



# CRAIG MICHAEL DAVIS

## ARTIST STATEMENT

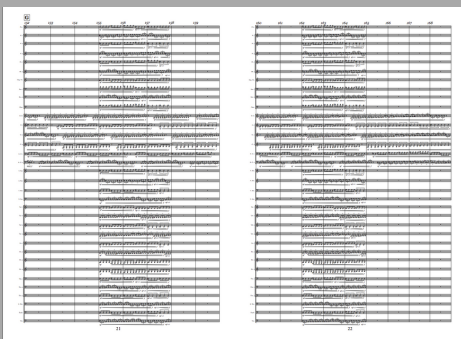
“WHEN YOU TAKE A FLOWER IN YOUR HAND AND REALLY LOOK AT IT, IT’S YOUR WORLD FOR THE MOMENT. I WANT TO GIVE THAT WORLD TO SOMEONE ELSE... NOBODY REALLY SEES A FLOWER - REALLY - IT IS SO SMALL - WE HAVEN’T TIME - AND TO SEE TAKES TIME... SO I SAID TO MYSELF - I’LL PAINT WHAT I SEE - WHAT THE FLOWER IS TO ME BUT I’LL PAINT IT BIG AND THEY WILL BE SURPRISED INTO TAKING TIME TO LOOK AT IT.”

- Georgia O'Keefe

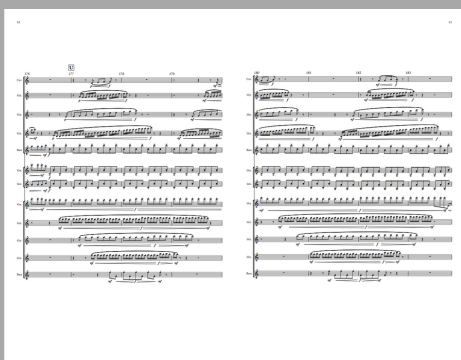
Music is much like painting a flower, though instead of painting on canvas, as a composer, I paint time. Because our perception of time tends to be linear by default, I have devoted many works to the idea of non - linear time. In this vein, I’m currently working on a cyclical piece that lasts 24 hours in duration. The piece follows the trajectory of our modern 24 hour clock, though there is no beginning or ending to this work. The listener can enter into the sound world at their own pace and stay as long as they please.

My work has also been paralleled to that of a sculptor, who sculpts away chunks of clay to reveal the beautiful figure within. Thus, my goal in creating music is often to start with large chunks of sound, then removing any extra notes, my work is left with only the notes that are necessary. Thinking like a sculptor, in *War Against the Soul* for wind band (see *excerpt 1* in ledger), I aimed at creating large, sculpted sound masses using the shape of a cross. In this way, physical images and pictures can be embodied into the sound.

Another work, *Floating Cities*, utilizes this same technique, however, I split this piece, for guitar ensemble, into three groups, each representing a layer of time. You may see from *excerpt 2*, that the top group is juxtaposed against the bottom group, in a 3:2 ratio. This three against two "macro isorhythm" is not the only metaphor, but those interested in tuning ratios will note that the ratio 3:2 represents a just perfect fifth. Represented in this piece are also ratios 4:3 and 5:4.



*Excerpt Score 1 from: War Against the Soul*



*Excerpt Score 2 from: Floating Cities*

### CONTACT

(909) 732-4766

CRAIGDAVISPIANOS@GMAIL.COM:

WWW.CRAIGMICHAELDAVIS.COM



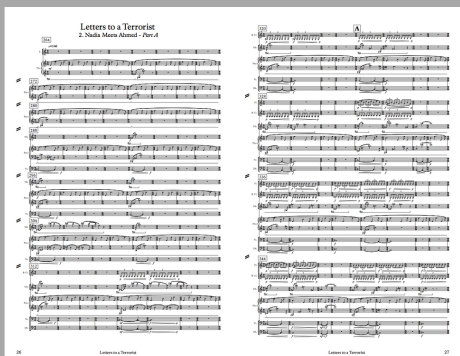
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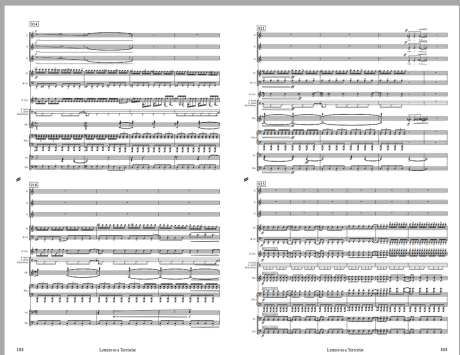
I have more recently expanded this sculpting idea, using electronic software (such as granular synthesis, spectral analysis, MAX, and RTcmix), and Digital Audio Workstations (such as Protools, Logic and Digital Performer), to create sound sculptures that cannot fully be actualized by acoustic instruments. In these electronic pieces, I often take real world sounds (ie. Insect buzzing, train track noise, my wife singing, etc.), analyze their sound spectrum, and change them in interesting ways that make the source unrecognizable. I then create new soundscapes that encompass new sound worlds and aesthetics.

Having teachers such as: Michael Gordon, Julia Wolfe, Justin Dello Joio and Lloyd Rodgers, my most recent works encompass an edgy mixture of post-minimalism, and post-rock, yet have a uniquely classical aesthetic. *Letters to a Terrorist*, is a great example of this. It is an opera-ballet about the wife of a head emir in the G.I.A. in Algeria. Executions, betrayal, and denial mark the opening of this love story where Nadia, the protagonist, finds herself caught between her family and the man she loves, while she wrestles with the teachings of Islam and her husband, Ahmed's, expectations.

I find that this way of musical expression remains relevant to the current culture, yet the pacing, counterpoint, and harmonic complexity, is written in such a way that even the most seasoned musicians can find interest in performing the music. Having grown up on the coast of California and moving to New York City in my early twenties, my music encompasses the freedom and improvisational spirit of the West, while adhering to a very clear East Coast, Downtown New York scene, with rich experimentation. Though my works are very clearly notated so that very little questions arise in the rehearsal process, I aim to leave enough space for musical interpretations that can breathe life to a performance, and encourage musicians to take a flower in their hand, notice it, and let it become their world for a moment.



Excerpt Score 3 from: *Letters to a Terrorist*



Excerpt Score 4 from: *Letters to a Terrorist*

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