smith joined the faculty at Southwest Missouri State University. His duties included conducting the university orchestra and teaching music theory and composition. Though Smith was keen to gain experience as a university professor, he found the administrative workload of his theory and composition courses to be a hindrance to his composing. He also missed having immediate access to a variety of wind bands willing to perform his compositions.³⁰

In the spring of 1977, less than a year after accepting the job, Smith tendered his resignation from the university to concentrate on conducting and composing. In 1978, the Smiths moved to Raytown, a suburb of Kansas City. For the remainder of his life he travelled as a guest

²⁸ Pam Smith Kelly, *Harmony from Within*, 95.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 95–103

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 95–103

conductor and clinician, composing for all levels of wind band, orchestra, choir, and chamber ensemble.³¹

In the mid-1980s Smith frequently travelled throughout America, Europe, and Australia. His international appointments as a conductor included Norway, Austria, Germany, France, Switzerland, and Australia. Smith also was a popular clinician and conductor in the United States, as well. His travels as a conductor and clinician and his participation in professional organizations made a tremendous impact on many band directors and composers in the 1970s and 1980s.³²

On Sunday, December 13, 1987, Smith suddenly passed away after the annual Christmas program at his home church, Blue Ridge Presbyterian. The band world was shocked to learn of Smith's death. At the 1987 Midwest Convention, the Wingert-Jones booth was flooded with flowers and notes of sentiment for the Smith family.³³

³¹ Ibid., 95–103

³² Ibid., 281.

³³ Ibid., 289.

2. INFLUENCES AND INNOVATIONS

Smith's popularity in the wind band community was bolstered by his innovative compositional approach, exemplified by his signature traits. The first of these was Smith's style of motivic development and variation. When constructing a motivically-designed piece, Smith often began with two base motives. The first motive (A) consists of melodic material on which the composition's melodies and variations are constructed. The second motive (B) is an ostinato pattern that frequently returns unaltered throughout the composition.³⁴

Smith's second signature trait was his frequent use of irregular and mixed meter. Smith's third signature trait was his affinity for composing demanding, technically challenging passages for every instrument in the ensemble. This trait included his use of the horn, traditionally under-represented in band repertoire, as a principal melodic instrument. Smith sought to lift the melodic importance of the horn to that of the clarinet, flute, and trumpet.³⁵

In his compositions for school band, Smith was strongly influenced by his own experiences in the classroom, especially rhythm teaching.³⁶ By including rhythmic and metrical complexity in his compositions, he hoped to sustain students' interest in the repertoire while enhancing their understanding of and proficiency with difficult rhythms. To this end, Smith often

³⁴ Pam Smith Kelly, *Harmony from Within*, 288.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 288.

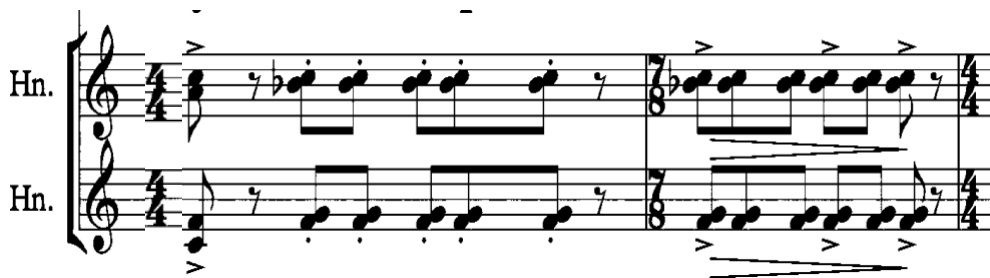
³⁶ *Ibid.*, 289.

included measures of 5/8, 7/8, and 3/8 in his compositions.³⁷ Smith was fond of performing Bernstein's music, and his daughter writes that Bernstein's rhythms "enticed Dad's 'inner rhythm.'" She also notes that Bernstein's use of shifting meter, extended instrumental ranges, and unconventional compositional forms greatly influenced Smith's compositional style.³⁸

Smith was further influenced by virtuoso trumpet player Raphael Mendez and composers Gustav Holst and John Williams, whose performances and compositions encouraged Smith to take risks in his compositions for band.³⁹ His use of technically demanding instrumental parts was influenced by his rigorous early piano lessons with his maternal grandmother, Nina Smith, who emphasized scales and etudes in the interest of technical fluency.⁴⁰

Smith's first published composition, *Emperata Overture*, became famous for its use of mixed meter and 7/8 time.⁴¹ The mixed-meter passage shown in Figure 1 is an ostinato motive that occurs three times throughout the work.

Figure 1. *Emperata Overture*, 7/8 passage, mm. 8–9.



³⁷ Ibid., 293.

³⁸ Ibid., 288.

³⁹ Ibid., 15.

⁴⁰ Pam Smith Kelly, *Harmony from Within*, 13.

⁴¹ Ibid., 293.

Band conductor and composer Robert Foster discussed Smith's compositional influence within the band community, highlighting Smith's contributions to the advancement of irregular meters in band music:

As a result of Claude and his introduction of multiple meters and irregular meters in band literature, which was not commonly done prior to him, prior to *Emperata* – through doing that he educated a whole generation of band teachers about how to conduct multiple meter time and irregular patterns of time, the 7/8 measure, to the point where people teased him about it—well—if it's a Claude piece, it's got to have a 7/8 measure. He basically dragged a whole generation of teachers into the 20th-century rhythmically. By doing that he brought their students into it at the same time. I think that he, more than any other single individual in school band literature, is responsible for doing that.⁴²

Smith discussed the use of rhythm in 20th-century music and the conductor's role in teaching irregular rhythms to young learners in a 1987 interview:

Rhythmic variety and a contemporary flavor are important to 20th-century music. Much recent music, such as that of Stravinsky and Copland, uses asymmetrical rhythms. Students can get the feel of odd-metered measures once it is carefully explained to them. It's important for the conductor to explain the beat pattern and how the measures are put together, so the players can feel the right rhythmic pulse.⁴³

In his compositions, Smith endeavored that every member of the wind ensemble should have prominent lines,⁴⁴ because “everyone should get a chance to play the melody once in a while no matter what instrument they play.”⁴⁵ Smith conceded that his prior experience as a horn player influenced his compositional decisions:

Being a horn player, I've suffered through the oom-pah parts long enough. I want to see something fun happen once in a while. For years everyone thought the horn players were second rate citizens and their parts were as dull as they could be.⁴⁶

⁴² Mary Louise Jones, “Claude Thomas Smith,” 53.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 53.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 17.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 54.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 54.

John Williams' *Cowboys Overture* was a prominent member of Smith's record collection, and may have influenced his treatment of horn parts. Recorded for both orchestra and wind ensemble, this composition used horn as a primary melodic instrument, which likely bolstered Smith's confidence in his prominent placement of the horn in his own works.⁴⁷

The technique of distributing melodic lines through the ensemble was generally well received by performers, educators, and conductors. For example, conductor and educator William Maupin said, "All were appreciative of Smith's use of interesting parts for all instruments in his compositions" and that "each section of the band had innovative and challenging parts to play."⁴⁸

⁴⁷ Ibid., 13.

⁴⁸ Ibid., 13.

3. COMPOSING FOR UNITED STATES AIR FORCE BAND

Smith's early contributions to young band music and his innovative compositional style helped him gain recognition within the wind band community at large. This recognition led to commissions by the United States Service Bands of several professional-level compositions. Among Smith's over one hundred works for concert band, his four masterworks commissioned by the Service Bands stand out for their quality and ingenuity while exemplifying the signature compositional traits discussed above. These works comprise *Festival Variations*, commissioned by the United States Air Force Band in 1982; *Variations on a Hymn by Louis Bourgeois*, commissioned by the United States Marine Band in 1984; *Danse Folâtre*, commissioned by the United States Air Force Band in 1987; and *Variations on a Revolutionary Hymn*, commissioned by the United States Army Field Band in 1987. Of the four, *Festival Variations* and *Danse Folâtre* best demonstrate Smith's signature traits.

The genesis of Smith's professional compositions for the service bands is inextricably linked to Colonel Arnold D. Gabriel, who directed the United States Air Force Band from 1964 to 1985.⁴⁹ During Gabriel's time as conductor of the Air Force Band, he rejuvenated the ensemble through "national and international tours, creating a Guest Artist Series, hiring the first female instrumentalist in a military band, creating chamber ensembles, and perhaps most important, commissioning new works."⁵⁰ Many original band works were composed during this

⁴⁹ Mary Louise Jones, "Claude Thomas Smith," 288.

⁵⁰ "History of the United States Air Force Band 1964– 1985," The United States Air Force Band, accessed December 15, 2018, <http://www.usafband.af.mil/factsheets/factsheet>.

era due to the commissioning projects of military band directors. Significant composers commissioned by the military bands include Thomas Knox, Claude T. Smith, and Gunther Schuller.⁵¹

When Gabriel first commissioned him to compose a professional-level work in 1982, Smith was fifty years old and already established as a performer, educator, and composer.⁵² Smith's musical training in the 371st Army Band in Ft. Leavenworth and at the University of Kansas, combined with his years of experience teaching and composing for grade school and college bands, provided a strong foundation for his first professional-level endeavor.⁵³

Gabriel was familiar with Smith's reputation as a quality composer for young bands and interested in offering Smith a chance to write for an advanced wind ensemble:

When I became a military band conductor, I was aware of the wonderful compositions that Claude Smith had written. I have played many of them and had adjudicated them with high school bands. In the early part of the 1980s, I talked to Claude about writing a virtuoso piece for concert band. I felt that in the breast of every composer there is a need to write such a composition. He wrote *Festival Variations* in January 1982.⁵⁴

At its premiere performance on February 10, 1982, at the 75th Music Educators National Conference in San Antonio, "the applause would not stop until Claude came on stage to acknowledge the ovation."⁵⁵ Gabriel firmly believed in the lasting appeal of the piece, writing that "*Festival Variations*, with its brilliant technical passages coupled with its glorious

asp?id=8069.

⁵¹ Megan Jane Starrett, "The Role of the Horn in Band Music," (MM thesis University of Kansas, 2009), 87.

⁵² Mary Louise Jones, "Claude Thomas Smith," 298.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 288.

⁵⁴ Pam Smith Kelly, *Harmony from Within*, 288.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 299.

romanticism, will certainly rank as one of the monumental compositions of the twentieth century.”⁵⁶

John Woody, a former classmate of Smith’s and longtime principal horn player for the Air Force band described the challenging horn writing and the reactions of the audience at the premiere:

[Smith] told everyone that he wrote the horn parts to pay me back for kicking him off first chair (at the University of Kansas). I performed *Festival Variations* sixty-five times in two and a half years. We took the piece on five tours. It was a hit every place we performed. When we premiered the piece at TMEA in 1982, the audience was talking throughout the performance. We thought they didn’t like it. Just the opposite, they were commenting on what they were hearing. They couldn’t believe the horn parts, the trumpet parts, etc. They were hearing a band piece that changed the way composers would write for a good band.⁵⁷

Festival Variations also became Smith’s first composition to be widely performed in Japan. When Colonel Arnold Gabriel was invited to guest conduct the Tokyo Kosei Wind Orchestra in 1983, he introduced *Festival Variations* to Japanese performers and audiences.⁵⁸ The work was an immediate success and launched Smith’s continued popularity with Japanese wind ensembles. Smith’s professional-level works are frequently performed in contests by Japanese high school and professional bands, and are among the most famous band pieces in Japan.⁵⁹

Two years after James M. Bankhead was appointed to replace Gabriel as conductor of the Air Force Band, he followed in his predecessor’s footsteps and commissioned Smith to compose

⁵⁶ Ibid., 299.

⁵⁷ Ibid., 299.

⁵⁸ Mary Louise Jones, “Claude Thomas Smith,” 89.

⁵⁹ Yoshihisa Fujishige, “Interview with Author,” 1.

yet another boundary-pushing work.⁶⁰ In response, Smith composed *Danse Folâtre* in 1986. It was premiered on June 13, 1986, at the National Band Association Convention in Knoxville.⁶¹ The Air Force Band performed the new piece again at the 1986 Mid-West International Band and Orchestra Clinic. Following the ensemble's first tour performing the work, *Danse Folâtre* was published in 1987 by Wingert-Jones.⁶²

Longtime friend, copyist, and Wingert-Jones employee, Andrew Yates, discussed his initial viewing of the original manuscript for *Danse Folâtre*, noting the technically demanding and complex instrumental parts:

It was Claude on a whole new level. I did not think *Festival Variations* could be topped—I was wrong. In the recapitulation, there is a segment where the timpani had the motive and plays a variation by pedaling up chromatically. . . I heard this, and yelled, OH MY! I looked at Claude and he had this grin on his face I have never forgotten.⁶³

There is little documentation surrounding the premiere performance of *Danse Folâtre*, or its initial reception. However, a review of the reissued recordings of Lowell Graham conducting *Danse Folâtre* with the Heritage of America Band praises the piece: “I’m glad to have met Claude T. Smith’s *Danse Folâtre* (1986), an eye-opener with extreme technical demands.”⁶⁴

Due to Smith’s untimely death in December of 1987, *Danse Folâtre* was his final professional band work.

Claude Smith’s daughter, Pam Smith Kelly, graciously provided the present author with several yet-unpublished communications between various parties involved in the commissioning

⁶⁰ Claude T. Smith, *Danse Folâtre*, 1.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 1.

⁶² Mary Louise Jones, “Claude Thomas Smith,” 79.

⁶³ Pam Smith Kelly, *Harmony from Within*, 287.

⁶⁴ Ryan Killpatrick, Review of the reissued recordings *Proclamation and Celebration*, by Lowell Graham, *American Record Guide* 73, issue 2 (March 2010), 220.

and programming process of Smith's service band works. These documents are reproduced in Appendix A.

4. INNOVATIONS IN *FESTIVAL VARIATIONS* AND *DANSE FOLÂTRE*

Festival Variations and *Danse Folâtre* concisely demonstrate Smith's compositional traits: his idiosyncratic use of motives and variations, irregular and mixed meter, and tremendously demanding technical passages for all instruments, especially horn. The following analysis of *Festival Variations* and *Danse Folâtre* examines these three features in turn. The first section discusses Smith's use of motives and variations specifically in *Festival Variations* as well as the broad application of motivic development in his compositional process. This section also briefly discusses the form of *Danse Folâtre* and contrasts its use of motives to that of *Festival Variations*. The second section examines two extended passages that represent Smith's most characteristic use of irregular meter and mixed meter combined with high technical demand. The third section explores the significance of Smith's horn writing and highlights several additional technical excerpts from both works. The instrumentation of *Festival Variations* and *Danse Folâtre* can be found in Appendix B.

Motives and Variations in *Festival Variations*

Smith's idiosyncratic approach to motives and variation generally involves two motives: motive A, melodic material on which the composition's primary melody and its variations are constructed; and motive B, an ostinato pattern that repeats at various points throughout the work.⁶⁵ Motive A is typically introduced in fragmented form and only later amalgamated into the work's primary melody. Though Smith's approach is not especially rare in music for other

⁶⁵ Ibid.

ensembles, most wind band compositions of Smith’s time, especially those written for young bands, used a more conventional approach to motivic development. Smith’s approach was innovative within the context of his genre and worth further examination.

The form of *Festival Variations* is shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Form of *Festival Variations*

Motive A and B Fanfare Motive	Variation 1 Primary Melody	Variation 2	Variation 1’	Variation 2’
mm. 1–24	mm. 25–108	mm. 109–137	mm. 138–167	mm. 168–183
$J=152$ A & B motives in 3/4 & 4/4.	Extended melody based on A motive in 6/8.	Extended variations and modulations based on B motive	Extended A melody repeated with rhythmic alterations	Extended variations and modulations on based on B motive
Eb Major	G Major—F Major		(F Major)	

Variation 3	Variation 4	Variation 3’	Variation 4’	Variation 3’’
mm. 184–193	mm. 194–216	mm. 217–224	mm. 225–235	mm. 236–249
Tempo is Andante. New variation based on elongated A motive.	Tempo quickens. Alternation between cadenza-like A motive in solo instruments and structured B motive.	Tempo Andante. Like variation 3, but with all instruments except horn.	Tempo quickens. A motive is extended through repetition and merges with an elongated B motive.	Tempo Andante. Like variation 3’, but re-orchestrated and including horns.
C minor	G minor	(G minor)	(G minor)	(G Minor)

Variation 5	Variation 6 Fugal Variation	Variation 1 Recap Primary Melody	Fanfare Coda
mm. 250–269	mm. 270–322	mm. 323–335	mm. 336–404
Tempo 1. 6/8 A motive alternates through the brass and low reed sections.	Extended brass fugue on the 6/8 A motive.	Recapitulation of primary melody with rhythmic alterations.	Final fanfare based on the initial A motive.
F Major	(F Major)	(F Major)	(F Major)

Characteristically, Smith uses two main motives as the basis for his *Festival Variations*. Both motives are presented in the introduction of the work and are used to create three distinct melodic phrases throughout the work. Motive A is a simple seven-note melody that descends

from $\hat{3}$ to $\hat{7}$ and back in eighth notes (see Figure 2).

Figure 2. *Festival Variations*, motive A, m. 1.



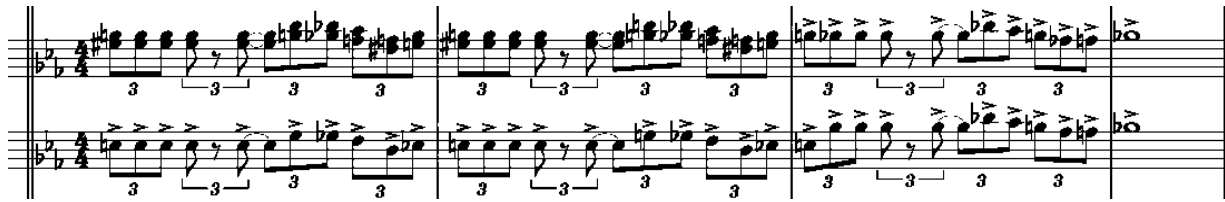
The motivic line in the first measure is immediately extended to create the first of three longer melodic phrases. Smith outlines the dominant and tonic in measure two, loosely establishing the key of E-flat by landing on the dominant (concert B-flat) in measure four.



Figure 3. *Festival Variations*, motive A, mm. 1-5.

Motive B is presented in measure five following the horn introduction. For this motive Smith uses a compound-adjacent simple meter pulse. By using triplets in 4/4 time, Smith creates a 12/8 feel, imparting the phrase with a dance-like lilt. Figure 4 shows the extended B motive presented by the low brass. Motive B provides a sense of harmonic ambiguity through close harmonies, often including half-steps in the upper brass and low brass, but by the final measure of the passage the ensemble returns to a unison on the dominant.

Figure 4. *Festival Variations*, motive B, mm. 5-7.



Following a repeat of the introductory material Smith begins the first variation.

Figure 5. *Festival Variations*, variation 1, melody, mm. 33–50.



This variation is based on the seven-note A motive extended into a full melodic phrase (the main theme of *Festival Variations*). The 6/8 time of Variation 1 recalls the lilting feel of motive B. The smooth transition between the fanfare introduction and the dance-like melody seen here is a testament to Smith’s compositional craftsmanship; seemingly distinct motives combine to create the second full melodic phrase.

Unlike much of Smith’s work for young band in this style, *Festival Variations* does not wait to reveal the primary melodic phrase of the work until the end. Instead he presents the work’s primary phrase in measures 33–64, shown in Figure 5. Though the listener perceives that this melodic line is important, it remains unclear until later whether it is the main theme or a variant.

Motives A and B continue to appear in variations 2, 4, and 6. In these variations Smith

uses both the 3/4 fanfare version and the 6/8 lilting version of motive A. It is in these variations that Smith explores the ensemble's technical limits. Melodic lines pass among solo instruments, chamber ensembles, and woodwind and brass choirs. These variations are characterized by their use of short motivic lines based on motives A and B (rather than full melodic phrases), and by their demanding technical challenges for all instruments in the ensemble.

Variation 3 is the only slow variation in the work and is also the last full melodic phrase based on motive A. In variation 3, motive A is elongated and presented in 4/4 time. In measure 186, the motive is extended to fit in 4/4 time by repeating key notes in the melody: the first note of motive A is extended by one eighth note through an octave leap, and the third note of the motive is repeated directly. The melodic line continues to develop through measures 187–97, with a repetition of the 4/4 A motive in measures 190 (see Figure 6).

Figure 6. *Festival Variations*, variation 3, solo horn excerpt, mm. 186–193.



Near the conclusion of *Festival Variations*, Smith recalls the main theme of the piece through a fugue based on the 6/8 motive A in the brass (Figure 7). This passage contains extreme demands in terms of register, finger dexterity, and chromaticism for all brass parts.

Figure 7. *Festival Variations*, variation 6, fugal variation on motive A, mm. 274–306.

The image displays three systems of musical notation for Variation 6 of *Festival Variations*. The first system (mm. 274-288) is a brass fugue featuring five parts: Trumpet in Bb, Horn in F, Trombone, Baritone Horn, and Tuba. The tempo is marked as quarter note = 152. The second system (mm. 290-298) shows the wind ensemble (Tpt., Hn., Tbn., Bar. Hn., Tba.) playing a melodic line. The third system (mm. 298-306) continues the wind ensemble part, with the Trombone, Baritone Horn, and Tuba parts marked with accents and the word *rit.* (ritardando).

Following the brass fugue in Variation 6, the work's overarching primary melody is confirmed to be the theme presented in Variation 1, versions of which were seen previously in Figures 3, 5, and 6. The wind ensemble plays a final full statement of the primary theme in rhythmic unison, followed by a brief fanfare coda.

Form and Development in *Danse Folâtre*

The form of *Danse Folâtre* can be best described as a standard rondo form (see Table 2).

Table 2. Broad form of *Danse Folâtre*.

Section	A	B	A	C	A	C	A
Key	Bb	F-Bb	Bb-F	Eb	Bb	Eb	Bb
	I	V-I	I-V	IV	I	IV	I

As in *Festival Variations*, Smith develops most of the melodic material from two main motives that are introduced at the beginning of the work. In *Danse Folâtre*, however, rather than creating a series of variations, Smith extends his original base motives with new material. Another key difference is that motive A in *Danse Folâtre* (Figure 8) forms a more complete musical unit compared to its counterpart in *Festival Variations*, which is more fragmentary.

Figure 8. *Danse Folâtre*, motive A, mm.1-2.



Danse Folâtre begins with motive A: a flourish into the tonic followed by two beats of syncopation and an ascending passage from $\hat{6}$ to $\hat{5}$. Smith emphasizes tonic and dominant in this passage, much like the extended motive A seen at the beginning of *Festival Variations*.

The B motive of *Danse Folâtre* (Figure 9), plays a similar role to that of *Festival Variations*, being highly percussive and providing a sense of tonal ambiguity. The B motive ends with a G-flat major seventh chord ($\flat VI_7$) in the home key of B-flat.

Figure 9. *Danse Folâtre*, motive B, mm. 2–4.



In the case of both works, the A and B motives form the basic material from which Smith generates his melodic ideas. The key difference between *Festival Variations* and *Danse Folâtre* is how Smith develops the motives. In *Festival Variations*, he varies motives A and B to create new melodic material, while in *Danse Folâtre* he generally keeps the motives in their original form but extends them. The difference is made apparent by comparing a short woodwind fugue in *Danse Folâtre* (Figure 10), with the fugal variation from *Festival Variations* (Figure 7).

In both cases Smith begins each entrance of the fugue with the A motive, but in *Festival Variations*, Smith changes the feel of the passage by using the lilting 6/8-time signature instead of the motive's original 3/4. In contrast *Danse Folâtre's* fugue entrances begin with the A motive in its original form.

Figure 10. *Danse Folâtre*, woodwind fugue, mm. 185–194.

The image displays a woodwind fugue score for measures 185 through 194. The score is arranged in two systems. The first system covers measures 185 to 194, and the second system covers measures 190 to 194. The instruments listed on the left are: Flute, Oboe, Bassoon, Clarinet in Eb, Clarinet in Bb, Alto Clarinet in Eb, Bass Clarinet in Bb, Alto Saxophone, Tenor Saxophone, and Baritone Saxophone. The tempo is marked as ♩ = 152-160. The score features complex rhythmic patterns, including sixteenth and thirty-second notes, and rests. Dynamics such as *mf* (mezzo-forte) and *mp* (mezzo-piano) are indicated throughout. The key signature is one flat (Bb), and the time signature is 4/4. The fugue begins in measure 185 with the Clarinet in Bb and continues through measure 194.

Irregular and Mixed Meter

Smith's use of irregular and mixed meters in *Festival Variations* and *Danse Folâtre* is exemplified in the following excerpts. These passages employ frequent ensemble unison playing and are technically demanding in terms of articulations, range, finger dexterity, and timing. This, in combination with the difficulties of reading irregular meters, made these passages some of the most challenging to be written in original wind band music. Figure 11 shows the first of these passages located in *Festival Variations* from measures 33–64.

Figure 11. *Festival Variations*, irregular meter passage, mm. 33–64.

The musical score for Bassoon, measures 33-64, is presented in five systems. The tempo is marked as $\text{♩} = 152$. The key signature is one sharp (F#). The score begins in 6/8 time and features several meter changes: 7/8 at measure 51, 6/8 at measure 55, 2/4 at measure 56, and 3/4 at measure 60. The notation includes various rhythmic figures, such as eighth and sixteenth notes, and rests, with accents placed on weak beats to create a complex, disorienting rhythmic pattern.

Here Smith combines common and irregular meters, creating a rhythmically intense mixed-meter passage with substantial metrical ambiguity. Smith compresses the beat pattern in measures 55 and 56, switching from 6/8 to sixteenth-notes in 2/4. While both time signatures are conducted in two, the rapid juxtaposition of triple and quadruple subdivisions is one of the passage's rhythmically challenging features. Smith further disguises the downbeat by placing accents on weak beats beginning in measure 57. The result is a dizzying display of technique that requires detailed attention to rhythmic accuracy and manual dexterity.

Though *Danse Folâtre* contains fewer instances of irregular meter than *Festival Variations*, some passages are just as rhythmically demanding (see Figure 12).

Figure 12. *Danse Folâtre*, irregular meter ensemble passage, mm. 24–33.



This excerpt begins in the upper woodwinds in measure 24, building through the ensemble until the entire band is playing in unison rhythm at measure 33. In this passage Smith mostly uses common time signatures, but he alludes to 7/8 meter by combining a measure of 2/4 with one of 3/8. While the use of accent displacement and beat extension/compression is less pronounced than in the excerpt in Figure 11, Smith’s tendency to combine common and irregular meters is evident. The potential difficulties inherent in the full ensemble unison from measures 31–33 reveals Smith’s willingness to take risks when composing for professional musicians. This passage requires tremendous technical proficiency from every performer, requiring the musicians to possess great finger dexterity, rhythmic accuracy, vertical alignment, and fast and crisp articulation.

Though other passages of irregular and mixed meter exist within each work, the previous excerpts highlight Smith’s tendency towards technically demanding lines and mixed/irregular meter. These passages are among the first of their kind in original music for wind band. Smith’s use of irregular meters is extensive even in his catalog of works for young bands, but with these professional-level pieces, he was given the opportunity to compose without restraint and was able to demonstrate the extent of his talent. In doing so, Smith influenced a new generation of

wind band composers to employ daring technical and rhythmic challenges in their own compositions.

Individual and Ensemble Technical Demands

Smith often wrote the most difficult passages in ensemble or sectional unison; these difficult passages require the performer to possess extreme dexterity, flexibility, timing, and phrasing. This section examines significant excerpts for horn and discusses Smith's unique approach to writing for the instrument, then discusses additional demanding or exposed excerpts for other solo instruments, sections, or the full wind ensemble.

Writing for Horn

Though Smith's works for professional wind band provide challenges for every section in the band, his horn parts are particularly noteworthy for their unconventional orchestration. By writing many of the most difficult horn passages in unison, Smith requires performers to possess remarkable dexterity and flexibility in extreme registers. Smith's affinity for horn as a melodic instrument resulted in more frequently exposed horn parts than in other band music of the period. In combination, these factors require high-caliber musicians for a clear and faithful performance of Smith's horn parts.

Smith, a horn player himself, was already known for expanding the standard role of horn parts in band music during the '60s and '70s, especially as regards the use of horn as a melodic contributor within the wind ensemble.⁶⁶ The invitation to compose for the United States Air Force Band, however, brought about an interesting turn of events. At the time of both commissions, Johnny Woody, Smith's college acquaintance from the University of Kansas, was the ensemble's principal horn player.

⁶⁶ Pam Smith Kelly, *Harmony from Within*, 298.

In college, their relationship had a rocky start, with Woody (a freshman) dethroning Smith, then the principal horn of the Wind Ensemble and a rising senior.⁶⁷ Smith freely admitted that he wrote extra-challenging horn parts to get back at Woody for defeating him in college.⁶⁸

Though their friendship had improved by the time of Smith's first commission, Smith still pushed at his old rival and, in the process, expanded the limits of modern horn writing. According to David Bushhouse, longtime professor of brass at the University of Kansas, "His compositions provided challenges to horn players and influenced composers to write better horn parts, from *Emperata Overture* to *Festival Variations*."⁶⁹ According to Bushhouse, at the premiere performance of *Festival Variations*, "The horn opening with the high B-flat was very exciting and caused a stir, but when the horns moved to the high C in the middle, there was a massive gasp in the audience" (Figures 13 and 14).

Figure 13. *Festival Variations*, horn excerpt, mm. 10–15.



Figure 14. *Festival Variations*, horn excerpt, mm. 263–272.



In both excerpts, the horn section is in unaccompanied unison, forcing all members in the section to perform with clarity and proficiency under extremely challenging circumstances.

⁶⁷ Ibid., 298.

⁶⁸ Ibid., 299.

⁶⁹ Ibid., 298.

These passages require great finger dexterity, accuracy, extreme range, and ensemble coordination.

Danse Folâtre similarly includes an extended-register high C for horn in measure 12 (see Figure 15).

Figure 15. *Danse Folâtre*, horn excerpt, mm. 2–13.



In contrast with *Festival Variations*, the horns enter in measure 2 with a heroic countermelody containing flourishes and trills, culminating in the high C in measure 12. The horn section ascends to the high C in unison. The expanded horn register also appears in *Danse Folâtre* at the introduction to the Andante C section at measure 80, shown in Figure 16.

Figure 16. *Danse Folâtre*, horn excerpt, mm.80–82.



During this horn passage, the rest of the wind ensemble sustains a whole-note C major-minor 7th chord with a crescendo from piano to fortissimo. The understated accompaniment draws the listener’s ear to the horn section’s arrival at the climactic high C.

Another excerpt that demonstrates Smith’s combination of extreme dexterity and extended horn register can be found in the Andante Rubato section of *Festival Variations*, starting with measure 236 (Figure 17).

Figure 17. *Festival Variations*, horn excerpt, mm. 236–242.



This excerpt provides an excellent example of the lush and intricate melodic lines that were typical of Smith’s horn writing. From the onset of the horn line, Smith creates a “slide” effect by chromatically descending from G to E. He continues in this vein by using glissandi and rapid sextuplet passages. The close chromaticism of the melodic line and its sheer speed require the performer to have excellent timing and note accuracy. The second half of the phrase turns into a fanfare like motive once again uses the extended horn register. Again, highlighting Smith’s affinity for exposing the horn as melodic contributor through highly demanding musical lines.

Smith took the risk of scoring demanding parts for the horn and presented them in tremendously exposed textures, demonstrating his unique approach to horn writing. While it was not uncommon for horn players to encounter parts with extended range and high technical demand in orchestral music and some concert band music of the time, these parts were often less prominent or more accompanied, making Smith’s writing particularly significant.

Other Individual and Ensemble Demands

Prior dissertations have discussed other significant excerpts from *Festival Variations* and *Danse Folâtre*, especially with regard to Smith’s writing for low brass and the preparation of excerpts from these works for professional wind band auditions. As in Smith’s writing for horn, the following excerpts are considered significant for their challenging technical demands and exposed scoring.

In their dissertations, Daniel R. Chapa and James T. Johnson both mentioned a specific Euphonium passage from *Festival Variations* as relevant audition materials (see Figure 18).^{70,71}

Figure 18. *Festival Variations*, euphonium excerpt, mm. 46–63.



According to Chapa and Johnson, this excerpt is especially significant for its asymmetrical rhythms, irregular meter, and range. The transition between 6/8 and 2/4 subdivision requires tremendous finger dexterity and Smith’s use of accidentals and accent displacement in measures 57 to 63 add another layer of rhythmic complexity.

Danse Folâtre contains a similar technically demanding passage for Euphonium, shown in Figure 19.

⁷⁰ Daniel R. Chapa, “Preparing Selected Wind Band Euphonium Audition Material Through the Use of Etudes,” (DMA diss. University of North Texas, 2016), ii.

⁷¹ James T. Johnson, “A Survey and Guide to United States Military Band Trumpet Auditions,” (DMA diss. Florida State University, 2016), ii.

Figure 19. *Danse Folâtre*, extended euphonium solo excerpt, mm. 52–68.

The musical score for Euphonium in *Danse Folâtre*, mm. 52–68, is presented in five systems. The tempo is marked as ♩=152 SOLO. The key signature is one flat (B-flat). The score begins in 4/4 time and features several meter changes: 3/4 at mm. 55, 2/4 at mm. 58, 7/8 at mm. 62, and 4/4 at mm. 66. The dynamics range from *mf* (mezzo-forte) to *f* (forte) and *sf* (sforzando). The piece is marked SOLO from mm. 52 to 61 and TUTTI BAND from mm. 62 to 68. The notation includes complex scalar passages, slurs, and accents, indicating a technically demanding piece.

This passage challenges the performer through extended-range scalar passages, irregular meters, abrupt metrical changes, requiring great finger dexterity and careful attention to articulation.

In his 1998 dissertation, Paul Hagan examined excerpts for trombone frequently requested by audition leaders and recommended by prominent military band trombonists.⁷² Both *Festival Variations* and *Danse Folâtre* are listed in their entirety as works that should be known to Trombonists auditioning for professional service bands. Figures 20 and 21 provide brief excerpts from each work that show the most technically demanding and exposed passages.

⁷² Paul Martin Hageman, “Trombone Excerpts from the Concert Band Repertory,” (DMA diss. University of Northern Colorado, 1998), ii.

Figure 20. *Festival Variations*, trombone excerpt, mm. 234–252.



This excerpt requires the performer to play extremely high but with sensitive, expressive dynamics. Also, due to the close intervals in the passage the performer must pay particular attention to slide technique. This slide technique is especially challenging in measures 246 and 251 as extended-range sextuplets lead to a final fermata on a high B flat.

Figure 21. *Danse Folâtre*, trombone excerpt, mm. 57–61.



As in the prior excerpt, the passage reproduced in Figure 21 requires detailed attention to slide technique and articulation. Given the tempo of 152–160 beats per minute and the repetitive slur-two tongue-four pattern seen in measures 57 and 59, this excerpt provides an articulation challenge for even upper-level trombonists.

Finally, in Brent Harvey’s dissertation, he discussed a relevant tuba passage, shown in Figure 22.

Figure 22. *Festival Variations*, tuba excerpt, mm. 9–19.



Harvey determined that the passage’s difficulty ranks 4 on a 5-point scale, based on the passage’s extreme finger dexterity and wide range.⁷³ The excerpt’s articulation also presents a challenge, as each descending line is marked with accents to be performed at remarkable speed, requiring significant dexterity of articulation. Once again, this passage demonstrates Smith’s tendency to expose highly technical lines for solo instruments or unison sections.

Smith’s approach to percussion orchestration also deserves mention. As a composer for young band, Smith worked to write percussion parts that would keep his students engaged.

Percussionist and educator Mrs. Asher-Wiley discussed Smith’s approach to scoring for percussion:

His thematic material for percussion would be longer and more sustained. We would have a section to play and not just a little four, six, or eight measures... You were challenged by it. It was musical. It’s the kind of thing you want to do. He would handle the other instruments with the same intelligence.⁷⁴

Though both *Festival Variations* and *Danse Folâtre* utilize percussion heavily throughout, the best example of Smith’s use of percussion to carry the melodic line is presented in *Danse Folâtre* (Figure 23).

Figure 23. *Danse Folâtre*, percussion soli, mm. 181–185.

The image shows a musical score for percussion soli in measures 181-185 of *Danse Folâtre*. The score is written for six percussion instruments: Timpans, Xylophone, Glockenspiel, Vitraphone, Chimes, and Snare Drum. The Timpans part is the most prominent, featuring a complex melodic line with various dynamics (p, mp, f) and articulations (accents, slurs). The other instruments provide accompaniment and rhythmic support.

⁷³ Brent Harvey, “Essential Excerpts for Tuba from Original Works Written for Wind Ensemble,” (DMA diss. University of North Carolina at Greensboro, 2007), 38.

⁷⁴ Mary Louise Jones, “Claude Thomas Smith,” 58.

During this passage, the melodic line is carried by the timpani and xylophone. The chromatic sixteenth-note passage in this excerpt requires precise pedaling technique by the timpanist, while the xylophone part requires accurate subdivision so that the syncopated entrance is vertically aligned with the preceding timpani line.

Festival Variations and *Danse Folâtre* both feature demanding ensemble passages, the most substantial of which were discussed in the previous section (see Figures 8 and 9). Another passage that deserves mention is as a full-ensemble transition in *Danse Folâtre*, shown in Figure 24.

This final excerpt can be described as a “waterfall” of sixteenth-note scale-like passages that begins in the uppermost voices of the wind ensemble and descends through the lowest. The syncopated entrance from complete silence in measure 115 is particularly difficult for the upper woodwinds, as it requires extreme clarity and precision in the upper registers.

Another challenging feature of this passage relates to the clarity of ensemble articulation. As the full wind ensemble is employed from top to bottom, it becomes increasingly difficult to coordinate articulation among instruments. These syncopated entrances and ensemble articulation issues place this passage among the most difficult in Smith’s catalog.

Figure 24. *Danse Folâtre*, waterfall transition, mm. 115–118.

Allegro ♩ = 152

Piccolo

Flute 1/2

Oboe 1/2

Bassoon 1/2

Clarinet in E \flat

Clarinet in B \flat 1/2/3

Alto Clarinet in E \flat

Bass Clarinet in B \flat

Alto Saxophone

Tenor Saxophone

Baritone Saxophone

Allegro ♩ = 152

Trumpet in B \flat 1

Trumpet in B \flat 2/3

Horn in F 1/2

Horn in F 3/4

Trombone 1

Trombone 2/3

Euphonium

Tuba

p

5. CONCLUSION

Though Smith's music is less frequently performed today than in the 1970s–90s, there seems to be a resurgence in popularity of his music for young band. Some of his pieces have gained popularity as “retro” classics from the early days of school band. The two previously discussed professional-level works still enjoy frequent performances by top high school and professional wind ensembles around the world. The continued performance of Smith's compositions is a testament to his compositional craftsmanship and the joy these works bring to performers and audiences.

Festival Variations and *Danse Folâtre* are the most frequently represented works in academic research concerning the works of Claude T. Smith. This body of research highlights Smith's innovative compositional techniques but usually does not connect these techniques to Smith's personal life and influences. By explaining and highlighting connections between Smith's personal life and compositional style, this document provides a more comprehensive context in which to view Smith's legacy, while also providing representative musical examples from two of his most popular works for professional band.

Smith's greatest compositional impact in the wind band community was his use of irregular and mixed meters in compositions for young band. He is also remembered for his ability to keep performers engaged through technically demanding parts that allow all performers to play melodic material. Smith's demanding horn parts for military band are still representative of top-level modern horn literature, and should be considered by aspiring horn players as part of

the vital core of band literature written for their instrument. Smith's use of technically demanding individual parts for every instrument in his compositions for professional band has also helped maintain the popularity of these compositions. In a time when few band composers would risk composing unconventional music, Smith carved a niche for his own compositional style.

Most modern wind band pieces reveal the influence of Smith's music. Modern wind band music is littered with Smith's compositional influences, including mixed and irregular meters and extended technical demands; and through Smith, modern pieces exhibit the influence of the well-known composers who impacted Smith's style (e.g., Leonard Bernstein and John Williams).

Smith's legacy as an educator and composer is one that few have achieved in the wind band community. With continued performances and research on Smith's music, his works will likely remain a staple in the wind band literature. Since Smith's untimely death cut short his ever-increasing exploration of the technical limits of the modern wind band, we can only wonder at the complexities Smith could have created given more time.

Composer and conductor, James Curnow, who considered Smith a longtime friend, mentor, and colleague, gives perhaps the most apt description of Smith's life in his correspondence with Smith's daughter. Curnow wrote that,

Claude was and incredible composer of all levels of band, orchestral and choral music, from the youngest levels to the most accomplished performers. I feel that this was due to his extreme success as a teacher/band director in the public schools, which he was able to translate into teachable, beautifully melodic, excitingly rhythmic and energetic phrases set upon a harmonic language that was new and refreshing. Band directors enjoyed conducting and players look forward to performing his music and still do so today.⁷⁵

Several modern wind band composers cite Smith as a direct influence; these include Julie Giroux, Robert W. Smith, David Holsinger, James Swearingen, and James Curnow. Each of

⁷⁵ Pam Smith Kelly, *Harmony from Within*, 234.

these composers is widely successful in the band music world, especially as regards compositions for younger bands. Further research into parallels between Smith's own career and that of the composers he influenced could be productive and interesting.⁷⁶

Claude T. Smith's life was one of compassion, creativity, and passion for his work in education and composition. He achieved great success in his personal and professional life. My hope is that others who encounter Smith's music and story continue to realize and appreciate his rich legacy.

⁷⁶ Ibid., 230–245.

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APPENDIX A: CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN SMITH, GABRIEL, AND BANKHEAD



The
United
States

AIR FORCE BAND and THE SINGING SERGEANTS

3 February 1981

Mr. Claud T. Smith
5626 Ridgeway
Kansas City, MO 64133

Dear Claud,

The United States Air Force Band, Colonel Arnald D. Gabriel, commander/conductor, would like to commission you to compose a special virtuoso concerto for symphonic concert band. The selection should last from 10 to 12 minutes and be tailored to the instrumentation and special capabilities of the Air Force Band. Commission price will be \$5,000 payable upon completion of the full score. We will need the score by 15 April 1982. The new piece will be premiered at the National Band Association national convention in Kansas City in June 1982. We will be responsible for extracting parts.

Our procurement office will not contact you until after 1 October 1981 as funding for the project will be from Fiscal 1982 monies.

The Euphonium solo you did for us is exceptional. We have great expectations for the new work as well.

Congratulations on your many great musical contributions to our repertoire.

If you have any further questions please call collect, (202) 767-4224. We will be in touch periodically regarding this project.

CLAUDE T. SMITH
5626 Ridgeway
Kansas City, Missouri 64133
(816) 358-6728

March 13, 1981

Captain James M. Bankhead, USAF
Deputy Commander
The United States Air Force Band
Bolling Air Force Base
Washington, D.C. 20332

Dear James,

I am most happy and honored to accept Colonel Gabriel's invitation to compose a virtuoso concerto for the symphonic concert band. I understand that the work should be 10 to 12 minutes in length and that payment of \$5,000.00 (Five Thousand Dollars) will be paid following your receipt of the full score by April 15, 1982.

Again, I am honored to do this work, and I appreciate your kind words regarding the solo I did for Brian and the band.

Please give my best to the Colonel and to my good friends in the band.

Sincerely,

Claude T. Smith

CTS:ms



The
United
States
AIR FORCE BAND

The United States Air Force Band enjoys a proud tradition of leadership in the expansion of the repertoire for the Concert Band.

In addition to the hundreds of transcriptions and special arrangements by our outstanding arranging staff, we have premiered original works by world class composers, which are destined to set the standard for concert band composition.

Festival Variations by Claude T. Smith was premeired by The United States Air Force Band at the 75th Anniversary of the Music Educators Music Conference and the Texas Music Educators Association combined convention on February 10, 1982, in San Antonio, Texas. The response was vociferous. Seldom has a composition met with such immediate and overwhelming acceptance.

Festival Variations, with its brilliant technical passages coupled with its glorious romantacism, will certainly rank as one of the monumental compositions of the twentieth century.



1902 Association Drive,

**Music
Educators
National
Conference**

Reston, Virginia 22091

April 2, 1982

Mr. Claude T. Smith
5626 Rigeway
Kansas City, MO 64133

Dear Claude:

This is a somewhat belated but nonetheless sincere letter of thanks and appreciation to you for the exciting work "Festival Variations" premiered in San Antonio by the Air Force Band, and dedicated to the MENC on the occasion of its 75th anniversary. I am sure that you could sense from the response from the audience that you had accomplished something very special!

I am sorry that I did not have an opportunity to see you and thank you in person, but did at least get a glimpse of you when you stood for the well deserved accolade.

And, now, I have a question to ask. What will be the eventual disposition of the original manuscript of the score? Do you have it, or was it turned over to Arnald Gabriel? My reason for asking is that it would be wonderful if your original manuscript could eventually be sent to the MENC Historical Archives on the campus of the nearby University of Maryland. If this is possible, and if you could send it to me, I will make certain personally that it gets to the archivist, Bruce Wilson.

Does the original score have an inscription on it indicating that it was commissioned by the Air Force Band and dedicated to MENC? I assume that it would have.

You will be interested to know that we have in the archives Howard Hanson's original manuscript for his Song of Democracy. It was commissioned by the National Education Association and was dedicated to the NEA on the occasion of its 100th anniversary and MENC's 50th anniversary.

phone 703-860-4000 Official Magazine: Music Educators Journal

Ms. Claude T. Smith

-2-

April 2, 1982

Again, our thanks to you for making such a significant contribution to MENC's 75th anniversary, and I will look forward to hearing from you with regard to your original score. You might want to give me a call on the MENC toll-free line (800/336-3768).

My warm personal regards and best wishes.

WINGERT-ONES MUSIC, INC.
2026 BROADWAY • BOX 1878 • KANSAS CITY, MISSOURI 64141

July 30, 1982

Colonel Arnald Gabriel
Commander/Conductor
United States Air Force Band
Bolling AFB
Washington, DC 20332

Dear Gabe:

This will confirm my understanding of our conversation in Lawrence a few days ago concerning the Claude Smith FESTIVAL VARIATIONS.

You have agreed to write a 'forward' which will be printed on the inside cover of the manuscript full score. We plan to use your letter....shoot it and reprint. If this procedure seems inappropriate to you, please let me know as we will then retype it and print. I'd like to use your letterhead if it can be arranged. You are further to make available to us a cassette of your recent recording of this title when it is reproduced to your satisfaction. We will have this cassette reproduced in a quantity commensurate with the number of printed sets and one will be a part of each set sold.

We will have printed on the cover of the full score the commission information. I anticipate it to read:

Commissioned by the United States Air Force Band,
Colonel Arnald D. Gabriel, Commander/Conductor, and
dedicated to the Music Educators National Conference
on the occasion of it's 75th anniversary. (1907-1982)

Please make any corrections/additions/deletions that you deem proper on this commission.

We will of course make a set available to you for your files if you feel that is useful.

I believe Claude is planning being back your way in about a month to work with some of your people on errors in some of the parts. I understand he has cleared this with George Phelps.



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The
United
States
AIR FORCE BAND

Flight

Mr Claude T. Smith
5626 Ridgeway
Kansas City MO 64133

30 January 1984

Dear Claude

Greetings and best wishes for the New Year. I'm sorry to have missed you in Chicago last December, but scheduling was just impossible at the time.

In reference to your conversation with CMSgt Leigh Steiger in Chicago, it would be marvelous to have you do another work for us. If we do indeed appear at the Mid-West convention in 1985, it would be a very appropriate occasion for the premiere.

We are able to offer you a commission fee of \$5,000, with the usual stipulation that the Air Force Band receive unlimited performing rights to the work, even after publication.

If this is acceptable to you, Chief Steiger will be in touch with you to work out the details of the contract.

We look forward to another of your masterpieces.

APPENDIX B: *FESTIVAL VARIATIONS* AND *DANSE FOLÂTRE* INSTRUMENTATION

<i>Festival Variations</i>	<i>Danse Folâtre</i>
Piccolo	Piccolo
2 Flutes	2 Flutes
2 Oboes	2 Oboes
2 Bassoons	2 Bassoons
Eb Clarinet	Eb Clarinet
3 Bb Clarinets	3 Bb Clarinets
Alto Clarinet	Alto Clarinet
Bb Bass Clarinet	Bb Bass Clarinet
Bb Contra Clarinet	Bb Contra Clarinet
2 Eb Alto Saxophones	2 Eb Alto Saxophones
Bb Tenor Saxophone	Bb Tenor Saxophone
Eb Baritone Saxophone	Eb Baritone Saxophone
3 Bb Trumpets	Bb Piccolo Trumpet
4 French Horns	3 Bb Trumpets
4 Trombones	4 French Horns
Euphonium	4 Trombones
Tuba	Euphonium
Cello (Optional)	Tuba
String Bass	Cello
Piano	String Bass
Harp	Piano
Xylophone	Xylophone
Glockenspiel	Glockenspiel
Vibraphone	Marimba
Tambourine	Vibraphone
Chimes	Temple Blocks
Triangle	Tambourine
Crash Cymbal	Castanets
Suspended Cymbal	Chimes
Snare Drum	Claves
Bass Drum	Wood Block
Gong	Triangle
Timpani	Suspended Cymbal
	Snare Drum
	Bass Drum
	Tam-Tam
	Timpani

