The Commissioning, Composition, and Performance Preparation of Christopher Rouse's Heimdall's Trumpet for Christopher Martin and the Chicago Symphony Orchestra

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THE COMMISSIONING, COMPOSITION, AND PERFORMANCE PREPARATION OF CHRISTOPHER ROUSE’S *HEIMDALL’S TRUMPET* FOR CHRISTOPHER MARTIN AND THE CHICAGO SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

By

Benjamin A. Fairfield

A DOCTORAL ESSAY

Submitted to the Faculty of the University of Miami in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Musical Arts

Coral Gables, Florida

May 2016
THE COMMISSIONING, COMPOSITION, AND PERFORMANCE PREPARATION OF CHRISTOPHER ROUSE’S *HEIMDALL’S TRUMPET* FOR CHRISTOPHER MARTIN AND THE CHICAGO SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

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(May 2016) of Christopher Rouse’s *Heimdall’s Trumpet* for Christopher Martin  
and the Chicago Symphony Orchestra

Abstract of a doctoral essay at the University of Miami.

Doctoral essay supervised by Professor Craig Morris.  
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The purpose of this essay is to explore the significance of notable American composer Christopher Rouse’s *Heimdall’s Trumpet*, a new concerto in four movements for trumpet and orchestra. The work received its premiere on December 20, 2012 at Orchestra Hall in Chicago, Illinois by the Chicago Symphony Orchestra along with guest conductor, Jaap van Zweden, and the Chicago Symphony Orchestra’s principal trumpeter, Christopher Martin, soloist.

This essay will use Christopher Rouse, Christopher Martin, and the piece *Heimdall’s Trumpet*, as its primary examples. The discussion will provide a background on the music of Christopher Rouse, primarily his brass music, concertos, and his previous commission from the Chicago Symphony Orchestra. It will include an extensive examination on the life, training, and career of trumpeter Christopher Martin, specifically his performance preparation leading up to the premiere of *Heimdall’s Trumpet*. The final part of the essay will include an extensive discussion of the piece, *Heimdall’s Trumpet*.

While Christopher Rouse has written several notable concertos, *Heimdall’s Trumpet* will serve as his first concerto for trumpet and orchestra. It was chosen as the topic of this essay because of the significance to the trumpet repertoire.
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This essay would not have been possible without the cooperation of Boosey and Hawkes, Inc., composer Christopher Rouse, trumpeter Christopher Martin, and the Chicago Symphony Orchestra. It is difficult to put into words the thanks and admiration I have for these wonderful musicians.

To Dr. Christopher Rouse, thank you for your dedication to your craft. With Heimdall’s Trumpet, you have showed the world your vision of Ragnarök, and brought to life the hero Heimdall and his mythical Gjallarhorn. Thank you for the generous amount of time you spent chatting with me in the basement of Orchestra Hall in Chicago before the second rehearsal of your new concerto. To the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, thank you for the use of your rehearsal and interview space, and your generous allowance for me to observe the rehearsal process for Heimdall’s Trumpet. Your assistance was most helpful in completing the project. To Christopher Martin, thank you for your musical wisdom and vision in asking the Chicago Symphony to commission a trumpet concerto from such a prominent American composer, and thank you for delivering a spectacular premiere in December of 2012.

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the members of my committee both past and present, Dr. Paul Wilson, Mr. Jerry Peel, Mr. Gary Green, Mr. John Olah, Mr. Thomas Sleeper, and Dr. Scott Stinson. To the chair of my committee and my mentor at the University of Miami, Mr. Craig Morris, I thank you for your wisdom, your patience, and your constant artistic excellence. I have certainly grown as a musician under your
guidance and leadership and have had the fortunate opportunity of making music alongside you many wonderful times. I truly enjoyed every minute.

To all who have supported me through this long process over many years, I thank you for your patience and understanding. From a failed first attempted project through the end of the current one, you never gave up on me and supported my pursuit of a dream. To Andrew Zweibel, Amanda Chin, Shawn Vondran, Jamie Nix, Charles Damon, Andy Roseborough, Brian Winegardner, Michael Flynn, Caitlyn Smith, Tim Shade, Tom Keck, members of the faculty of the Frost School of Music, and many others, your friendship and support mean the world.

Thank you to my family, whose love and support have allowed me to pursue my musical dreams. Alan, Frances, and Amy Fairfield, you have certainly had to endure a lot of trumpet music these past thirty years. Thank you for never giving up on me.

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CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

On December 20th, 21st, & 22nd, 2012, at Orchestra Hall in Chicago, IL, The Chicago Symphony Orchestra presented the world premiere of Christopher Rouse’s trumpet concerto, *Heimdall’s Trumpet* (2012). The orchestra’s principal trumpeter, Christopher Martin served as soloist, and the orchestra was under the direction of guest conductor Jaap van Zweden. *Heimdall’s Trumpet* is Rouse’s first concerto for trumpet and the second commission he has received from The Chicago Symphony Orchestra.

Pulitzer Prize winning composer Christopher Rouse’s music has, to date of this publication, appeared in five subscription series concerts of The Chicago Symphony Orchestra. Rouse’s association with the orchestra began in 1984 when, on March 2nd, 3rd, and 4th of that year, they performed the then thirty-five-year-old composer’s brief work *The Infernal Machine* (1981) under the baton of Leonard Slatkin. Long-time Chicago Tribune critic, John von Rhein, who would later write a review of Rouse’s *Heimdall’s Trumpet* stated in the March 3, 1984 edition of the Chicago Tribune, “Rouse...has created an exhilarating piece of musical clockwork that is not only colorful and cannily crafted, but great fun to listen to. The score takes off in a prestissimo whirl of chugging, twittering, grinding, slithering sounds that give way to the delicate shimmer of crystal goblets, which the flutists and oboists are asked to rub near the end of the 5-minute work. Here is one contemporary piece you wouldn't mind having encored on the spot.”

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Ten years later, on April 28th, 29th, & 30th, 1994, The Chicago Symphony Orchestra would again program the music of Christopher Rouse, his Symphony No. 1 (1986) under the direction of David Zinman. In 2001, the Chicago Symphony Orchestra commissioned Rouse for the first time and received his Clarinet Concerto (2001), composed for the orchestra’s principal clarinetist Larry Combs. The work was given its premiere at Orchestra Hall in Chicago on May 17th, 18th, 19th, & 22nd, 2001 with Christoph Eschenbach conducting. In reviewing the premiere performance, John von Rhein states, “His music speaks of now, in bold, exuberant, manic, at times raucous terms that reflect the world in which we live. We shouldn't be surprised by the pile-driving dynamics and rhythms of rock that leap from his scores. Nor should we be surprised that his musical language seems ever in a state of flux, reinventing itself in unpredictable ways.”

Reviewer Ben Hogwood says of the Clarinet Concerto, “his writing does at times elude tonality, and in setting seemingly random challenges, determined by a throw of the dice, the placing of events and their outcomes intentionally draws comparison with a board game or television-game-show.”

Rouse’s most recent appearance on the schedule of The Chicago Symphony Orchestra (before the premiere of Heimdall’s Trumpet), took place on April 20th, 21st, 22nd, 23rd, & 25th, 2006. In this subscription series, the CSO performed Rouse’s Rapture (2000), again with David Zinman conducting. Rouse says of Rapture, “This is the most unabashedly tonal music I have ever composed. I wished to depict a progression to an

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ever more blinding ecstasy, but the entire work inhabits a world devoid of darkness – hence the almost complete lack of sustained dissonance.”

The New York Times has called Christopher Rouse’s music “some of the most anguished, most memorable music around.” Stephen Wigler of The Baltimore Sun has written, “When the music history of the late 20th Century is written, I suspect the explosive and passionate music of Rouse will loom large.” Rouse’s music has been awarded the 1993 Pulitzer Prize for Music (Trombone Concerto), a 2002 Grammy Award for Best Classical Contemporary Composition (Concert de Gaudí, a guitar concerto), a 1988 First Place Kennedy Center Friedheim Award (Symphony No. 1), and Rouse has been elected to the prestigious American Academy of Arts and Letters.

Christopher Martin has held the Adolph Herseth Principal Trumpet chair of The Chicago Symphony Orchestra since 2005. Prior to joining The Chicago Symphony Orchestra, he held the Principal Trumpet position in the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra from 2000 - 2006. During his tenure with The Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Mr. Martin has served under music directors Daniel Barenboim (2005 - 2006) and Riccardo Muti (2010 - present), Principal Conductor Bernard Haitink (2006 - 2010), and has been a featured soloist on subscription series concerts eight times, under conductors such as Michael Tilson Thomas, Jamie Laredo, and Nicholas Kraemer. His most recent solo appearance was in March 2012, performing the Shostakovich Concerto for Piano, Strings, and Trumpet in C minor, Op. 35 with pianist Marc-André Hamelin and

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conductor Kirill Petrenko. Christopher Rouse’s *Heimdall’s Trumpet* marks the first time Mr. Martin will premiere a new work for trumpet and orchestra.

**Significance**

On December 20, 21, and 22, 2012, Christopher Martin and the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, led by guest conductor Jaap van Zweden, presented the world premiere of *Heimdall’s Trumpet* written by Christopher Rouse. The work was Mr. Rouse’s second commission from the Chicago Symphony Orchestra (*Clarinet Concerto*, 2001) and his first trumpet concerto. Rouse stated that Heimdall, in Norse mythology, was the God whose trumpet blasts signaled the beginning of Ragnarok, which was their equivalent of Armageddon. Heimdall was the Norse equivalent of the angel Gabriel and that it was his trumpet that would bring about this idea of Ragnarok, which was truly apocalyptic in Norse mythology and it occurred to Rouse that this idea might be the inspiration for this piece.⁶ Christopher Martin says of the piece, “the piece itself is very dramatic and, in fact, one of the reasons I was excited for Mr. Rouse to write this piece is because he blends expertly the craft and technique of composing with the kind of raw energy of almost rock and roll music. It’s a good fit both for me and for the (Chicago Symphony Orchestra). The (Chicago Symphony Orchestra) is known for it’s attraction to large pieces, large scale works, dramatic works, and I think this concerto fits nicely.”⁷

Chicago Symphony Orchestra program annotator, Philip Huscher states that, “The

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Chicago Symphony and Martin chose Rouse for this commission largely because of his flair for writing big dramatic pieces for large orchestra, and the desire to produce a concerto that is, as Martin points it, a ‘real conversational ensemble piece’ rather than a solo showcase pure and simple.”

**Purpose**

The purpose of this essay will be to examine the newly commissioned work, *Heimdall’s Trumpet* (2012), a concerto in four movements for solo trumpet and orchestra by Pulitzer Prize winning composer Christopher Rouse. The work is Christopher Rouse’s second commission from the Chicago Symphony Orchestra and made possible by a grant from the Edward F. Schmidt Family Commissioning Fund. The Chicago Symphony Orchestra’s principal trumpeter Christopher Martin gave the premier on December 20, 2012 with guest conductor Jaap van Zweden leading the Chicago Symphony Orchestra.

The essay will provide insight into the musical background of both the composer and soloist for *Heimdall’s Trumpet*. It will focus on the commissioning process, all stages of composition, Christopher Rouse’s insights about composition, his inspiration for this piece, and Christopher Martin’s performance preparation. The essay will also include a brief discussion of Mr. Rouse’s previous commission from the Chicago Symphony Orchestra (*Clarinet Concerto* for former CSO principal clarinetist Larry Combs, 2001), as well as a listing of Mr. Martin’s previous solo appearances with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra.

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While there are many excellent pieces for solo trumpet and orchestra, there are few contributions from living composers of great significance. Christopher Rouse’s new work was chosen because Mr. Rouse is a noteworthy contemporary American composer whose quality of work is always held in high regard and a composer in which this author has personal experience with a premiere (Wolf Rounds, 2007). In addition, Christopher Martin is a well-respected musician, whose position as principal trumpeter of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra is a testament to his importance in the current musical landscape.

**Research Questions**

The scope and purpose of this essay are framed by the following questions:

1. What is Christopher Rouse’s significance as a composer and how is he viewed by his colleagues and the artistic community?

2. What is Christopher Martin’s significance as a trumpeter and how is he viewed by his colleagues and the artistic community?

3. What is the significance of Rouse’s new work, *Heimdall’s Trumpet* for trumpet and orchestra?

4. What are the performance issues in *Heimdall’s Trumpet*?

   What are the challenges for the solo trumpeter?

   What are the challenges for the accompaniment?

   What are the challenges in preparing and rehearsing the piece?
Presentation of the Study

The presentation of the research will be offered in the following organizational manner. The second chapter will present a review of all relevant prior scholarly research regarding both composer Christopher Rouse and performer Christopher Martin. This chapter will investigate and evaluate all existing scholarly research on Mr. Rouse and Mr. Martin and as a result, the value of this essay will become clear in light of the absence of scholarly resources on these two important musical figures of our generation.

The third chapter will present an outline of the research methods to be employed during the course of the study. This chapter will describe how data is to be collected, from whom data is to be collected, and in what format data will be collected. This chapter identifies the primary interviewees and describes their relevance to the study.

The fourth chapter will present biographical information on composer Christopher Rouse. Included in this chapter will be information about Rouse’s background and musical training, a comprehensive list of works, including those works for solo orchestral instruments, and those commissioned by the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, and a brief description of his previous commission from the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Clarinet Concerto (2001). This chapter will also address Mr. Rouse’s compositional techniques, his insights about composing, and his own works.

The fifth chapter will present biographical information on trumpeter Christopher Martin. Included in this chapter will be information about Martin’s background and musical training, a description of his orchestral career from its beginning until the date of this publication, a comprehensive listing of solo pieces performed by Mr. Martin with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra including title of the work, composer, conductor, and dates
of performance, and his insights into trumpet performance.

The sixth chapter will present information about Mr. Rouse’s *Heimdall’s Trumpet* (2012) for Christopher Martin and the Chicago Symphony Orchestra. Included in this chapter will be compositional and performance aspects of the work, including the significance and design of the work and any specific performing challenges it presents. Musical examples from the score will be included and discussed. The final chapter will also draw conclusions based upon the research and summarize the findings.
CHAPTER 2
REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

There has been a reasonable amount of scholarly research conducted on the subject of composer Christopher Rouse and a surprisingly small amount of scholarly research conducted concerning trumpeter Christopher Martin. A brief perusal of the internet will bring up much biographical and career-related information about the two from various orchestra and publisher websites, but a smaller amount of scholarly research about the men, who they are, and why they are significant has been carried out. That fact should underline the importance of this essay, since its purpose serves not only to examine Christopher Rouse’s *Heimdall’s Trumpet*, but also to provide insight into the musical background and significance of both its composer Christopher Rouse and performer Christopher Martin.

The literature that does exist, relative to this essay, will be summarized in this chapter in order to connect that literature with this study. At the conclusion of the chapter, the reader will be aware of the shortage of significant scholarly research available regarding Christopher Rouse and an almost complete lack of scholarly research with reference to Christopher Martin, and will note the need for such an undertaking. Also included in this chapter will be relevant scholarly research related to the piece *Heimdall’s Trumpet* regarding the mythological character Heimdall, Gjallarhorn (Heimdall’s horn), and Ragnarok (the end of the world or final battle of the gods). Christopher Rouse’s mythological inspirations for the piece will be discussed in the sixth chapter, which deals specifically with *Heimdall’s Trumpet*. 

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In her 2007 D.M.A. Essay titled, Christopher Rouse’s *Wolf Rounds*: Compositional Insight and World Premiere Performance Preparation, Catherine Rand explores Christopher Rouse’s only composition to date for wind ensemble, *Wolf Rounds* (2007), and its significance to the wind ensemble repertoire. The research centers on Rouse’s creative process while composing *Wolf Rounds* and documents the world premiere performance preparation by the Frost Wind Ensemble and its conductor, Professor Gary D. Green. The Frost Wind Ensemble including the author of this essay on trumpet performed the premiere, which took place in the Isaac Stern Auditorium at Carnegie Hall on March 29, 2007.

During an interview with Ms. Rand about being commissioned to write music, Christopher Rouse stated, “I have to be able to write what I want to write. So, if they have a laundry list of requirements, I always turn those down.” Through her interviews, Rand obtains a wealth of information from Mr. Rouse about his commissions and his compositional process that will be helpful in understanding how he came about writing *Heimdall’s Trumpet*.

Rand’s D.M.A. essay includes an in-depth look at the score of *Wolf Rounds*, citing and including specific musical examples from the score to illustrate her discussion of the piece. She also explains to her readers the meaning of the title, *Wolf Rounds*, and how it is really not about wolves as animals, but rather about the “loops” that occur throughout the work and how that is similar to the way wolves work in packs to surround their prey, circling or “looping” it. Rouse explains,

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I didn’t like the word “loops” as a title. But then I thought about the fact that [the] Latin word for wolf is lupus. So loops, lupis, lupus. And then I thought about wolves and that they do work in packs and surround their prey, circle it... Originally the piece didn’t have anything to do with wolves in any specific way. Although I thought maybe as I was going along that I should make some wolf noises just to... so that’s what the growling trombones are all about.\(^\text{10}\)

The score and the title, *Heimdall’s Trumpet*, will also be discussed at length during this essay in the sixth chapter.

**2005 Ph.D. Thesis by Burkhardt Reiter**

Burkhardt Reiter’s 2005 Ph.D. Thesis titled, *Symmetry and Narrative in Christopher Rouse’s Trombone Concerto, with, ‘white space waiting’ (an original composition for chamber orchestra)* discusses the musical implications of Rouse’s *Trombone Concerto*. Much of Reiter’s thesis is focused on how Rouse’s *Trombone Concerto* creates an overall sense of tragedy. The abstract of Reiter’s thesis states, “The analytic component of my dissertation...illuminates the ways in which the concerto creates the musical metaphor of tragedy.”\(^\text{11}\)

One of the elements used to create the sense of tragedy comes from a four-note quotation from Rouse’s own *Symphony No. 1* to signify an anti-Death and *Transfiguration* statement against Richard Strauss’ tone poem by that title. Rouse uses a similar eight note motif, though it is not a quotation, in *Heimdall’s Trumpet* to spell out

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the eight letters in the name Heimdall a few times during the composition, most notably at the very end of the piece, as the final part of the trumpet blast signaling Ragnarok.

**1992 D.M.A. Essay by James Ball**

James Ball’s 1992 D.M.A. Essay titled, *A conductor’s guide to selected contemporary American orchestral composition* includes a discussion of seventeen compositions that were jointly commissioned by the Meet the Composer Orchestra Residency Program and the orchestra in which the composers were placed. The thirteenth chapter of Ball’s essay discusses Christopher Rouse’s *Symphony No. 1* (1986), composed for the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra. Each chapter of Ball’s essay is divided into four sections. The first section describes the instrumentation, duration, publisher, date of composition, date of premiere, and details specific to each work. The second section gives general background information about the piece and describes each work in some detail. The third section provides biographical information about each composer. The fourth and final section lists the composers published orchestral compositions from 1981 until 1987.

During the course of Ball’s essay, he discusses how the orchestration in Rouse’s *Symphony No. 1* makes use of some of the more unusual instruments in the orchestra such as oboe d’amore and four Wagner tubas and how that affects the timbral quality of the orchestration. He quotes Rouse’s program notes on *Symphony No. 1*, stating, “it is imperative that the solo for oboe d’amore be played on this instrument and not an English
hurt. Also, euphoniums may not be substituted for the Wagner tubas.”

In *Heimdall’s Trumpet*, Rouse makes use of another of the orchestra’s unusual instruments, the bass trumpet. In the final section of the piece, Rouse uses two bass trumpets to introduce the idea of Ragnarok before the final blast is sounded by the solo trumpet. It was helpful to the author of this essay to read Ball’s thoughts and insights into the use of some of the orchestra’s more unusual instruments.

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**The Muse That Sings, Composers Speak about the Creative Process**

by Ann McCutchan

Christopher Rouse

Ann McCutchan’s book, *The Muse That Sings: Composers Speak About the Creative Process*, published in 1999, is an invaluable resource for those seeking information about the creative process of current American composers. She states in her introduction, “*The Muse That Sings* is a collection of soliloquies by twenty-five American composers who tell how they think in sound, work their ideas into written scores, and bring new pieces of concert music to life.” In his chapter, Christopher Rouse shares his thoughts on writing music, why he writes, and gives some of his inspiration for composing. He states that “what gets [him] interested in a piece is the person or group requesting it, whether it’s somebody [he] has enjoyed working with in the past, or someone [he] hasn’t worked with but hold in high regard.”

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on to detail his compositional process from the starting point of receiving a commission for an orchestral piece, through his inspiration for beginning to write the piece or what it will be about, how he begins to write the music, and all the way through his complete compositional process. Mr. Rouse’s very detailed description of his compositional process from beginning to end will be very useful for this study. The sixth chapter of this document, the chapter that outlines Heimdall’s Trumpet, will benefit greatly from Mr. Rouse’s reflections on his compositional process.

 Tempo Article by Laurie Shulman

 Christopher Rouse: An Overview

 Tempo is a quarterly journal devoted to 20th Century and contemporary concert music published by the Cambridge University Press. Articles in Tempo are frequently illustrated with musical examples and survey various aspects of a composer’s background and music. Issue 199, published in January 1997, included an article by Laurie Shulman titled “Christopher Rouse: An Overview” which explores the personal aspects of Rouse’s music and chronicles his life and major works from his music catalogue.

 In her article, Shulman states that [Rouse] promises to be one of the next century’s great composers in traditional forms, specifically symphony and concerto”\(^{15}\) citing his tenure as composer-in-residence for several prominent American orchestras and giving special mention to his 1993 Pulitzer Prize winning Trombone Concerto. Amongst the characteristics of Rouse’s music for which he is most noted, Shulman states,

 He is known for a bewildering array of characteristics: violent, even noisy orchestral scores; unabashed allusions to rock ‘n’ roll in the concert hall;

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huge percussion sections; and eloquent adagios bespeaking such dark tragedy that they can be downright depressing. These varied states come forth from a man who is beloved by his friends for his rich, quick, and often deadpan sense of humor. His success as a composer can be ascribed to his uncanny gift for reaching listeners on a visceral level. He has a way of communicating directly with audiences through his music.  

Shulman discusses Christopher Rouse’s compositional process throughout the article. Speaking specifically of when he begins a new piece, she quotes the composer,

I generally have to know, first of all, what it’s going to say on an emotional and expressive level. Then I have to know how it ends, how it begins, and various significant points of arrival between – the way stations. I think about it a lot. I get a lot of walk time in with a cigar and just ponder. When I feel I have enough of a sense of the piece, even though there still may be many decisions unresolved, I’ll nonetheless get going on the score.

**Composer Christopher Rouse**

**A Conversation with Bruce Duffie**

A 1994 interview with composer Christopher Rouse, conducted by Bruce Duffie, aired in 1994 and again in 1999 on WNIB radio, a Chicago based classical radio station from 1955-2001. A copy of the unedited audio tape of the interview was placed in the Archive of Contemporary Music at Northwestern University and was transcribed and posted to Duffie’s personal website in 2009. During the course of the interview, Rouse and Duffie discuss all aspects of Rouse’s music and his compositional process, accepting commissions to write music, orchestrating music, editing music, today’s music listeners, winning a Pulitzer Prize for music, and various other topics.

When asked about putting markings into his scores, Rouse states, “I am rather stingy with markings for some reason… I am not someone who throws all sorts of

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17 ibid
instructions into the score.” He goes on to say, “I usually give a tempo marking - some kind of general indication such as *adagio* or *allegro*, and perhaps an occasional expressive adjective to define a very general sense of the mood. But other than that, I tend not to get too crazed with instructions on the page.” When asked a question about writing idiomatically for instruments, specifically regarding when writing a solo concerto, the conversation was as follows:

BD: But then you’re asked to write a cello concerto. Are you thinking cellistically, or are you thinking musically of a single line?

CR: You have to do both. You have to think of the music and then decide whether it really is music that is appropriate for the cello. You always have to have in mind what is right for the instrument. Is this really the right material for this player or the instrument that he or she plays? Sometimes it isn’t, in which case, if it’s a good idea, you save it and maybe reuse it or use it later on in another work. But I really think it is very important to try to write idiomatically for instruments.

Rouse also discusses orchestration during the course of the interview. Duffie asks several questions about how Rouse goes about orchestrating a work. The conversation went as follows:

BD: When you’re looking at the blank page, do you think linearly of a line and then orchestrate it, or do you think vertically in terms of blocks of sound?

CR: I don’t think of orchestration as something that’s applied after the fact to a musical work that’s already been conceived or even set forth in some kind of reduced format on the page. I think of orchestration as something that’s innately part of the initial creative act. So it’s not really a matter of thinking linearly or

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19 ibid

vertically; it just kind of comes to me already orchestrated at least in some broad based way.

BD: Does it come to you and then you transfer it to the page, or does it come to you and then you have to work it out?

CR: It comes to me and then I work it out mentally rather than on the page. I’m not physically a sketcher; I’m a mental sketcher, so the only thing I ever write down actually is the final score.²¹

Living Music Project at the University of Michigan

2008 Christopher Martin Interview with Jason Bergman

Living Music is a project of the American Music Institute at the University of Michigan School of Music. According to it’s website, the Living Music project “offers a snapshot of contemporary musical life throughout the United States and the globe.”²² By focusing on questionnaires and interviews, the project provides first person commentary on music today. Student researchers and research teams, assisted and edited by the faculty and staff of the Living Music project at the University of Michigan School of Music, produce the questionnaires and interviews, and conduct the research project.

On February 7, 2008, interviewer Jason Bergman sat down with Christopher Martin, principal trumpeter of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra. The interview is transcribed and available on the Living Music website. Over the course of the interview, the two discuss three main subjects, Martin’s background and history, working in the


Chicago Symphony Orchestra, and general topics relating to contemporary American music such as issues facing today’s American Orchestras.

Martin recounts his early days beginning as a horn player in suburban Atlanta, GA where his father, a horn player himself, is a prominent music educator and his transition to beginning to play trumpet. He discusses his teachers and early training as a trumpeter. He addresses his role playing in the Chicago Symphony Orchestra as well as preparing solo literature and how he feels that helps his job in the orchestra. Bergman asks Martin about the ongoing CSO Resound series of recordings that is currently happening with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra. Martin goes on to discuss those recordings as well as some other recording projects that he has previously been involved with. From there, he goes on to discuss the importance of hearing music live and the state of the current American Orchestras.

December 2011 *The Brass Herald* Article

**Chris Martin in Conversation with Candace Horton**

*The Brass Herald* is an all-encompassing journal relating to brass playing published five times per year by Philip Biggs in the United Kingdom. According to its website, “*The Brass Herald* was launched in August 2003 and covers the whole range of brass. From Brass Bands to Orchestral Brass, Salvation Army Bands to Big Bands, and Military Bands to Jazz.”

23 Founder and publisher Philip Biggs states, “The all-

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encompassing nature of the magazine is helping to create a better understanding across the boundaries of brass playing – to the benefit of all.”

Issue 41, published in December 2011 includes a cover photo of Christopher Martin and an accompanying interview with Candace Horton. During the interview, Mr. Martin gives the reader a first person account of his role as the principal trumpeter of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, his practice routine and performance preparation, performing solo literature, the acoustics of Orchestra Hall in Chicago, IL, and recording with the orchestra. While discussing his practice routine to keep in top shape for performances with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Martin states,

I’m much more organized about my practice. Whether I’m working or whether I have a day off or whether I have a week off, I still have my morning warm up routine every day that I do as early as I can. And I have my afternoon practice session and one other practice session – whether I have concerts or not, I find it’s better to not go too long without some practice. I don’t go practice for hours and hours at a time, but for me, a normal session is 45 minutes to an hour. If I do that three times a day, it keeps me in shape without getting so tired that I have a problem with the job.

When asked a question about performing and preparing to perform solo literature, Mr. Martin states that his mindset is the same as preparing to perform his duties in the orchestra. He says, “I think playing trumpet is playing trumpet and performing is performing. Almost everything we ever play in the orchestra is a solo or soli passage… and so the mindset I think easily translates to playing a concerto. It’s really the same.”

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26 ibid
In his December 2012 Playbill program notes for the premiere of Heimdall’s Trumpet, Chicago Symphony Orchestra program annotator Phillip Huscher gives biographical and career information about composer Christopher Rouse and describes the Norse mythological idea of Ragnarok, on which the piece Heimdall’s Trumpet is based. He begins the program notes by stating,

Ragnarok is Armageddon in Norse mythology – or Gotterdammerung, the twilight of the gods, in Wagner parlance. It is signaled by the sound of a trumpet. That is the subject of Christopher Rouse’s new work for the Chicago Symphony and its principal trumpet, Christopher Martin. It is Heimdall, the Norse god, who calls the heroes to the field where the last battle will be fought, marking the end of the world of gods and men.  

Huscher discusses how Rouse secured the commission for the new concerto from the Chicago Symphony Orchestra and states, “The Chicago Symphony and Martin chose Rouse for the commission largely because of his flair for writing big dramatic pieces for large orchestra, and the desire to produce a concerto, that is, as Martin puts it, a ‘real conversational ensemble piece’ rather than a solo showcase pure and simple.”

Huscher’s program notes go on to briefly detail each of the four movements of Heimdall’s Trumpet and offers Rouse’s own thoughts about the concerto which include the following statement, “Cast in four movements, the title of the piece refers properly to the finale, which attempts in a general way to depict these mythological events as I

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28 Ibid
imagine them. The onset of Ragnarok occurs only at the very end of the work, in a very short orchestral fortissimo outburst followed by an extended silence.”

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CHAPTER 3

METHOD

The purpose of this essay will be to examine Christopher Rouse’s newly commissioned work *Heimdall’s Trumpet*, a concerto for solo trumpet and orchestra. The research will focus on three subjects, the piece *Heimdall’s Trumpet*, the composer Christopher Rouse, and the soloist Christopher Martin, Principal Trumpet of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, for whom the work was written. The essay will detail who these important musicians are and why they are relevant in today’s musical landscape, their significance as musicians, and how they are viewed by their musical colleagues. As for the piece itself, the research will focus on all aspects of the new composition, not just a theoretical analysis and formal analysis of the work. The essay will describe the commissioning process and its origins, answering the questions of how and why the piece came into existence. Included in the discussion will be insight on Mr. Rouse’s inspiration for the piece and his own thoughts about what motivated him prior to writing the piece and while composing the work. Finally, the essay will detail the performance issues found in *Heimdall’s Trumpet*. It will answer the questions of what significant performing challenges occur in the solo trumpet part, the orchestra parts, and what challenges occurred while rehearsing and performing the piece.

This composition is Christopher Rouse’s first trumpet concerto. Because of this fact, its significance to the repertoire cannot be ignored and as such, this will be the first scholarly document written on the concerto. The essay will make use of an interview process so as to provide first-hand information and accounts of the commissioning process, the compositional process, and any performance challenges the work presents.
In addition, the essay will include significant background information on the composer and dedicatee, in order to become a useful resource for future researchers and performers who wish to study either or both of these important musicians.

**Delimitations**

The scope of this essay will be limited to *Heimdall’s Trumpet*, the new trumpet concerto written by Christopher Rouse. It will encompass all aspects of this composition from commissioning the work through its premiere performance. The essay will also include detailed information on the primary individuals involved in this composition, composer Christopher Rouse, and soloist Christopher Martin.

**Interview Process**

As this essay’s topic of discussion is a brand-new composition, there has been no scholarly research on the subject. There has also been surprisingly little scholarly research about the composer, Christopher Rouse, and the soloist, Christopher Martin. This being the case, the primary method of data collection for this essay will be an interview process that seeks first-hand knowledge and accounts from primary sources of the composition, its composer, and its dedicatee.

The criterion for selection of interviewees is governed by the expertise of the interviewee in relation to the composer, Christopher Rouse, and his music, and the soloist, Christopher Martin, and his significance to modern trumpet playing. The author has identified two people who meet the criterion satisfactorily: the composer himself, Christopher Rouse, the soloist himself, Christopher Martin.
The two primary interviewees for this essay being Christopher Rouse and Christopher Martin will lead to maximum validity of data and information collected. Rouse’s first-hand description of his compositional process and background information will provide important accurate information about the composition, and his analytical insights will provide first-hand data and ensure an accurate overview of the composition. Christopher Martin’s description of his background in trumpet playing will provide a valid basis as to the reason he was selected as the soloist for *Heimdall’s Trumpet*. His first-hand account of his performance preparation of the piece will provide invaluable data for the chapter dealing with the piece itself, shedding light on specific technical and musical challenges and how Mr. Martin tackled those challenges.

**Observation**

A secondary method of data collection for the essay will be taken from the author’s observation of the performance preparation of *Heimdall’s Trumpet* and the observations made in rehearsal by both Christopher Rouse and Christopher Martin. The author of this essay was invited to observe the dress rehearsal of *Heimdall’s Trumpet* on the morning of the premiere. The observations made by the author during the rehearsal will be chronicled in this essay, as will the reflections of both the composer and soloist. Insight gained from this method of observation will include 1.) the composer’s changes to the score and/or parts during rehearsal, 2.) any issues related to playability by the soloist or orchestra, 3.) the specific technical or musical challenges of the solo trumpet part, and 4.) the challenges of putting together the new piece in a limited amount of rehearsal time.
Analysis

The secondary method of data collection for the essay will be a general analysis of the work itself. While for the purpose of this study, a complete theoretical analysis is unnecessary, some basic tonal and harmonic analysis, and some formal structural analysis of the design of the Concerto will be included in this study as an overview of the piece from the composer’s perspective. This analysis will be conducted in consultation with the composer in order to ensure validity of the data.

The analytical data collected will be presented in the essay with text examples and descriptions as well as musical excerpts taken from the score for the sake of clarity and demonstration. The analysis will be conducted in consultation with the composer and the performer in order to present their different, yet similar approaches to the music and a well-documented scholarly collection of facts about the new composition.

Other Documentation

Additional materials related to the premiere of Heimdall’s Trumpet will also be included in the essay. These materials include promotional materials used by the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, ticket stubs from the premiere, program notes from the Playbill used at the premiere, and articles and reviews relating to the premiere performance of Heimdall’s Trumpet.
Christopher Rouse was born on February 15, 1949 in Baltimore, Maryland. From an early age, Rouse developed an interest in both classical music and rock and roll. He began composing at age seven and began early music studies on both guitar and drums. About his early interest in composing, Rouse states,

I think I was about six when I decided I wanted to become a composer. That was always my dream. It didn’t occur to me then that composing would be anything other than a delight. I imagined myself sitting at a piano, looking heavenward for inspiration, getting the music down without a great deal of work, just hurriedly scribbling a la Mozart or Schubert, with a never-ending stream of ideas.\(^{30}\)

Rouse says that his early memories include both rock and roll and Beethoven’s Fifth Symphony. His parents encouraged his love of music. They occasionally took him to concerts (which Rouse speculates may have been to counteract his interest in Elvis Presley and Little Richard) and paid for him to study piano during the 1960’s. Rouse eventually took percussion lessons as well but performing was not of interest to him, as he did not particularly enjoy practicing. His attention rested in composing. During his high school years, Rouse pursued his goal of becoming a composer largely through listening to music. Listening played a large part in his early training. The influence of listening to composers such as Beethoven and Grieg was large in Rouse’s childhood. He states, “I remember the wonder, when I was a kid, of hearing the Beethoven Ninth Symphony scherzo for the first time. I can still see where I was sitting in the room. And

the Peer Gynt Suite! That was a wonderful favorite of mine.”31 Upon hearing Prokofiev’s brassy Scythain Suite by chance in a record shop, Rouse states, “(it was) the most exciting thing I ever heard.32 These listening exercises were the beginning of Rouse’s training in the art of composition.

**Higher Education and Formal Training**

Upon graduation from high school in 1967, Rouse attended the Oberlin Conservatory in Oberlin, Ohio. It was for the entrance audition at Oberlin that Rouse composed his first two pieces. Once enrolled at Oberlin, he studied composition with Richard Hoffman. Already well versed in the standard orchestral literature, while a student at Oberlin, Rouse continued his habit of listening to music. He sat aside time each day to listen to one piece that he had not heard before while watching the score as he listened. During this time period, Rouse would not only listen to classical scores, he would also keep up his interest in rock and roll and the popular music of the day. A college friend turned him on to the music of Led Zeppelin, a band in which Rouse would develop a keen interest. Rouse found, the band very innovative and experimental, in particular, the album *Led Zeppelin III* (1970). In a 1997 interview with Laurie Schulman, Rouse stated:

> The music [of Led Zeppelin] was very dissonant, full of strange influences and weird recording techniques. Partly it was the loudness, that raunchy, hard-driving quality, but also the fact that they were doing so many fascinating things with meter, with silence, with phraseology. It wasn’t

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just mindless heavy metal in 4/4. Led Zeppelin’s music guided me into thinking about things like rhythm, meter, and silence in my own music.\textsuperscript{33}

Upon graduation from the Oberlin Conservatory in 1971, Rouse went to the University of Pennsylvania to study with George Rochberg. Citing philosophical differences between himself and Rochberg, Rouse withdrew from the University of Pennsylvania after only one semester. For the next two years, Rouse opted to study privately with composer George Crumb in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. About this period of study with Crumb, Rouse recalls:

He was not a person who was terribly given to a lot of criticism. What I learned was more by osmosis, by being around him at the time he was writing the first two books of \textit{Makrokosmos}. We talked about music, not so much my music but his music, and music in general. I learned more that way than from specific comments he made about my work.\textsuperscript{34}

In the fall of 1973, following the two-year period of study with George Crumb, Rouse found himself enrolled at Cornell University to complete a doctorate and study composition with Karel Husa. While at Cornell, Rouse claims that his interaction with musicologists, theorists, and other composers at the institution made him more of a scholar. He was able to learn more about the academic side of music, exposure he views in hindsight as a plus. It was during this time that Rouse was further able to develop not only his music writing ability, but his general writing ability as well. Rouse frequently very eloquently authors his own program notes and has published several articles along with the \textit{William Schumann Documentary} (1980), which includes a list of works, discography, and bibliography.

\textsuperscript{34} Laurie Shulman, “Christopher Rouse: An Overview,” \textit{Tempo}, January 1997, no.199: 3.
While at Cornell, Rouse would meet a very significant figure in the life of his music, a distinguished conductor who would become, and remains today, a champion of Rouse’s compositions. At Cornell, Rouse did not have much opportunity to hear his music being performed, most specifically, his orchestral pieces. One particularly significant exception came in during a read-through of new music by Cornell composition students by the Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra. David Zinman conducted this read-through. Of Rouse’s composition that day, Zinman has stated, “Chris’s piece was the only one that really sounded professional. I was very impressed, and remembered his name.”

_The Infernal Machine and Symphony No. 1_

Throughout the decade of the 1970’s, Rouse remained influenced by his teacher George Crumb and his innovative compositional style. Rouse would try to imitate Crumb’s style as much as possible. Eventually, he decided that there was little point in speaking through someone else’s musical voice and began to develop his own individual style. This was an important realization for Rouse’s musical development. Once he began to communicate in his own style and speak through his voice, particularly in the orchestral compositions during the 1980’s, Rouse’s career began to flourish.

Shortly after leaving Cornell, Rouse began his teaching career at the University of Michigan. During his third year in Ann Arbor, the University orchestra director, Gustav Meir asked Rouse to write a piece for the orchestra’s upcoming performances at the 1981 Evian Festival. The resulting piece, _The Infernal Machine_, has become one of Rouse’s

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most frequently performed compositions. Joseph Schwantner, then the composer-in-residence for the Saint Louis Symphony Orchestra, Rouse’s friend, and soon-to-be colleague at his next teaching position, the Eastman School of Music in Rochester, NY, gave a recording of *The Infernal Machine* to Leonard Slatkin, then the music director of the Saint Louis Symphony Orchestra. Slatkin liked the piece and began programming it frequently. When the time came to do the premiere recording of *The Infernal Machine*, it was Slatkin and the Saint Louis Symphony who did the honors.

When Rouse moved to Eastman in 1981, conductor David Zinman was still leading the Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra. Zinman remembered Rouse from his Cornell days and commissioned him to write a piece for the orchestra. The resulting piece, *Gorgon*, was premiered in 1984 by Zinman and the Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra. Shortly thereafter, Zinman became the music director of the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra and added *The Infernal Machine* to his repertoire. Zinman was also instrumental in having Rouse become the composer-in-residence for the Baltimore Symphony in 1986. Notable Baltimore commissions include *Karolju* (1990) for SATB chorus and orchestra, and the *Symphony No. 1* (1986). Zinman says of the later, “The Symphony is strong. It has real depth of feeling, especially the ending. I find it a very moving and devastating work. I think if I’d be remembered for one thing, it’s commissioning Chris’s First Symphony.”

*Symphony No. 1* received the Kennedy Center Friedheim Award in 1988 for the best American orchestral composition premiered during the previous two years.

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In testament to his reputation and popularity, by the mid 1980’s, Rouse was composing exclusively on commission. During this time, boosted by the success of *The Infernal Machine*, he crafted a series of similar scores, their signatures being compositions that are loud and hard driving with enormous amounts of rhythmic energy and heavy percussion parts. Of Rouse’s music during this time, Zinman stated,

Chris wanted to write propulsive music, and his early pieces are very loud. He uses the orchestra in a very brutal way in these scores – *Infernal Machine, Bump, Gorgon, Phaethon*. It comes out of the rock’n’roll generation. I think he had to get all this music out of his system. All these pieces are tremendously crafted. He has a great ear for orchestra, and he’s the best writer for percussion I’ve ever seen.\(^{37}\)

**Mythology**

Over the course of his career, Rouse has composed many pieces that are titled or based upon some sort of mythology or mythological reference. His most recent concerto, and the topic of this essay, *Heimdall’s Trumpet* (2012) is certainly not his first mythologically based piece. Rouse’s *Der Gerettete Alberich* or “Alberich saved,” composed for percussionist Evelyn Glennie, draws inspiration from the Wagnerian character Alberich from Wagner’s four opera cycle, *Der Ring des Nibelungen*. *Gorgon* (1984) is a score inspired by the ancient Greek legend of the gorgons. *Ku-Ka Ilimoku* (1978) is based upon the Hawaiian mythological character “Ku,” a god similar to that of Zeus in Greek mythology or Odin in Norse legend. *Morpheus* (1975) is about Morpheus, the god of sleep and brother of death, associated with dreams. *Phaethon* (1986) is another of the several scores based on ancient Greek mythology. In the legend, Phaethon is the son of the sun god, Helios. There were several other early Rouse pieces, which are

no longer in his catalogue, that were based upon Greek mythology. These include
Alloeidea (1978), Aphrodite Cantos (1976), and the wind ensemble piece Thor (1981),
based upon the hammer wielding legendary Norse god.

Rouse, when asked why the subject of mythology or the mythological characters
interests him or captures his attention states,

I loved the stories as a kid and often, not always, but most particularly in
Greek mythology, there is a moral to the story. There is something we are
supposed to learn from the tale. In other cases, it’s just the imagination
and the imagery of myths, form all sorts of cultures…That kind of
symbolic imagery has always appealed to me from mythology.38

**Concerti**

*Heimdall’s Trumpet* is hardly the first concerto written by Christopher Rouse. He
has written many concerti, some with simple titles such as the 1993 Pulitzer Prize
*Violin Concerto* (1991), *Violincello Concerto* (1992-93), and Rouse’s only other
commission from the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, the *Clarinet Concerto* (2001),
written for Larry Combs, then the principal clarinet of the orchestra. Other concerti have
more programmatic names, such as *Heimdall’s Trumpet* (2012) for trumpet, *Der gerettete
written for Emanuel Ax on piano.

The two most significant concerti that are precursors to *Heimdall’s Trumpet* are
the *Trombone Concerto*, Rouse’s only other concerto written for a solo brass instrument
and the *Clarinet Concerto*, Rouse’s only other concerto commission from the Chicago
Symphony Orchestra. The *Trombone Concerto* was finished in April 1991 and was

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38 Christopher Rouse, Interview with the author, 20 December 2012, tape recording, Chicago, Illinois.
commissioned by the New York Philharmonic for their principal trombonist, Joseph Alessi, in honor of the orchestra’s sesquicentennial. It was composed as the first of a series of four concerti, the later ones being for violin, cello, and flute. Unlike some other composers, whose brass concerti tend to be of a lighter nature, Rouse’s *Trombone Concerto*, while no doubt requiring a high level of virtuosity from it’s soloist, contains music of a primarily somber and introspective character. The work is dedicated to Leonard Bernstein, which is a fitting tribute to Bernstein’s association with the New York Philharmonic for many years. The third movement of the concerto, in particular, is a memorial to Bernstein, whose sudden and untimely death occurred in October 1990, while Rouse was working on the concerto. Rouse uses a quotation from Bernstein’s *Symphony No. 3 (“Kaddish”)* in tribute to the maestro during the third movement of the *Trombone Concerto*. The composition was awarded the 1993 Pulitzer Prize for Music, further advancing Rouse’s already blossoming career.

Rouse’s *Clarinet Concerto* was completed in December 2000 and premiered on May 17, 2001. It was commissioned for the Chicago Symphony Orchestra and its principal clarinetist Larry Combs and funded by the Hanson Institute for American Music at the Eastman School of Music. Rouse stated that he wanted the score to have a sense of unpredictability. During the piece, moods change rapidly and often without preparation. The demands placed upon the soloist are extremely high. There are short spells of lyrical playing for the soloist; however, much of the time is spent demonstrating the instrument’s agility and the virtuoso soloist’s dexterity.
On Composing and Rouse’s Compositional Style

Christopher Rouse is known for orchestral scores that possess a driving, sometimes brutal energy. In recent years, a new lyrical voice has emerged in his music. The New York Times has called Christopher Rouse’s music “some of the most anguished, most memorable music around.” Stephen Wigler of The Baltimore Sun has written, “When the music history of the late 20th Century is written, I suspect the explosive and passionate music of Rouse willloom large.”

Rouse himself had this to say about his style,

I would say that I like to work in a big box. I like to work in a world in which I can write extremely dissonant music or extremely consonant music. I do believe in a kind of expressive urgency. I’m very much a believer in the idea motion first regardless of how complex the musical language may or may not be. And I’m known, I know, as a composer of extremes.

Rouse’s music has been awarded the 1993 Pulitzer Prize for Music (*Trombone Concerto*), a 2002 Grammy Award for Best Classical Contemporary Composition (*Concert de Gaudí*, a guitar concerto), a 1988 First Place Kennedy Center Friedheim Award (*Symphony No. 1*), and Rouse has been elected to the prestigious American Academy of Arts and Letters.

During a 1999 interview with author Ann McCutchan, Rouse described his compositional process in great detail. He laid out, step by step, his process from the commission through the composition.

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40 Christopher Rouse, Pre-Concert Conversation with Chicago Symphony Orchestra Vice President for Artistic Planning and Audience Development Martha Gilmer, 21 December 2013, tape recording, Chicago, Illinois.
Let’s say that I’ve been commissioned to write a twenty-minute orchestra piece... The first thing that occurs to me is what the piece will try to say, what it’s about. Next, I usually decide on the material near the end of the piece, the final point of arrival. Then I decide on various way stations, including the beginning of the piece (which may or may not be the next thing that occurs to me after the ending). Once I have enough way stations, I feel ready to begin writing, even though there are still millions of musical decisions to make. With enough way stations not too far apart from one another, I have an overall sense of the architecture of the piece. Figuring out how to get from A to B and B to C can happen during the process of writing... I write everything out in full score, from the start... I work in pencil, but I try to make the score look as close to engraved music as I can. This slow process not only keeps me thinking about the piece, but it prevents me, I hope, from making mistakes I might have made had I worked faster. For me, the quality of the visual presentation has something to do with the music itself.\footnote{Ann McCutchan, The Muse That Sings/Composers Speak about the Creative Process, Oxford University Press: 123-124.}

To illustrate Rouse’s compositional process, the following conversation is taken from a December 2012 interview at Orchestra Hall in Chicago, IL between the author and Christopher Rouse. Rouse discusses how he begins a new composition then expands on his compositional process. He provides valuable insight here as to how he composes.

FAIRFIELD: Can we talk a little bit about your composition process? I read Laurie Schulman’s article and she said, well, you said actually, that when you begin a new piece, you know kind of what it’s about and then you do some reflecting on it?

ROUSE: Oh Yeah. Always. I do mental sketching, I don’t write anything down. I just think about the piece until I reach the point where I feel I’m ready to begin. Which still leaves dozens and dozens, well, hundreds, thousands, whatever decisions still to be made on the spot. But I have to know enough about a piece to feel like I can start and then I just write the final score just from bar one to bar whatever. And it’s a way of working that’s comfortable for me. Once or twice in my life, I’ve begun a piece and say, gotten a minute or so into it and realized, no, this is not, this is not going right so then I chuck it and start over again with
something else. But usually that doesn’t happen because I feel comfortable enough that I’ve reached a kind of mental gel point that I know this is what I want to do and I’ll just kind of go from there.

FAIRFIELD: And you have some kind of idea, you reflect on that before you even start writing anything?

ROUSE: Oh, right.

FAIRFIELD: You kind of have some way stations, I think?

ROUSE: Yeah. Exactly. And the last thing that comes are the pitches. I often think in terms of gestures and contours. Things occur to me already orchestrated. To me, orchestration is not something that you glom on after the piece is finished, in a piano score, short score. To me, it’s right there from the get go. And so I might, I might just be thinking about a piece and I will hear something like (sings a fanfare figure), lets say. Then I will think, well, what are the issues there if I’m thinking of that as a trumpet thing? Ok, if I do that, where is the trumpeter going to breathe? What kinds of range am I, in other words, it’s not going to be easy if the high note has to always, I mean the top note, the highest note in that lick has to be some high B or something, that’s going to be fraught with peril. So I kind of analyze the gesture and decide, ok this can work or what do I need, like whittling, you know, what do I need to do to this idea to get it to work? But the actual pitch content of (sings fanfare figure), is really not necessarily part of the idea from the start. At first it’s the gesture and the contour of the idea. And again, with (sings part of the fanfare figure), if I come up with that as an idea, I would think well that’s not a string idea (sings fanfare again). It just seems to me that’s a brass idea. Let’s say it wasn’t for this piece, let’s say it was just a straight orchestra piece and I just come up with that (sings fanfare figure). Could be woodwind. Not oboes. Flutes, certainly. Clarinets, maybe depending upon how much slurring there is but if it’s all tongued, blah blah blah, you get the idea. So each one of these little things that occurs to me, I analyze to see what instruments can do it, what needs to be done to it to get it to work for whatever instruments I may choose, and in some cases, that particular one, I might use, I might refer to it in the woodwinds but it would basically be, that would be a
trumpet, that would be a trumpet idea to me. Trombones, you know, they can’t…

FAIRFIELD: Kind of limited on the technique…

ROUSE: Yeah, with the slide. And horns, ah, you know… (laughter)

FAIRFIELD: (laughter) I do. Yes, I do. You had talked about gesture and I had, David Zinman had said in an article, “What speaks immediately to listeners is the starkness of gesture” (in your music) and it sounds like that’s the first thing that speaks to you as well, as you just said. You hear the gestures first.

ROUSE: Absolutely. Well, I mean, to me, a piece of music is kind of like sonic theater and just as an actor on the stage will say, “I love you” or (stomps foot) “Go to hell” or whatever it may be you know, it’s the words and the inflection of the words, but also there’s a physicality sometimes in the way that the words in a play are reinforced by what the hands are doing or the body is doing. And, to me, music is gestural as well. And I do think in terms of the drama of a piece. And so I do think theatrically and I think of (sings fanfare figure), ok, assuming it’s very loud, that there is a kind of an alarm sounding quality to that. It’s like a crazed kind of fanfare. Something wild is happening or about to happen. So that kind of idea, to me, will then function in that kind of, god, musico-dramatic way. God that’s horrible, musico-dramatic way, but I’ve always heard music as a kind of drama. The interesting thing about music is that it’s comparatively abstract and unspecific. What is an A-flat? You know, you play an A-flat, what does that mean? Well it doesn’t mean… It’s not like seeing the word, tree, seeing a painting of a tree or seeing the word tree in a poem or a novel or whatnot. There is a much more specific visual imagery involved there that…

FAIRFIELD: Right. You see the word and we all know what a tree is…

ROUSE: Exactly. But an A-flat… But then if I add a C and an E-flat above it and have a major triad, then there begins be a kind of a consensual specificity. You know, everyone says, well you know, major is happy and minor is sad, that’s ridiculous. No, it really isn’t. Ninety-nine percent of the time major is happy and minor is sad, it’s a linguistic thing
that composers understand. And again, something low is different in meaning than something high. A consonant chord versus a dissonant chord, obviously there are different meanings there. So maybe it’s just conditioning but I think composers do understand that the kinds of ideas that they use, the kind of harmony, the kinds of scoring, the kinds of whatnot, will, most likely, elicit a certain kind of response or understanding from listeners.

In the following excerpt, Rouse discusses in more detail how his compositional process is more intuitive than academic. Sometimes, as he states, while composing, he is not conscious of how the process happens, he just lets it happen intuitively.

FAIRFIELD: Going back to composing, you hear the gesture kind of first, it’s not orchestrated, I guess, or it is orchestrated and then you add the pitches later you said. Do you hear writing say, writing specifically for the solo trumpet line, do you hear those gestures in a series of phrases or kind of just one gesture and then you’ll work another gesture and string them together, or do you hear kind of longer phrases and then notate it out?

ROUSE: Yes. (laughter) I don’t know. Now you’re getting into the realm of I don’t know what I’m doing. I am a very intuitive composer I will admit. Which doesn’t mean that I’m not thinking about craft and making the music coherent and so forth, and often, I play games, I call them games. Just little things with numerology or whatnot, just to make it more interesting to me. They’re not meant to be heard. I have this code that I use for spelling names and so forth and that is used in this piece, just for Heimdall. His name is spelled out throughout the piece at various points, kind of like he’s signing his work. But a lot of what I do, all I can describe it as at one moment I’m searching for an answer and then suddenly the answer is there, and it’s not necessarily the result of a lot of painstaking conscience manipulation, it’s just, oh, ok. I tend not to really think too much about what it is or how it got there or whatnot. I’m sure I do all of the things that you described but I’m not really conscious of it.
On the specific subject of orchestration, Rouse states that he wasn’t really taught the subject by teachers. He learned to orchestrate from studying the repertoire and familiarizing himself with a lot of orchestral music. He learned to orchestrate by studying how other composers treat the instruments of the orchestra.

Actually I wasn’t really taught (orchestration) by teachers. I was taught that more by just the repertoire and learning a lot of orchestra music, looking at the scores, seeing how other composers handle the instruments and learning that way. Often when students say, “What orchestration book should I buy,” I say buy Daphnis and Chloe (Ravel). The score of Daphnis and Chloe is the best orchestration book you would ever get for yourself. As far as composition, teaching composition is a very strange kind of pursuit. With teaching an instrument, you already have the music on the page and you have fingerings, certain ways for the music to be played. With composition, you’re facing a blank piece of music paper and you’re trying to help the student fill up that page, not with your notes, if you’re a good teacher. It’s very easy for a composer to say well I would do it this way and I would do it that way. You want to try to get inside their minds and find their notes, the notes that are right for them. And so, various people are more or less successful with that kind of teaching than others. Certainly in terms of writing for instruments, the repertoire is the best, is the best teacher.42

Rouse often discusses the difficulties of creative work such as composing. He states that it is very difficult, and often not very enjoyable work. He discusses that subject during the following portion of the interview, as well as gives some insight into how much, if any, editing he does to a work once it is completed.

ROUSE: And believe me, there are a lot of parallels between creative work and labor. It’s hard to get it out. I have colleagues, I’m not quite as bad, but I’ve had colleagues who’ve, I have one who broke his foot kicking the piano because he was so angry that he couldn’t get the music out. I know another one smashed up his hand putting his fist into a wall. The frustration, it, you know, the Hollywood idea of just writing in rapture just thinking angels dictate

42 Christopher Rouse, Pre-Concert Conversation with Chicago Symphony Orchestra Vice President for Artistic Planning and Audience Development Martha Gilmer, 21 December 2013, tape recording, Chicago, Illinois.
the music to you, ha! It’s hard, frustrating, often very, very painful work.

FAIRFIELD: I imagine.

ROUSE: I hate composing. I’m miserable whenever I’m composing. As I always tell people, a composer, a real composer, just knows that they are not alive without doing it. The only thing worse than composing would be not composing. But it is a painful, not at all enjoyable process. I think younger people enjoy it. When I was a student I enjoyed it more. But then, as the years pass, you become more self-critical. You don’t want to repeat yourself so it becomes harder and harder to find an idea that you think is good enough. Then it really is tough. There is a wonderful Brahms statement towards the end of his life, he said, “When I was young I was full of ideas but I didn’t know what to do with them. Now I know what to do with them, if only I could get one.” (laughter)

FAIRFIELD: (laughter) Yeah, I certainly understand. Performing, you were talking about the frustration, very similar, you know. If I get a new piece, I’ll sit there and play it and I want to throw my trumpet sometimes and punch the walls and kick the pianos and things like that, and labor is a very good word for it. People think, what do you do? Well, I play trumpet. Well that must be fun! Well, sometimes, sometimes. So I certainly understand that idea…

ROUSE: Well, and another wonderful quote from George Bernard Shaw, he says, I can’t remember what the verb was, it was I dislike, it was very proper British, it wasn’t loathe or something like that, but “I dislike writing, but I enjoy having written.” Yeah, if a piece comes out ok, and you hear it and you think, well, you know, that’s not something that I’m going to be ashamed of, then that’s the reward. But then when you have to turn right around and start on another piece then it’s Oh God, here we go again.

FAIRFIELD: And what about editing? Do you do much editing after anything?

ROUSE: No. Partly it’s laziness. Partly it’s because publishers don’t like you to do that because then they have to keep generating new scores and sets of parts. Partly it’s because, maybe largely, or the biggest part is that I’m always
tending to look forward. Once I finish a piece, draw the double bar, it’s gone, it’s over with. And so I’m always looking towards what’s coming up rather that what I’ve already done. If a piece, I mean, if it’s a matter of a little tweak here and there, changing a fortississimo to a fortississississimo, sure, that’s easy enough to do. But the notion of rewriting an entire passage, or a new movement or something like that, I don’t do. If a piece has a couple of blemishes, I figure ok, what the heck. Nobody’s perfect. If it really has too many blemishes, I just withdraw it.

When asked if the difficulties of composing are worth the trouble, Rouse states, “It is if I feel that I have provided that sense of meaning to people. If I feel I’ve made a difference in their lives for some brief instant of time, that’s what makes it worthwhile for me.” Rouse has made a difference in the lives of millions of people through his music. He is one of the most widely respected and honored American composers living today. Included as appendices at the end of this essay, are a comprehensive list of compositions by Christopher Rouse and a list of his awards and accomplishments.

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CHAPTER 5
TRUMPETER CHRISTOPHER MARTIN

Christopher Martin was appointed principal trumpet of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra in 2005 by Daniel Barenboim. Prior to joining the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Martin held the positions of principal trumpet with the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra and associate principal trumpet with the Philadelphia Orchestra; and has performed as guest principal trumpet of the Los Angeles Philharmonic, the Seattle Symphony, the Grand Teton Music Festival, and the Saito Kinen Festival.

Christopher Martin grew up in the metropolitan Atlanta suburb of Marietta, Georgia. His father, Freddy Martin, a horn player and longtime area band director and music educator, was the director of a drum and bugle corps named The Spirit of Atlanta. His mother, Linda, sang with the Atlanta Symphony Chorus. From an early age, Chris remembers growing up around music, particularly around brass instruments. About Chris’ early days growing up with music, Freddy states,

Chris went to his first band rehearsal at three weeks of age and grew up hearing me advocate the Arnold Jacobs method of breathing and playing. He also grew up hearing Chicago Symphony recordings because this has always been my favorite orchestra and certainly my favorite brass sound. I am a horn player, and Philip Farkas was a hero for me. To this day I teach the Arnold Jacobs breathing techniques with the Phantom Regiment (Drum and Bugle Corps) and my school bands. I have long admired the sound of Bud Herseth and Ed Kleinhammer.\footnote{Freddy Martin, “From a Father’s Prospective,” The Instrumentalist, September 2007, 62, no. 2: 21.}

Wanting to be like his father, Chris began to play the horn but after only two weeks, realized that the trumpet may be a better fit. He explained that because he was
kind of a quiet child, the trumpet appealed to him because it was not that at all. Very early help on trumpet came from his father, although, once old enough, Freddy, not wanting to be the teacher for his own son, sent Chris to study with Atlanta Symphony Orchestra member Larry Black just before Chris entered high school. Freddy asserts,

Chris started playing trumpet during sixth grade, and I gave him a little help but no formal lessons. He switched schools before his freshman year of high school to play in my brother’s band (Sprayberry High School in Marietta, GA). When he got into the car after the first marching band rehearsal, his first words were, “Dad, I want to take trumpet lessons.” Up to that point, he never wanted to take lessons, but upon hearing how well the other trumpets in this fine band sounded, he made up his mind.\(^{45}\)

Chris credits Larry Black with helping him formulate his idea of an orchestral trumpet sound. Already knowing what good brass playing sounded like from growing up around his father’s ensembles, Chris asserts that Larry Black helped shape the orchestral style and sensibility. Chris states,

He used to make me excerpt tapes, this was before CD’s, for me off of his old LP’s. Mostly with the Chicago Symphony, with Bud (Adolph Herseth, former Principal Trumpet of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra) of course, and the New York Philharmonic and Phil (Philip Smith, Principal Trumpet of the New York Philharmonic), some with Cleveland, and a lot with Jim Thompson and the Atlanta Symphony.\(^{46}\)

Chris remembers playing along with and back and forth with these recordings made by Larry Black. This was during a formative time in his early training. Chris affirms,

I listened to them all the time, even before I decided to perform for a living. I sat there with headphones on and played an excerpt, perhaps Bud Herseth on *Pictures at an Exhibition*. My first thought was, “I sound like a foghorn compared to him.” This was when I was 15 or 16. I continued


to play back and forth with the recording to figure out what was different.\^\textsuperscript{47}

Martin studied with Larry Black every week, sometimes twice a week from eighth grade until the time when he graduated from high school and each time he was home from college. Chris was also fortunate to study from Jim Thompson during his last few years of high school while Thompson was playing Principal Trumpet with the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra. Of Thompson, Chris Martin states, “He is a beautiful soloist and has a wonderful sound and a good sense of what it means to be a soloist and what it means to be musical.”\^\textsuperscript{48} It was during these high school years when Chris decided to become a professional musician. Martin credits an Atlanta Symphony Orchestra performance of Gustav Mahler’s second symphony, heard when Chris was fifteen years of age, with aiding the decision to become a professional. “We went to see an Atlanta Symphony concert…it was an amazing, dramatic piece called *Symphony No. 2* of Mahler, and that changed my life.”\^\textsuperscript{49}

Upon graduation from Sprayberry High School in 1993, Martin enrolled at the Eastman School of Music in Rochester, New York where he studied trumpet with Charlie Geyer and Barbara Butler and, in 1997, received a bachelor’s degree in trumpet performance. He credits Charlie and Barbara with helping to solidify and expand upon the concepts he learned in Atlanta from Larry Black and Jim Thompson. About Charlie Geyer specifically, Martin states that Geyer stressed intelligent, creative practicing.

\^\textsuperscript{48} Jason Bergman, Living Music Project at the University of Michigan Interview with Christopher Martin [on-line] available from [http://sitemaker.umich.edu/livingmusic/home](http://sitemaker.umich.edu/livingmusic/home); Internet, accessed 4 February 2013: 3.
While not pushing a specific routine, Geyer addressed the fundamentals of sound, articulation, and flexibility, but left it to students to determine what routine to use.

Another big factor in Martin’s early training occurred during the summer months while he was a student at the Eastman School of Music. Philip Smith, Principal Trumpet of the New York Philharmonic, became a mentor of Chris’ at a now defunct brass camp called Harmony Ridge in Vermont. Harmony Ridge was a weeklong intensive brass summer workshop at a small college in Vermont. Chris attended Harmony Ridge at the ages of 19 and 20. About this time, Chris states, “We had access to Phil all day, everyday, 10-12 hours a day. It was really a wonderful time for me and he really became a mentor of mine. We still talk actually every now and then.”

**Professional Positions**

While still a student at Eastman, Christopher Martin held the position of third/assistant principal trumpet with the Albany (NY) Symphony Orchestra and performed with the Buffalo Symphony Orchestra during the 1997-1998 season as a finalist for the position of Principal Trumpet. Prior to that, he subbed with the Rochester Philharmonic, Atlanta Symphony Brass Quintet, New World Symphony, the New World Brass Quintet, and was rotating Principal Trumpet with the National Repertory Orchestra in Breckenridge, Colorado during the 1997 season.

In October 1997, Mr. Martin was appointed the Associate Principal Trumpet of the Philadelphia Orchestra. He held this position for three seasons. Following his tenure

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in Philadelphia, Martin was named Principal Trumpet of his hometown Atlanta Symphony Orchestra, a position he would hold for five seasons.

In 2005, Mr. Martin was appointed Principal Trumpet of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra by then music director Daniel Barenboim, where he holds the Adolph Herseth Principal Trumpet Chair. The 2013-2014 season marks Mr. Martin’s ninth season in this position. Other members of the current Chicago Symphony Orchestra trumpet section are John Hagstrom, second trumpet, Mark Ridenour, third/assistant principal trumpet, and Tage Larson, fourth/utility trumpet.

**Chicago Symphony Orchestra**

There was a very steep learning curve that came along with the job of Principal Trumpet of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra. Christopher Martin says of his first six months on the job that it was probably the hardest period that he has ever had musically in terms of work load and being very honest with himself on where he was falling short and where he could be better.

Even before the steep on-the-job learning curve, Martin had to prepare and win the audition for the Chicago Symphony Orchestra job. He began preparation for the audition two months in advance and breaking his audition preparation into three blocks. Of this method of preparation, Martin states,

I have found that beginning this early greatly increases the efficiency of my practice by breaking the audition preparation into three blocks: the first month for intense study of the pieces I have less familiarity with and reacquainting myself with the standard repertoire, the next three weeks for multiple “performance practice” sessions and mock auditions, and the last
week before the audition to recover for the performance of the audition itself.\textsuperscript{51}

During his first phase of preparation, he spent between ninety minutes to two hours on the audition material. That left him enough time in the day for daily maintenance sessions and additional preparation time for his current job, which, at that time, was a Principal Trumpet of the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra. Martin believes that the second phase of preparation, the “performance practice” phase, is the most important and is also the phase in which he believes most people are not disciplined enough to execute in the manner which would be most helpful. During this phase, Martin divided his sessions into three, four, or five segments of no more than thirty minutes to an hour in duration, the goal during these sessions being variety and challenge. The point of this method of practice is to simulate an audition situation in which auditionees must perform very brief, yet very intense audition rounds. With all of these practice sessions, Martin made a goal of performing his best on each excerpt on the first time through. As he states, “remember, the point is to build comfort with the ‘one chance only’ reality of auditions.”\textsuperscript{52} During the final week leading to the audition, Martin cut down the practice sessions to only one or two per day to avoid any chance of physical injury or excess fatigue on audition day.

During his first six months at the job of Principal Trumpet in Chicago, Martin spent a great deal of time practicing the fundamental areas of sound, stamina, and dynamic contrast. He also spent countless hours listening to former Chicago Symphony

\textsuperscript{51} James West, “Preparing the CSO Audition: Reflections from Chris Martin,” Journal of the International Trumpet Guild, June 2006, 30, no. 4: 54.

\textsuperscript{52} ibid
Orchestra Principal Trumpeter, Adolph “Bud” Herseth on recordings. As Martin states, “I spent many hours listening in an attempt to get into Mr. Herseth’s musicality, phrasing, pacing, and most of all his sound. I am a firm believer in the brain’s incredible ability to retain, learn, and evolve based on healthy input and repetition…success is the sum of hundreds of positive actions repeated over time.”

Though many hours were spent practicing and cultivating sound, projection, shape, articulation, and learning to adapt to new levels of stamina and extremes of dynamic levels both loud and soft, Martin states,

All of this practice and technical work is toward the obvious goal of having the technique disappear completely from the performance, leaving only a powerful musical statement that will move the listener. Mr. Herseth has always been the embodiment of convincing, powerful storytelling through music regardless of the technique involved. That is the definition of a master.

Martin as a Soloist

While his position as Principal Trumpet with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra does not allow Christopher Martin to be a soloist often, either with the orchestra or otherwise, Martin does enjoy solo playing and relishes the chance to play solos whenever the opportunity comes his way. In a 2008 interview with Jason Bergman, Martin discusses solo playing and the impact it has on his position in the orchestra.

BERGMAN: I’ve observed that you’ve been doing more solo playing. For example, you just recently played the Haydn Trumpet Concerto with the CSO. Do you enjoy all the solo work, and how does it impact your orchestral playing?

MARTIN: I love to play solos, and to me it’s actually more fun. Playing in the orchestra is great fun, but it’s more difficult I find because you have less control. You have very little control; the conductor has all the control. But also, you

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54 ibid
play and then you rest, and then you play and you rest, and then you sit for 15 minutes, and then you play. Playing solos is actually kind of, not relaxing, but it’s very calming to me. You have complete control. You choose the piece you want, you choose your tempi, and you choose how you want to balance to the ensembles. So, I actually enjoy it and it’s really healthy for my playing, and I know colleagues of mine, particularly in the section if you’re playing 2nd, 3rd, or 4th, that playing solos and chamber music is really vital. I remember when I was in Philly, and I was the associate principal, doing chamber music and playing in quintets really kept me motivated and fired up to practice and to stay in the best shape I could. It’s true here too, but it’s not so much about being in shape. I find it more musically very rewarding and it keeps things fresh. And I find that when I come back to the orchestra, I’m really excited to be there because I always learn. When I did the ITG recital, I learned so much about preparing, and how I should’ve prepared, and maybe a little differently for that. Playing a lot of different music, bam bam bam, and using many different horns in a row is not something we usually do here. We play mostly German repertoire and we play C trumpet, mostly piston, and a good bit of rotary. That’s about it. We almost never play piccolo, almost never play D or Eb trumpet, or anything else for that matter. We rarely play cornets. So, you can really get into a zone and you do those things really well. You know, I remember warming up about a year or so ago and looked at my Eb trumpet not remembering the last time I had played it. I picked it up and it was a horrible sound and it felt really terrible. And I remember thinking, ‘what happens if I need this next week and they change the piece and I have to play Eb trumpet?’ So, outside stuff really helps keep your whole spectrum of technique and mentality sort of fresh. But balancing it is hard, it’s really hard. You know, Bud wouldn’t do much of anything outside. He didn’t teach anywhere, he coached the Civic orchestra, and he rarely did solo work. He was very careful about how he managed it. I’m finding that he was really onto something. I don’t do nearly as much as I could, or I want to, but it’s just not possible to do that much. I’m finding that I’m probably turning down about 80 percent of what I get called to do. Which makes me sad, but my priority is the orchestra, and being the best that I can be in that chair at the CSO. That’s my job and that’s my priority. That’s
what I grew up wanting to do. So, you make choices and that’s ok.
CHAPTER 6

HEIMDALL’S TRUMPET

On December 20, 21, and 22, 2012, Christopher Martin and the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, led by guest conductor Jaap van Zweden, presented the world premiere of *Heimdall’s Trumpet* written by Christopher Rouse. The work was Mr. Rouse’s second commission from the Chicago Symphony Orchestra (*Clarinet Concerto*, 2001) and his first trumpet concerto. Rouse stated that Heimdall, in Norse mythology, was the God whose trumpet blasts signaled the beginning of Ragnarok, which was their equivalent of Armageddon. Heimdall was the Norse equivalent of the angel Gabriel and it was his trumpet that would bring about this idea of Ragnarok, which was truly apocalyptic in Norse mythology and it occurred to Rouse that this idea might be the inspiration for this piece.\(^5\) Christopher Martin says of the piece, “the piece itself is very dramatic and, in fact, one of the reasons I was excited for Mr. Rouse to write this piece is because he blends expertly the craft and technique of composing with the kind of raw energy of almost rock and roll music. It’s a good fit both for me and for the (Chicago Symphony Orchestra). The (Chicago Symphony Orchestra) is known for it’s attraction to large pieces, large scale works, dramatic works, and I think this concerto fits nicely.”\(^6\) Chicago Symphony Orchestra program annotator, Philip Huscher states that, “The Chicago Symphony Orchestra and Martin chose Rouse for this commission largely because of his flair for writing big dramatic pieces for large orchestra, and the desire to produce a


concerto that is, as Martin points it, a ‘real conversational ensemble piece’ rather than a solo showcase pure and simple.”

**Heimdall**

The Norse mythological character Heimdall (meaning “Heavens Mount”) is known as the Watchmen of the Gods and the Guardian of the Bifrost bridge. He is also known as “the Son of the Waves” referring to the fact that he was the son of the god Odin and the Nine Waves (Aegir’s nine daughters) by enchantment of Odin. Heimdall is the Asa-God of Light and the rainbow. “Heimdall, always clad in resplendent white armor, is therefore called the bright God, as well as the light, innocent, and graceful God, all which titles he fully deserves, for he is as good as beautiful, and all the Gods love him.”

Heimdall possessed a trumpet called Gjallarhorn, which the Gods bade him blow whenever he saw their enemies draw near. It was said that the sound of Heimdall’s trumpet would be heard by all creatures in heaven, earth, and Niflheim (one of the Nine Worlds in Norse mythology). The sound of the Gjallarhorn would announce that the last day had arrived and that the great battle known as Ragnarok was about to begin. The trumpet blast warned of impending doom and served as an announcement for everyone to assemble together for battle.

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58 *Heimdall*, biography from Holy Nation of Odin website, [on-line], available from [http://sonsofodin1519.org/content/heimdall](http://sonsofodin1519.org/content/heimdall); Internet, accessed 13 January 2013.
To battle the gods are called
By the ancient
Gjallar-horn.
Loud blows Heimdall,
His sound is in the air.

-Saemund’s Edda (Benjamin Thorpe translation)\textsuperscript{59}

To keep this instrument, the Gjallarhorn, which was a symbol of the moon crescent, ever at hand, Heimdall either hangs it on a branch of Yggdrasil (an immense Norse mythological tree) above his head or sinks it in the waters of Mimir’s well. Legend states that Heimdall will perish at the hands of the Fenris wolf during the last battle of Ragnarok.

\textsuperscript{59} Heimdall, biography from Holy Nation of Odin website, [on-line], available from http://sonsofodin1519.org/content/heimdall; Internet, accessed 13 January 2013.
Figure 6.1  *Heimdall blows the Gjalarhorn* by Lorenz Frølich, 1895
Commissioning Process

*Heimdall’s Trumpet* is Christopher Rouse’s second commission from the Chicago Symphony Orchestra. The first commission Rouse received from this orchestra was the *Clarinet Concerto*, written for the Chicago Symphony Orchestra’s then principal clarinetist Larry Combs in 2001. The program notes for *Heimdall’s Trumpet* indicate that the Edward F. Schmidt Family Commissioning Fund, which has generously given support to many new works over the past several decades including the John Stevens
Concerto for Contrabass Tuba and Orchestra (1998) and the John Williams Horn Concerto (2003), both written for Chicago Symphony Orchestra brass principals, commissioned the work for the Chicago Symphony Orchestra.

In 2011, the Chicago Symphony Orchestra was seeking a commission for Principal Trumpeter Christopher Martin. The orchestra’s management asked Martin for recommendations of composers from whom he would like to perform a piece. Martin suggested Christopher Rouse, stating, “Mr. Rouse blends expertly the craft and technique of composing with, kind of, the raw energy of almost rock and roll music…It’s a good fit, both for me and for the CSO.” Orchestra management then contacted Christopher Rouse about the possibility for writing a piece for Christopher Martin and the orchestra, to which Rouse agreed.

Of this particular commission for Heimdall’s Trumpet and its restrictions, Rouse discussed the commission during a December 20, 2012 interview with the author of this document. He stated:

They just wanted a piece for trumpet and orchestra and so after thinking about well do I just want to do a nice three movement concerto, I thought, no I think I’ll do what I’ve done in, oh, the piano concerto Seeing is not really, it’s called Seeing rather than Piano Concerto or Der Gerettete Alberich instead of Percussion Concerto so this follows that route…Well usually we have to decide on a length. And with most orchestras it’s kind of a given that you’ll stay within their core membership. If you want anything more, they’ll entertain that notion if you ask but you can’t just write for, you know, eight accordions or something like that unless you ask them. The only thing in this case, and Chris said “don’t worry about it, it’s not a problem,” was I wanted to include a couple of bass trumpets at the end, you know, in the last minute or two of the piece, which, of course, as you know, they’re really played by trombonists rather than trumpets.

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Other than that I didn’t really want to do anything that was beyond the usual kind of orchestral compliment.\textsuperscript{61}

In a pre-concert lecture given by Christopher Rouse on December 21, 2012, Chicago Symphony Orchestra Vice President for Artistic Planning and Audience Development, Martha Gilmer discussed the Edward F. Schmidt Family Commissioning Fund and the commissioning process for \textit{Heimdall’s Trumpet}. She stated:

We have a wonderful board member who, his family has given money to the endowment to support commissions, and the Schmidt family in particular, wants to commission works for our own CSO players as concertos. And so, part, from our point of view, part of this ongoing dialogue is going to our key players and saying, “Who would you like to have write a piece for you, what’s your wish list?” And so sometimes the dialogue is, “I would like Christopher Rouse to do it” and so we will work, and I’m seeing your publisher sitting right in front of me, we will work through someone saying, “Does Chris Rouse want to write a trumpet concerto for Chris Martin?” And sometimes the answer is no, I already have one, or right now, that’s not what I’m thinking and that’s fine, then we go on to plan B. And, as this attests to, sometimes it’s yeah, that’s a great idea, why not. So it is a journey and it’s a very good question because it’s part of a process and we don’t, I have never put demands on a composer like, it’s gotta be fourteen minutes long and I only want triple winds and please don’t exceed… because I think that gets in the way of the process. I think it’s more fun to let you develop what you want to do.\textsuperscript{62}

According to Christopher Rouse, the Chicago Symphony Orchestra owns the commissioning rights to \textit{Heimdall’s Trumpet} and they have the performing rights to the piece for two years. They premiered the piece in December 2012. They have the right to perform the New York premiere, the West Coast premiere, the European premiere, and

\textsuperscript{61} Christopher Rouse, Interview with the author, 20 December 2012, tape recording, Chicago, Illinois.

\textsuperscript{62} Christopher Rouse, Pre-Concert Conversation with Chicago Symphony Orchestra Vice President for Artistic Planning and Audience Development Martha Gilmer, 21 December 2013, tape recording, Chicago, Illinois.
after two years, other orchestras may program the piece. As far as a second performance
by a different trumpeter and orchestra, Rouse says,

What will happen is that these performances will take place and Chris’
colleagues will ask him how it went and what he thought of the piece,
there will be a buzz either of the piece stinks or the piece is good or it’s
awful hard or whatever, and then, trumpeters will start looking at the part
and seeing if they can do it, if they want to do it, and if they can with their
orchestra and so on. But usually, the second performance won’t happen
until two years after the first.⁶³

**Composing Heimdall’s Trumpet**

Christopher Rouse completed his *Third Symphony* in February 2011, a joint
commission between the St. Louis Symphony, the Baltimore Symphony, the Singapore
Symphony, and the Royal Stockholm Philharmonic. This was the composition in his
catalogue that preceded *Heimdall’s Trumpet*. After completing a commission, Rouse
likes to take a bit of time to clear his mind before beginning the next composition. Of the
early stages of composition of *Heimdall’s Trumpet* Rouse stated,

Normally after I finish a piece, I’ll take several weeks off just to kind of,
clear my mind and relax a little bit and then I’ll get going on the next one.
What was the piece before *Heimdall’s Trumpet? Third Symphony*, I
guess. And that would have been, that was finished in February, I believe,
of (20)11. So I probably started on *Heimdall* maybe in early April,
something like that.⁶⁴

Prior to beginning composition on *Heimdall’s Trumpet*, Christopher Rouse did
not undertake any specific study of previously written trumpet concerti. He was familiar
with the Haydn *Concerto in Eb* and had encountered several other trumpet concerti over
the years, but as he was preparing to write his own trumpet concerto, he consciously

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⁶³ Christopher Rouse, Interview with the author, 20 December 2012, tape recording, Chicago,
Illinois.
⁶⁴ ibid
stayed away from other composer’s works so as not to influence any of his own writing. He mentioned that he has colleagues that immerse themselves in whatever instrument that they are preparing to write a concerto for, however, he prefers to stay away from that and not let what has been composed previously affect his own decision making process as he is writing.

**Heimdall’s Trumpet: An Overview**

*Heimdall’s Trumpet* (2012) is a four movement concerto performed without pause between movements, for trumpet and orchestra consisting of three flutes (third doubling piccolo), three oboes, three clarinets, three bassoons (third doubling contrabassoon), four horns, three trumpets, three trombones, tuba, harp, timpani, percussion (three players), and strings. Though there are four distinct movements (performed without pause between), the programmatic title of *Heimdall’s Trumpet* refers specifically to the final movement. It is approximately twenty-four minutes in length.

Composer Christopher Rouse, a composer who frequently authors his own program notes, offers the following notes for *Heimdall’s Trumpet*:

Commissioned by the Chicago Symphony Orchestra for its principal trumpeter, Christopher Martin, *Heimdall’s Trumpet* was completed in Baltimore, Maryland on January 21, 2012. The title of the work refers to the Nordic god Heimdall, whose blasts on his trumpet announce the onset of Ragnarok, the Norse equivalent of Armageddon.

Cast in four movements, the title of the piece refers properly to the finale, which attempts in a general way to depict these mythological events as I imagine them. The onset of Ragnarok occurs only at the very end of the work, in a very short orchestral fortissimo outburst followed by an extended silence. The first movement is declamatory in nature and gives way to a whirlwind scherzo that utilizes a variety of mutes for both the soloist and the orchestral brass section. The third movement is a largo that swings like a pendulum between sections of substantive dissonance and straightforward consonance. The aforementioned finale, more specifically
dramatic and programmatic in nature, returns to the more aggressive world of the first movement.

The solo trumpet part requires much of the player, who must possess enormous technical prowess, including the ability to produce pedal tones at some length.\(^65\)

The work begins with solo trumpet alone, answered by the muted trumpet section of the orchestra in antiphonal fashion. It begins slowly and rather quietly, though it hardly remains that way. Chicago Tribune music critic John von Rhein states, “The work is slow to take off, but once it does, it makes you want to hold on to the roller coaster and enjoy the ride.”\(^66\) In his review, Mr. von Rhein also states, “The musical style melds the pile-driver sonorities and manic accumulation of rhythmic energy of Rouse’s earlier manner with the more consonant calm of his recent pieces.”\(^67\) Reviewer Lawrence A. Johnson states,

This trumpet concerto melds solo pyrotechnics against a dramatic symphonic tapestry in especially graceful and compelling fashion. Spiced with the composer’s usual ear for percussive coloring and rhythmic insistence, and scored with characteristic ingenuity and audacity with plenty of opportunities for the soloist, this work should find a wide audience.\(^68\)

Throughout the concerto, there is much dialogue and interplay, a sort of conversation between the solo trumpet and the orchestra. During the course of the work,

\(^{65}\) Christopher Rouse, program note for Heimdall’s Trumpet, [on-line], available from http://www.christopherrouse.com/heimdallpress.html; Internet, accessed 27 November 2013.


\(^{67}\) ibid

there is a rather unsettled feeling, as if the earlier movements predict the impending doom of Ragnarok that is portrayed during the final movement. This holds especially true during the slow third movement, which, at times, seems almost pleading or insistent, as if offering a warning of the chaos to come. During this movement, there are beautiful moments of stability that are subtly and on occasion, violently interrupted by chaos. These chaotic interruptions play a role throughout the work.

The final movement, constructed in a rather fast, compound meter, builds a sense of dread, giving rise to the feeling that something bad is about to happen. The quick, compound metrical tempo is constantly interrupted by a series of two chords, each time more fully scored and becoming louder and louder, giving the feeling that, as composer Christopher Rouse states, “the feeling when you’re trying to think about something else but something dreadful just keeps coming back in your mind’s eye…and then you go off and think again, do something else and then, but there it is. No matter which way you turn, it just keeps coming back.”

During his pre-concert lecture prior to the world premiere on December 21, 2012 moderated by the Chicago Symphony Orchestra Vice President for Artistic Planning and Audience Development, Martha Gilmer, Christopher Rouse offers the following glimpse of *Heimdall’s Trumpet*,

It’s a four movement concerto in which the last movement is really the one that is the most narrative in which the trumpet player is supposed to represent, or take the role of Heimdall, and at the very end of the piece, blow those notes that bring on, what you will hear is just an incredibly loud noise that just lasts a split second followed by silence. That’s Ragnarok. And so, the other movements are really meant to achieve other things. The second movement, for example, is meant to show off various mutes that the trumpet has and it’s really about mutes. The third

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69 Christopher Rouse, Interview with the author, 20 December 2012, tape recording, Chicago, Illinois.
movement is the movement that is slow and meant to show (Chris Martin’s) ability, marvelous ability to play lyrically. We tend to think of trumpet as playing a lot of militaristic kinds of things, there are certainly plenty of fanfares and such in the piece, but also, it can be a beautiful lyrical instrument so I wanted to also show that side of the trumpet.\footnote{Christopher Rouse, Pre-Concert Conversation with Chicago Symphony Orchestra Vice President for Artistic Planning and Audience Development Martha Gilmer, 21 December 2013, tape recording, Chicago, Illinois.}

Finally, Chicago Symphony Orchestra program annotator, Phillip Huscher, offers an overview of the new concerto,

*Heimdall’s Trumpet* is the latest of Rouse’s scores inspired by myth, including *Gorgon* and *Phaeton*, two orchestral works from the 1980s, and *Morpheus*, a solo cello piece — all based on Ancient Greek mythology. *Der gerettete Alberich* (Alberich saved), a fantasy for percussion and orchestra on themes by Wagner that was premiered in 1998, brings us closer to the Norse legends that generated *Heimdall’s Trumpet*.

The Chicago Symphony and Martin chose Rouse for this commission largely because of his flair for writing big dramatic pieces for large orchestra, and the desire to produce a concerto that is, as Martin puts it, a “real conversational ensemble piece” rather than a solo showcase pure and simple.

This kind of interaction is evident from the beginning of the work, which unfolds as a kind of call and response between the solo trumpet and first the brass section, and then the winds. Despite the complexity and importance of the orchestral writing through the four-movement work, the solo trumpet inevitably has the most challenging role to play, one that not only stretches the trumpet’s expressivity, but, quite literally, its range as well. At the end of the third movement, Rouse writes the lowest fundamental C on the instrument—on the piano it’s the note one octave up from the bottom, down in the trombone’s register. Lying in what trumpeters call the pedal range, this note doesn’t appear in any of the standard literature, and, as Martin notes, it is normally played only in the privacy of the practice room. Rouse’s second movement uses octatonic scales (built out of eight rather than seven notes).

The ending of *Heimdall’s Trumpet*, where myth and music become one, is, appropriately, high drama. A passage for solo trumpet, in cadenza-like phrases, and two bass trumpets—an instrument one rarely hears—drives the piece toward the moment of Heimdall’s fateful call, the moment of Ragnarök. The last expression marking that Rouse writes, over the
trumpet’s final phrase, is *stentoreo*, after Stentor, the mythological figure who was known for his booming voice.\footnote{Phillip Huscher, “Heimdall’s Trumpet,” Chicago Symphony Orchestra *Playbill*, December 2012: 38 - 40.}

*Heimdall’s Trumpet: I*

The first movement of *Heimdall’s Trumpet* opens at a pianissimo dynamic with the solo trumpet playing a fanfare figure beginning on a concert E-flat, over a single, sustained concert E-flat played by the second violins and harp. The soloist is quickly answered by his three colleagues in the trumpet section of the orchestra, as they each perform the fanfare figure, muted and slightly altered, in antiphonal fashion. The opening call and response section, shown below in example 6.1, is a precursor of the interaction to come in the first movement, the dialogue between the solo trumpet and the orchestral brass section and later the same between solo trumpet and orchestral winds.
Example 6.1  Christopher Rouse, *Heimdall’s Trumpet*, mvt. 1, mm. 1-5. Opening.
Rouse views the entire first movement as a precursor of things to come, a preamble perhaps. Of the four movements, he believes the first to be the least organized and the least consistent in tempo. It is just an introductory movement, something to give the listener a sense of what is to come. In his program notes, Rouse says little about the first movement except that it is declamatory in nature and gives way (attacca) to a whirlwind scherzo, which is to become the second movement.

Another important precursor occurring in the first movement, is the phonetic spelling through musical pitches of the letters of the name Heimdall. Rouse has chosen eight pitches to represent the eight letters of the name and arranged them in a specific order. This musical phrase, containing the pitches B, E, A, E, D, A, D, D, can be found in several important locations in the concerto, most notably as the very ending of the concerto, during the soloist’s final entrance, which occurs alone, where he assumes the mantle of Heimdall and sounds the eight letters of his name bringing about the onset of Ragnarök before the final blast of noise from the orchestra and the silence signaling the end of the world (example 6.2). It is interesting to note that the pitch “B” is represented by the letter “H” in the German language and that letter is often written for the pitch “B.”

Example 6.2  Christopher Rouse, *Heimdall’s Trumpet*, mvt. 4, rehearsal 93. Spelling of the name Heimdall at the onset of Ragnarök.
The first occurrence of the phonetic spelling of the name Heimdall occurs during the introductory first movement of the work. The pitches are presented in the trio of flute, oboe, and clarinet parts. Rhythmically different from the ending Ragnarök occurrence of the name, the meaning is the same. Rouse is musically spelling the name of the title character (example 6.3).

Example 6.3  Christopher Rouse, *Heimdall’s Trumpet*, mvt. 1, two before rehearsal 7.

First occurrence of the spelling of the name Heimdall in the flute, oboe, and clarinet.

In their reviews of the premiere, well-respected Chicago music critics John von Rhein and Lawrence A. Johnson sum up the first movement of the concerto. In his Chicago Tribune review, von Rhein states, “The opening movement arises as if from the mists of myth, the trumpet’s laconic, fanfare-like lines occasionally punctuated by violent
chords from the orchestra. Musical questions are set up that are not answered until the
Presto second movement.”\textsuperscript{72} In his review for the Chicago Classical Review blog,
Johnson gives the best summation of the opening movement,

*Heimdall’s Trumpet* opens with an angular fanfare for the soloist, which
leads to a dialogue between solo trumpet and three muted orchestra
trumpets, with the rest of the brass and winds soon joining the
conversation. Sudden peppery orchestral outbursts ensue, leading to a
ruminative cadenza for the soloist. This contrast continues throughout the
movement with heaving chords erupting out of the restless symphonic
pulsing, followed by an elegiac solo trumpet cadenza.\textsuperscript{73}

**Heimdall’s Trumpet: II**

The second movement of *Heimdall’s Trumpet*, marked Presto $\dot{=}$ 160 in the score
is a whirlwind scherzo that features very rapid tonguing, virtuosic technique, as well as
a host of different types of mutes for the solo trumpet. The types of mutes required
include straight mute, cup mute, harmon mute with the stem in and at times, requiring the
soloist to use his left hand to open and close the stem, harmon mute with the stem half
out, and whispa mute. The score requires the soloist to interchange these mutes very
quickly, which, at the rapid pace of the second movement, can be a challenge. The
orchestral brass also use the same mutes during the second movement, with the exception
of the whispa mute.


Before beginning the second movement, Rouse pondered what was unique about the trumpet, what was idiomatic for the instrument? While mulling this idea, Rouse considered the different types and sounds of mutes for trumpet. He states, “And so I thought, well I’ll just do a mute movement, and, in which, the orchestra brass will also use the same mutes.”

Rouse discussed how specific he was with mute choices in the following interview with the author,

FAIRFIELD: You have written, obviously, some muted things before but did you have to do any research, or did you ask for a specific, you know, there are infinite number of straight mutes, did you specify metal mute or carbon fiber or wood, or left that up to the performer?

ROUSE: Right. No, I didn’t because I wasn’t so hooked on specificity there. I like to leave the player a little sense of choice in these things.

FAIRFIELD: Right. Yeah, some composers will notate, you know, metal straight mute or this kind of mute and things like that.

ROUSE: Yeah. Yeah. I mean with the harmon, of course, that’s pretty specific, well the harmon and the cup are pretty specific. But no, I guess I could have said metal straight mute or whatnot but I figured I’d leave it to the player.

The second movement also makes frequent use of the octatonic scale, a musical scale in which the notes ascend in an alternating pattern of half-steps and whole-steps. Octatonic scales also make use of eight different pitches in the scale as opposed to seven different pitches in a traditional major or minor scale. Whereas the ascending pattern of the distance between the notes of a traditional major scale would be as follows, W-W-H-W-W-W-H (W = whole-step, H = half-step), the ascending pattern of an octatonic scale would alternate between half-steps and whole-steps as such, H-W-H-W-H-W-H-W or

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74 Christopher Rouse, Interview with the author, 20 December 2012, tape recording, Chicago, Illinois.
W-H-W-H-W-H-W-H. *Heimdall’s Trumpet* makes use of the former of these octatonic scales, beginning with a half-step followed by a whole-step, then alternating while ascending. A very clear example of Rouse’s use of the octatonic scale is provided in example 6.4, presenting two examples of the use of the scale for the solo trumpeter, the first being a one octave example beginning on the concert C# and the second being a two plus octave example beginning in the following bar on the concert A.

Example 6.4  Christopher Rouse, *Heimdall’s Trumpet*, mvt. 2, five before rehearsal 25.

Rouse’s use of the octatonic scale.

Another unique aspect of the second movement is the amount of conversation, or dialogue between the trumpet soloist and the orchestra. Frequently during the second movement, the soloist will state an idea or play a brief phrase, which is immediately answered by a section or several sections of the orchestra. During the opening of the concerto, there is a dialogue between the solo trumpet and the orchestral trumpets, which happens frequently throughout the work. During the second movement, there is also a large amount of dialogue between the solo trumpet and other sections of the orchestra, notably the violins and clarinets. Rouse states, “I like, sometimes, to have kind of a
dialogue between the soloist and his equivalents back in the band but other times I have a
conversation between soloist and orchestra.”

Two musical examples illustrate this dialogue. In example 6.5, at rehearsal
number thirty-five, the solo trumpet states an angular, two bar, syncopated phrase, which
is immediately answered note for note by the violins and principal clarinet. In the next
bar, at rehearsal thirty-six, the trumpet takes the conversation over again, this time for
only one bar, and is once again answered by the violins and principal clarinet. These
brief conversations happen frequently during Rouse’s Scherzo. Though not notated in
this excerpt, the solo trumpet is muted (straight mute) at rehearsal 35 and the
conversation outlined in example 6.5 is the continuation of a conversation between solo
trumpet and the violins and principal clarinet which began at rehearsal thirty-three and
continues until rehearsal thirty-seven.

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75 Christopher Rouse, Interview with the author, 20 December 2012, tape recording, Chicago,
Illinois.
In example 6.6, beginning at two before rehearsal number forty-seven, the conversation between solo trumpet and orchestra takes place in smaller segments, with the solo trumpet and first violins trading sixteenth note ideas and a three part conversation consisting of brief gestures in a hurried manner that begins at rehearsal fourty-seven. Here, the solo trumpet is answered first by strings and winds and then by the brass.
Example 6.6  Christopher Rouse, *Heimdall’s Trumpet*, mvt. 2, two before rehearsal 47.

Dialogue between solo trumpet and orchestra.
In summary, the second movement of *Heimdall’s Trumpet* is a vivacious Scherzo employing various mutes for the trumpet soloist and the orchestral brass. The solo trumpet part requires virtuosic technique, as Chicago Tribune music critic John von Rhien described, “Here Martin got to display his amazing dexterity, articulating cascades of notes at breakneck speed, his jazzy vitality enfolded by colorfully varied textures in the orchestra.” Martin himself describes the concerto’s second movement as such, “There is conversation with the winds, a great deal with the strings, and the second movement is very fast, a very fast tempo.”

**Heimdall’s Trumpet: III**

The third movement of *Heimdall’s Trumpet* is a beautiful largo, showcasing the solo trumpeter’s ability to play lyrically. Beginning in a very un-Rouse-like peaceful manner, the third movement moves between beautiful moments of peaceful consonance and terrifying passages of unsettling dissonance. Rouse’s program notes state that, “The third movement is a largo that swings like a pendulum between sections of substantive dissonance and straightforward consonance.” Music critic Lawrence A. Johnson describes the third movement for the Chicago Classical Review, “The slow movement is among (Rouse’s) most lyrical inspirations, a Largo launched with a rich Barber-like

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introduction for strings. A searching, introspective solo passage leads to violent, agitated orchestral passages that seem to be quelled near the end of the movement into a benediction by the peaceful playing of the trumpet soloist.”

In addition to the beautiful lyrical passages for both soloist and orchestra, the third movement includes moments of unsettling dissonance, with the string section performing rapidly repeating ostinato passages providing an unsettling chatter beneath the trumpet soloist. During the third movement, antiphonal passages reminiscent of those heard in the opening of the first movement return in the flute, clarinet, and orchestral trumpet sections. The movement closes with a benediction-like ending from the solo trumpet, including a sounding of the lowest fundamental C, a technique known as pedal tones.

Just before the third movement launches, the second movement Scherzo ends as abruptly as it began as the strings rapidly ascend through octatonic scales, the winds keep a brisk eighth note pulse, while the brass and percussion rapidly repeat sixteenth notes when suddenly the chaotic conversation is interrupted by a very loud low G sounded by the bassoons, tuba, timpani, and contrabass announcing the arrival of Rouse’s third movement. This is immediately followed by rapidly crescendoing then decrescendoing shouts from the brass and winds, accompanied by clamoring cymbals and other percussion. The shouts and clamoring last for six bars, then give way to quiet, lush, slow moving chords in the strings, which are reminiscent of the Barber Adagio for Strings. This proves to be a sublime moment as the rapid conversation of the Scherzo and the intense shouting that began the third movement surrender to the peaceful strings. It is as

if the heavens open and allow the listener time to catch his breath before the soloist begins again with a prayerful lyrical melody (Example 6.7).
Example 6.7  Christopher Rouse, *Heimdall’s Trumpet*, mvt. 3, two before rehearsal 53.

Ethereal string chords prior to the solo trumpet lyrical entrance.
The concerto is now entering its most expressive, consonant, and tonal section in which Rouse intended to showcase the lyrical qualities of the solo instrument. Rouse stated, “It can be a beautiful lyrical instrument so I wanted to also show that side of the trumpet.” Following the beautiful string chords, the trumpet begins a prayer-like lyrical melody that is interrupted at rehearsal fifty-five by the clarinet section sounding an antiphonal passage reminiscent of the opening movement of the concerto (Example 6.8). The music is passed between the clarinet section in much the same manner as the antiphonal trumpet passage that opened the work, which can be found in Example 6.1. This antiphonal episode from the clarinets is followed by the solo trumpet briefly restating the prayer-like opening lyrical theme before being interrupted again, this time by the flute section, with another antiphonal passage (Example 6.8). The flutes pass the antiphonal music to the orchestral trumpet section, again muted (harmon mute), as they were during the opening of the concerto (Example 6.9). The trumpets play a different antiphonal passage this time before passing the conversation back to the solo trumpet, which is now beginning to sound slightly more agitated, nervous, and unsettled.

Underneath the solo trumpet at this entrance, found at rehearsal fifty-eight, the low strings begin an unsettling chatter, notated by Rouse as repeated boxes of music in the score which the author will refer to as chatter boxes (Example 6.9). Rouse finds that gesture plays a very important role in his music and this string gesture is that of noisy, unsettling chatter. Here, for the first time during the third movement, the listener begins to feel a sense of dread, an unsettling feeling of the impending doom yet to come.

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80 Christopher Rouse, Pre-Concert Conversation with Chicago Symphony Orchestra Vice President for Artistic Planning and Audience Development Martha Gilmer, 21 December 2013, tape recording, Chicago, Illinois.
Example 6.8  Christopher Rouse, *Heimdall’s Trumpet*, mvt. 3, rehearsal 55. Antiphonal passage found in the clarinet and flute sections.
Example 6.9  Christopher Rouse, *Heimdall’s Trumpet*, mvt. 3, rehearsal 57. Antiphonal trumpet entrance and first occurrence of the string chatter boxes occurring one after rehearsal 58.
Continuing from rehearsal fifty-eight, the string chatter boxes make their way through the string section consecutively from low to high, beginning in the bass, then cello parts at rehearsal fifty-eight (Example 6.9), through the viola, violin 2, and finally violin 1 parts at rehearsal sixty. As the boxes progress higher in register while ascending from the lower into the upper strings, they lend an even more unsettling feeling to the movement. With each different entrance of the chatter boxes, the texture of the orchestration becomes thicker, as once a section enters, they continue their chatter, simply adding the next highest section one at a time. Though the solo trumpet continues to play in a mostly lyrical fashion, the dynamics begin to swell, foreshadowing the upcoming finale, giving rise to the feeling of impending doom.

A one-measure timpani roll the bar before rehearsal sixty-one ushers in a trumpet cadenza, following which the lyrical melody resumes in a lower register of the solo trumpet and the unsettled strings return to their lush, ethereal chords, this time joined by the wind section of the orchestra. As the solo trumpet makes its way out of the low register of the instrument and into the upper, the texture of the orchestration again becomes thicker as more instruments are added and the dynamics begin to intensify, leading to a climax at rehearsal sixty-three where the string chords return, this time unrelenting, at a fortissimo dynamic and remain that way until the final unsettling chatter box occurring one after rehearsal sixty-four. Over the string chords, the solo trumpet makes a final plea before surrendering to the full string section’s very insistent chatter box one after rehearsal sixty-four. This final chatter box is also the longest sustained one by the full compliment of strings. Rouse instructs the final box to last a full ten seconds and places a decrescendo to pianissimo before the music continues (Example 6.10).
Example 6.10 Christopher Rouse, *Heimdall’s Trumpet*, mvt. 3, rehearsal 63. Unrelenting string chords and final chatter box one after rehearsal 64.

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At the end of the third movement, a return of the rapidly crescendoing then
decrescendoing shouts from the brass and winds, accompanied by clamoring cymbals and
other percussion, which occurred at the beginning of the movement, is heard, ushering in
a final antiphonal passage from the flute section. The solo trumpet then offers a type of
benediction to bring the movement to a close, which occurs in the very lowest possible
register of the trumpet, utilizing the pedal register on the penultimate note of the
movement for the soloist. Here, the soloist must play the lowest fundamental C possible
on the trumpet, or pedal C (Example 6.11). As soloist, Chris Martin puts it, “(Pedal
tones) are normally played only in the privacy of the practice room.”\footnote{Phillip Huscher, “Heimdall’s Trumpet,” Chicago Symphony Orchestra \textit{Playbill}, December 2012: 38 - 40.} Originally, there
were three more pedal tones, a pedal Eb, Db, and another pedal C, which were to occur
nine bars before the end of the movement, however, because they proved to be too
difficult to execute and at Martin’s request, Rouse removed those pedal tones, instructing
Mr. Martin to play the notes an octave higher in the trumpet’s normal register leaving
only the one pedal tone.

*Heimdall’s Trumpet: IV*

The final movement of *Heimdall’s Trumpet* is the most programmatic and the movement in which the solo trumpet takes on the role of the character Heimdall and sounds the final trumpet blast leading to Ragnarök. Rouse states, “It’s the only time the soloist actually assumes the mantle of Heimdall and at the very end, blows the eight letters of his name and then brings on (Ragnarök).”

According to Rouse, the fourth movement is also titled *Heimdall’s Trumpet*. In an interview given for the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Rouse stated,

> The piece as a whole is in four movements and it really only directly connects to Heimdall in the last movement, which is also called *Heimdall’s Trumpet*. So the whole piece, as well as the last movement, bear the same title. That movement is more programmatic, more descriptive than the first three movements, which are more conceived around the notation of trumpet calls, in particular Wagnerian, primeval trumpet calls. Also the name of Heimdall is used, I have a system of spelling names, so I reduced his name to pitches and that is an important motive throughout the piece.

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82 Christopher Rouse, Interview with the author, 20 December 2012, tape recording, Chicago, Illinois.

Rouse constructed the finale to begin with a sense of nervousness, a feeling that something dreadful is going to happen. It continues to build until finally Heimdall will have to sound his trumpet and bring about the end of the world. He describes it as such,

FAIRFIELD: Along those lines, what kind of gestures can we kind of expect here in *Heimdall’s Trumpet*? I’m imagining Heimdall signaling the end of the world, there is a lot of loud, a lot of what you were just saying…

ROUSE: It builds up, yeah, the last movement really, it begins with kind of a sense of dread, you know, these repeating D’s as though you just feel something bad is going to…

FAIRFIELD: Impending doom, maybe…

ROUSE: Yeah, although I felt also, I did need kind of fast movement so a lot of the movement is fast compound meter, mostly 6/8…

FAIRFIELD: This is the fourth movement?

ROUSE: In the fourth movement, yeah, but using fanfare-like figures but it keeps being interrupted by this series of two chords that, you know, you’ve had the feeling when you’re trying to think about something else but you just, something dreadful just keeps coming back in your mind’s eye.

FAIRFIELD: Absolutely.

ROUSE: And then you go off and think again, do something else and then, but there it is. No matter which way you turn, it just keeps coming back. And so this little passage of just (sings passage of two notes), interrupts the fast music several times and it gets louder and more fully scored each time. And that, kind of, represents the inevitability that Heimdall is going to have to blow his trumpet and we are going to have the apocalypse.

Speaking specifically about the ending of the piece, the Ragnarök idea, Rouse did not want to draw out the Ragnarök. He only wanted the initial essence and then just silence. “I imagine it as maybe what it would be in a nuclear blast. One pow that lasts
for a second and then silence.”

To Rouse, the silence represents the cessation of all things. At the end of his First Symphony and again at the end of his Trombone Concerto, Rouse uses what he terms an orchestral scream of annihilation, meaning something very specific. With the ending of the First Symphony, Rouse was destroying the hero figure. At the end of Heimdall’s Trumpet, the idea of Ragnarök is also an orchestral scream of annihilation; however, it has a very different meaning and is used in a different manner.

Rouse describes the gesture as follows,

Here, it’s not a sustained scream, it’s more of a (very loud, very short shout) and then it’s over. There really isn’t, we’re building, you’ll hear it, we’re building up, it’s getting wilder and wilder but we don’t actually have the full chaos with all the percussion and so forth until just the very last beat of the beat of the piece, just that (very loud, very short shout), with the silence following.

Rouse goes on to describe the idea for his Ragnarök in great detail. He explains his idea for complete silence at the end of the piece, the gesture he uses for Ragnarök, and the origin of his idea, which came from the 1964 movie Fail Safe, directed by Sidney Lumet, starring Henry Fonda and Walter Matthau.

ROUSE: The end is just a flash of just incredible noise and then silence which is Ragnarök and then, like a nuclear blast, you know, like the last thing you experience is just this blinding light and then...

FAIRFIELD: And so the last, I believe it’s four bars, four or five bars of the score, you ask the orchestra and soloist to stay perfectly still and quiet and the conductor actually conducts through...

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85 Christopher Rouse, Interview with the author, 20 December 2012, tape recording, Chicago, Illinois.
ROUSE: He doesn’t even do this, he freezes too and is just counting to himself, one, two, and then well, they haven’t actually done it yet but I hope they’ll do it today.

FAIRFIELD: Ok. And that’s kind of, the significance of that being the end of the world I would assume?

ROUSE: Yeah. Partly, I suppose, it traces back to the first film, *Fail Safe*, which was remade maybe ten years ago or so, but the original film from 1964 I think. The movie is, the President of the United States has to drop a nuclear hydrogen bomb on New York because accidentally we’ve dropped one on Moscow and that’s the only way the Russians will not retaliate.

FAIRFIELD: Right.

ROUSE: And so, the very last scene, it’s just a scene of New York. People doing things in New York. You’d have to see the movie…

FAIRFIELD: I have not but I’ll have to see it.

ROUSE: It’s an amazing, it’s a great movie and it’s at the height of the Cold War.

FAIRFIELD: *Fail Safe*? Is that what it’s called?

ROUSE: *Fail Safe*, right. It’s from the height of the Cold War. So, you know, we were very paranoid about nuclear war and the Russians and all of that. So that idea of, and then the screen just goes blank at the end, you know. So that idea of the silence representing just the cessation of all things.

FAIRFIELD: Right.

ROUSE: I didn’t really want to do a real Ragnarok that went on for a while, I just wanted that flavor of just the initial (claps hands) contact and then just, the rest is silence.

A central figure of the fourth movement is the fanfare-like figures occurring in a fast paced compound meter, which are interrupted by a series of two chords, conveying the feeling one gets when trying to think about something else but something dreadful
just keeps coming back in the mind’s eye. No matter which way you turn, the feeling just keeps coming back. This two chord interruption occurs three times during the movement, growing louder and more fully scored each time. According to Rouse, this ultimately represents the inevitability that Heimdall is going to have to blow his trumpet and we are going to have the apocalypse. The first of these occurrences is marked $mf$ and played only by low brass, horn, contrabassoon, and contrabass (Example 6.12). The second is marked $f$, adding the winds, orchestral trumpets, and timpini (Example 6.13). The final occurrence is marked $fff$ and includes all instruments of the orchestra except horns, percussion, and strings (Example 6.14).
Example 6.12  Christopher Rouse, *Heimdal’s Trumpet*, mvt. 4, rehearsal 74. First of the two chord interruptions.
Example 6.13 Christopher Rouse, *Heimdall’s Trumpet*, mvt. 4, two before rehearsal 81.

Second of the two chord interruptions.
Example 6.14 Christopher Rouse, *Heimdall’s Trumpet*, mvt. 4, two before rehearsal 88.

Third and final of the two chord interruptions.
Chicago Symphony Orchestra program annotator Phillip Huscher masterfully describes the ending of the concerto. In his notes he states,

The ending of *Heimdall’s Trumpet*, where myth and music become one, is, appropriately, high drama. A passage for solo trumpet, in cadenza-like phrases, and two bass trumpets, an instrument one rarely hears, drives the piece toward the moment of Heimdall’s fateful call, the moment of Ragnarök. The last expression marking that Rouse writes, over the trumpet’s final phrase, is *stentoreo*, after Stentor, the mythological figure who was known for his booming voice.

Following the last of the two chord interruptions, occurring two bars before rehearsal eighty-eight (Example 6.14), the woodwinds are finished until the sounding of Ragnarok, the final note of the work. Shortly after rehearsal eighty-eight, a snare-drum roll begins (which will continue until rehearsal ninety-two when it gives way to an incredibly loud bass drum roll) and two bass trumpets enter, announcing that the battle is near. The principal and second trombone players from the orchestra play the bass trumpets. The score directs both players to change to bass trumpet in the measure following the final two chord interruption, stating “Tbn. 1 muta in Bass Trumpet 1” and “Tbn. 2 muta in Bass Trumpet 2.” The antiphonal fanfare music sounded by the two bass trumpets is based upon the solo trumpet’s first entrance of the concerto (Examples 6.15 and 6.16). The fanfare is passed between the bass trumpets three times before the solo trumpet re-enters.

When the solo trumpet enters at rehearsal eighty-nine, the music takes on an insistent character. The dynamics are now approaching the forte level. The speed of the fanfares is increasing. Rapid articulation reappears. The sense of impending doom is upon us and the moment of Ragnarök is fast approaching.
Example 6.15 Christopher Rouse, *Heimdall’s Trumpet*, mvt. 4, rehearsal 88.

Snare drum roll begins and bass trumpet 1 enters.
Example 6.16 Christopher Rouse, *Heimdall’s Trumpet*, mvt. 4, seven after rehearsal 88.

Snare drum roll continues. Bass trumpet 2 enters.
Another aspect of the fourth movement which adds to the feeling that impending doom is now upon us is the recurrence of the chatter boxes found in the third movement. Occurring in only one place in the fourth movement, and here, might not be considered chatter boxes, but rather shouting boxes, as they occur at the dynamic climax of the piece, rehearsal ninety-two, just before the soloist’s final entrance, in which the trumpeter assumes the mantle of Heimdall, sounds the eight letters of his name, and brings about Ragnarök. Now found in the brass parts as well as the strings, the rapid, repeated articulations of the brass announce that something terrible has now arrived. The snare drum roll, which began one measure after rehearsal eighty-eight has been a constant since that time, steadily crescendoing until the climax at rehearsal ninety-two where it gives way to an incredibly loud bass drum roll which takes place beneath the shouting boxes, until the final trumpet entrance at rehearsal ninety-three.

The entire piece has been building up to the moment that happens at rehearsal ninety-two. As the trumpets and low brass sound their forceful fanfares, the snare drum roll builds to a huge climax finally giving way to a bass drum roll, and Rouse instructs the strings to perform the music in their chatter box as fast as possible by writing, *presto possibile* in the score. While all this noise is going on, the horns sound the rapidly crescendoing then decrescendoing shouts, which were heard during the third movement. Following this incredible instability, the solo trumpet will enter, sounding the eight letters of the name Heimdall, and there will be an incredibly loud, but brief final shout from the entire orchestra followed by stark silence to end the piece. Rehearsal ninety-two is the moment for which all the build up of the previous three movements was aiming. It is an incredibly important moment in the concerto. (Example 6.17)
Example 6.17 Christopher Rouse, *Heimdall’s Trumpet*, mvt. 4, rehearsal 92.

Return of the chatter boxes and final dynamic climax.
When the final trumpet call begins, at rehearsal ninety-three, which represents Heimdall blowing the Gjallarhorn to signal Ragnarök, the drum roll and tremendous blasts from the orchestra cease and the trumpet is left alone to sound the eight letters of the name Heimdall, which he does in the order that Rouse has arranged B-E-A-E-D-A-D-D, the final D being the highest written note in the piece for the solo trumpet, the D written two ledger lines above the treble clef staff (Example 6.18). The moment of Heimdall’s fateful call has finally arrived, the moment of Ragnarök. The last expression marking that Rouse writes, over the trumpet’s final phrase, is stentoreo, after Stentor, the mythological figure who was known for his booming voice.

Example 6.18 Christopher Rouse, *Heimdall’s Trumpet*, mvt. 4, rehearsal 93.

Final trumpet call, spelling of Heimdall, signaling Ragnarök.

Following the spelling of the name Heimdall by the solo trumpet, there is an incredibly loud, but brief final shout from the entire orchestra, also marked *stentoreo* and at the incredibly loud dynamic marking of *fff*. This brief flash of incredible noise represents the cessation of all things. The silence which follows the final blast is notated in Rouse’s score. Rouse writes **FREEZE!** in bold font and all capital letters. Following this instruction, Rouse instructs the performers that “The conductor and all
performers should remain absolutely motionless while the conductor silently counts the remaining beats to him or herself.\footnote{Christopher Rouse, \textit{Heimdall’s Trumpet}, Boosey & Hawkes, 2012.} (Example 6.19)

Example 6.19 Christopher Rouse, \textit{Heimdall’s Trumpet}, mvt. 4, final four measures.

Ragnarök blast and silence that follows.
By all accounts, the premiere performances of *Heimdall’s Trumpet* on December 20, 21, and 22, 2012, were a rousing success. In the Chicago Tribune, critic John von Rhein stated, “Thursday’s first performance bolstered Rouse’s reputation as one of the most compelling American composers around.”

He added, “Rouse’s handling of the orchestra, right up to a screaming mass plunge off the musical cliff at the very end (abruptly followed by ominous silence) is nothing if not individual.” Of soloist Christopher Martin, von Rhien was most impressed, “Martin soared to the ecstatic heights and plunged to the subterranean depths of his instrument with virtuosic aplomb. The sheer nonchalance with which he tossed off these death-defying feats was jaw-dropping.”

Chicago Classical Review blog critic Lawrence A. Johnson added, “This trumpet concerto melds solo pyrotechnics against a dramatic symphonic tapestry in especially graceful and compelling fashion.”

As has become his custom, Christopher Rouse autographs the end of the score for *Heimdall’s Trumpet* with the words “Deo Gratias,” Latin for “Thanks be to God.” Under this inscription, he adds the date of completion, January 21, 2012, and the place, Baltimore, Maryland.

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88 ibid

89 ibid

FAIRFIELD: My name is Ben Fairfield and I am going to interview Christopher Rouse this morning about his new trumpet concerto, Heimdall’s Trumpet. It’s Thursday, December 20, 2012 and we are in Orchestra Hall in Chicago, (IL). My first question, we’ll start with who was Heimdall and what can you tell me about this idea of Ragnarok?

ROUSE: Well, Heimdall is the Norse God whose trumpet blasts bring about the onset of Ragnarok, which is the Norse Armageddon, the apocalypse. I had, when I agreed to do a trumpet concerto, sometimes I’m drawn to doing just a regular, traditional concerto called, Concerto, other times I want to do something that’s a little more programmatic and this was the case with this piece and so I was casting about for trumpet, the use of trumpets kind of in mythology and history and so forth, and remembered Heimdall. There’s not a lot that the sagas say about him, really there is very little information except that he blows the trumpet so I couldn’t really construct an entire piece around him. But, I decided to write a piece that would have that kind of feel, at least in the slow movement and the last movement. There are four movements; the last one is also called “Heimdall’s Trumpet.” That’s the really, the only really programmatic one. It’s the only time the soloist actually kind of assumes the mantle of Heimdall and at the very end, blows the eight letters of his name and then brings on, you’ve seen the score right?

FAIRFIELD: Briefly, yes I have.

ROUSE: Ok, yeah, because the end is just a flash of just incredible noise and then silence which is Ragnarok and then, like a nuclear blast, you know, like the last thing you experience is just this blinding light and then…

FAIRFIELD: And so the last, I believe it’s four bars, four or five bars of the score, you ask the orchestra and soloist to stay perfectly still and quiet and the conductor actually conducts through…

ROUSE: He doesn’t even do this, he freezes too and is just counting to himself, one, two, and then well, they haven’t actually done it yet but I hope they’ll do it today.

FAIRFIELD: Ok. And that’s kind of, the significance of that being the end of the world I would assume?
ROUSE: Yeah. Partly, I suppose, it traces back to the first film, *Fail Safe*, which was remade maybe ten years ago or so, but the original film from 1964 I think. The movie is, the President of the United States has to drop a nuclear hydrogen bomb on New York because accidentally we’ve dropped one on Moscow and that’s the only way the Russians will not retaliate.

FAIRFIELD: Right.

ROUSE: And so, the very last scene, it’s just a scene of New York. People doing things in New York. You’d have to see the movie…

FAIRFIELD: I have not but I’ll have to see it.

ROUSE: It’s an amazing, it’s a great movie and it’s at the height of the Cold War.

FAIRFIELD: *Fail Safe*? Is that what it’s called?

ROUSE: *Fail Safe*, right. It’s from the height of the Cold War. So, you know, we were very paranoid about nuclear war and the Russians and all of that. So that idea of, and then the screen just goes blank at the end, you know. So that idea of the silence representing just the cessation of all things.

FAIRFIELD: Right.

ROUSE: I didn’t really want to do a real Ragnarok that went on for a while, I just wanted that flavor of just the initial (claps hands) contact and then just, the rest is silence.

FAIRFIELD: Well good, I’m interested to hear that. Hopefully they’ll do it this morning, if not, I guess we’ll hear it tonight (laughter).

ROUSE: Ah, yeah, we’ll see (more laughter).

FAIRFIELD: You’ve written several other pieces that are kind of based on one type of mythology or another, the wind ensemble piece, *Thor*, that is removed from your catalogue, I read about that from Cathy Rand’s dissertation, and a couple others. What is it about the mythological characters or mythology that kind of captures your attention?

ROUSE: I loved the stories as a kid and often, not always, but most particularly in Greek mythology there is a moral to the story. There is something that we are supposed to learn from the tale. In other cases it’s just the imagination and the imagery of myths, from all sorts of cultures. Maybe I’m just a little boy that hasn’t grown up yet…

FAIRFIELD: I don’t think there’s anything wrong with that…
ROUSE: I love, I mean, for example, in Norse mythology, the character of Fenrir is this enormous kind of, he’s a wolf, but kind of an enormous earth wolf who devours, I’ve suddenly forgotten who, during Ragnarok Fenrir devours Odin maybe, I can’t remember you’d have to look it up, but all of that kind of symbolic imagery has always appealed to me from mythology.

FAIRFIELD: Very good. More specifically I guess about Heimdall, when you got the commission to do the piece, was it the Heimdall idea first or did you write some music first and then kind of transfer that over into, well I could write this…

ROUSE: No, no, I always have to know what the piece is going to be about before I do any writing.

FAIRFIELD: Ok.

ROUSE: They just wanted a piece for trumpet and orchestra and so after thinking about well do I just want to do a nice three movement concerto, I though, no I think I’ll do what I’ve done in, oh, the piano concerto Seeing is not really, it’s called Seeing rather than Piano Concerto or Der Gerette Alberich instead of Percussion Concerto so this follows that route.

FAIRFIELD: And then the New York Philharmonic recently did or is doing Seeing is that right? Maybe this season or last season?

ROUSE: They’re doing it at the end of this season in June.

FAIRFIELD: I thought I remembered reading that. So can you talk a little about the commissioning process? They (The Chicago Symphony Orchestra) asked you to write a specific piece for trumpet and orchestra? It wasn’t just a commission for the Chicago Symphony, it was specifically for trumpet?

ROUSE: No it was that they wanted a piece written for Chris Martin and they asked him who he would like apparently the poor, misguided soul decided to choose me so then they approached me on that basis.

FAIRFIELD: So they approached him first and he was the one who recommended you…

ROUSE: That’s what I understand. You ought to talk to him.

FAIRFIELD: Yeah, I will. I’m not going to do it while he’s, you know, while he’s playing the concerto but in the next few weeks or months I’m going to sit down with him and get his thoughts on the piece.
ROUSE: But he can tell you much more specifically how it all came about.

FAIRFIELD: Sure. Did they have any restrictions when they approached you with the commission as far as lengthwise or instrumentation wise…

ROUSE: Well usually we have to decide on a length. And with most orchestras it’s kind of a given that you’ll stay within their core membership. If you want anything more, they’ll entertain that notion if you ask but you can’t just write for, you know, eight accordions or something like that unless you ask them. The only thing in this case, and Chris said “don’t worry about it, it’s not a problem,” was I wanted to include a couple of bass trumpets at the end, you know, in the last minute or two of the piece, which, of course, as you know, they’re really played by trombonists rather than trumpets. Other than that I didn’t really want to do anything that was beyond the usual kind of orchestral compliment.

FAIRFIELD: And in the, while we’re on that subject, in the orchestration, I guess, there are groups of three of most of the winds and brass; I guess there’s four horns and one tuba. Was there any significance to the number three or is that just standard?

ROUSE: No it’s just kind of standard, standard instrumentation, right?

FAIRFIELD: So you did talk to Chris Martin a little bit before you wrote the concerto?

ROUSE: Ah, not really, no.

FAIRFIELD: No?

ROUSE: No and we never really talked much about, during the process of writing it… we emailed about pedal tones a bit and that was pretty much it. And I kind of misunderstood what he was saying about his pedal tone abilities and wrote something that was really too demanding so I had to patch up a couple bars near the end of the third movement which originally had more pedal tones. Now there’s only one, it’s the low C pedal tone is the only one that is left out of that passage.

FAIRFIELD: All right, and that’s towards the end of the third movement, right?

ROUSE: Right. Yeah, kind of transitioning into the fourth. So I, but other than that I didn’t consult with him, I thought I could, you know, I understood the instrument well enough to write the piece and then give it to him and say, “Well if you need me to change some things let me know.” And he didn’t ask for any changes, so, other than that pedal tone thing, so I guess it was okay.
FAIRFIELD: Perfect. How long ago did he see the part?

ROUSE: Oh boy, he, of course he can tell you better. It took awhile to extract the parts. The piece was finished the beginning of 2012.

FAIRFIELD: Ok.

ROUSE: I’m not sure when he first got his part but I think it might have waited until the summer or something like that.

FAIRFIELD: That’s something I’ll have to ask him, I guess.

ROUSE: It shouldn’t, normally it shouldn’t take that long, I’m not sure what the hold up was but I did have to kind of goad my publisher, I said “you know, I don’t think Chris has the solo part and I think he would probably, if he’s playing the piece in four months, probably like to see it.”

FAIRFIELD: Sure. When did the commission come about? When did you start writing?

ROUSE: Sometime in 2011. Normally after I finish a piece, I’ll take several weeks off just to kind of, clear my mind and relax a little bit and then I’ll get going on the next one. What was the piece before Heimdall’s Trumpet? Third Symphony, I guess. And that would have been, that was finished in February, I believe, of (20)11. So I probably started on Heimdall maybe in early April, something like that.

FAIRFIELD: Springtime of 2011?

ROUSE: Yeah. Normally I do one piece a year.

FAIRFIELD: Ok. Who did the Third Symphony, just out of curiosity?

ROUSE: That was a joint commission. The premiere was St. Louis Symphony. It was a consortium. And then Baltimore did it last month, Singapore does it next month, and then Royal Stockholm Philharmonic does it in the spring.

FAIRFIELD: Nice, that’s great. Ok, back to talking about the idea of the trumpet, when you, or before you were preparing to write, did you do any listening or reflecting on any other trumpet concerti or trumpet players…

ROUSE: Nope.

FAIRFIELD: Or you just, kind of cleared your head altogether?
ROUSE: Yeah, yeah I mean I know the Haydn, who doesn’t and I’ve encountered some other trumpet concerti over the years but no, I have colleagues or friends I know who do just that. If they’re going to write a violin concerto, they just listen to every violin concerto they can lay their hands on…

FAIRFIELD: Kind of immerse themselves in it…

ROUSE: Right, and I’m kind of the opposite, I just kind of stay away from all of it. Of course with Chris, you can do pretty much anything…

FAIRFIELD: He can!

ROUSE: Yeah, and of course then one is spoiled when you’re writing for someone like that but I don’t want to write a piece that only one person can play.

FAIRFIELD: Right.

ROUSE: So it’s not so much tailor made for, I mean that’s why I didn’t say “What little tricks and special things can you do, Chris,” because then it would possibly not be so easily picked up by other folks. It’s hard, there’s no question about it, it’s very virtuosic. Matter of fact, I haven’t yet asked him really how hard it is, how plausible is it for other people to do this piece? But I didn’t want to, as I say, I didn’t want to make it so narrowly for one person’s abilities.

FAIRFIELD: Yeah, having done Wolf Rounds, and having taken part in a premiere of yours, I can kind of speak to the fact that it can be a little technically challenging sometimes…

ROUSE: Oh yes!

FAIRFIELD: Wolf Rounds wasn’t so bad…

ROUSE: It’s not that I set out to write really hard music but it always ends up coming out that way anyway.

FAIRFIELD: Can you speak to maybe some of the, what you would consider technical challenges? You mentioned pedal tones, are there any other specific technical challenges you would think might be difficult for trumpeters?

ROUSE: Well, I mean, there is a lot of fast tonguing and most of the fast passagework is scales. I know not to just leap all over the place; it’s not good for the embouchure…
FAIRFIELD: Thank you! (laughter)

ROUSE: Yes. But it does require a lot of prestidigitation in terms of moving around the instrument within confined spaces but, you know, you may do kind of a scale that will go from low G all the way up to high A or B. So, one has to be able to do that. Again, probably, he can give you more information about what’s really the hardest aspect or aspects to the piece better than I can. I did know that in the third movement, I did want to give him a chance to play lyrically because most of the piece is more rhetorical, fanfare kinds of things and, as I say, a lot of fast tonguing. The second movement is everything I could think of to do with mutes.

FAIRFIELD: Yeah, I was going to ask you about that.

ROUSE: Yeah, I thought, for the Scherzo, I thought, you think about what’s unique, what’s idiomatic for this instrument and, of course, like the trombone, there are lots of mutes for the trumpet. And so I thought, well I’ll just do a mute movement. And, in which the orchestra brass also will use the same mutes.

FAIRFIELD: Off the top of your head, do you remember what kind of mutes?

ROUSE: Yeah I used straight mute, harmon stem in and halfway out, cup mute, whispa mute. I think that’s it.

FAIRFIELD: And the orchestral brass use the same?

ROUSE: And they use, I don’t think they use the whispa mutes.

FAIRFIELD: Right, I would imagine not.

ROUSE: But they use the harmon and the cup and so on. I like, sometimes, to have kind of a dialogue between the soloist and his equivalents back in the band. But sometimes, I will eliminate, for example, there are no orchestral oboes in my Oboe Concerto. Sometimes I eliminate the equivalent in the orchestra but other times I will…

FAIRFIELD: Have a conversation between soloist and orchestra.

ROUSE: Yes. Exactly. Right.

FAIRFIELD: Trumpets or flutes or what have you…

ROUSE: Orchestral trumpets versus solo trumpet, right, exactly. Or flute, yeah, the Flute Concerto has a passage where the orchestral flutes really join the
solo flute. It’s called the Flute Machine (laughter), that’s what they’ve come to call it.

FAIRFIELD: You have written, obviously, some muted things before but did you have to do any research, or did you ask for a specific, you know, there are infinite number of straight mutes, did you specify metal mute or carbon fiber or wood, or left that up to the performer?

ROUSE: Right. No, I didn’t because I wasn’t so hooked on specificity there. I like to leave the player a little sense of choice in these things.

FAIRFIELD: Right. Yeah, some composers will notate, you know, metal straight mute or this kind of mute and things like that.

ROUSE: Yeah. Yeah. I mean with the harmon, of course, that’s pretty specific, well the harmon and the cup are pretty specific. But no, I guess I could have said metal straight mute or whatnot but I figured I’d leave it to the player.

FAIRFIELD: Sure. Can we talk a little bit about your composition process? I read Laurie Schulman’s article and she said, well, you said actually, that when you begin a new piece, and you just mentioned it before, you know kind of what it’s about and then you do some reflecting on it like you had mentioned before. The process was pretty similar this time?

ROUSE: Oh Yeah. Always. I do mental sketching, I don’t write anything down. I just think about the piece until I reach the point where I feel I’m ready to begin. Which still leaves dozens and dozens, well, hundreds, thousands, whatever decisions still to be made on the spot. But I have to know enough about a piece to feel like I can start and then I just write the final score just from bar one to bar whatever. And it’s a way of working that’s comfortable for me. Once or twice in my life, I’ve begun a piece and say, gotten a minute or so into it and realized, no, this is not, this is not going right so then I chuck it and start over again with something else. But usually that doesn’t happen because I feel comfortable enough that I’ve reached a kind of mental gel point that I know this is what I want to do and I’ll just kind of go from there.

FAIRFIELD: And you have some kind of idea, you reflect on that before you even start writing anything?

ROUSE: Oh, right.

FAIRFIELD: You kind of have some way stations, I think?
ROUSE: Yeah. Exactly. And the last thing that comes are the pitches. I often think in terms of gestures and contours. Things occur to me already orchestrated. To me, orchestration is not something that you glom on after the piece is finished, in a piano score, short score. To me, it’s right there from the get go. And so I might, I might just be thinking about a piece and I will hear something like (sings a fanfare figure), lets say. Then I will think, well, what are the issues there if I’m thinking of that as a trumpet thing? Ok, if I do that, where is the trumpeter going to breathe? What kinds of range am I, in other words, it’s not going to be easy if the high note has to always, I mean the top note, the highest note in that lick has to be some high B or something, that’s going to be fraught with peril. So I kind of analyze the gesture and decide, ok this can work or what do I need, like whittling, you know, what do I need to do to this idea to get it to work? But the actual pitch content of (sings fanfare figure), is really not necessarily part of the idea from the start. At first it’s the gesture and the contour of the idea. And again, with (sings part of the fanfare figure), if I come up with that as an idea, I would think well that’s not a string idea (sings fanfare again). It just seems to me that’s a brass idea. Let’s say it wasn’t for this piece, let’s say it was just a straight orchestra piece and I just come up with that (sings fanfare figure). Could be woodwind. Not oboes. Flutes, certainly. Clarinets, maybe depending upon how much slurring there is but if it’s all tongued, blah blah blah, you get the idea. So each one of these little things that occurs to me, I analyze to see what instruments can do it, what needs to be done to it to get it to work for whatever instruments I may choose, and in some cases, that particular one, I might use, I might refer to it in the woodwinds but it would basically be, that would be a trumpet, that would be a trumpet idea to me. Trombones, you know, they can’t…

FAIRFIELD: Kind of limited on the technique…

ROUSE: Yeah, with the slide. And horns, ah, you know… (laughter)

FAIRFIELD: (laughter) I do. Yes, I do. You had talked about gesture and I had, David Zinman had said in an article, “What speaks immediately to listeners is the starkness of gesture” (in your music) and it sounds like that’s the first thing that speaks to you as well, as you just said. You hear the gestures first.

ROUSE: Absolutely. Well, I mean, to me, a piece of music is kind of like sonic theater and just as an actor on the stage will say, “I love you” or (stomps foot) “Go to hell” or whatever it may be you know, it’s the words and the inflection of the words, but also there’s a physicality sometimes in the way that the words in a play are reinforced by what the hands are doing or the body is doing. And, to me, music is gestural as well. And I do think in terms of the drama of a piece. And so I do think theatrically and I think of
(sings fanfare figure), ok, assuming it’s very loud, that there is a kind of an alarm sounding quality to that. It’s like a crazed kind of fanfare. Something wild is happening or about to happen. So that kind of idea, to me, will then function in that kind of, god, musico-dramatic way. God that’s horrible, musico-dramatic way, but I’ve always heard music as a kind of drama. The interesting thing about music is that it’s comparatively abstract and unspecific. What is an A-flat? You know, you play an A-flat, what does that mean? Well it doesn’t mean… It’s not like seeing the word, tree, seeing a painting of a tree or seeing the word tree in a poem or a novel or whatnot. There is a much more specific visual imagery involved there that…

FAIRFIELD: Right. You see the word and we all know what a tree is…

ROUSE: Exactly. But an A-flat… But then if I add a C and an E-flat above it and have a major triad, then there begins be a kind of a consensual specificity. You know, everyone says, well you know, major is happy and minor is sad, that’s ridiculous. No, it really isn’t. Ninety-nine percent of the time major is happy and minor is sad, it’s a linguistic thing that composers understand. And again, something low is different in meaning than something high. A consonant chord versus a dissonant chord, obviously there are different meanings there. So maybe it’s just conditioning but I think composers do understand that the kinds of ideas that they use, the kind of harmony, the kinds of scoring, the kinds of whatnot, will, most likely, elicit a certain kind of response or understanding from listeners.

FAIRFIELD: Along those lines, what kind of gestures can we kind of expect here in Heimdall’s Trumpet? I’m imagining Heimdall signaling the end of the world, there is a lot of loud, a lot of what you were just saying…

ROUSE: It builds up, yeah, the last movement really, it begins with kind of a sense of dread, you know, these repeating D’s as though you just feel something bad is going to…

FAIRFIELD: Impending doom, maybe…

ROUSE: Yeah, although I felt also, I did need kind of fast movement so a lot of the movement is fast compound meter, mostly 6/8…

FAIRFIELD: This is the fourth movement?

ROUSE: In the fourth movement, yeah, but using fanfare-like figures but it keeps being interrupted by this series of two chords that, you know, you’ve had the feeling when you’re trying to think about something else but you just, something dreadful just keeps coming back in your mind’s eye.
FAIRFIELD: Absolutely.

ROUSE: And then you go off and think again, do something else and then, but there it is. No matter which way you turn, it just keeps coming back. And so this little passage of just (sings passage of two notes), interrupts the fast music several times and it gets louder and more fully scored each time. And that, kind of, represents the inevitability that Heimdall is going to have to blow his trumpet and we are going to have the apocalypse.

FAIRFIELD: Which is perfectly timed, I guess right now (laughter). The Mayans predicted the end of the world tomorrow!

ROUSE: (laughter) I know, we are by years if you’re a Mayan, we’re about done. The performance on Saturday may not take place.

FAIRFIELD: Well, I guess we’ll find out!

ROUSE: That’s right!

FAIRFIELD: Along those lines of, kind of, orchestral screams and the end of the world idea, at the end of the First Symphony, and I think, again at the end of the Trombone Concerto, there is kind of what you called an orchestral scream of annihilation or something, meaning something very specific. That was, I think you said it was destroying the hero figure, kind of for no purpose whatsoever.

ROUSE: In the symphony. In the symphony.

FAIRFIELD: Is this kind of the same thing at the end? Very similar?

ROUSE: Well not for, it doesn’t have the same meaning.

FAIRFIELD: Right, but the same orchestrally?

ROUSE: Except that here, it’s not a sustained scream, it’s more of a (very loud, very short shout) and then it’s over. There really isn’t, we’re building, you’ll hear it, we’re building up, it’s getting wilder and wilder but we don’t actually have the full chaos with all the percussion and so forth until just the very last beat of the beat of the piece, just that (very loud, very short shout), with the silence following.

FAIRFIELD: While speaking about the Trombone Concerto, in the trombone and cello concerti, Leonard Bernstein and William Schumann are remembered and quoted. Any quotations in the trumpet concerto?

ROUSE: No.
FAIRFIELD: Going back to composing, you hear the gesture kind of first, it’s not orchestrated, I guess, or it is orchestrated and then you add the pitches later you said. Do you hear writing say, writing specifically for the solo trumpet line, do you hear those gestures in a series of phrases or kind of just one gesture and then you’ll work another gesture and string them together, or do you hear kind of longer phrases and then notate it out?

ROUSE: Yes. (laughter) I don’t know. Now you’re getting into the realm of I don’t know what I’m doing. I am a very intuitive composer I will admit. Which doesn’t mean that I’m not thinking about craft and making the music coherent and so forth, and often, I play games, I call them games. Just little things with numerology or whatnot, just to make it more interesting to me. They’re not meant to be heard. I have this code that I use for spelling names and so forth and that is used in this piece, just for Heimdall. His name is spelled out throughout the piece at various points, kind of like he’s signing his work. But a lot of what I do, all I can describe it as at one moment I’m searching for an answer and then suddenly the answer is there, and it’s not necessarily the result of a lot of painstaking conscience manipulation, it’s just, oh, ok. I tend not to really think too much about what it is or how it got there or whatnot. I’m sure I do all of the things that you described but I’m not really conscious of it.

FAIRFIELD: So we talked a little bit about the fourth movement being the Heimdall is signaling the end of the world here, the Ragnarok idea and we talked about the scherzo being a mute type movement. The third movement, I think, is the slow movement, right, just kind of a song?

ROUSE: Yeah, that was a chance for him to play lyrically. I didn’t want him just doing tongue city the whole time.

FAIRFIELD: So what about the first movement? What’s that, kind of, idea there?

ROUSE: I’m still trying to figure out what I was doing in the first movement. It’s really a preamble, in a way. It’s the least organized; let’s say the least consistent in tempo. Well, even that’s not true. The idea of a kind of a steady flow is less evident in the first movement, I would say, than in the other movements. So it is kind of introductory, just to kind of give a sense, perhaps, of what’s coming. But the fast movement, I mean, it just always (taps hand at a rapid, steady pace) totally remains in tempo, as does the slow movement. The finale, as I said, is basically fast with those interruptions. But the first movement, yeah, the only way I can describe it is kind of prefatory.

FAIRFIELD: Ok. Did you start writing with the first movement or the last movement?

ROUSE: First movement. Yeah, I just always…
FAIRFIELD: You just go consecutively?

ROUSE: I just go straight through.

FAIRFIELD: Ok. Very good. The CSO’s Principal Conductor, Jaap van Sweden is conducting. Did you have any say over who was going to conduct? (The interviewer incorrectly titled Jaap van Sweden as the CSO’s Principal Conductor instead of Principal Guest Conductor leading to the following confusion)

ROUSE: Is he the principal? What, principal guest or something?

FAIRFIELD: I think it’s Principal Guest Conductor. I think so. I’ll have to look that up…

ROUSE: Because, I mean, Muti, Muti is the Music Director.

FAIRFIELD: Right. I think his title, he has a title, is Principal Guest Conductor.

ROUSE: Huh! Didn’t realize that. No, I had nothing to do with that.

FAIRFIELD: It was just his turn in the barrel, I guess or however they work that out.

ROUSE: Sometimes they just ask various people, “Will you do this? Will you do this?”

FAIRFIELD: Right. But you didn’t have any say over whether it was Muti or…

ROUSE: No. In fact, this is my first time working with him. I’ve never worked with him before.

FAIRFIELD: He’s in Dallas, I guess.

ROUSE: Right.

FAIRFIELD: How long, start to finish, how long do you think it took? You said you started in the spring of 2011 and finished maybe earlier this year?

ROUSE: January. I think it was January of 2012. So, nine months. Like a baby! (laughter)

FAIRFIELD: Like a baby, that’s right! (laughter)

ROUSE: And believe me, there are a lot of parallels between creative work and labor. It’s hard to get it out. I have colleagues, I’m not quite as bad, but I’ve had colleagues who’ve, I have one who broke his foot kicking the
piano because he was so angry that he couldn’t get the music out. I know another one smashed up his hand putting his fist into a wall. The frustration, it, you know, the Hollywood idea of just writing in rapture just thinking angels dictate the music to you, ha! It’s hard, frustrating, often very, very painful work.

FAIRFIELD: I imagine.

ROUSE: I hate composing. I’m miserable whenever I’m composing. As I always tell people, a composer, a real composer, just knows that they are not alive without doing it. The only thing worse than composing would be not composing. But it is a painful, not at all enjoyable process. I think younger people enjoy it. When I was a student I enjoyed it more. But then, as the years pass, you become more self-critical. You don’t want to repeat yourself so it becomes harder and harder to find an idea that you think is good enough. Then it really is tough. There is a wonderful Brahms statement towards the end of his life, he said, “When I was young I was full of ideas but I didn’t know what to do with them. Now I know what to do with them, if only I could get one.” (laughter)

FAIRFIELD: (laughter) Yeah, I certainly understand. Performing, you were talking about the frustration, very similar, you know. If I get a new piece, I’ll sit there and play it and I want to throw my trumpet sometimes and punch the walls and kick the pianos and things like that, and labor is a very good word for it. People think, what do you do? Well, I play trumpet. Well that must be fun! Well, sometimes, sometimes. So I certainly understand that idea…

ROUSE: Well, and another wonderful quote from George Bernard Shaw, he says, I can’t remember what the verb was, it was I dislike, it was very proper British, it wasn’t loathe or something like that, but “I dislike writing, but I enjoy having written.” Yeah, if a piece comes out ok, and you hear it and you think, well, you know, that’s not something that I’m going to be ashamed of, then that’s the reward. But then when you have to turn right around and start on another piece then it’s Oh God, here we go again.

FAIRFIELD: And what about editing? Do you do much editing after anything?

ROUSE: No. Partly it’s laziness. Partly it’s because publishers don’t like you to do that because then they have to keep generating new scores and sets of parts. Partly it’s because, maybe largely, or the biggest part is that I’m always tending to look forward. Once I finish a piece, draw the double bar, it’s gone, it’s over with. And so I’m always looking towards what’s coming up rather than what I’ve already done. If a piece, I mean, if it's a matter of a little tweak here and there, changing a fortississimo to a fortissississississimo, sure, that’s easy enough to do. But the notion of
rewriting an entire passage, or a new movement or something like that, I don’t do. If a piece has a couple of blemishes, I figure ok, what the heck. Nobody’s perfect. If it really has too many blemishes, I just withdraw it.

FAIRFIELD: Ok. I guess we are getting towards the end; I don’t want to take up too much of your time.

ROUSE: Yeah, I probably better get up there soon.

FAIRFIELD: Just two more quick questions. Is there a second performance of the piece already scheduled?

ROUSE: No. Which is what usually happens unless it’s a consortium. In this case, it’s just Chicago commissioning it. So they own the piece essentially for, I don’t know what the contract says, traditionally it’s like two years. They have the right to do the first New York performance, the first West Coast performance, the first European performance, blah blah blah. And then other orchestras can do it but, you know, orchestras generally are about two years ahead in their planning anyway.

FAIRFIELD: I have found that out the hard way!

ROUSE: Oh! Ok. What will happen is that these performances will take place and Chris’ colleagues will ask him how it went and what he thought of the piece, there will be a buzz either of the piece stinks or the piece is good or it’s awful hard or whatever, and then, trumpeters will start looking at the part and seeing if they can do it, if they want to do it, and if they can with their orchestra and so on. But usually, second performance won’t happen until two years after the first. As I say, unless it’s a consortium. If it’s a consortium, then they…

FAIRFIELD: Different orchestras, everybody involved in the consortium will get a turn.

ROUSE: Yeah and they often decide at the time of, there’s always a lead orchestra in a consortium. They pay more and they, kind of, are the ones who organize it all and get things together and so forth, and for that, they get the premiere, the very first performance.

FAIRFIELD: And then, the last question, is there something you’re working on now? Some commission that you’re working on for the next few months or are you kind of in between?

ROUSE: No, no. I’m doing my *Fourth Symphony* now for the New York Philharmonic.
FAIRFIELD: You’re the composer-in-residence this season and next, is that right? Through next season?

ROUSE: Right, through next season so I did a quickie over the summer that didn’t take long. They wanted an opener for their tour, like an eight-minute opener, so I was able to write that during the spring and summer. And so I started on the symphony about two months ago, so I’m still, kind of, early on in that stage.

FAIRFIELD: Well thank you so much for your time this morning. I certainly appreciate it.

ROUSE: Sure. I hope it’s useful to you.

FAIRFIELD: Absolutely! I’m looking forward to hearing it.

ROUSE: Well it’s coming up! (laughter)
GILMER: I have, tonight, the pleasure of introducing you to Christopher Rouse, who has written this incredible piece that you’re going to hear. It’s been a few years in the journey since we started talking about this piece and the soloist, of course, is our own Chris Martin. Before we start talking I want to just say this is really one of my favorite weeks of the season because we have something in Chicago that many of you might not even be aware of, some of you will be. We have a conference called Mid-West Band and Orchestra Clinic which brings band directors and student groups from all over the country, not just the mid-west, to perform for each other and to work with each other. So, this week, we always have an influx of audience members of teachers, of orchestra or band students and we just had a great student parade go by, you’ll see a lot of young people in the audience tonight. Are there any, is there anybody here in the lecture who is part of the Mid-West Band and Orchestra clinic? Yeah? Welcome. (Applause) And I want to say, to the students, respect your teachers. They really give this great tradition of music the incredible longevity that we share. They keep the flame alive. And I know that Chris Rouse is going to agree with that and I know Chris Martin is going to agree with that. Chris Martin’s dad is here. His brother is a trumpet player. I think Chris’ father is an educator, isn’t he? Or is he a performer? We really always pay tribute to people who teach music. You never get to stand up and take a bow on the public stage enough. Really, it’s great. (Applause) So, let’s talk about Heimdall’s Trumpet. Why Heimdall? Where did the name, where did the title come from? Where did this all begin?

ROUSE: Well, I’ve written quite a few concerti, but you approached me for a trumpet one which I hadn’t yet done, and, sometimes, when I do a concerto I’m content with just a nice abstract, quote/unquote three movement concerto that will be called Oboe Concerto or whatnot. But sometimes, I tend to look at things perhaps a little more programmatically, which I chose to do in this case. So, in casting about for the trumpet and trumpet players through history, of course, you know, the Angel Gabriel and so forth, but I remembered that in Norse mythology, Heimdall is a God whose trumpet blasts bring on what is called Ragnarok in Norse mythology. The apocalypse. So that’s good programming this week since…(laughter) Yes, the piece does end with the actual end of the world.
GILMER: You know that people might say that we have programmed this deliberately for the end of the world?

ROUSE: Exactly

GILMER: Which, of course, we have.

ROUSE: Right. Although it turns out that there’s not a lot of information about Heimdall except for this one role in which he functions. So, it’s a four movement concerto in which the last movement is really the one that is the most narrative in which the trumpet player is supposed to represent, or take the role of Heimdall, and at the very end of the piece, blow those notes that bring on, what you will hear is just an incredibly loud noise that just lasts a split second followed by silence. That’s Ragnarok. And so, the other movements are really meant to kind of achieve other things. The second movement, for example, is meant to show off various mutes that the trumpet has and it’s really about mutes. The third movement is the movement which is slow and meant to show Chris’ ability, marvelous ability to play lyrically. You know, we tend to think of trumpet as playing a lot of militaristic kinds of things, but there’s certainly plenty of fanfares and such in the piece, but also, it can be a beautiful lyrical instrument so I wanted to also show that side of the trumpet.

GILMER: So, when we approached you and talked about this, did you know the playing of Chris Martin yet? Did you know what he was capable of?

ROUSE: No, I didn’t specifically, I have to admit but I knew that he was the principal trumpet player of the Chicago Symphony, which meant that I pretty much assumed that he could do anything…

GILMER: Or everything…

ROUSE: Yes, everything! And I haven’t been disappointed. He’s some musician!

GILMER: So we were talking before, and I said, so talk about you and Chris and the conversations you had back and forth. There’s many ways to write a concerto. Sometimes you, I do know composers that have played or asked the soloist to play over the telephone and they have this ongoing dialogue, in fact, we just had this with Anna Clyne (CSO Mead Composer-in-Residence) and Jenny Koh (CSO violinist) a couple weeks ago. But, you had a vision, you knew what this piece was and it wasn’t necessary?

ROUSE: I rarely, actually, consult my soloists when I’m writing a concerto. I will, unless I really feel uncomfortable with the instrument, which I had a case, one case, when I wrote a guitar concerto. I really was at sea so I had to work with the guitarist pretty closely, but with the other concerti I’ve
written I’ve felt comfortable enough to feel that I could write the piece and then have my performer tell me anything that wasn’t copasetic and fix that. And, indeed, there was one passage here in which I got a little carried away, I don’t need to get too technical here, with what are called pedal tones. They are low notes that are actually below the official range of the trumpet and they are very hard to produce, and I got a bit carried away there so Chris said, “Maybe could you look at this and do something else” so I did. But other than that he’s been able to play it all. He’s really terrific.

GILMER: So when you were studying composition, way back when, sorry, I shouldn’t say way back when, that’s really insulting (laughter)…

ROUSE: Wasn’t the second millennium way back when?

GILMER: No. I said that because I was particularly struck by thinking of young composers. Composers in their twenty’s maybe. You, the craft you learn, that’s what I meant to say, because you said, “I felt comfortable with the trumpet,” you were taught a certain craft of instrumentation, orchestration, what the instrument can do. How has that evolved?

ROUSE: Actually I wasn’t really taught that by teachers. I was taught that more by just the repertoire and learning a lot of orchestra music, looking at the scores, seeing how other composers handle the instruments and learning that way. Often when students say “What orchestration book should I buy,” I say buy Daphnis and Chloe (Ravel). The score of Daphnis and Chloe is the best orchestration book you would ever get for yourself. As far as composition, teaching composition is a very strange kind of pursuit. With teaching an instrument, you already have the music on the page and you have fingerings, certain ways for the music to be played. With composition, you’re facing a blank piece of music paper and you’re trying to help the student fill up that page, not with your notes, if you’re a good teacher. It’s very easy for a composer to say well I would do it this way and I would do it that way. You want to try to get inside their minds and find their notes, the notes that are right for them. And so, various people are more or less successful with that kind of teaching than others. Certainly in terms of writing for instruments, the repertoire is the best, is the best teacher.

GILMER: We’re celebrating this year the anniversary of The Rite of Spring. When The Rite of Spring was composed, the capacity of players, the performers to perform it, was not what it is today is my guess. My feeling is that composition continually evolves and challenges performers and takes where they are and then pushes it just further. So Rite of Spring today, for performers, is, relatively speaking, easy or straightforward. They have that knowledge. Do you think, as a composer, that you pick up on this
technical advancement and you do keep pushing the art form forward that way?

ROUSE: Yes. It’s not necessarily true that we are trying to do that. Sometimes it’s our, it may be an ignorance that we do something that is not… There is a wonderful story about Ravel, speaking of Daphnis and Chloe, for those of you who know it, the dawn section begins with flutes and clarinets playing these incredibly fast licks (sings), like that, and at the first rehearsals the French performers said we can’t do this, the instrument can’t do this, so Ravel supposedly said, “Well just do the best you can.” And then, about two decades later, some British clarinetist came along and decided, no, I am going to find the fingerings that will work on the clarinet so that this is playable and once that player showed that it was playable, then, of course, everybody had to learn to play it. You couldn’t fake it anymore. The same happened on the flute, why someone ______ all the fingerings, and so, once it’s demonstrated that it’s not unplayable, then, you have to learn to play it. The technique has to catch up with the composers’ thoughts. There are some things that will always be unplayable. You may not know it, but there is a little passage in the Pastoral Symphony of Beethoven, which is, and will always be, unplayable for the double basses. In the thunderstorm movement. So sometimes, unless we can find a way for people to grow extra fingers or something, composers are not always necessarily just pushing the envelope, they are just beyond the envelope altogether. But that’s rare. More often, if a composer writes very difficult music, but music that is still somehow idiomatic, the performers will ultimately find a way to play it.

GILMER: So in Beethoven’s case, according to the Pastoral Symphony, did Beethoven write it as unplayable because he couldn’t hear it, because he didn’t understand it, or did he want to have players, the sound be under tension?

ROUSE: I think, to be honest, in those days the cellos and the basses would play the same music, the same musical line with the cellos playing an octave higher than the basses and I think he was really thinking for the cellos, it is playable on the cello. And so he just set it with basses and wasn’t really thinking about the basses. Cellists can do it, bass players can’t.

GILMER: So I heard tell that Chris Martin has said this piece is hard (laughter).

ROUSE: Yes, I actually was rather proud today, I asked him “how hard is this piece on a scale of one to ten,” and he said a nine. And I was very pleased with that because every other piece I’ve written it’s always been ten (laughter). So I was very happy to find out that at least I’m mellowing in my old age here and writing pieces that are merely fiendishly difficult instead of vicious. It’s not that I really set out to write hard music, it just comes out
that way. But, of course, with a concerto, a soloist has to expect to be put through his or her paces. You don’t want to write a piece that just gets something so easy that you are not able to impress the listener with your ability to handle the instrument. So I always do want to be sure that there are chances for virtuosity in any concerto that I write.

GILMER: So I know trumpet players, not just in this country but around the world, are watching this premiere tonight. They are anxious for a new piece in the repertoire and looking for possible future performances. I know that Chris will also set a very high bar…

ROUSE: That he will.

GILMER: He’s been working exceedingly hard. We’ve talked a lot about Chris but there is an orchestra sitting behind him. What can you tell us about the orchestra’s role in the concerto tonight?

ROUSE: Well, you know, one of the issues when you’re writing a concerto is, are there going to be balance problems. Some instruments, the cello is one, or the oboe, don’t have a really loud, projecting sound so you have to be careful how you handle the orchestra. You don’t want them drowning out your soloist. With a piece for the trumpet, that’s not quite such an issue. So, the orchestra, sometimes, is pretty darn loud. Not always. I really do pull back a bit when I want the soloist to play something that is going to be clear but removing some of the kind of balance issues that one would have to deal with if they were writing something for the oboe or whatnot, was really a big plus for me. So it’s really a virtuoso workout for the orchestra as well as it is for the soloist.

GILMER: Do any of you have any questions (directed towards the audience) about what you’re going to hear tonight? Either, certainly about the piece, the piece you haven’t heard yet so it’s always hard to know what questions, or about composition, especially students, any questions at all?

MALE: When was this finished? How long has Chris had to practice?

ROUSE: You know, I’m not sure when he got the part. The piece was finished in January of last year (2012) and then there is this whole process of copying the parts, the solo material and so forth. It seems to me that he got his part sometime over the summer. So he’s had maybe five or six months at it.

GILMER: Did you send him scraps of it along the way or just wait until…

ROUSE: No he just waited for the whole shebang.

GILMER: Other questions?
MALE: I’m sorry to say I’m not familiar with any of your other music yet, but how would you describe your style and/or any certain influences that are reflected in your career?

ROUSE: How would I describe my style? It’s always difficult. Composers don’t necessarily have the best view of what it is they do. For example, I don’t know what my style is except that other colleagues of mine have said, Oh Rouse means you do this, you do this, you do that, to which I reply, I do? News to me. I would say that I like to work in a big box. I like to work in a world in which I can write extremely dissonant music or extremely consonant music. I do believe in a kind of expressive urgency. I’m very much a believer in the idea motion first regardless of how complex the musical language may or may not be. And I’m known, I know, as a composer of extremes. Perhaps that goes with my feeling that particularly in this day and age, where we are bombarded with everything from loud commercials to just constant bombardment from all sorts of sources, that the listener is most likely to really listen attentively, perk up their ears, if one either whispers or screams. And so I tend to do a lot more very soft music and very loud music perhaps than some composers. To me, the worst thing is to bore the listener with music that’s kind of namby pamby, or kind of in the middle. So I guess that’s kind of some kind of crater hole for me.

GILMER: We did talk about the fact that you wrote a clarinet concerto for this orchestra with the infamous, famous Larry Combs and it was amazing experience as well.

ROUSE: Yeah, that was a lot of fun.

MALE: This piece will tax the abilities of Chris Martin. How adaptable, or how approachable will the orchestration be for orchestras other than the Chicago Symphony?

ROUSE: Can other orchestras play this piece is basically the question. As my pieces go, this is certainly, it’s demanding, not nearly as demanding as some other works of mine. And, of course, the secret always is to write something that isn’t too too terribly difficult, but it sounds difficult. The listener is wowed by the virtuosity of the music, again, turns out it’s not necessarily quite as hard to play as it sounds. So, which is not to say that this is an easy piece by any extent. I think it’s pretty practical. I think a lot of other orchestras can handle this.

GILMER: I think the worst is when a composer makes something that sounds to us, the audience, just as easy as anything and it’s fiendishly difficult for the orchestra.
ROUSE: Oh, that’s the worst!

GILMER: That’s the worst!

MALE: How much do you use a computer to write?

ROUSE: How much do I use a computer? Not a lot. I’m still an old-fashioned pencil and paper person. It’s not that I have anything against the computer, I’m just technologically challenged. An e-mail is a triumph of computer mastery for me. (laughter) So I don’t use the computer. I just do it the old-fashioned way.

GILMER: So are there sketches for this piece that exist that ended up, as it were, put on a shelf for something else? Do you, kind of keep going straight through or say, alright I’ll take that out and put it over here?

ROUSE: I may do that with ideas. A certain idea may occur to me and I think, well it doesn’t work for this piece so I’ll save it, but I don’t actually shelve a piece, I usually only work on one piece at a time. I start at the beginning and go to the ending and get it off the table and move on to the next…

GILMER: We were also talking that since this work has been completed, you’ve had other works along the way…

ROUSE: Well I wrote a short piece over the summer and into the fall. An eight-minute orchestra piece, almost all my music is orchestral. And now, I’m a couple months into a longer project.

GILMER: So you’ve been in Chicago for rehearsals and so forth. When you go back to your hotel room are you composing or do you wait to get back to your studio and do any work there? I’m always curious.

ROUSE: Yeah. I can think about music, and often think about it all over the place but to actually do the real work, I can pretty much only do that at home.

MALE: Could you speak a little bit about your work with conductors and their interpretation of your music and whether or not you would be open to their suggestions or their interpretations?

ROUSE: Yeah. Working with conductors. Well, now for example, this is my first time working with Mr. van Zweden and it’s been wonderful. He’s terrific. He knows what he’s doing. He knows how to rehearse. He corrects all of the things that I would say something about before I have to say anything and that’s always wonderful for a composer, to know that the conductor knows your piece and is on the same wavelength in terms of how things need to go. I’ve been incredibly fortunate in my life to develop long-
standing relationships with several conductors and then I always know I
don’t even need to say anything to them. They are completely in tune
with what I’m after and that’s always great because you feel as though
there’s a real bond there. Yeah, sure, occasionally, there is the unhappy
experience with a conductor but those are, certainly for me, rare. Those
usually are about the conductor not really being interested. For whatever
reason, he’s been asked to perform a piece he doesn’t really care about and
when the composer gets a sense the conductor just doesn’t care, you know,
that’s obviously not going to be fun. But certainly, in my case, it hasn’t
happened very often so I’ve been lucky.

GILMER: I think that’s also a testament, though, to your craft because you’ve been
able to write down what it is you want to hear. I think, sometimes,
composers have this image and then what they wrote down, what
somebody is following, doesn’t necessarily match. So I really think that’s
your gift of clarity.

ROUSE: Well it’s something I always tell my students, “When you write the music
down, nowadays do it on computer, whatever, imagine that your music is
being played by a bunch of people who haven’t a clue about you and
you’re not going to be there to fix things.” So, in other words, how do you
put down on the page everything that you possibly can, not only being
clear what you want but to make clear what you don’t want. Sometimes, a
composer will write a term like, “Don’t slow down,” because the music
seems to imply that it should be slowing down here so you have a
precautionary “Don’t do it!” “Don’t slow down!” And you want to try to
zero in on the ways that what you’ve written can be misunderstood or
misinterpreted and be sure that your wishes are put on the page as clearly
as possible.

GILMER: I’ve been President more than a few premiers, world premiers like we’re
going to hear tonight, but I’m always reminded of the story of an architect
who says the architect’s worst day is the day the client moves in. Imagine
you have this beautiful, pristine, you have the mounting, you have a
drawing, whatever. It gets built. And finally it’s all ready. Then someone
hangs, you know, a drape in a window that completely changes the façade.
Or it’s a commercial building and you suddenly have, you know, Taco
Bell sign on the front of your beautiful building and I’ve never forgotten
that image. Whenever dealing with a composer, for the same reason, it’s
been an internal for you for a very long time and, with your experience,
you know how to get over that but younger composers, it’s got to be really
challenging.

ROUSE: Well and still, I always tell composers if they can avoid the first rehearsal,
avoid it. Don’t, I mean, you want to hear your piece, you’ve been waiting
all this time to hear your piece, but first rehearsals are usually people
reading through the music the first time and it’s not going to sound terribly
good. And if you think that’s the way the piece sounds, then you think,
Oh My God I’m totally incompetent, my life as I know it is over, this is a
disaster, you can really get frozen like that. So I, it’s not so easy with a
new piece, really you have to be there for the first rehearsal because you
want to be sure that the parts don’t have mistakes and so forth, but, if it’s
not a first performance, I always skip the first rehearsal because I just
know that it’s going to be awful beyond words. (Laughter)

GILMER: That’s true! One more question.

MALE: Could you speak a little bit about how the process of the commission
works for you and who reached out to who, the conversation, and if the
orchestra puts any kind of parameters on you that says we want to
showcase these skills etc…so that, to make our students know, how
commissions work?

ROUSE: Boy, the process of commissioning. There are so many different ways that
they work. In a case like this, an orchestra commission, the orchestra will
decide that they want to ask a given composer, well we’ll say me, to write
a piece. They will either contact me, if I have a close relationship with
that orchestra, a really close re

GILMER: No I think that’s exactly…John Schmidt are you in this room tonight?
Are the Schmidt family here? We have a wonderful board member who,
his family has given money to the endowment to support commissions,
and the Schmidt family in particular, wants to commission works for our
own CSO players as concertos. And so, part, from our point of view, part
of this ongoing dialogue is going to our key players and saying, “Who
would you like to have write a piece for you, what’s your wish list?” And
so sometimes the dialogue is, “I would like Christopher Rouse to do it”
and so we will work, and I’m seeing your publisher sitting right in front of
me, we will work through someone saying, “Does Chris Rouse want to
write a trumpet concerto for Chris Martin?” And sometimes the answer is
no, I already have one, or right now, that’s not what I’m thinking and that’s fine, then we go on to plan B. And, as this attests to, sometimes it’s yeah, that’s a great idea, why not. So it is a journey and it’s a very good question because it’s part of a process and we don’t, I have never put demands on a composer like, it’s gotta be fourteen minutes long and I only want triple winds and please don’t exceed… because I think that gets in the way of the process. I think it’s more fun to let you develop what you want to do.

ROUSE: Sure. Fourteen minutes, right. I think usually they want some sense of a boundary so that I don’t write and hour and a half long trumpet concerto where, you know, lips are bleeding at the end (laughter), so then…

GILMER: We may have a rough approximation but we don’t try to control it to this…

ROUSE: Exactly, it’s not down to the nanosecond.

GILMER: How long is tonight’s piece?

ROUSE: You know I haven’t actually timed it. See, what happens is that I always time the pieces with a metronome at home but metronome timings are never what actually turn out to be, when a piece actually is in a hall and has to breathe, those tempi that seemed exactly right when you were writing, may need to be finessed a bit. Either slowed down or sped up or whatnot. The metronome timing is twenty-one minutes. I’m going to guess it’s probably closer to twenty-three or twenty-four, but I don’t know for sure.

GILMER: And that all has to do with the players and the acoustic that you’re playing in, as well.

ROUSE: Exactly.

GILMER: That’s what you learn when you’re an experienced composer as opposed to the first time out when everybody gets really, really nervous. I think, sorry, I’m watchless tonight… 7:34 would tell me that if you are going to get to your seat, it’s about time. Thank you. Tonight is the real treat and I look forward to hearing your World Premiere and thank you so much Christopher Rouse. (applause)

ROUSE: My pleasure.
SIMEONE: In a brand new concerto for trumpet, composer Christopher Rouse challenges the player to use the instrument in unusual ways.

ROUSE: The movements are meant to show off the instrument. The first movement is kind of rhetorical. The second uses all the mutes I could think of, for not just the soloist but for the orchestral brass as well. The third is the slow movement and tends more towards a tonal harmonic language. And then comes the apocalyptic finale.

SIMEONE: CSO Principal Trumpet Christopher Martin says, "It's eye opening."

MARTIN: At the very end of the piece, it gets very high very quickly, in the last call of Heimdall. And some of the tempi were a little surprising too, really very fast. And scales that we don't normally play as classical players. He used a scale called the octatonic scale, which is alternating half and whole steps. Jazz musicians use them quite often. I feel like learning this piece opened up a different sound world that the trumpet wasn't capable of.

SIMEONE: This concert in December included a world premiere of a new trumpet concerto by American composer, Christopher Rouse. Rouse and CSO Principal Trumpet Christopher Martin introduce the newly commissioned work.

ROUSE: This was a piece that I wrote for Christopher Martin called Heimdall's Trumpet. Heimdall, in Norse mythology, was the God who would blow the trumpet and bring on Ragnarok, which was the Norse Armageddon. So essentially the end of the piece is also the end of the world. The piece is in four movements, and it's only in the last movement that he puts on the mantle of the actual character and the last movement is indeed about kind of the impending doom and the moment in which he blows his trumpet, ending on a high D, and we have one very brief flash of sound and then silence.

MARTIN: It's very dramatic. Mr. Rouse blends expertly the craft and technique of composing with, kind of, the raw energy of almost rock and roll music. Plus he's a big fan of Led Zeppelin, which is one of my favorite bands too. I was hoping for this piece to be a collaborative, conversational score. A real conversation between soloist and orchestra and also the
solo trumpet and the brass section. He's done that beautifully in this piece. The opening is a kind of call and response with solo trumpet playing kind of soft swells and fanfares and calls and those are answered immediately by muted trumpet section. The three trumpets in the orchestra are playing with different mutes and bizarre overlaid rhythms that don't necessarily have anything to do with each other but the effect is this kind of distant echo and it's very exciting. The whole first movement is that way. There is conversation with the winds, a great deal with the strings, and the second movement is very fast, a very fast tempo.

ROUSE: The third is the slow movement and tends toward a more tonal harmonic language than the other movements. And then comes the apocalyptic finale.

MARTIN: The fourth movement is really, really fast. In 6/8 and 9/8 and that kind of sets in kind of thing. Fast trumpet fanfares and quick melodies and then they’re sent all over the orchestra coming back again. It’s kind of a 360-whiplash effect.
APPENDIX D

CHICAGO SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA PROGRAM NOTES FOR _HEIMDALL’S TRUMPET_ BY PHILIP HUSCHER

**PROGRAM**

ONE HUNDRED TWENTY-SECOND SEASON

**Chicago Symphony Orchestra**
**Riccardo Muti** Music Director
**Pierre Boulez** Helen Regenstein Conductor Emeritus
**Yo-Yo Ma** Judson and Joyce Green Creative Consultant

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Thursday, December 20, 2012, at 8:00
Friday, December 21, 2012, at 1:30
Saturday, December 22, 2012, at 8:00

**Jaap van Zweden** Conductor
**Christopher Martin** Trumpet

**Shostakovich**  
_Festive Overture, Op. 96_  
First Chicago Symphony Orchestra subscription concert performances

**Rouse**  
_Heimdall’s Trumpet_  
(In four movements)

CHRISTOPHER MARTIN  
Commissioned for the Chicago Symphony Orchestra by the Edward F. Schmidt Family Commissioning Fund

World premiere

**INTERMISSION**

**Tchaikovsky**  
_Manfred Symphony, Op. 58_  
_Lento lugubre_  
_Vivace con spirto_  
_Andante con moto_  
_Allegro con fuoco_

This program is partially supported by grants from the Illinois Arts Council, a state agency, and the National Endowment for the Arts.
Ragnarök is Armageddon—or Götterdämmerung, the twilight of the gods, in Wagner parlance. It is signaled by the sound of a trumpet. That is the subject of Christopher Rouse’s new work for the Chicago Symphony and its principal trumpet, Christopher Martin. It is Heimdall, the Norse god, who calls the heroes to the field where the last battle will be fought, marking the end of the world of gods and men. In some accounts, his call can be heard throughout the heavens, the earth, and the lower world.

Rouse has long been drawn to weighty subjects. Many of his early works probe the troubled human condition in bleak and unsparing language. “Most of my music deals with pain,” he told a New York Times reporter back in 1992. “If your modus vivendi as a composer,” he continued, “is to explore organizational techniques, you have revealed yourself as an intelligent, rational, Apollonian type of person. If, on the other hand, you’re exposing the wounds of a lifetime and perhaps some kind of embracing view of how you function as part of a wounded species, that makes you more vulnerable.” Even in a later work such as Rapture, the 2000 score that the CSO played in 2006, which reflected a shift toward a more tonal music and attempts to “project a sense of spiritual ecstasy,” Rouse is still grappling with serious, substantive ideas.

Rouse was largely self-taught as a composer when he entered the Oberlin Conservatory. He received a bachelor’s degree there in 1971 and subsequently studied at Cornell University; his teachers include George Crumb and Karel Husa. He has been on the faculty of the Eastman School of Music since 1981. (In 1983, he taught the school’s first course in the history of rock and roll.) From 1986 until

**Christopher Rouse**
Born February 15, 1949, Baltimore, Maryland.

**Heimdall’s Trumpet**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COMPOSED</th>
<th>INSTRUMENTATION</th>
<th>APPROXIMATE PERFORMANCE TIME</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2011–12</td>
<td>three flutes and piccolo, three oboes, three clarinets, three bassoons and contrabassoon, four horns, three trumpets, two bass trumpets, three trombones and tuba, timpani, percussion, harp, strings</td>
<td>22 minutes</td>
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Commissioned for the Chicago Symphony Orchestra by the Edward F. Schmidt Family Commissioning Fund. These are the world premiere performances.
1989, Rouse served as composer-in-residence of the Baltimore Symphony. His Symphony no. 1, written for that orchestra, received the prestigious Kennedy Center Friedheim Award in 1988. Since 1997, he has taught composition at the Juilliard School. This year, he began a two-year appointment as composer-in-residence of the New York Philharmonic.

In 1993, Rouse was awarded the Pulitzer Prize in music for his Trombone Concerto; written in memory of Leonard Bernstein, it quotes from Bernstein’s Kaddish Symphony. Rouse’s sphere of reference is wide and very personal. Iscariot (1989), for chamber orchestra, uses the chorale tune “Es ist genug” that has figured prominently in works by Bach and in Alban Berg’s Violin Concerto. Bonham, scored for eight percussionists, is a tribute to the late John Bonham, drummer of Led Zeppelin. His Cello Concerto incorporates a song by William Schuman and Arnalta’s lullaby from Monteverdi’s The Coronation of Poppea, and it quotes music by Stephen Albert and Andrzej Panufnik, whose deaths partly inspired the work. Der gerettete Alberich (Alberich saved), which was premiered in 1998, is a fantasy for percussion and orchestra on themes by Wagner. Heindall’s Trumpet is the latest of Rouse’s scores inspired by myth, including Gorgon and Phaeton, two orchestral works from the 1980s, and Morpheus, a solo cello piece—all based on Ancient Greek mythology. Der gerettete Alberich (Alberich saved), a fantasy for percussion and orchestra on themes by Wagner that was premiered in 1998, brings us closer to the Norse legends that generated Heindall’s Trumpet.

In recent years, Rouse has been particularly drawn to writing works for a solo instrument with orchestra, but these scores are not pure, abstract concertos in the classical sense. Kabir Padavali is an orchestral song cycle with texts by the fifteenth-century Indian mystic poet Kabir; Seeing, a piano concerto that is also a meditation on madness as seen in the tragic lives of Robert Schumann and the rock guitarist-songwriter Skip Spence; and Concert de Gaudi, a guitar concerto inspired by the Spanish architect Antoni Gaudi. Rouse’s preoccupation with concertos and concerto-like works spans thirty years, from his Violin Concerto of 1991 through a series of orchestral works featuring solo trombone, cello, flute, percussion, piano, guitar, oboe, and clarinet—former CSO principal clarinet Larry Combs and the Orchestra gave the world premiere of the Clarinet Concerto here in 2001—and now, with this new work for the Chicago Symphony, the trumpet.
This kind of interaction is evident from the beginning of the work, which unfolds as a kind of call and response between the solo trumpet and first the brass section, and then the winds. Despite the complexity and importance of the orchestral writing through the four-movement work, the solo trumpet inevitably has the most challenging role to play, one that not only stretches the trumpet’s expressivity, but, quite literally, its range as well. At the end of the third movement, Rouse writes the lowest fundamental C on the instrument—on the piano it’s the note one octave up from the bottom, down in the trombone’s register. (Lying in what trumpeters call the pedal range, this note doesn’t appear in any of the standard literature, and, as Martin notes, it is normally played only in the privacy of the practice room.)

Rouse’s second movement uses octatonic scales (built out of eight rather than seven notes), which are more common to jazz than orchestral music (Martin remembers practicing them when he studied jazz at Eastman).

The ending of Heimdall’s Trumpet, where myth and music become one, is, appropriately, high drama. A passage for solo trumpet, in cadenza-like phrases, and two bass trumpets—an instrument one rarely hears—drives the piece toward the moment of Heimdall’s fateful call, the moment of Ragnarök. The last expression marking that Rouse writes, over the trumpet’s final phrase, is stentoreo, after Stentor, the mythological figure who was known for his booming voice.

Christopher Rouse offers these comments about Heimdall’s Trumpet:

Cast in four movements, the title of the piece refers properly to the finale, which attempts in a general way to depict these mythological events as I imagine them. The onset of Ragnarök occurs only at the very end of the work, in a very short orchestral fortissimo outburst followed by an extended silence. The first movement is declamatory in nature and gives way to a whirlwind scherzo that utilizes a variety of mutes for both the soloist and the orchestral brass section. The third movement is a largo that swings like a pendulum between sections of substantive dissonance and straightforward consonance. The aforementioned finale, more specifically dramatic and programmatic in nature, returns to the more aggressive world of the first movement. The solo trumpet part requires much of the player, who must possess enormous technical prowess, including the ability to produce pedal tones at some length.

—Phillip Huscher
APPENDIX E

SCORE OF *HEIMDALL'S TRUMPET* BY CHRISTOPHER ROUSE

CHRISTOPHER ROUSE

*HEIMDALL'S TRUMPET*

FOR SOLO TRUMPET AND ORCHESTRA

Commissioned for the Chicago Symphony Orchestra,
Riccardo Muti, Music Director,
by the Edward F. Schmidt Family Commissioning Fund.

HENDON MUSIC

BOOSEY & HAWKES
INSTRUMENTATION

3 Flutes (3rd doubling on Piccolo)
3 Oboes
3 B♭ Clarinets
3 Bassoons (3rd doubling on Contrabassoon)

4 F Horns
3 C Trumpets
3 Trombones
Tuba

Timpani
3 Percussion
(chinese cymbal, xylophone, anvil, 2 snare drums,
cymbals, hammer, tenor drum, tam-tam,
glockenspiel, suspended cymbal, metal plate, bass drum,
chimes, field drum, bongos, gong)

Harp

Solo C Trumpet

Strings

Duration: ca. 21 minutes
APPENDIX F

COMPREHENSIVE LIST OF COMPOSITIONS BY CHRISTOPHER ROUSE
(Listed Alphabetically)

*Artemis* (1998)
For Brass Quintet

First performance: 17 October 1988, Bartlett Chapel, Yale University, New Haven, Connecticut by The Brass Ring

Duration: 4:00
Publisher: Boosey & Hawkes

*Bonham* (1988)
For eight percussionists

First performance: April 1989, Boston, Massachusetts by the New England Conservatory of Music Percussion Ensemble conducted by Frank Epstein

Duration: 6:00
Publisher: Boosey & Hawkes

*Bump* (1985)
For Orchestra
Movement III of *Phantasmata* (1981/85)

First performance: 25 October 1986, Powell Symphony Hall, Saint Louis, Missouri by the Saint Louis Symphony Orchestra conducted by Leonard Slatkin

Duration: 8:00
Publisher: Boosey & Hawkes

*Clarinet Concerto* (2001)
For Solo Clarinet and Orchestra
Commissioned for Larry Combs by the Hanson Institute for American Music at the Eastman School of Music

First performance: 17 May 2001, Orchestra Hall, Chicago, Illinois by Larry Combs, clarinet and the Chicago Symphony Orchestra conducted by Christoph Eschenbach

Duration: 19:00
Publisher: Boosey & Hawkes
**Compline** (1996)
For flute, clarinet, harp, and string quartet

First performance: 9 December 1996, Alice Tully Hall, New York, New York by the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center

Duration: 16:00
Publisher: Boosey & Hawkes

**Concert de Gaudí** (1999)
For Solo Guitar and Orchestra
Joint commission for Sharon Isbin from the Norddeutsche Rundfunk and the Dallas Symphony Orchestra. Additional funding provided by Richard and Judy Nordlof, to whom the work is dedicated

First performance: 2 January 2000, Hamburg, Germany by Sharon Isbin, guitar and the Norddeutscher Rundfunk Orchester conducted by Christoph Eschenbach

Duration: 25:00
Publisher: Boosey & Hawkes

**Concerto for Orchestra** (2008)
For Orchestra

First performance: 1 August 2008, Cabrillo Festival of Contemporary Music, Santa Cruz Civic Auditorium, Santa Cruz, California by the Cabrillo Festival Orchestra conducted by Marin Alsop

Duration: 23:00
Publisher: Boosey & Hawkes

**Concerto per Corde** (1990)
For string orchestra


Duration: 27:00
Publisher: Boosey & Hawkes

**Envoi** (1995)
For Orchestra

First performance: 9 May 1996, Symphony Hall, Atlanta, Georgia by the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra conducted by Yoel Levi
Duration: 20:00
Publisher: Boosey & Hawkes

Flute Concerto (1993)
For Solo Flute and Orchestra

First performance: 27 October 1994, Orchestra Hall, Detroit, Michigan by Carol Wincenc, flute and the Detroit Symphony Orchestra conducted by Hans Vonk

Duration: 28:00
Publisher: Boosey & Hawkes

Friandises (2005)
For Orchestra
Joint commission from the New York City Ballet and The Juilliard School

First performance: 10 February 2006, New York State Theater, Lincoln Center, New York, New York by the New York City Ballet, choreography by Peter Martins

Duration: 25:00
Publisher: Boosey & Hawkes

Der gerettete Alberich (1997)
For Solo Percussion and Orchestra
Commissioned for and dedicated to Evelyn Glennie by a commissioning consortium consisting of The London Symphony Orchestra, The Cleveland Orchestra, The Philadelphia Orchestra, and The Baltimore Symphony Orchestra

First performance:

Duration: 22:00
Publisher: Boosey & Hawkes

Gorgon (1984)
For Orchestra
Commissioned by the Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra

First performance: 15 November 1984 by the Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by David Zinman

Duration: 16:00
Publisher: Helicon Music Corporation
**Heimdall’s Trumpet** (2011)
For Solo Trumpet and Orchestra
Commissioned for the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Riccardo Muti, Music Director, by the Edward F. Schmidt Family Commissioning Fund

First performance: 20 December 2012, Orchestra Hall, Chicago, Illinois by Christopher Martin, trumpet and the Chicago Symphony Orchestra conducted by Jaap van Zweden

Duration: 21:00
Publisher: Boosey & Hawkes

**The Infernal Machine** (1981)
For orchestra
Movement II of *Phantasmata* (1981/85)
Composed for the University of Michigan Symphony Orchestra

First performance: 9 May 1981, Evian Festival, France by the University of Michigan Symphony Orchestra conducted by Gustav Meier

Duration: 5:00
Publisher: Helicon Music Corporation

**Iscariot** (1989)
For chamber orchestra

First performance: 27 October 1989, Ordway Music Theatre, Saint Paul, Minnesota by the Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra conducted by John Adams

Duration: 4:00
Publisher: Boosey & Hawkes

**Kabir Padavali** (1997-98)
For Soprano and Orchestra

First performance: January 1999 by Dawn Upshaw and the Minnesota Orchestra conducted by David Zinman

Duration: 28:00
Publisher: Boosey & Hawkes

**Karolju** (1990)
For SATB Chorus and Orchestra

First performance: 7 November 1991 by the Baltimore Symphony and Chorus conducted by David Zinman
Ku-Ku Ilimoku (1978)
For four percussionists
First performance:

Duration: 27:00
Publisher: Boosey & Hawkes

Lares Hercii (1983)
For Violin and Harpsichord
Composed for Charles Castleman (violin) and Barbara Harbach (harpsichord)
First performance: 15 October 1985 by Charles Castleman (violin) and Arthur Haas (harpsichord)

Duration: 5:00
Publisher: Helicon Music Corporation

Little Gorgon (1986)
For Solo Piano
First performance:

Duration: 2:00
Publisher: Helicon Music Corporation

Morpheus (1975)
For Solo Cello
Composed for Carey Miller
First performance: 10 November 1983 in New York, New York by Chris Finckel of the Atlantic Quartet, cello

Duration: 8:00
Publisher: Helicon Music Corporation

The Nevill Feast (2003)
For Orchestra
Commissioned by the Boston Pops Orchestra

First performance: 7 May 2003 by The Boston Pops Orchestra conducted by Keith Lockhart
Duration: 8:00  
Publisher: Boosey & Hawkes

**Oboe Concerto** (2004)  
For Solo Oboe and Orchestra  
Commissioned by the Minnesota Orchestra

First performance: 5 February 2009, Orchestra Hall, Minneapolis, Minnesota by Basil Reeve, oboe and the Minnesota Orchestra conducted by Osmo Vänskä

Duration: 20:00  
Publisher: Boosey & Hawkes

**Odna Zhizn** (2009)  
For Orchestra

First performance: 10 February 2010, Avery Fisher Hall, New York, New York by the New York Philharmonic conducted by Alan Gilbert

Duration: 15:00  
Publisher: Boosey & Hawkes

**Ogoun Badagris** (1976)  
For five percussionists

First performance:

Duration: 5:00  
Publisher: Helicon Music Corporation

**Phaethon** (1986)  
For Orchestra

First performance: 8 January 1987, Academy of Music, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania by the Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Riccardo Muti

Duration: 7:00  
Publisher: Boosey & Hawkes

**Phantasmata** (1981/85)  
For Orchestra

First performance (complete): 25 October 1986, Powell Symphony Hall, Saint Louis, Missouri by the Saint Louis Symphony Orchestra conducted by Leonard Slatkin
Duration: 18:00
Publisher: Boosey & Hawkes

**Prospero’s Rooms** (2012)
For Orchestra

First performance: 17 April 2013, Avery Fisher Hall, New York, New York by the New York Philharmonic conducted by Alan Gilbert

Duration: 8:00
Publisher: Boosey & Hawkes

**Rapture** (2000)
For Orchestra

First performance: 5 May 2000, Heinz Hall, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania by the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra conducted by Mariss Jansons

Duration: 11:00
Publisher: Boosey & Hawkes

**Rapturedlux** (2001)
For Cello Ensemble
Commissioned by the Royal Northern College of Music Manchester International Cello Festival

First performance: 5 May 2001, Royal Northern College of Music in Manchester, England by the Cellists of the Royal Northern College of Music in Manchester

Duration: 5:00
Publisher: Boosey & Hawkes

**Requiem** (2007)
For Bass-Baritone Solo, SATB Chorus, Children’s Chorus, and Orchestra
Commissioned by Solo Dei Gloria, Inc.

First performance: 25 March 2007, Los Angeles Master Chorale and the Master Chorale Orchestra, baritone Sanford Sylvan, conducted by Grant Gershon

Duration: 90:00
Publisher: Boosey & Hawkes

**Ricordanza** (1995)
For Solo Cello
First performance:
Duration: 5:00
Publisher: Boosey & Hawkes

Rotae Passionis (1982)
For Orchestra
Commissioned by the Boston Musica Viva

First performance: 8 April 1983, Boston, Massachusetts conducted by Richard Pittman

Duration: 18:00
Publisher: Helicon Music Corporation

Seeing (1998)
For Solo Piano and Orchestra
Commissioned for Emanuel Ax and the New York Philharmonic by Lillian Barbash

First performance:
Duration: 28:00
Publisher: Boosey & Hawkes

String Quartet No. 1 (1982)
For String Quartet
Composed for the Casella Quartet

First performance:
Duration: 17:00
Publisher: Helicon Music Corporation

String Quartet No. 2 (1988)
For String Quartet

First performance: July 1988, Aspen Music Festival by The Cleveland Quartet

Duration: 24:00
Publisher: Boosey & Hawkes

String Quartet No. 3 (2009)
For String Quartet
Composed for and dedicated to The Calder Quartet
First performance:

Duration: 20:00
Publisher: Boosey & Hawkes

*Symphony No. 1* (1986)
For Orchestra

First performance: 21 January 1988, Meyerhoff Symphony Hall, Baltimore, Maryland by the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra conducted by David Zinman

Duration: 27:00
Publisher: Boosey & Hawkes

*Symphony No. 2* (1994)
For Orchestra

First performance: 4 March 1995, Jones Hall, Houston, Texas by the Houston Symphony Orchestra conducted by Christoph Eschenbach

Duration: 25:00
Publisher: Boosey & Hawkes

*Symphony No. 3* (2011)
For Orchestra

First performance:

Duration: 25:00
Publisher: Boosey & Hawkes

*Trombone Concerto* (1991)
For Solo Trombone and Orchestra
Awarded 1993 Pulitzer Prize for Music


*Valentine* (1996)
For Solo Flute

First performance: 14 February 1996, Merkin Concert Hall, New York, New York by Carol Wincenc, flute

Duration: 2:00
Publisher: Boosey & Hawkes

*Violin Concerto* (1991)
For Solo Violin and Orchestra


Duration: 22:00
Publisher: Boosey & Hawkes

*Violoncello Concerto* (1992-93)
For Solo Cello and Orchestra

First performance: 26 January 1994, Dorothy Chandler Pavilion, Los Angeles, California by Yo-Yo Ma, violoncello and the Los Angeles Philharmonic conducted by David Zinman

*Wolf Rounds* (2007)
For Wind Ensemble
Commissioned by the Frost Wind Ensemble of the University of Miami

First performance: 29 March 2007, Carnegie Hall, New York, New York by the Frost Wind Ensemble conducted by Gary Green

Duration: 17:00
Publisher: Boosey & Hawkes
APPENDIX G

COMPREHENSIVE LIST OF SOLO APPEARANCES BY CHRISTOPHER MARTIN WITH THE CHICAGO SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA
(Listed Chronologically)

August 9, 2006

BACH Brandenburg Concerto No. 2 in F Major, BWV 1047
Jaime Laredo, conductor
Chicago Symphony Orchestra
Martin Theatre, Ravinia Festival, Highland Park

November 14, 15, 17, & 20, 2007

HAYDN Trumpet Concerto in E-flat Major
Nicholas Kraemer, conductor
Chicago Symphony Orchestra
Orchestra Hall, Chicago

November 16, 2007

HAYDN Trumpet Concerto in E-flat Major
Nicholas Kraemer, conductor
Chicago Symphony Orchestra
Edman Memorial Chapel, Wheaton College, Wheaton

April 1, 2, 3, & 7, 2009

BACH Brandenburg Concerto No. 2 in F Major, BWV 1047
(performed without conductor)
August 5, 2009

SHOSTAKOVICH *Concerto for Piano, Strings, and Trumpet in C Minor, Op. 35*

Joyce Yang, piano

James Conlon, conductor

Chicago Symphony Orchestra

Pavilion, Ravinia Festival, Highland Park

November 4, 5, & 6, 2010

COPLAND *Quiet City*

Scott Hostetler, english horn

Michael Tilson Thomas, conductor

Chicago Symphony Orchestra

Orchestra Hall, Chicago

May 19, 20, 21, & 24, 2011

JOLIVET *Concertino for Trumpet*

TOMASI *Trumpet Concerto*

Ludovic Morlot, conductor

Chicago Symphony Orchestra

Orchestra Hall, Chicago
March 22 & 24, 2012

SHOSTAKOVICH *Concerto for Piano, Strings, and Trumpet in C Minor, Op. 35*

Marc-André Hamelin, piano
Kirill Petrenko, conductor
Chicago Symphony Orchestra
Orchestra Hall, Chicago

December 20, 21, & 22, 2012

ROUSE *Heimdall's Trumpet*

Jaap van Zweden, conductor
Chicago Symphony Orchestra
Orchestra Hall, Chicago
SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY


_________. Pre-Concert Conversation with Chicago Symphony Orchestra Vice President for Artistic Planning and Audience Development Martha Gilmer, 21 December 2013. Tape Recording. Chicago, Illinois.

