From Detroit to LA

Michael Mikulka

"From Detroit to LA" is based on a flight I took in November 2009. This was the first time I had flown on a clear day at a low altitude, and I was struck by the patterns that emerged from the air: not only the man-made patterns of towns and plowed farmland, but also the natural patterns from mountains, rivers, and canyons. Though we were actually moving at several hundred miles per hour, everything below seemed expansive, and shifted from view at a slow pace, which is the reason for the quasi-minimalist style often found in this piece.

All of the melodies for the piece were composed on the actual flight, and the order in which they appear in the composition is the order in which they appeared during the trip. The purpose of the trip was to visit the University of Southern California, so a few of the motifs and melodic fragments (as well as other aspects of the composition) are imitative of and/or inspired by the music of Frank Ticheli.

From Detroit to LA

Michael Mikulka

Endless squares of farmland

♩ = 120

Piccolo
Flute 1 + 2
Oboe 1 + 2
Bassoon 1 + 2
Clarinet in B♭ 1
Clarinet in B♭ 2
Clarinet in B♭ 3
Bass Clarinet
Alto Saxophone 1+2
Tenor Saxophone
Baritone Saxophone
Trumpet 1
Trumpet 2
Trumpet 3
Horn in F 1 + 2
Horn in F 3 + 4
Trombone 1
Trombone 2
Bass Trombone
Euphonium
Tuba
Timpani
32" - G, 29" - B, 26" - C♯ , 23" - F
Large Temple Block
Percussion 1
Percussion 2
Percussion 3
Xylophone
Marimba

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

Little streams and rivulets appear

Picc.
Fl. 1 + 2
Ob. 1 + 2
Bsn. 1 + 2
Cl. 1
Cl. 2
Cl. 3
B. Cl.
A. Sax.
T. Sax.
B. Sax.
Tpt. 1
Tpt. 2
Tpt. 3
Hn. 1 + 2
Hn. 3 + 4
Tbn. 1
Tbn. 2
B. Tbn.
Euph.
Tba.
Timp.
Perc. 1
Perc. 2
Perc. 3
Xyl.
Mar.

sfzp *f* *mf* *mp* *sfzp* *mf* *mp* *mf* *f* *8va*

9 10 11 12 13

Picc.
Fl. 1 + 2
Ob. 1 + 2
Bsn. 1 + 2
Cl. 1
Cl. 2
Cl. 3
B. Cl.
A. Sax.
T. Sax.
B. Sax.
Tpt. 1
Tpt. 2
Tpt. 3
Hn. 1 + 2
Hn. 3 + 4
Tbn. 1
Tbn. 2
B. Tbn.
Euph.
Tba.
Timp.
Perc. 1
Perc. 2
Perc. 3
Xyl.
Mar.

78

to gong (with triangle beater)
Egg Shaker
Bass Drum

14 15 16 17 18 19 20

The streams lead into broad rivers

♪ = ♪

Picc.

Fl. 1 + 2 — 1sts / 2nds

Ob. 1 + 2

Bsn. 1 + 2

Cl. 1

Cl. 2

Cl. 3

B. Cl.

A. Sax.

T. Sax.

B. Sax.

Tpt. 1

Tpt. 2

Tpt. 3

Hn. 1 + 2

Hn. 3 + 4

Tbn. 1

Tbn. 2

B. Tbn.

Euph.

Tba.

Timp. — Scrape gong with triangle beater

Perc. 1

Perc. 2

Perc. 3

Xyl.

Mar.

21 22 23

Picc.
Fl. 1 + 2
Ob. 1 + 2
Bsn. 1 + 2
Cl. 1
Cl. 2
Cl. 3
B. Cl.
A. Sax.
T. Sax.
B. Sax.
Tpt. 1
Tpt. 2
Tpt. 3
Hn. 1 + 2
Hn. 3 + 4
Tbn. 1
Tbn. 2
B. Tbn.
Euph.
Tba.
Timp.
Perc. 1
Perc. 2
Perc. 3
Xyl.
Mar.

24 25 26 27

The river gives way to circles of farmland

Picc.

Fl. 1 + 2

Ob. 1 + 2

Bsn. 1 + 2

Cl. 1

Cl. 2

Cl. 3

B. Cl.

A. Sax.

T. Sax.

B. Sax.

Tpt. 1

Tpt. 2

Tpt. 3

Hn. 1 + 2

Hn. 3 + 4

Tbn. 1

Tbn. 2

B. Tbn.

Euph.

Tba.

Timp.

Perc. 1

Perc. 2

Perc. 3

Xyl.

Mar.

1sts

p

pp

mp

28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36

Picc.
Fl. 1 + 2
Ob. 1 + 2
Bsn. 1 + 2
Cl. 1
Cl. 2
Cl. 3
B. Cl.
A. Sax.
T. Sax.
B. Sax.
Tpt. 1
Tpt. 2
Tpt. 3
Hn. 1 + 2
Hn. 3 + 4
Tbn. 1
Tbn. 2
B. Tbn.
Euph.
Tba.
Timp.
Perc. 1
Perc. 2
Perc. 3
Xyl.
Mar.

mp *mf* *p* *mp* *p* *mp* *p* *mp* *mp*

37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44 45

rit.

Picc.
Fl. 1 + 2
Ob. 1 + 2
Bsn. 1 + 2
Cl. 1
Cl. 2
Cl. 3
B. Cl.
A. Sax.
T. Sax.
B. Sax.
Tpt. 1
Tpt. 2
Tpt. 3
Hn. 1 + 2
Hn. 3 + 4
Tbn. 1
Tbn. 2
B. Tbn.
Euph.
Tba.
Timp.
Perc. 1
Perc. 2
Perc. 3
Xyl.
Mar.

46 47 48 49 50 51 52 53 54

A tempo
A pair of streams pass through the circular fields

Picc.
Fl. 1 + 2
Ob. 1 + 2
Bsn. 1 + 2
Cl. 1
Cl. 2
Cl. 3
B. Cl.
A. Sax.
T. Sax.
B. Sax.
Tpt. 1
Tpt. 2
Tpt. 3
Hn. 1 + 2
Hn. 3 + 4
Tbn. 1
Tbn. 2
B. Tbn.
Euph.
Tba.
Timp.
Perc. 1
Perc. 2
Perc. 3
Xyl.
Mar.

1 only

55 56 57 58

Picc.
Fl. 1 + 2
Ob. 1 + 2
Bsn. 1 + 2
Cl. 1
Cl. 2
Cl. 3
B. Cl.
A. Sax.
T. Sax.
B. Sax.
Tpt. 1
Tpt. 2
Tpt. 3
Hn. 1 + 2
Hn. 3 + 4
Tbn. 1
Tbn. 2
B. Tbn.
Euph.
Tba.
Timp.
Perc. 1
Perc. 2
Perc. 3
Xyl.
Mar.

5/8 | 2/4 | 3/4 | 4/4

p
pp
to temple block

59 60 61 62 63

Squares reappear

Picc.
Fl. 1 + 2
Ob. 1 + 2
Bsn. 1 + 2
Cl. 1
Cl. 2
Cl. 3
B. Cl.
A. Sax.
T. Sax.
B. Sax.
Tpt. 1
Tpt. 2
Tpt. 3
Hn. 1 + 2
Hn. 3 + 4
Tbn. 1
Tbn. 2
B. Tbn.
Euph.
Tba.
Timp.
Perc. 1
Perc. 2
Perc. 3
Xyl.
Mar.

a2

gliss.

64 65 66 67 68 69 70 71

The squares are interspersed with rectangles

Picc.
Fl. 1 + 2
Ob. 1 + 2
Bsn. 1 + 2
Cl. 1
Cl. 2
Cl. 3
B. Cl.
A. Sax.
T. Sax.
B. Sax.
Tpt. 1
Tpt. 2
Tpt. 3
Hn. 1 + 2
Hn. 3 + 4
Tbn. 1
Tbn. 2
B. Tbn.
Euph.
Tba.
Timp.
Perc. 1
Perc. 2
Perc. 3
Xyl.
Mar.

72 73 74 75

The rectangles and squares combine into a patchwork pattern

Picc.
Fl. 1 + 2
Ob. 1 + 2
Bsn. 1 + 2
Cl. 1
Cl. 2
Cl. 3
B. Cl.
A. Sax.
T. Sax.
B. Sax.
Tpt. 1
Tpt. 2
Tpt. 3
Hn. 1 + 2
Hn. 3 + 4
Tbn. 1
Tbn. 2
B. Tbn.
Euph.
Tba.
Timp.
Perc. 1
Perc. 2
Perc. 3
Xyl.
Mar.

to gong (with triangle beater)

76 77 78 79 80

Picc.
Fl. 1 + 2
Ob. 1 + 2
Bsn. 1 + 2
Cl. 1
Cl. 2
Cl. 3
B. Cl.
A. Sax.
T. Sax.
B. Sax.
Tpt. 1
Tpt. 2
Tpt. 3
Hn. 1 + 2
Hn. 3 + 4
Tbn. 1
Tbn. 2
B. Tbn.
Euph.
Tba.
Timp.
Perc. 1
Perc. 2
Perc. 3
Xyl.
Mar.

6/4

mp

mf

f

Smoothly

81 82 83 84 85

Picc.

Fl. 1 + 2

Ob. 1 + 2

Bsn. 1 + 2

Cl. 1

Cl. 2

Cl. 3

B. Cl.

A. Sax.

T. Sax.

B. Sax.

Tpt. 1

Tpt. 2

Tpt. 3

Hn. 1 + 2

Hn. 3 + 4

Tbn. 1

Tbn. 2

B. Tbn.

Euph.

Tba.

Timp.

Gong (scrape w/ triangle beater)

to crash cymbals

Perc. 1

to susp. cymbal

Perc. 2

Perc. 3

Xyl.

Mar.

86 87 88 89 90 91

The lines defining the land become blurred,
mountains enter in the distance
slightly faster ♩ = 128

Picc.
Fl. 1 + 2
Ob. 1 + 2
Bsn. 1 + 2
Cl. 1
Cl. 2
Cl. 3
B. Cl.
A. Sax.
T. Sax.
B. Sax.
Tpt. 1
Tpt. 2
Tpt. 3
Hn. 1 + 2
Hn. 3 + 4
Tbn. 1
Tbn. 2
B. Tbn.
Euph.
Tba.
Timp.
Perc. 1
Perc. 2
Perc. 3
Xyl.
Mar.

1 player
distant
1st bring out!!
into stand
into stand
into stand
bring out!!
bring out!!

92 93 94 95 96

58

Picc.
Fl. 1 + 2
Ob. 1 + 2
Bsn. 1 + 2
Cl. 1
Cl. 2
Cl. 3
B. Cl.
A. Sax.
T. Sax.
B. Sax.
Tpt. 1
Tpt. 2
Tpt. 3
Hn. 1 + 2
Hn. 3 + 4
Tbn. 1
Tbn. 2
B. Tbn.
Euph.
Tba.
Timp.
Perc. 1
Perc. 2
Perc. 3
Xyl.
Mar.

a2
1
2
1st
susp. cymbal

97 98 99 100 101

Large snow-capped mountains

Picc.
Fl. 1 + 2
Ob. 1 + 2
Bsn. 1 + 2
Cl. 1
Cl. 2
Cl. 3
B. Cl.
A. Sax.
T. Sax.
B. Sax.
Tpt. 1
Tpt. 2
Tpt. 3
Hn. 1 + 2
Hn. 3 + 4
Tbn. 1
Tbn. 2
B. Tbn.
Euph.
Tba.
Timp.
Crash cymbals
Perc. 1
Perc. 2
Perc. 3
Xyl.
Mar.

102 103 104 105 106

Picc.
Fl. 1 + 2
Ob. 1 + 2
Bsn. 1 + 2
Cl. 1
Cl. 2
Cl. 3
B. Cl.
A. Sax.
T. Sax.
B. Sax.
Tpt. 1
Tpt. 2
Tpt. 3
Hn. 1 + 2
Hn. 3 + 4
Tbn. 1
Tbn. 2
B. Tbn.
Euph.
Tba.
Timp.
Perc. 1
Perc. 2
Perc. 3
Xyl.
Mar.

5/8 3/4

f
mf
f
mf
f

to temple block

107 108 109 110 111

The mountains continue, with circular patterns in the valleys

Picc.
Fl. 1 + 2
Ob. 1 + 2
Bsn. 1 + 2
Cl. 1
Cl. 2
Cl. 3
B. Cl.
A. Sax.
T. Sax.
B. Sax.
Tpt. 1
Tpt. 2
Tpt. 3
Hn. 1 + 2
Hn. 3 + 4
Tbn. 1
Tbn. 2
B. Tbn.
Euph.
Tba.
Timp.
Perc. 1
Perc. 2
Perc. 3
Xyl.
Mar.

mf *mp* *f* very full

3/8 3/4

112 113 114 115

Picc.
Fl. 1 + 2
Ob. 1 + 2
Bsn. 1 + 2
Cl. 1
Cl. 2
Cl. 3
B. Cl.
A. Sax.
T. Sax.
B. Sax.
Tpt. 1
Tpt. 2
Tpt. 3
Hn. 1 + 2
Hn. 3 + 4
Tbn. 1
Tbn. 2
B. Tbn.
Euph.
Tba.
Timp.
Perc. 1
Perc. 2
Perc. 3
Xyl.
Mar.

very full
very full

116 117 118 119 120

Picc.
Fl. 1 + 2
Ob. 1 + 2
Bsn. 1 + 2
Cl. 1
Cl. 2
Cl. 3
B. Cl.
A. Sax.
T. Sax.
B. Sax.
Tpt. 1
Tpt. 2
Tpt. 3
Hn. 1 + 2
Hn. 3 + 4
Tbn. 1
Tbn. 2
B. Tbn.
Euph.
Tba.
Timp.
Perc. 1
Perc. 2
Perc. 3
Xyl.
Mar.

3/8 | 3/4 | 7/8

f *mp* *mf*

gliss.

121 122 123 124 125 126 127

Picc.
Fl. 1 + 2
Ob. 1 + 2
Bsn. 1 + 2
Cl. 1
Cl. 2
Cl. 3
B. Cl.
A. Sax.
T. Sax.
B. Sax.
Tpt. 1
Tpt. 2
Tpt. 3
Hn. 1 + 2
Hn. 3 + 4
Tbn. 1
Tbn. 2
B. Tbn.
Euph.
Tba.
Timp.
Perc. 1
Perc. 2
Perc. 3
Xyl.
Mar.

to shaker

128 129 130 131 132 133

Large plateaus sweep across the landscape

Picc.
Fl. 1 + 2
Ob. 1 + 2
Bsn. 1 + 2
Cl. 1
Cl. 2
Cl. 3
B. Cl.
A. Sax.
T. Sax.
B. Sax.
Tpt. 1
Tpt. 2
Tpt. 3
Hn. 1 + 2
Hn. 3 + 4
Tbn. 1
Tbn. 2
B. Tbn.
Euph.
Tba.
Timp.
Perc. 1
Perc. 2
Perc. 3
Xyl.
Mar.

bring out

134 135 136 137 138

Picc.
Fl. 1 + 2
Ob. 1 + 2
Bsn. 1 + 2
Cl. 1
Cl. 2
Cl. 3
B. Cl.
A. Sax.
T. Sax.
B. Sax.
Tpt. 1
Tpt. 2
Tpt. 3
Hn. 1 + 2
Hn. 3 + 4
Tbn. 1
Tbn. 2
B. Tbn.
Euph.
Tba.
Timp.
Perc. 1
Perc. 2
Perc. 3
Xyl.
Mar.

3/4 5/4 3/4 5/4 3/4

f *mf* *mp*

139 140 141 142

The plateaus lead to deep canyons

Picc.
Fl. 1 + 2
Ob. 1 + 2
Bsn. 1 + 2
Cl. 1
Cl. 2
Cl. 3
B. Cl.
A. Sax.
T. Sax.
B. Sax.
Tpt. 1
Tpt. 2
Tpt. 3
Hn. 1 + 2
Hn. 3 + 4
Tbn. 1
Tbn. 2
B. Tbn.
Euph.
Tba.
Timp.
Perc. 1
Perc. 2
Perc. 3
Xyl.
Mar.

Temple block

143 144 145 146 147

Picc.
Fl. 1 + 2
Ob. 1 + 2
Bsn. 1 + 2
Cl. 1
Cl. 2
Cl. 3
B. Cl.
A. Sax.
T. Sax.
B. Sax.
Tpt. 1
Tpt. 2
Tpt. 3
Hn. 1 + 2
Hn. 3 + 4
Tbn. 1
Tbn. 2
B. Tbn.
Euph.
Tba.
Timp.
Perc. 1
Perc. 2
Perc. 3
Xyl.
Mar.

148 149 150 151

relaxing slightly

Picc.
Fl. 1 + 2
Ob. 1 + 2
Bsn. 1 + 2
Cl. 1
Cl. 2
Cl. 3
B. Cl.
A. Sax.
T. Sax.
B. Sax.
Tpt. 1
Tpt. 2
Tpt. 3
Hn. 1 + 2
Hn. 3 + 4
Tbn. 1
Tbn. 2
B. Tbn.
Euph.
Tba.
Timp.
Perc. 1
Perc. 2
Perc. 3
Xyl.
Mar.

4/4

(open)

to susp. cymbal

152 153 154 155 156 157

The canyons fade into squares

A tempo

♩ = 120

Picc.
Fl. 1 + 2
Ob. 1 + 2
Bsn. 1 + 2
Cl. 1
Cl. 2
Cl. 3
B. Cl.
A. Sax.
T. Sax.
B. Sax.
Tpt. 1
Tpt. 2
Tpt. 3
Hn. 1 + 2
Hn. 3 + 4
Tbn. 1
Tbn. 2
B. Tbn.
Euph.
Tba.
Timp.
Perc. 1
Perc. 2
Perc. 3
Xyl.
Mar.

158 159 160 161

Picc.
Fl. 1 + 2
Ob. 1 + 2
Bsn. 1 + 2
Cl. 1
Cl. 2
Cl. 3
B. Cl.
A. Sax.
T. Sax.
B. Sax.
Tpt. 1
Tpt. 2
Tpt. 3
Hn. 1 + 2
Hn. 3 + 4
Tbn. 1
Tbn. 2
B. Tbn.
Euph.
Tba.
Timp.
Perc. 1
Perc. 2
Perc. 3
Xyl.
Mar.

78

fp mf mp f

Susp. cymbal

162 163 164 165

Picc.
Fl. 1 + 2
Ob. 1 + 2
Bsn. 1 + 2
Cl. 1
Cl. 2
Cl. 3
B. Cl.
A. Sax.
T. Sax.
B. Sax.
Tpt. 1
Tpt. 2
Tpt. 3
Hn. 1 + 2
Hn. 3 + 4
Tbn. 1
Tbn. 2
B. Tbn.
Euph.
Tba.
Timp.
Perc. 1
Perc. 2
Perc. 3
Xyl.
Mar.

1sts
2nds
dampen loudly
dampen!

166 167 168 169 170