

# **Percy Grainger's *Australian Up-Country Tune*: A Brief Guide for Conductors, Players and Listeners**

**David Goza**

**Director of Orchestral Activities, the University of Arkansas**

This is a Glenn Cliffe Bainum setting of a piece for wordless chorus, first sung at Grainger's wedding to Ella Viola Strom in August, 1928. It is therefore to be understood primarily as a love song, perhaps Grainger's equivalent of Wagner's *Siegfried Idyll*. The piece is a mere twenty-nine measures in length, but it is musically and psychologically rich for its size.

In the analysis that follows, all pitch references are to sounding pitches.

The upbeat is counted in the Schirmer edition as measure 1.

## **Phrase Analysis**

Although the *Up-Country Tune* is not overtly sectional, it may be thought of as lying in three main parts, with each part demonstrating more-or-less regular phrase divisions:

### **I Section A (mm. 1–12): a compound question with affirmative answer**

Phrase 1 (mm. 1–8): a series of three musical questions, united by coordinating conjunctions, synthesizing one compound question (e.g. "Do you love me, and will you marry me, and will you bear my child?").

Question 1 (mm. 1–3): The F# in first and second clarinets, alto clarinet, and tenor saxophone, is the (chromatic) coordinating conjunction. On paper, this appears to be a three-bar phrase because of the peculiarity of numbering in the score; it is actually two measures long.

Question 2 (mm. 4, 5): The D at the end of measure 5, in the melodic instruments, is the (diatonic) coordinating conjunction.

Question 3 (mm. 6–8): This is the irregular-metered one (as though the questioning has become more intense and urgent). In terms of beats, the length is the same as that of Questions 1 and 2.

Phrase 2 (mm. 9–12): The Answering Codetta, motivically related to Question 1, but metrically related to Question 3. The first bassoon line is particularly fine. At the downbeat of measure 9 the English horn takes over from the flutes, extending their F almost to the cadence.

In this opening section, note the additive process: a stark unison on the fermata upbeat, the four-part harmony beginning on the downbeat (m. 2), voiced in the upper clarinets played in the *chalmereau*; the paced addition of the remaining three voices of the saxophone choir in measures 5 and 6; the introduction of the lower double reeds and bass clarinet in measure 9. The dynamics are different for each subphrase: Question 1 is played *mp* with a rising and falling nuance; Question 2 employs a general *crescendo*; Question 3 covers a wide dynamic range of *f/mf* to *pp*. The Answering Codetta employs the full dynamic range of Question 3. A graceful "natural rhythm" occurs twice in the opening section, at the cadential points of the complex question and of its answer. Grainger's great genius was to insist on this naive musical gesture twice more: the stroke

is particularly daring after the great climax of measure 27 and the ravishing harmonies which accompany it.

## **II Section B (mm. 13–20): a chorale and a reiterated answer**

Phrase 1 (mm. 13–16) is a four-part chorale in a pared-down version of the full band: only the euphoniums are unrepresented. Over this chorale is played a wave-like *obligato* melody (in flutes, first oboe, first clarinet, first cornet – the latter marked *pp* in contrast to the woodwinds' *mf*). Toward the end of this phrase, the cornet player must rise to a position of dynamic prominence equal to that of the woodwinds. This phrase is divisible into an assertion and a question:

Assertion (mm. 13, 14): Note that the cornet player *does not* crescendo on the cadence note.

Question (mm. 15, 16): The cadence is on A minor, the first truly poignant moment in the piece: it must not be hurried through.

Phrase 2 (mm. 17–21) is exactly the Answering Codetta from Section A, with the horns and baritone called in to reinforce the melody. On the slight fermata bar, the timpanist reinforces the *crescendo* and pushes the music effectively into the final section.

## **III Section C (mm. 21–29): again the chorale, with a passionate affirmative answer**

Phrase 1 (mm. 21–24): The closing section begins with the Chorale + *obligato* in a fuller scoring and with the dynamic indications augmented by one degree. The use of the sustaining second cornet voice within the *obligato* is notable. The dynamic nuance indications clearly call for a distinction to be made between this four-measure phrase (note the unqualified *diminuendo* in most parts and the new amplitude level in some, at the dotted-figure pickup in m. 24), and the remaining five measures.

Phrase 2 (mm. 25–29): Instead of the expected Answering Codetta (cf. mm. 13–20), there comes an extension of the question posed by the *obligato*; the melody is quickly transformed (mm. 25, 26) into a reminiscence of the Answering Codetta, but without its reassuring warmth. What is offered instead is a final passionate surge of music (mm. 27–29): the heart is opened and every emotion poured out. In these three amazing bars, a perfectly standard ii–V–I cadence is extended by secondary dominants, chromatic passing tones and strange *appoggiaturas*; the final (sub)climax is on a chord lying outside the purview of traditional Western music, functioning as a dominant but riddled with unconventional elements (the persistent F, the unaccounted-for D<sub>5</sub>). The finishing employment of the *semplice* cadence figure is Grainger's most inspired stroke.

## **Errata**

### **I Full Score**

- m. 5 The slurs in clarinets 1, 2 and 4 and alto clarinet are incorrect; they should match that of the tenor saxophone. Clarinets 2 and 3 are missing the short hairpin that is found in the other parts.
- m. 10 A slur should extend through this bar in the baritone saxophone part.
- m. 12 The English horn and bassoon parts are missing a hairpin.

- m. 13 A hairpin is missing in bassoon parts. The tenor saxophone part is tied from the previous measure.
- m. 15 The slur is missing from the 1st oboe part.
- m. 16 The slur in the 2nd bassoon part is misprinted. It should match the one in the bass clarinet part.
- m. 17 A slur is missing in the 1st bassoon part. 1st and 2nd clarinets and the alto saxophones are missing a hairpin. The baritone saxophone part should be slurred between the F# and D.
- m. 19 In the 4th clarinet part, the slur extends to the first D only. The 2nd alto saxophone part is slurred from the A to the D.
- m. 20 Timpani should have a slight fermata indication on beat 2.
- m. 21 The 1st and 2nd bassoons slur from beat 3 through the following bar. The alto clarinet and tenor saxophone parts should be likewise edited. The 3rd trombone should slur from the D into the next bar, as in measure 13.
- m. 22 Slurs are missing in bassoon parts (see above). The slurs in the 1st oboe and all clarinet parts should be extended to match the slur in the 1st cornet part.
- m. 23 The 2nd oboe and English horn must slur from the second half of this bar into the following measure, as in the 1st alto saxophone part. The two half notes in the 1st bassoon part should be connected with a slur. The horns are missing complementary hairpins in this measure and the measure following. The 3rd trombone and tuba must slur from the D into the next bar, as in m.15. The baritone should slur this entire measure into the A of bar 24.
- m. 24 The slur in the 1st alto saxophone should include the C#. A hairpin is missing in the 1st and 2nd horn parts. The 2nd cornet part should probably include a diminishing hairpin.
- m. 25 The alto clarinet part should be slurred into the following measure, as in the 1st bassoon part.
- m. 26 There is an extraneous hairpin in the English horn part. The slur in the 2nd bassoon should extend to the C (c.f. bass clarinet). The designation "4 players" in the 1st cornet part at measure 26 actually applies to the 2nd and 3rd cornets (one and two players each, respectively), who should enter on that G half note and *crescendo*. The score should be amended accordingly.
- m. 27 The 2nd oboe, English horn and 2nd bassoon should slur across the barline. The 3rd and 4th horns should slur to beat 3.
- m. 28 The 4th horn is missing an eighth rest at the end of the measure. The string bass *diminuendo* should end *piano*.

## II Parts

**1st Flute, 2nd Flute:** In measure 3 the hairpin *diminuendo* is printed one beat too soon: it should be from the D in measure 3 to the F in measure 4. In measure 22, slur the entire bar. The slur in measure 26 should be shortened to include the first two beats only (the half-note F is tongued). In

measure 27, the *fortissimo* is reached on the third beat.

**1st Oboe:** In measure 22, slur the entire bar. In measure 27, extend the *crescendo* all the way to the third beat.

**2nd Oboe:** In measure 22, slur the entire bar. In measure 23, slur from the second F into the following bar.

**English Horn:** In measures 21 and 23, begin the *crescendo* hairpin on beat 2. Slur from the C in measure 23, into the following measure. In measure 27 the *crescendo* goes all the way to beat 3.

**1st Bassoon:** In measure 5 the baritone saxophone cue should be an undotted half note, slurred into the following bar. In measure 17, slur as in measure 9 and *crescendo* from beat 1. In measures 21 and 23, begin the *crescendo* hairpin on beat 2. In measure 25, start the *crescendo* one-half beat earlier than printed.

**2nd Bassoon:** In measure 5, the baritone saxophone cue should be an undotted half note, slurred into the following bar. The diminishing hairpin in measure 9 extends into measure 10, beat 4. In measures 21 and 23, begin the *crescendo* hairpin on beat 2.

**1st Clarinet:** In measures 4, 9, 21, 23 and 25, begin the *crescendo* on beat 2. Slur all of measure 22.

**2nd Clarinet:** In measures 4, 9, 21, 23 and 25, begin the *crescendo* on beat 2. Slur all of measure 22. In measure 28, the *piano* is reached on beat 2.

**3rd Clarinet:** In measures 21, 23 and 25, begin the *crescendo* on beat 2.

**4th Clarinet:** In measure 5, slur the dotted figure into the D. In measure 22, extend the slur to cover the entire bar. In measure 28, shorten the slur to take in the notes through the E $\flat$ ; the C is separate.

**Alto Clarinet:** In measure 2, the *crescendo* starts on beat 2. The slur in measure 4 should include the entire bar.

**Bass Clarinet:** In the tenor saxophone cue, break the second slur in measure 5 after the dotted quarter note. In measure 25, slur to the quarter note.

**E $\flat$  Contrabass Clarinet:** Measure 21 is a return to 4/4 time.

**Alto Saxophone I:** In measure 12, add a *crescendo* hairpin. In measure 17, remove the dot from the second quarter note. In measure 18, make the diminishing hairpin start a little sooner than printed, as in measure 10.

**Alto Saxophone II:** In measure 16 the last note is *piano*. In measure 28 the first quarter note should be F $\sharp$  not A. The last measure should contain only the whole rest (not the whole note). The whole rest should include a fermata.

**Tenor Saxophone:** In measure 2 the second note is a quarter note. In measures 4 and 13, begin the *crescendo* on beat 2. In measure 17, begin the *diminuendo* sooner than printed, as in measure 10. In measure 21, slur from the B to the F $\sharp$  in the following bar.

**1st Cornet:** Begin the *crescendi* in measures 13, 15, 21, 23 and 25 on beat 2.

**2nd and 3rd Cornets:** In measure 26, the half note at the end of the bar should not be a cue: you are supposed to play it, with a *crescendo* from *piano*.

**1st Horn:** In measure 3, the tenor saxophone cue should include a slur from D to D#. In measure 8 the D should be slurred into the following bar. In measure 11 the slur begins on G. There is a *crescendo* in bar 12. In measures 13 and 15, begin the *crescendo* on beat 2. Tongue the first note of measure 22. In measure 27 the *crescendo* is all the way to beat 3.

**2nd Horn:** In measure 6, the tenor saxophone cue should include a slur that takes in all of the notes. There should be a slur from the D in measure 9, into the following bar. In measure 12 there is a *crescendo*. In measure 15, begin the *crescendo* earlier than printed, as in bar 13. Tongue the first note of measure 22. In measure 27 the *crescendo* is all the way to beat 3.

**3rd Horn:** The tenor saxophone cue in measure 8 should include a slur from the D into the following bar. There should be a *crescendo* in measure 12. In bar 13 the *crescendo* should begin on beat 2. The dynamic indications *p* and *f* should be removed from measures 23 and 24.

**4th Horn:** In measure 28 the G quarter note should have a fermata.

**1st Trombone:** The tenor saxophone cue in measure 5 should include a slur from the second C into the baritone saxophone cue. The 1st bassoon cue at measure 9 is missing a slur from the C to the F; so also in measure 17. Measures 12 and 20 should have *crescendi*. The 3rd trombone cue at bar 22 should include a slur from the " into the following measure. The bassoon cue right before your first entrance (measure 26) should include a *crescendo*. The *crescendo* in bar 27 should go all the way to the third beat. The slur in measure 28 should include the entire bar.

**2nd Trombone:** The tenor saxophone cue in measure 5 should include a slur from the second C into the baritone saxophone cue. Measures 12 and 20 should have *crescendi*. In measures 21 and 23, there should be a slur from the D into the following bar; a *diminuendo* is missing from bar 24. The bassoon cue in measure 26 should include a *crescendo*.

**3rd Trombone:** The tenor saxophone cue in measure 5 should include a slur from the second C into the baritone saxophone cue. Measures 12 and 20 should have *crescendi*. In measures 13 and 15, begin the *crescendo* on beat 2. In measure 16 the second eighth note should be F not E. In measures 21 and 23, slur from the D into the following bar, as in measures 13 and 15. The bassoon cue in measure 26 should include a *crescendo*.

**Treble Clef Baritone:** In measure 8 there should be a slur in the tenor saxophone cue that connects the A to the first beat of the following bar. There should be a *crescendo* in measure 12. The third trombone cue in measure 13 should include a slur from E into the following bar.

**Bass Clef Baritone:** In measure 8 there should be a slur in the tenor saxophone cue that connects the G to the first beat of the following bar. There should be a *crescendo* in measure 12. The third trombone cue in measures 15 and 16 should include a slur that reaches from the D half note to the A quarter note. The *crescendo* in measure 17 should begin on beat 2.

**Tuba:** The 2nd bassoon cue in measure 12 is missing a *crescendo*; so also in measure 20. In measures 13 and 15 the *crescendo* should begin on beat 2. In measure 23, slur from the D into the following bar.

**String Bass:** In measures 9 and 17, the 2nd bassoon cue should include a slur into the following bar. Measures 12 and 21 should have a *crescendo*. In measure 13, begin the *crescendo* on beat 2. The D in measure 15 should be slurred into the following measure.

**Timpani:** The clarinet cue should include a *crescendo* in measure 9 and *diminuendo* in measure 11, and a *mezzo forte, crescendo* in measure 13. Bar 17 is *piano*. The fermata at measure 20 is “slight.” There are rising and falling nuances in measures 25 and 26 and a great *crescendo* in measure 27 to a *fortissimo* on beat 3.

### Suggestions to Performers

**Flutes:** In the opening measures, play in a slightly rolled-out position in order to keep the pitch up to that of the clarinets. Stagger the breathing to make a fine legato throughout this opening, but take care to do justice to the articulations. Play the dotted figure in measure 5 *poco grazioso*. Stress the first eighth note in measure 6: it is an *appoggiatura*. Take care to finish this phrase in tune. In measures 13–16 do your best to outblow the cornet player, but stay in tune with him. From measure 21 to the end, carefully tune your unisons and take Grainger’s dynamic nuances seriously. Don’t forget to roll out again in the last two bars. Gradually take away your vibrato at the end.

**Clarinets:** Start the fermata upbeat (measure 1) without tonguing. When playing softly in the *chalmereau* and in the throat, you will go sharp unless you do something to prevent it. Keep the chin down and try to cover the tip of the reed a little more than usual. Firsts and seconds, make the final eighth notes of measures 3 and 5 very expressive and intentional, noting that the first of them is in *diminuendo* and the other in *crescendo*. The third and fourth clarinet parts are particularly important in the opening section; play them with a nice, full tone. Fourth clarinets, play most expressively in measures 9 and 17; thirds, emphasize the written E in measure 11 and again in measure 19. Second clarinets, the written A $\sharp$  in measure 27 is a chromatic *appoggiatura* that deserves special attention. Clarinets, don’t allow yourselves to go sharp at the end!

**Alto Saxophones:** Remember at all times the difficulties associated with playing in D major: the sharp octave D, the flat open C $\sharp$ , the sharp low G. Take care of them at all times. Don’t take “NO” for an answer from inanimate objects. Second alto saxophone, the F $\sharp$  in measure 27 is a chromatic *appoggiatura*. Stress it.

**Tenor Saxophone:** You have the truest statement of the melody at the beginning: the first clarinet’s line has been adjusted for a shorter tube length, so *make sure* your low D speaks in measure 3.

**First Cornet:** Play your line at **13** like a promise of things to come: let the woodwinds dominate at this point, and add just a little color to their sound. However, in measure 15, make a bigger *crescendo* than they do so as to rise to meet them in measure 16. Do not get louder at the end of bar 14, even though the woodwinds do; *do* get louder at the end of measure 22. Make a **mighty** *crescendo* through measure 27.

**Second and Third Cornets:** Keep your instruments warm while you count all those rests. At the second cornet entrance from measure 21, play exactly the dynamic nuances Grainger has given you: they are very different from those in the first cornet part. Make a **mighty** *crescendo* through measure 27.

**Horns:** Note the huge dynamic changes in measures 15 and 16. Make a **mighty** *crescendo* through measure 27.

**Trombones:** Make as *legato* a third trombone sound as possible from measure 13. First and second players, keep your instruments warm while you count all those rests. Make a **mighty** *crescendo* through measure 27.

**Tubas:** The octave drop in measure 28 must be very dramatic.

**Timpani:** Play measures 20 and 21 like a flower opening its petals. Play the last two bars like a distant hint of rain.

Copyright 2006 by David Goza, Director of Orchestral Activities, the University of Arkansas.  
All rights reserved.