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## Ann Southam's Solo Piano Music: A Performance Guide

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Doctor of Musical Arts degree in Music

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## **Abstract**

Ann Southam (1937-2010) is one of Canada's greatest contemporary composers. Best-known for her minimalist music, Southam composed twelve-tone, minimalist, jazz, and electroacoustic music for a variety of mediums including orchestral, chamber, and solo instrument. A significant portion of her creative output is for solo piano and this monograph is the first study of these works. This project demonstrates her wide-ranging approach to composition while also focusing on her minimalist music. It promotes Southam's music and emphasizes her significance as a contemporary Canadian composer. This monograph can be used by performers, scholars, composers and teachers to deepen their understanding of Southam and her music which will in turn foster well-informed performances of her solo piano music. This broad project is meant to enhance the approachability of Southam's music while also acting as a foundation on which further research can develop.

## **Keywords**

Ann Southam, Canadian Music, Canada, Contemporary Classical Music, Piano, Solo  
Piano Music, 20th Century Composition, 21st Century Composition, Twelve-Tone,  
Minimalism, Performance, Analysis, Performance Guide, *Glass Houses*, *Rivers*

## **Summary for Lay Audience**

Ann Southam (1937-2010) is one of Canada's greatest contemporary composers. She is best-known for her minimalist music. Minimalism is a term used to describe music that intentionally uses reduced musical forces. It is often characterized by repeated patterns that gradually change, but the term can also describe music that is pared-down and sparse. Southam also composed twelve-tone music (music that is not based on the major or minor scale), jazz style works, and early electronic music. Most of her music was written for solo piano and this monograph is the first study of those works. This project demonstrates her wide-ranging approach to composition while also focusing on her minimalist music. It promotes Southam's music and emphasizes her significance as a contemporary Canadian composer. Musicians can learn about Southam's music by reading this monograph and apply their knowledge to create effective performances.

## Acknowledgments

I must start by expressing my gratitude to the late Ann Southam for creating the remarkable music that inspired this project. I sincerely hope that I have done it justice and that she would be pleased with the work. Thank you to my supervisor Dr. Catherine Nolan for supporting me with kindness and expertise, not only through the process of completing this monograph, but through the entire DMA program. Thank you for helping me become a better writer and researcher. I would also like to express my gratitude to the Banff Centre for Arts and Creativity and the staff at the Paul D. Fleck Library and Archives. I am fortunate to have been given access to invaluable resources in the Ann Southam archives. The information I gathered there enhanced this project.

There is a group of teachers and mentors who have helped me along my academic journey that I wish to acknowledge here. First, Dr. Leslie Kinton; you are a kind and knowledgeable teacher. I am thankful for your guidance and encouragement throughout my doctoral studies. You taught me to listen and helped me become a confident and independent pianist. To Dr. Brett Kingsbury; you saw potential in me when I did not. You encouraged me to pursue graduate studies in performance and I will be forever grateful for your confidence in me. Next, thank you to Dr. Diana Dumlavwalla, Dr. Christine Tithecott, and Dr. Paul Woodford; three passionate pedagogues who instilled in me a love for teaching. Gratitude must also be expressed to Dr. John Chong and Dr. John McMillan at Musicians' Clinics of Canada. Without your help, I may not be playing the piano today. Lastly, I am forever grateful for my dear professor, John-Paul Bracey. You taught me to play with style. Thank you for encouraging me to strive for excellence.

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## Table of Contents

Abstract .....	ii
Keywords .....	iii
Summary for Lay Audience .....	iv
Acknowledgments .....	v
Table of Contents .....	vii
List of Figures .....	ix
List of Appendices .....	xiii
Preface .....	xiv
Chapter 1: Introduction .....	1
1.1 Purpose of Study & Literature Review .....	2
1.2 Methodology .....	5
1.3 Chapter Outline and Research Questions .....	5
1.4 Who was Ann Southam? A Biographical Sketch.....	7
1.4.1 Early Life .....	7
1.4.2 Education .....	9
1.4.3 Electroacoustic Music and the Toronto Dance Theatre.....	10
1.4.4 Southam’s Return to Acoustic Instruments and her Discovery of Minimalism	13
1.4.5 Southam’s Legacy .....	15
Chapter 2: Southam’s Music for Solo Piano.....	19
2.1 Introduction .....	19
2.2 Reception of Southam’s Piano Works .....	19
2.3 Compositional Approach & Tone Rows .....	20
2.4 Southam’s Music for Solo Piano.....	25
2.4.1 Early Non-Minimalist Music.....	25
2.4.2 Jazz Style Works.....	35
2.4.3 Minimalism.....	41
2.4.4 Blended Works .....	56
2.5 Conclusion.....	67
Chapter 3: Southam’s Minimalist Music for Solo Piano .....	68
3.1 Introduction .....	68

3.2 Minimalism in Music & Southam’s Place Within the “School” .....	69
3.3 Process: Flexibility and the Feminist Aesthetic .....	81
3.4 Southam’s Harmonic Language .....	94
3.5 Teleology in Southam’s Minimalist Music .....	100
3.6 Conclusion.....	107
Chapter 4: Performer’s Perspective: Playing Southam’s Minimalist Works for Solo Piano .....	109
4.1 Introduction .....	109
4.2 Playing Minimalist Music .....	110
4.3 The Performer’s Autonomy in Southam’s Minimalist Music.....	113
4.4 Performance Guides: Learning, Interpreting & Performing Southam’s Minimalist Works .....	117
4.4.1 The Minimalist Style Works.....	119
4.4.2 The Minimalist Aesthetic Works.....	147
4.4.3 To Memorize or Not? .....	163
4.5 Conclusion.....	165
Chapter 5: Conclusion & Future Directions .....	167
Bibliography .....	170
Appendix 1: Catalogue of Southam’s Works for Solo Piano .....	177
Appendix 2: Southam’s Tone Rows .....	196
Appendix 3: DMA Performance Event Programs .....	198
Curriculum Vitae .....	202



## List of Figures

### Chapter 2

Figure 2.1 “Tone Row No. 1”.....	24
Figure 2.2 “Tone Row No. 2”.....	24
Figure 2.3 “Tone Row No. 3”.....	24
Figure 2.4 “Tone Row No. 4”.....	24
Figure 2.5 <i>Altitude Lake</i> , p. 19.....	28
Figure 2.6 <i>Altitude Lake</i> , half of p. 15 through p. 16.....	29
Figure 2.7 <i>Sonata in One Movement</i> passages from p. 2 and p. 16.....	31
Figure 2.8 <i>Four Bagatelles</i> Fourth Movement, mm. 10-18.....	32
Figure 2.9 <i>Four Bagatelles</i> Second Movement.....	34
Figure 2.10 <i>3 In Blue</i> , mm. 8-35.....	37
Figure 2.11 <i>Five Shades of Blue</i> Third Movement, mm. 1-13.....	38
Figure 2.12 <i>3 in Blue</i> , Second Movement, mm. 1-8.....	39
Figure 2.13 <i>Five Shades of Blue</i> , Fourth Movement, mm. 1-6.....	40
Figure 2.14 <i>Glass Houses No. 5</i> , portion of the original “tune sheet” score.....	43
Figure 2.15 <i>Glass Houses No. 5</i> , mm. 1-38.....	43
Figure 2.16 <i>Rivers No. 5, 3<sup>rd</sup> Set</i> , mm. 63-68.....	45
Figure 2.17 <i>Rivers No. 1, 1<sup>st</sup> Set</i> , mm. 1-8.....	47
Figure 2.18 <i>Rivers No. 1, 2<sup>nd</sup> Set</i> , mm. 1-9.....	49
Figure 2.19 <i>Slow Music: Meditations on a Twelve Tone Row</i> , mm. 1-6.....	52
Figure 2.20 <i>In Retrospect</i> , p. 1.....	54
Figure 2.21 <i>Returns II: a Meditation</i> , mm. 1-16.....	56

Figure 2.22 <i>Patterns of Nine</i> , mm. 1-8.....	58
Figure 2.23 <i>Soundings for a New Piano Eleventh Movement</i> , mm. 1-24.....	60
Figure 2.24 <i>Qualities of Consonance</i> , mm. 1-18.....	63
Figure 2.25 <i>Qualities of Consonance</i> , mm. 64-74.....	64
Figure 2.26 <i>Qualities of Consonance</i> , mm. 131-145.....	65
Figure 2.27 <i>Qualities of Consonance</i> , mm. 252-266.....	66
Figure 2.28 <i>Qualities of Consonance</i> , mm. 319-324.....	66

### Chapter 3

Figure 3.1 <i>Glass Houses No. 5</i> , mm. 1-36.....	74
Figure 3.2 <i>Rivers No. 3, 3<sup>rd</sup> Set</i> , mm. 1-3.....	75
Figure 3.3 <i>Rivers No. 3, 3<sup>rd</sup> Set</i> , m. 9.....	76
Figure 3.4 <i>Rivers No. 3, 3<sup>rd</sup> Set</i> , m. 3.....	76
Figure 3.5 <i>Rivers No. 3, 3<sup>rd</sup> Set</i> , m. 5.....	76
Figure 3.6 <i>Rivers No. 3, 3<sup>rd</sup> Set</i> , m. 7.....	77
Figure 3.7 <i>Rivers No. 3, 3<sup>rd</sup> Set</i> , mm. 9-11.....	77
Figure 3.8 <i>Soundings for a New Piano</i> , Second Movement.....	79
Figure 3.9 “Untitled Sketch,” ca. 1980s.....	83
Figure 3.10 <i>Pond Life</i> , First Movement.....	87
Figure 3.11 “Do women have the potential for a unique aesthetic?”.....	89
Figure 3.12 <i>Returnings I</i> , opening.....	91
Figure 3.13 <i>Returnings I</i> , mm. 1-20.....	92
Figure 3.14 <i>Returnings I</i> , mm. 132-153.....	92
Figure 3.15 <i>Rivers No. 4, 2<sup>nd</sup> Set</i> , mm. 1-9.....	96

Figure 3.16 <i>Rivers No. 4, 2<sup>nd</sup> Set</i> , mm. 19-25.....	97
Figure 3.17 <i>Rivers No. 4, 2<sup>nd</sup> Set</i> , mm. 22-31.....	98
Figure 3.18 <i>Rivers No. 4, 2<sup>nd</sup> Set</i> , mm. 34-41.....	98
Figure 3.19 Steve Reich's <i>Piano Phase</i> , opening.....	101
Figure 3.20 <i>Rivers No. 9, 3<sup>rd</sup> Set</i> , mm. 29-46.....	104
Figure 3.21 "Four Patterns from mm. 29-46 in <i>Rivers No. 9, 3<sup>rd</sup> Set</i> ".....	106

#### **Chapter 4**

Figure 4.1 <i>Rivers No. 3, 3<sup>rd</sup> Set</i> , mm. 1-18.....	122
Figure 4.2 <i>Rivers No. 3, 3<sup>rd</sup> Set</i> , Ostinato 1.....	127
Figure 4.3 <i>Rivers No. 3, 3<sup>rd</sup> Set</i> , Ostinato 2.....	127
Figure 4.4 <i>Rivers No. 5, 3<sup>rd</sup> Set</i> , Ostinato 1.....	127
Figure 4.5 <i>Rivers No. 5, 3<sup>rd</sup> Set</i> , Ostinato 2.....	127
Figure 4.6 <i>Rivers No. 5, 3<sup>rd</sup> Set</i> , Ostinato 3.....	128
Figure 4.7 <i>Rivers No. 9, 3<sup>rd</sup> Set</i> , Ostinato.....	128
Figure 4.8 <i>Rivers No. 9, 3<sup>rd</sup> Set</i> , mm. 173-184.....	131
Figure 4.9 <i>Rivers No. 3, 3<sup>rd</sup> Set</i> , m. 1.....	132
Figure 4.10 <i>Rivers No. 5, 3<sup>rd</sup> Set</i> , m. 1.....	132
Figure 4.11 <i>Rivers No. 5, 3<sup>rd</sup> Set</i> , m. 37.....	134
Figure 4.12 <i>Glass Houses No. 5</i> .....	139
Figure 4.13 "The Structure of <i>Glass Houses No. 5</i> ".....	141
Figure 4.14 <i>Glass Houses No. 3</i> , ostinato.....	142
Figure 4.15 <i>Glass Houses No. 3</i> , mm. 75-100.....	143
Figure 4.16 <i>Glass Houses No. 3</i> , mm. 133-163.....	146

Figure 4.17 “Spatial View of Pond”.....	149
Figure 4.18 <i>Spatial View of Pond I</i> , mm. 1-12.....	149
Figure 4.19 <i>Pond Life</i> , First Movement, systems 1 and 2.....	154
Figure 4.20 <i>Returns I</i> , p. 1.....	156
Figure 4.21 <i>Rivers No. 4, 2<sup>nd</sup> Set</i> , mm. 1-9.....	159
Figure 4.22 <i>Rivers No. 4, 2<sup>nd</sup> Set</i> , mm. 19-22.....	160
Figure 4.23 <i>Rivers No. 4, 2<sup>nd</sup> Set</i> , transcription of mm. 19-22 .....	161
Figure 4.24 <i>Rivers No. 4, 2<sup>nd</sup> Set</i> , mm. 23-30.....	162

## **List of Appendices**

Appendix 1: Catalogue of Southam's Works for Solo Piano.....	179
Appendix 2: Southam's Tone Rows.....	199
Appendix 3: DMA Performance Event Programs.....	200

## Preface

I remember sitting in the pews at a church in my community practicing saying her name “*Southam, Southam, Southam,*” quietly to myself while I waited my turn. I was participating in the local music festival and when I was called forth to perform, I proudly announced, “I will be playing Ann Southam’s *3 in Blue no. 2.*” It was one of my most favourite pieces to play. Years later, I was reminded of Southam’s music while listening to CBC radio. It was her piece *Remembering Schubert*. I was drawn to the patterns in the piece; fascinated by how the melodic motifs float effortlessly from the repetitive texture. The expressive impact was unforgettable. Naturally, I learned the piece for my second Master’s recital. Since then, I have been dedicated to performing and researching the piano music of one of the greatest Canadian composers.

As I began to research and perform Southam’s music I was taken aback by how little information was easily available in an efficient and usable resource. I therefore made it my goal to consolidate information into a single resource focussing on her solo piano music that can be used by performers, scholars, teachers, and composers. It has been an absolute pleasure studying Southam and her music. Southam mentioned that she did not feel the weight of a male dominated tradition bearing down on her when creating in the electroacoustic studio. She provided me with a similar experience. The autonomy Southam allowed performers has given me a level of freedom and sense of ease that I had not yet experienced when studying the more conventional repertoire. Much like how Southam felt safe working with pianist Eve Egoyan, I feel safe and content when interpreting and performing her music. Southam empowered me to make my own artistic choices. I hope to encourage others to appreciate Southam and her music as much as I do.

## Chapter 1: Introduction

Ann Southam (1937-2010) is one of Canada's greatest contemporary composers. Described by Robert Everett-Green as the best-known Canadian composer of minimalist music in a 2009 *Globe and Mail* article, Southam's catalogue of works spans a variety of mediums and musical styles ranging from electroacoustic, to orchestral, chamber, and solo pieces written in jazz, twelve-tone, and minimalist styles.<sup>1</sup> Southam has been recognized both internationally and nationally for her contributions. For example, her eleven-movement work for solo piano entitled *Simple Lines of Enquiry* (2007) drew international acclaim when its recording by Canadian pianist Eve Egoyan appeared in the *New Yorker's* top ten classical albums of 2009.<sup>2</sup> In May of 2010, Southam was awarded the Order of Canada. While recognizing Southam as a minimalist composer praised for "the subtlety and emotional character of her music," the award was also given in acknowledgment of her support of the arts and charitable organizations in Canada.<sup>3</sup> Southam was, and still is, a significant figure in Canadian art music.

Southam composed over forty works for solo piano, several with multiple stand-alone movements, covering a wide-ranging compositional approach. She is recognized as one of Canada's most prolific composers.<sup>4</sup> Many have praised Southam's unique style, with Eve Egoyan going as far as to say that Southam was her "own school," of music

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<sup>1</sup> Robert Everett-Green, "Ann Southam: A One-Woman Tone Poem," *Globe and Mail* (Toronto, ON), July 6, 2009: <https://www.theglobeandmail.com/arts/ann-southam-a-one-woman-tone-poem/article1199935/>.

<sup>2</sup> Alex Ross, "2009: Ten Exceptional Recordings," *The New Yorker*, December 2, 2009, <https://www.newyorker.com/culture/alex-ross/2009-ten-exceptional-recordings>.

<sup>3</sup> "Order of Canada: Ann Southam," accessed July 31, 2019, <https://www.gg.ca/en/honours/recipients/146-11800>.

<sup>4</sup> Jay Somerset, "The Women in Fleece," *The Walrus*, April 12, 2012, <https://thewalrus.ca/the-woman-in-fleece/>.

composition.<sup>5</sup> Her music is innovative, wide-ranging, beautiful, and meaningful. Her remarkable works for piano are worthy of intensive study and a prominent place in the piano performance repertoire. This monograph is the first formal study of Ann Southam's works for solo piano.

## 1.1 Purpose of Study & Literature Review

The purpose of this monograph is to provide a comprehensive resource for performers of Southam's solo piano music. It promotes Southam's music and emphasizes her significance as a contemporary Canadian composer. This monograph includes an overview of Southam's complete works for solo piano that illustrates her wide range of creations for the instrument. Next, a deeper investigation into her minimalist works for solo piano highlights important aspects such as her musical processes that she created, or "cook(ed) up,"<sup>6</sup> when composing, and her highly personal musical language that freely incorporated elements of minimalist process music and twelve-tone-rows.<sup>7</sup> This study also includes guides on learning and performing Southam's music. A deeper understanding of how Southam's music is constructed paired with the guides will foster well-informed interpretations of her piano music.

Currently, there are only five scholarly resources that include Southam and her music. Although brief, Tamara Bernstein's 2013 article in *Grove Music Online* about Ann Southam and her music is currently the most comprehensive written work on the topic.<sup>8</sup> It is a useful resource as it consolidates information about Southam's life, music, and

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<sup>5</sup> Eitan Cornfield, producer of *Ann Southam: Canadian Composer Portraits, Documentary*, 2005, Centrediscs CMCCD 10505, CD, Track 1 00:52, speaker Eve Egoyan.

<sup>6</sup> Everett-Green, "One-Women Tone Poem."

<sup>7</sup> Tamara Bernstein, "Southam, Ann." *Grove Music Online*, (2013), accessed 31 Jul. 2019, <https://doi-org.proxy1.lib.uwo.ca/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.45467>.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.



compositional approach. Bernstein highlights the emotional impact of Southam's music created by her "persistent and eloquent musical exploration of emotional ambiguity through the play of stability and instability; of musical 'home' (tonality, drones, ostinati) and 'homelessness' (the dissonant 12-note row)."<sup>9</sup> This sentiment is echoed in Elaine Keillor's short mention of Southam in her 2006 book *Music in Canada: Capturing Landscape and Diversity*. Keillor explains that Southam combined both minimalism and serialism to create process pieces that explore the melodic possibilities of the twelve-tone row.<sup>10</sup>

Sarah Feltham used Southam's piano pieces from *Rivers, 2<sup>nd</sup> Set* as an example in her 2015 dissertation "Middle Power Music: Modernism, Ideology, and Compromise in English Canadian Cold War Composition."<sup>11</sup> Feltham argues that the free use of minimalist compositional techniques in Southam's works are an example of the compromises of power structures and ideologies present in the sounds of middle power music. Southam's personal approach, particularly her view that minimalism can express a feminist aesthetic, is in part what separates her minimalist music from the more prominent American composers of music in the same style.<sup>12</sup> This notion will be further explored in Chapter 3.

Andra McCartney interviewed Southam as part of her 1994 Master's thesis on the development of electroacoustic music in Canada that concentrated on the contributions of

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<sup>9</sup> Bernstein, "Ann Southam," *Grove Music Online*.

<sup>10</sup> Elaine Keillor, *Music in Canada: Capturing Landscape and Diversity* (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2006), 255.

<sup>11</sup> Sarah Feltham, "Middle Power Music: Modernism, Ideology, and Compromise in English Canadian Cold War Composition," (dissertation, Stony Brook University, 2015), 142, accessed from: <https://search-proquest-com.proxy1.lib.uwo.ca/pqdtglobal/docview/1767779451/1086E3C5C33A4A31PQ/1?accountid=15115>.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, 124.

women composers.<sup>13</sup> Although focused on Southam's electroacoustic music, this resource is useful for understanding Southam's transition back to writing for acoustic instruments in the 1970s. Southam's piano music is also mentioned in research conducted by Christopher Hahn, who included two works from Southam's *Stitches in Time* (1979) in his 2005 dissertation surveying Canadian pedagogical repertoire.<sup>14</sup> Hahn also acknowledges the need for further research on Canadian composers of the current generation. He recommends that in-depth studies be conducted so the piano music of prolific composers such as, Ann Southam, Nancy Telfer, Alexina Louie, among others, can be disseminated to wider audiences.<sup>15</sup>

Further information on Southam and her music can be gathered from newspaper articles, magazine articles, the Canadian Music Centre, interviews, documentaries, podcasts, concert programs, websites, recordings, and album liner notes; however, with the exception of Bernstein's informative yet brief *Grove Music Online* article, there are no detailed published scholarly works or research projects exclusively on the topic of Southam's music for solo piano. This study is the first consolidated and comprehensive resource for pianists, teachers, students, and scholars to use when studying Southam's solo piano works. This broad project can act as a foundation on which further research on the piano music of Ann Southam can develop.

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<sup>13</sup> Andra McCartney, "Creating Worlds for my Music to Exist: How Women Composers of Electroacoustic Music Make Place for their Voices" (master's thesis, York University, 1994), accessed from: <https://search-proquest-com.proxy1.lib.uwo.ca/pqdtglobal/docview/304118103/E20D4DDA276A44F7PQ/2?accountid=15115>.

<sup>14</sup> Christopher Hahn, "Canadian Pedagogical Piano Repertoire Since 1970: A Survey of Contemporary Compositional Styles and Techniques" (dissertation, The University of Oklahoma, 2005), accessed from: <https://searchproquestcom.proxy1.lib.uwo.ca/pqdtglobal/docview/305450953/568594ED4E074407PQ/4?accountid=15115>.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, 208.

## 1.2 Methodology

Information for this monograph has been gathered from various sources including: the scholarly work mentioned in the literature review, newspaper and magazine articles, printed and recorded interviews with Ann Southam, documentaries, recordings, album liner notes, concert programs, program notes and scores, online sources, and the Canadian Music Centre. A visit to the Ann Southam Archives housed at The Paul D. Fleck Library and Archives at the Banff Centre for Arts and Creativity allowed for information to be gathered from important primary sources including Southam's personal papers, scores, recordings, and miscellaneous items bequeathed to the centre upon her death in 2010.<sup>16</sup> Furthermore, as a researcher and performer of Southam's piano music, it is my responsibility to learn to play as much of Southam's music as possible. As seen in the concert programs included in Appendix 3 many of Southam's works are included in my repertoire, and the experience I gained studying these works informed this monograph project.

## 1.3 Chapter Outline and Research Questions

The following is a summary of the topics that will be explored in the four chapters included in this monograph. Chapter 2 is a complete overview of Southam's known works for solo piano. Divided into the categories of Early Non-Minimalist Music, Jazz Style Works, Minimalism, and Blended Works; style, musical characteristics, and other information about the pieces are discussed to enhance understanding and accessibility of Southam's solo piano music. A catalogue of Southam's known works for solo piano

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<sup>16</sup> I visited the library at the Banff Centre for Arts and Creativity on June 25th and 26th, 2019. Thank you to Archivist John Yolkowski the library staff at the Banff Centre for your assistance.

associated with the discussion is included in Appendix 1. This catalogue consists of a description of each composition as well as information on the duration, available recordings, and where to access the score. Information in Chapter 2 paired with the catalogue will help make Southam's music more accessible to pianists, scholars, and teachers, which will in turn inspire increased study and performances of her remarkable music.

Both Chapters 3 and 4 concentrate on Southam's minimalist music for solo piano. Chapter 3 is inspired by the following questions: What is minimalist music? What are the features of Southam's minimalist music? Analyses of Southam's minimalist works for solo piano will show the qualities of her music and help performers grasp her varied approaches to minimalist composition with the goal of fostering well-informed interpretations of her minimalist music. Learning, interpreting, and performing Southam's minimalist piano music is the focus of Chapter 4. The intention of this chapter is to establish conventions to guide those performing Southam's minimalist music. It is therefore inspired by the following questions: How should pianists approach playing her music? What are effective strategies for practicing and learning these pieces? What are the sounds pianists should strive to create and how might they achieve them? Performance guides in this chapter shed light on interpretive choices, technical approach, and the process of learning her works.

What remains in Chapter 1 is a biographical sketch of Ann Southam that will concisely answer the question: Who was Ann Southam? Aspects of Southam's early life and education are discussed with the intention of highlighting the early influences that impacted her creative voice. Information on her time spent as the resident composer of

the Toronto Dance Theatre creating electroacoustic music in the late 1960s and 1970s and her transition back to writing for acoustic instruments is included. Southam's impact as a generous and humble philanthropist is emphasized. Although not a full biography, this sketch provides the essential background information on the life and enduring legacy of Ann Southam and her music.

## 1.4 Who was Ann Southam? A Biographical Sketch

### 1.4.1 Early Life

Ann Southam was born in Winnipeg on February 4<sup>th</sup>, 1937 to Joyce Mary Southam, and Kenneth Gordon Southam.<sup>17</sup> Her family moved to Toronto when she was a child, where she lived until her death in 2010. Southam grew up with music in the home, her mother played the piano, and the family had a record collection that included the standards like Tchaikovsky's B $\flat$  Piano Concerto, the music of Beethoven and Smetana, as well as her particular favourite: Ravel's *Bolero*.<sup>18</sup> As a child, Southam would play recordings of this repetitive work over and over again, and remarked that perhaps it was this piece that sparked her fondness of repetition.<sup>19</sup> Another musical influence from her early life was bagpipe music. Bagpipes are a double reed instrument with three drones that produce an unrelenting pitch while melody notes are played on the chanter.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> Tamara Bernstein, "Minimalist sound, Maximum impact," *Globe and Mail* (Toronto, ON), December 20, 2010: <http://v1.theglobeandmail.com/servlet/story/LAC.20101220.OBSOUTHAMATL/BDAStory/BDA/deaths/?pageRequested=1>.

<sup>18</sup> Ann Southam, interview by Ina Dennekamp, May 12, 1988, page 1, transcript and recording, The Paul D. Fleck Library and Archives at the Banff Centre, ID-ID06-ID06.71-ID06.71.2, <https://albertaonrecord.ca/transcript-of-interview-with-ann-southam>; Cornfield, producer of *Ann Southam: Canadian Composer Portraits*, Track 3 02:37, speaker Ann Southam.

<sup>19</sup> Cornfield, producer of *Ann Southam: Canadian Composer Portraits*, Track 3 02:37, speaker Ann Southam.

<sup>20</sup> *The Highland Bagpipe: Music, History, Tradition*, ed. Joshua Dickson (Surrey: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2009).

Southam's nanny took her to hear pipers playing at local events and Southam partly attributed the use of drones in her music to her early exposure to and passion for bagpipe music.<sup>21</sup> In addition to *Bolero* and bagpipe music, Southam also enjoyed the east coast fiddle music she heard on the CBC's Don Messer's Jubilee radio program.<sup>22</sup> The tunes she heard on this program would later inspire her *Glass Houses* for piano.<sup>23</sup>

Southam began her musical training in piano lessons where she particularly enjoyed playing romantic and dramatic sounding pieces with "lots of big chords and arpeggios."<sup>24</sup> As a preteen Southam began creating her own music at the piano.<sup>25</sup> At fifteen she started thinking of becoming a composer.<sup>26</sup> For Southam, composition was an emotional outlet. She explained that she "wouldn't even call it composing, I think it was kind of an emotional acting out. A way of giving some sort of expression to feelings, you know angst and all that kind of stuff."<sup>27</sup> Her brother Kip explained that Southam considered her music a mask that allowed her to be herself. Music helped her persevere through the "social nightmare of growing up gay in the 1950s."<sup>28</sup> At this time she was composing pieces that imitated Chopin and Brahms, but "definitely not Beethoven," as she firmly stated in a 1988 interview.<sup>29</sup> Unfortunately, I have not found any of the

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<sup>21</sup> Cornfield, producer of *Ann Southam: Canadian Composer Portraits*, Track 3 03:00, speaker Ann Southam.

<sup>22</sup> Somerset, "The Women in Fleece."

<sup>23</sup> Ann Southam, *Glass Houses*, ed. Christina Petrowska Quilico (Toronto: Canadian Music Centre, 1981/2009), preface.

<sup>24</sup> Eve Egoyan and Gayle Young, "Composition as Enquiry: The Explorational Music of Ann Southam," *Musicworks* 101, summer (2008): 40.

<sup>25</sup> Ann Southam, interview by Ina Dennekamp, 1988, page 1.

<sup>26</sup> Dennis Bathory-Kitsz and David Gunn, "If Only I Could Sing: Ann Southam in Conversation with Kalvos & Damian," *Musicworks* 71, summer (1998): 2; Ann Southam, interview by Ina Dennekamp, 1988, page 1; Cornfield, producer of *Ann Southam: Canadian Composer Portraits*, Track 4 04:27, speaker Ann Southam.

<sup>27</sup> Cornfield, producer of *Ann Southam: Canadian Composer Portraits*, Track 4 04:27, speaker Ann Southam.

<sup>28</sup> Somerset, "The Women in Fleece."

<sup>29</sup> Ann Southam, interview by Ina Dennekamp, 1988, page 1.

compositions from Southam's teenaged years. However, Southam's use of composition as emotional expression remained an essential force behind the piano works she would later write.

### 1.4.2 Education

After some false starts, including an attempt at university and a brief stint at secretarial college, Southam decided she was "going to do something about learning how to become a composer," and found her way to The Royal Conservatory of Music in Toronto studying piano with Pierre Souvairan (1911-2000) and composition with Samuel Dolin (1917-2002) in the 1960s.<sup>30</sup> Southam first approached John Weinzweig (1913-2006) at the Faculty of Music at the University of Toronto, who suggested she study with Dolin to gain the fundamentals of harmony and counterpoint that she needed to further her education. Being sent to study with Dolin was, as Southam enthusiastically explained, the best thing that ever happened to her.<sup>31</sup>

Southam remembered Dolin as a supportive teacher who nurtured his students' ideas.<sup>32</sup> Dolin helped Southam realize the "emotional things" she wanted to make happen through the musical language.<sup>33</sup> He taught her to have a plan for a piece of music.<sup>34</sup> This lesson likely influenced her use of processes that govern the organization of musical material in most of her piano works. Southam also discussed the "huge gift" of Dolin's efforts to host professional concerts showcasing his students' works. These concerts likely helped Southam realize the importance of working with other musicians. This

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<sup>30</sup> Ann Southam, interview by Ina Dennekamp, 1988, page 2.

<sup>31</sup> Jim Hiscott, producer of *Samuel Dolin Documentary*, June 6, 2002, CD, The Paul D. Fleck Library and Archives at the Banff Centre, 03:57, speaker Ann Southam. [AS6.3.001]

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, 05:29.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, 27:08.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, 13:56.

notion is reflected in her longstanding collaborative relationships with musicians Christina Petrowska Quilico, Eve Egoyan, Mary Gardiner, and David Jaeger, among many others, and her commitment to organizations that promote the works of new music composers.

Most importantly, Dolin taught Southam that the rules of composition were there to help rather than hinder one's creative ideas.<sup>35</sup> This philosophy set the foundation for Southam's free use of compositional tools, allowing her to develop her unique musical language:

When I started studying with him [I learned] his whole approach was rules are tools not sort of laws handed down from God fully formed and you just have to obey these things...[rather] that they can be used to create your own order and if you didn't like them you could change them and that sort of thing which I thought was wonderful. I had never heard of such a thing.<sup>36</sup>

At the conservatory, Southam set aside her tendencies to imitate the Romantics and started "fiddling around," with the twelve-tone system as it "seemed like the thing to do, at the time."<sup>37</sup> Some of the surviving piano pieces from Southam's student years include *Four Bagatelles* (1962), *Suite for Piano* (1963), and *Altitude Lake* (1963), among others that will be discussed more thoroughly in Chapter 2. These pieces reflect her flexible use of tone-rows,<sup>38</sup> all within the serialist style cultivated by composers and students during the 1950s and 1960s.

### 1.4.3 Electroacoustic Music and the Toronto Dance Theatre

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<sup>35</sup> Cornfield, producer of *Ann Southam: Canadian Composer Portraits*, Track 4 01:49, speaker Ann Southam.

<sup>36</sup> Ann Southam, interview by Ina Dennekamp, 1988, page 2.

<sup>37</sup> Bathory-Kitsz and Gunn, "If Only I Could Sing," 21.

<sup>38</sup> Bernstein, "Ann Southam," *Grove Music Online*.



Southam's flexibility served her well when she began to create in the electronic music studio at the University of Toronto Faculty of Music under the direction of composer Gustav Ciamaga (1930-2011). Electroacoustic music was in its infancy in Canada, and students were free to discover their own way to compose it. Southam thought she had "died and gone to heaven because there was no agreed upon way of doing anything."<sup>39</sup> The compositional restrictions of writing notated music for specific instruments were gone, and Southam reveled in this freedom.<sup>40</sup> She enjoyed working by instinct and creating her own rules.<sup>41</sup> Furthermore, she felt that electroacoustic music was a genre in which she could thrive as there was no male-dominated tradition bearing down on her.<sup>42</sup> Southam was a trailblazer in Canadian electroacoustic music and influenced future composers when she taught at the newly assembled electroacoustic studio at The Royal Conservatory of Music.<sup>43</sup>

Southam's electroacoustic works have been made more widely available through the efforts of the Canadian Music Centre. Since receiving her master tapes as a posthumous donation, the CMC has been digitizing the recordings and making them available to stream online through CMC Centrestreams.<sup>44</sup> In addition to what is available on Centrestreams, five of her electroacoustic works: *Fluke Sounds* (1989), *Walls and Passageways* (1974), *Reprieve* (1976), *Seastill* (1979), and *Rewind* (1984) were included on a 2005 Centrediscs album called *Ovation*. In her program notes, Southam explains that

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<sup>39</sup> John Gray and Ann Southam, "Episode 5: Ann Southam," in *The Composer's Chair*, produced by The Canadian Music Centre, podcast, audio, 15:16, accessed August 4, 2019, <https://www.musiccentre.ca/node/65841>.

<sup>40</sup> Bathory-Kitsz and Gunn, "If Only I Could Sing," 21.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>42</sup> Kim Echlin, "Glass Houses #5: Playing Plan," *The Citizen's Weekly* (Ottawa, ON), Oct. 5, 1997.

<sup>43</sup> Gray and Southam, "Episode 5: Ann Southam," 16:15.

<sup>44</sup> Bernstein, "Ann Southam," *Grove Music Online*.

these works were created in a “classical,” electronic music studio, using tape recorders, mixers, loop machines, sine and square wave generators, microphones, and two Synthis AKS veltape control synthesizers.<sup>45</sup> Two of these works, *Fluke Sounds* and *Walls and Passageways*, are stand-alone electronic pieces, while the other three are part of her catalogue of over thirty original pieces written for modern dance. Southam explained that these electronic works for modern dance functioned as an unseen presence meant to be danced with, rather than danced to.<sup>46</sup>

In the late 1960s, Southam was introduced to Patricia Beatty (b. 1936), a modern dancer who had returned from training in New York City. Beatty shared her vision of modern dance with Southam, who enthusiastically fell in love with the art form after a demonstration.<sup>47</sup> This led to a life-long association with modern dance in Canada, including a fifteen-year stint as the Resident Composer for the Toronto Dance Theatre founded by Beatty, as well as commissions for the Danny Grossman Company, Dancemakers, and Rachel Browne’s Winnipeg Contemporary Dancers.<sup>48</sup>

Dancers and choreographers appreciated the space in Southam’s electronic music. Beatty explained that when choreographing the dances, the movements would fall onto the music in an organic and “certain way,” that worked well.<sup>49</sup> Southam was thrilled to write music for modern dance, and appreciated how the dancers could sense the time in her music that was created with irregular beats as well as long tones that offered a sense

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<sup>45</sup> Ann Southam, liner notes to *Ovation Volume 4*, CBC Records PSCD 2029-4, 2005, CD.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid.

<sup>47</sup> Cornfield, producer of *Ann Southam: Canadian Composer Portraits*, Track 2 01:08, speaker Ann Southam.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid., Track 2 02:50.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid., Track 5 00:00, speaker Patricia Beatty.

of space.<sup>50</sup> She drew upon the emotional meaning inspired by watching the dancers to create an “emotional climate,” in her pieces.<sup>51</sup> These aspects of space and mood are important compositional features that would appear in many of the solo piano works she would later write. Furthermore, in the Toronto Dance Theatre, not only did Southam find a place for her electroacoustic music, but she also found a progressive community where she could express herself openly.<sup>52</sup>

As Southam began to transition back to writing music for acoustic instruments in the late 1970s, the Toronto Dance Theatre followed her lead and began setting choreography to some of her piano music including her *Glass Houses No.5* in 1983.<sup>53</sup> Southam’s music is still an important part of the Toronto Dance Theatre today. In 2012, the theatre set choreography to one of her *Rivers* for piano as a “tribute in movement” to Southam.<sup>54</sup> In March of 2018, Toronto Dance Theatre’s artistic director Christopher House revisited *Glass Houses* in a reimagined project called *Glass Fields* in celebration of the theatre’s fiftieth anniversary.<sup>55</sup> House felt that *Glass Houses* would be a good piece for choreographers to return to not only because of the music’s clarity of form and timeless “joyful physicality and musicality,” but also because the music is “by Ann Southam, the most important composer in the Toronto Dance Theatre’s long history.”<sup>56</sup>

#### **1.4.4 Southam’s Return to Acoustic Instruments and her Discovery of Minimalism**

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<sup>50</sup> Everett-Green, “A One-Woman Tone Poem.”

<sup>51</sup> Carol Anderson, “Choice and Interpretation,” *Musicworks* 46, Spring (1990): 6 & 7.

<sup>52</sup> Jay Somerset, “The Women in Fleece.”

<sup>53</sup> Arpita Ghosal, “TDT’s Glass Fields is a leap forward inspired by a look back,” *SesayArts Magazine*, March 22, 2018, <http://sesaya.com/2018/03/glass-fields/>.

<sup>54</sup> Paula Citron, “Christopher House on his tribute to Ann Southam’s Rivers,” *The Globe and Mail* (Toronto, ON), March 26, 2017: <https://www.theglobeandmail.com/arts/theatre-and-performance/christopher-house-on-his-tribute-to-ann-southams-rivers/article4210387/>.

<sup>55</sup> Arpita Ghosal, “TDT’s Glass Fields is a leap forward inspired by a look back.”

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*

As the late 1970s approached, electronic music technology was becoming increasingly computerized. Because of this, Southam began to transition away from writing electroacoustic music to writing for acoustic instruments again. When interviewed by Andra McCartney for her 1994 thesis on the development of electroacoustic music in Canada, Southam explained that she moved away from electroacoustic composition because the new electronic instruments no longer operated in the tactile way that she liked:

I just like that hands-on [approach], working by ear and by hand. Working by numbers on a computer screen—I just couldn't relate to it. It seems to me that I couldn't tune it. I had to look at the numbers on this little display in order to get what I want. But I was so used to working by ear, and just mucking around with knobs, and getting it by ear. I just couldn't relate to looking at the sound.<sup>57</sup>

At this time of transition, Southam noticed her piano, a six-foot eight-inch Bechstein she had purchased in the 1960s, and thought she would like to start playing again.<sup>58</sup> What drew her to playing and composing for piano was the fact that it was physical, allowing one to both write down and play the music by hand.<sup>59</sup> Also at this time, Southam was becoming aware of the minimalist movement.<sup>60</sup> She heard Terry Riley's electroacoustic minimalist piece *A Rainbow in Curved Air*, and instantly fell in love: "I truly loved that piece – just loved it!" she explained in a 2008 interview.<sup>61</sup> The bright quality of the piece was appealing and inspired her to think that "maybe it was okay to like tonal centres," after giving up conventional tonality to be taken seriously as a composer.<sup>62</sup> Southam also drew inspiration from other composers of minimalist music,

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<sup>57</sup> McCartney, "Creating Worlds for my Music to Exist," 120.

<sup>58</sup> Bathory-Kitsz and Gunn, "If Only I Could Sing," 21; Gray and Southam, "Episode 5: Ann Southam," 28:34.

<sup>59</sup> Egoyan and Young, "Composition as Enquiry," 41.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid., 40.

<sup>62</sup> Everett-Green, "One-Women Tone Poem."

including Steve Reich. She particularly admired his piece *Music for Mallet Instruments, Voices and Organ*.<sup>63</sup> From this point on, Southam would begin composing her fascinating and unique minimalist works for piano.

#### 1.4.5 Southam's Legacy

Southam left a legacy not only as a great Canadian composer, but also as a volunteer, teacher, and generous philanthropist known for both supporting the arts and empowering women. Southam received a large independent income as she was a descendant of newspaper mogul William Southam (1843-1932), but lived modestly and humbly. Southam is remembered by her colleagues and friends not as a glitzy upper-class socialite from the world in which she was raised, but as a simple person who preferred practical clothes and carrying her belongings in groceries bags over fancy handbags.<sup>64</sup> Jay Somerset's 2012 article published in *The Walrus* offers an eloquent depiction of the beloved Ann:

Born wealthy, she never had to work a day in her life. But unlike Kip, a snappy dresser and a former member of the Royal Canadian Yacht Club, Ann was shy and unassuming, seen most often in fleece sweaters and sensible shoes, even at glitzy concert hall premieres of her own material. She preferred turtlenecks to white gloves and gowns, greasy spoons over fine dining, silent philanthropy over personal recognition, the minimal over the maximal.<sup>65</sup>

Southam used her wealth and privilege to help others by funding and volunteering for many causes. Southam faced the inequity between female and male composers and wanted to support her colleagues who were also encountering these struggles.<sup>66</sup> In 1981, alongside Mary Gardiner, Southam helped establish the Association of Canadian Women

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<sup>63</sup>Egoyan and Young, "Composition as Enquiry," 40.

<sup>64</sup>Somerset, "The Women in Fleece."

<sup>65</sup>Ibid.

<sup>66</sup>Ann Southam, interview by Ina Dennekamp, 1988, page 11.

Composers. Their mandate was to fund and support female composers and performers in Canada.<sup>67</sup> She would continue to generously support this organization for many years.<sup>68</sup> In addition to this organization, Southam helped established Music Inter Alia in 1977, which was one of the first concert series dedicated to new music not only in Winnipeg, but in all of Western Canada.<sup>69</sup> Southam also supported other organizations she was associated with including the Toronto Dance Theatre, and the Canadian Music Centre.<sup>70</sup>

Southam also volunteered with the Canadian Women's Foundation, an organization that assists women facing violence and poverty. In 2011, it was announced that she willed \$14,000,000 to this foundation.<sup>71</sup> Her donation contributed to a fund that raises money and provides grants for programs meant to “break down barriers to gender equality for women and girls in Canada.”<sup>72</sup> Southam's generous donation is still helping the organization today. In a ten-year update published in November 2020, the foundation's president and CEO Paulette Senior explained that Southam's donation, the single largest one in the foundation's history, allowed them to double its Girls Fund. This fund provides support to programs that work to change the lives of women in girls across Canada.<sup>73</sup> With the donation, the Women's Foundation was also able to establish the Ann

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<sup>67</sup> Somerset, “The Women in Fleece.”

<sup>68</sup> Ann Southam, unpublished administrative documents pertaining to Southam's work with the Association of Canadian Women Composers, (Banff Alberta: The Paul d. Fleck Library and Archives at the Banff Centre, 1986-2005). [AS-AS4-AS4.001]

<sup>69</sup> Bernstein, “Ann Southam,” *Grove Music Online*.

<sup>70</sup> Cornfield, producer of *Ann Southam: Canadian Composer Portraits*, Track 5 02:42, speaker Patricia Beatty.

<sup>71</sup> David Graham, “Musician Ann Southam leaves \$14M to Canadian Women's Foundation,” *The Toronto Star* (Toronto, ON), October 25, 2011: [https://www.thestar.com/news/gta/2011/10/25/musician\\_ann\\_southam\\_leaves\\_14m\\_to\\_canadian\\_womens\\_foundation.html](https://www.thestar.com/news/gta/2011/10/25/musician_ann_southam_leaves_14m_to_canadian_womens_foundation.html).

<sup>72</sup> Robert Rowat, “10 years ago, composer Ann Southam bequeathed \$14M to the Canadian Women's Foundation. This is how it helped,” *CBC Music*, November 24, 2020: <https://www.cbc.ca/music/10-years-ago-composer-ann-southam-bequeathed-14m-to-the-canadian-women-s-foundation-this-is-how-it-helped-1.5808225?fbclid=IwAR2FIUzz2a2K4RRtT03nQmlUAPYHRuPgsGHETLwMHsNaQnuAzYP4B9e0cPc>.

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid*.

Southam Feminist Legacy Circle, which unites like-minded supporters of gender equality.<sup>74</sup> In all, Southam was a relentless fighter for women and equality, as her brother Kip explains, “from a very early age, she was aware of injustices, especially growing up in the fifties. Women were expected to play the stereotypical role. Her passion came from her early awareness of injustices in a patriarchal society and she was definitely angry about it.”<sup>75</sup> Her fight for gender equality is still going strong to this day.

Southam also had an interest in music education and impacted young people by teaching music appreciation to high school students through the Artists in Schools program.<sup>76</sup> In her lessons, she would encourage students to think independently by focusing on the process of composing. She helped students realize that they are not obligated to follow conventional compositional rules by encouraging them to “think up their own ideas.”<sup>77</sup> This notion reflects the impact of her training with Dolin who, as explained earlier, taught Southam that rules are flexible. It is also manifested in her own music that freely mixes musical languages and practices.

In addition to teaching in high schools, Southam also taught in the electroacoustic music studio at the Royal Conservatory from 1966 to 1990,<sup>78</sup> and participated in other education programs like the Studea Musica Summer Institute.<sup>79</sup> Southam’s dedication to music education is also evident in her support of the University of Ottawa’s Piano Pedagogy Program and their Piano Pedagogy Lab, which is named in her honour.<sup>80</sup>

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<sup>74</sup> Robert Rowat, “10 years ago, composer Ann Southam bequeathed \$14M to the Canadian Women’s Foundation...”

<sup>75</sup> Graham, “Musician Ann Southam leaves \$14M to Canadian Women’s Foundation.”

<sup>76</sup> Bernstein, “Ann Southam,” *Grove Music Online*.

<sup>77</sup> Anderson, “Choice and Interpretation,” 8.

<sup>78</sup> Bernstein, “Ann Southam,” *Grove Music Online*.

<sup>79</sup> “Piano Pedagogy Research Laboratory Room Dedication in Memory of Ann Southam,” accessed May 24, 2021, <https://piano.uottawa.ca/archives/fundraising/>

<sup>80</sup> Ibid.

Furthermore, Southam continues to impact piano students through her many pieces written for the Contemporary Showcase Festival held by the Alliance for Canadian New Music Projects.<sup>81</sup>

In conclusion, this biographical sketch shows that Southam was an innovative composer who worked to express her own unique voice while also generously supporting the community around her. She wrote music in many forms from electroacoustic music to orchestral works, chamber music, and even aleatoric experimental music, but the majority of her output is for solo piano. Southam's extraordinary piano music, particularly the works in the minimalist style, will be the focus of the remaining chapters of this monograph project.

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<sup>81</sup> Alliance for Canadian New Music Projects, *Contemporary Showcase Festival: Piano Syllabus*, <http://acnmp.ca/syllabus/english-syllabus/>.



## Chapter 2: Southam's Music for Solo Piano

### 2.1 Introduction

Ann Southam is considered one of Canada's best-known composers of minimalist music.<sup>82</sup> Although most of her piano music is minimalistic, she also created pieces in a range of styles including twelve-tone and jazz. She composed at least 43 works for solo piano. This number, however, grows significantly to approximately 125 as many of her works contain multiple movements that easily stand-alone. Her works are accessible to pianists from late-elementary to advanced skill levels. Some works, like *Sea Flea* (1962), *Quodlibet* (1966), and *Cool Blue & Red Hot* (1980), were specifically written for piano students, whereas others, like *Rivers, 3<sup>rd</sup> Set* (1981, revised in 2005), *Glass Houses* (1981, revised in 2009), *Qualities of Consonance* (1998), and *Figures* (2001) include intricate passagework, relentless repetition, and densely textured patterns best approached by pianists with advanced musicality and technique.

### 2.2 Reception of Southam's Piano Works

Southam's piano music has been well-received, with the Canadian Music Centre considering her *Glass Houses* a "hallmark of 20<sup>th</sup> Century Canadian composition."<sup>83</sup> Her minimalist music has been described as, "Steve Reich-school minimalism shot through with a silvery, birdsong lyricism all of her own."<sup>84</sup> The presence of lyricism is also acknowledged by pianist Christina Petrowska Quilico. A champion of Southam's piano

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<sup>82</sup> Elaine Keillor, *Music in Canada: Capturing Landscape and Diversity* (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2006), 255.

<sup>83</sup> Nicole Bain, "Centrediscs Releases Nominated for Two 2017 East Coast Music Awards," Press Release, Canadian Music Centre, January 31, 2017.

<sup>84</sup> Natasha Gauthier, "Christina Petrowska Quilico finding peace in contemporary music," *Ottawa Citizen* (Ottawa, ON), August 1, 2014, <http://ottawacitizen.com/uncategorized/christina-petrowska-quilico-finding-peace-in-contemporary-music>.

music, Petrowska Quilico spoke of the joyful fluidity in Southam's music and praised her ability to create a sense of "lyrical introspection," within minimalist composition.<sup>85</sup>

Others admire the emotional expressiveness of Southam's works that is sometimes tremendously boisterous while at other times extraordinarily tender, subtle, and contemplative.<sup>86</sup> Furthermore, Southam's ability to create impactful music with reduced compositional materials is often celebrated.<sup>87</sup> Composer and producer David Jaeger explained that Southam was a curious person who was "fascinated" by the possibilities of a single piano note.<sup>88</sup> John Terauds' review of Eve Egoyan's album *5* also praises Southam's use of reductive material, saying the music left him "slack-jawed in wonder at an imagination that can achieve so much with so little."<sup>89</sup> Overall, Southam's remarkable piano music is widely cherished and highly esteemed.

## 2.3 Compositional Approach & Tone Rows

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<sup>85</sup> Wendalyn Bartley, "The Current Within the Music," *The Whole Note*, August 30, 2018, <https://www.thewholenote.com/index.php/newsroom/beatcolumns-sp-2121861476/newmusic2/28242-pianist-christina-petrowska-quilico-the-current-within-the-music>; Robert Rowat, "How Christina Petrowska Quilico finds the flow in Ann Southam's music," *CBC Music*, September 24, 2018, <https://www.cbc.ca/music/read/how-christina-petrowska-quilico-finds-the-flow-in-ann-southam-s-music-1.5044794>.

<sup>86</sup> Eitan Cornfield, producer of *Ann Southam: Canadian Composer Portraits, Documentary*, 2005, Centrediscs CMCCD 10505, CD, Track 1 01:40, speaker Rachel Browne.; Tamara Bernstein, "Southam, Ann." *Grove Music Online*, (2013), accessed 31 Jul. 2019, <https://doi.org.proxy1.lib.uwo.ca/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.45467>.; Wendalyn, Bartley, "Listening and the piano Explosion," *The Whole Note*, March 28, 2013, <https://www.thewholenote.com/index.php/newsroom/beatcolumns-sp-2121861476/newmusic2/22874-listening-and-the-piano-explosion>.

<sup>87</sup> Jay Somerset, "The Women in Fleece," *The Walrus*, April 12, 2012, <https://thewalrus.ca/the-woman-in-fleece/>; Bernstein, "Ann Southam," *Grove Music Online*.

<sup>88</sup> David Jaeger, liner notes to *Soundspinning: Music of Ann Southam*, performed by Christina Petrowska Quilico, Centrediscs CMCCD 26018, 2018, CD.

<sup>89</sup> John Terauds, "Keyboard Thursday album review: Pianist Eve Egoyan's enchanting drift through music by Ann Southam," *Ludwig van Toronto*, April 18, 2013, <https://www.ludwig-van.com/toronto/2013/04/18/keyboard-thursday-album-review-pianist-eve-egoyans-enchanting-drift-through-music-by-ann-southam/>.

Southam composed her music at the piano. She valued working, writing, and playing by hand.<sup>90</sup> The majority of her scores are handwritten with many of her later works containing the postscript “writ by hand, played by hand.”<sup>91</sup> The physical act of making sounds on the piano was an essential part of her creative process. Southam explained that she would work out her ideas at the piano while paying particular attention to “what it feels like to have chords and notes and things in my hands, and what it feels like also to sit and listen to a sound,” and described this method as a sort of “mucking” around at the piano.<sup>92</sup> After the “disembodied world of electroacoustic music,” she enjoyed the pleasure of touch that working by hand offered.<sup>93</sup>

The piano at which Southam worked was her six-foot eight-inch Bechstein that she purchased in the 1960s. Southam loved the “bell-like” sound of her piano, and claimed that it likely influenced how she wrote for the instrument.<sup>94</sup> Although she did not elaborate with further examples, the bell-like tone likely influenced her treatment of texture. The heightened projection abilities of a ringing, effervescent tone would allow for certain notes and motifs to easily sing out clearly from the busy and seamless textures she used in pieces like *Rivers, 3<sup>rd</sup> Set*. Also, a piano with a bell-like tone often has a brighter, piercing start to the sound followed by a longer, gradual decay; an essential element in her slow minimalist works like *In Retrospect* and *Simple Lines of Enquiry*. Furthermore,

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<sup>90</sup> John Gray and Ann Southam, “Episode 5: Ann Southam,” in *The Composer’s Chair*, produced by The Canadian Music Centre, podcast, audio, 47:16, accessed August 4, 2019, <https://www.musiccentre.ca/node/65841>.

<sup>91</sup> Ann Southam, *Returnings I*, (Toronto: Canadian Music Centre, 2010), 6.

<sup>92</sup> Dennis Bathory-Kitsz and David Gunn, “If Only I Could Sing: Ann Southam in Conversation with Kalvos & Damian,” *Musicworks* 71, summer (1998): 22.; Ann Southam, interview by Ina Dennekamp, May 12, 1988, page 13, transcript and recording, The Paul D. Fleck Library and Archives at the Banff Centre, ID-ID06-ID06.71-ID06.71.2, <https://albertaonrecord.ca/transcript-of-interview-with-ann-southam>.

<sup>93</sup> Ann Southam, liner notes to *Canadian Composers Portrait Series: Ann Southam*, performed by Christina Petrowska Quilico, Centrediscs CMCCD 10505, 2005, CD.

<sup>94</sup> Gray and Southam, “Episode 5: Ann Southam,” 28:34.

her *Rivers, 2<sup>nd</sup> Set*, was once subtitled “The Bells” due to the “slightly clangorous effect” Southam heard in the piece.<sup>95</sup> Her Bechstein’s ability to create bell-like tones may have impacted her to both write and perceive the work in this way.

Southam loved to play the piano, but experienced restrictions due to the neurological condition focal dystonia.<sup>96</sup> She was transparent about how the limitations of the condition impacted the pacing, gestures, and overall style in her piano music. For example, to play quickly, she alternated the patterns between the hands in *Rivers, 3<sup>rd</sup> Set*. When the limitations became too frustrating, she began composing slower pieces using pared down materials, remarking that it is “amazing what you can find when you have to make a detour.”<sup>97</sup> And her discoveries were amazing indeed, with Southam creating remarkable reductive, slow, and contemplative works for piano that combine the minimalist and serialist languages. These slower minimalist pieces complement her faster, virtuosic minimalist works perfectly.

When composing, Southam would experiment with patterns at the piano.<sup>98</sup> These patterns were often made from her favourite twelve-tone rows. Southam’s use of tone rows was not rigid in the traditional Schoenberg sense.<sup>99</sup> She applied the device freely, using what she considered a “twelve interval row” (she likely meant twelve-tone or eleven interval row) as the source of melodic material for many of her piano works.<sup>100</sup> On

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<sup>95</sup> Bathory-Kitsch and Gunn, “If Only I Could Sing,” 27.

<sup>96</sup> *Tributaries: Reflections of Aiko Suzuki*, directed by Midi Onodera (Toronto, ON: Daruma Pictures Inc., 2009), DVD.; Ann Southam, interview by Ina Dennekamp, 1988, page 13.

<sup>97</sup> Eve Egoyan and Gayle Young, “Composition as Enquiry: The Explorational Music of Ann Southam,” *Musicworks* 101, summer (2008): 42.

<sup>98</sup> Cornfield, producer of *Ann Southam: Canadian Composer Portraits*, Track 6 00:32.

<sup>99</sup> Bernstein, “Ann Southam,” *Grove Music Online.*; Jaeger, liner notes to *Soundspinning: Music of Ann Southam*.

<sup>100</sup> Linda Catlin Smith, liner notes to *Simple Lines of Enquiry*, performed by Eve Egoyan, Centrediscs CMCCD 14609, 2009, CD.

many occasions, people have spoken of one single tone row that Southam used as a starting point for many pieces.<sup>101</sup> Even Southam alluded to the idea that there was a sole row that she turned to, explaining that she often felt she was finding different solutions to the same problem when composing:

Maybe that's because I've used the same twelve-tone row in so many pieces. It's a row that I came up with years ago. In fact, I've been fascinated by it for over fifteen years. That doesn't mean that I write strict twelve-tone music. I never have. But many of my pieces are based on this same row.<sup>102</sup>

Southam, however, used at least four different tone rows in her piano music.

Tamara Bernstein highlights two that she labeled Southam's favourite rows in her 2013 *New Grove* article, spelling the first as Db, Ab, B, D, G, E, A, Gb, C, Bb, Eb, and F, and the second as D, B, Eb, Gb, G, E, A, Ab, C, F, Bb, Db.<sup>103</sup> These two rows along with two more were found handwritten on staff paper with all transpositions at The Paul D. Fleck Library and Archives at the Banff Centre for Arts and Creativity.<sup>104</sup> I have labeled these rows Tone Row No. 1, No. 2, No. 3 and No. 4 and they are illustrated in Figures 2.1 through 2.4.

These rows are the essential compositional building blocks of many of Southam's piano pieces and although some rows are used more than others, there are piano pieces that use each of the four rows. Each row and its respective pieces are listed in Appendix 2. Tone Row No. 3 is indeed an inversion of Tone Row No. 2 (I8), but since there are

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<sup>101</sup> Ibid.; Elissa Poole, "Composer has a tough tone row to hoe," *The Globe and Mail* (Toronto, ON), Mar. 15, 1997.; Jaeger, liner notes to *Soundspinning: Music of Ann Southam*.

<sup>102</sup> Larry Lake, liner notes to *Glass Houses: Music of Ann Southam*, performed by pianists Stephen Clarke, Eve Egoyan, and Composers' Orchestra & String Quartet conducted by Gary Kulesha, CBC Records MVCD 1124, 1999, CD.

<sup>103</sup> Bernstein, "Ann Southam," *Grove Music Online*.

<sup>104</sup> Ann Southam, "Tone rows and drafts by Ann Southam," 20<sup>th</sup> century music manuscripts (Banff Alberta: The Paul D. Fleck Library and Archives at the Banff Centre). [AS-AS3-AS3.051]

pieces written using this row as its prime form, it will be considered a row in its own right. Overall, Southam mostly used the prime form in her works, though transpositions are occasionally used as well. Often, she would use the row for multi-movement works; starting each movement on a different row pitch while maintaining the same order. Sometimes Southam would also occasionally change just one note in the row, likely for expressive purposes.<sup>105</sup>



Figure 2.1: Tone Row No. 1



Figure 2.2: Tone Row No. 2



Figure 2.3: Tone Row No. 3, an inversion of No. 2 (I8)



Figure 2.4: Tone Row No. 4

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<sup>105</sup> Bernstein, "Ann Southam," *Grove Music Online*.

## 2.4 Southam's Music for Solo Piano

Next is an overview of Southam's known music for solo piano intended to show the extent of Southam's vast creative output for the instrument. For ease of discussion and comprehension, the pieces have been grouped into categories of works with common attributes: Early Non-Minimalist Music, Jazz Style Works, Minimalism, and Blended Works. The categories do not strictly follow chronological order, but Southam's writing approach evolved over time so there is an element of chronology in the organization of her works. The discussion below aims to capture the overall essence of each category; specific, individual descriptions of each work, along with information about where to attain the score, duration, and available recordings, can be found in Appendix 1.

### 2.4.1 Early Non-Minimalist Music

Southam began composing piano music when she was a teenager.<sup>106</sup> At this time, she would imitate the romantic styles of Chopin and Brahms.<sup>107</sup> Unfortunately, I have not located any existing music from this time in Southam's life. However, there are a handful of pieces that still exist from Southam's time studying composition with Samuel Dolin at the Royal Conservatory of Music in the 1960s. There are two pieces that are relatively well-known from this era called *Four Bagatelles* (1961/1962) and *Altitude Lake* (1963). Four other early works for piano were found at The Paul D. Fleck Library and Archives at the Banff Centre titled: *Strangeness, Nocturne and Fandango* (ca. 1960s),<sup>108</sup> *Suite for*

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<sup>106</sup> Ann Southam, interview by Ina Dennekamp, 1988, page 1.

<sup>107</sup> Ibid.

<sup>108</sup> Ann Southam, *Strangeness, Nocturne and Fandango*, unpublished score, (Banff Alberta: The Paul D. Fleck Library and Archives at the Banff Centre, 196-). [AS-AS3-AS3-001]

*Piano* (January-February 1963),<sup>109</sup> *Counterparts* (April 1966),<sup>110</sup> and *Sonata in One Movement* (1966).<sup>111</sup> These four works remain unpublished and in their initial handwritten form. No commercial recordings of these works are available. There is also evidence that a fifth piece called *Toccata* (1966) may exist but the location of the score is unknown.<sup>112</sup>

At the time of Southam's formal training the prominent trend in composing was to use the twelve-tone system. These six works reflect Southam's more conventional experimentation with the twelve-tone language. They also capture the stylistic characteristics of the avant-garde. In a 2008 interview, Southam reminisced about other influences that shaped her piano music as a student composer:

When I started studying composition with Sam Dolin I began with piano music. I remember that I absolutely loved Charles Ives' *Concord Sonata*. I loved the big chords, fistfuls of notes, the physicality of it. I also loved Copland's *Variations for Piano*. Again it was the physicality of it that appealed to me, and also the ingenious use of very simple material. I wrote music that was very influenced by these styles.<sup>113</sup>

Her solo piano work *Altitude Lake* reflects the thick textures that appealed to a young Southam. The passages from p.19 of the score, as seen in Figure 2.5, demonstrate her use of densely voiced chords covering nearly five octaves of the piano keyboard. Not only does *Altitude Lake* illustrate Southam's thick, physically demanding, chordal writing, but the work also shows the expressive extremes that are a prominent feature of

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<sup>109</sup> Ann Southam, *Suite for Piano*, unpublished score, (Banff Alberta: The Paul D. Fleck Library and Archives at the Banff Centre, 1963). [ASC.002]

<sup>110</sup> Ann Southam, *Counterparts*, unpublished score, (Banff Alberta: The Paul D. Fleck Library and Archives at the Banff Centre, 1963). [ASC.003]

<sup>111</sup> Ann Southam, *Sonata in One Movement*, unpublished score (Banff Alberta: The Paul D. Fleck Library and Archives at the Banff Centre, 1966). [ACS-001]

<sup>112</sup> Performing Rights Organization of Canada Limited, *Ann Southam*, (Toronto ON, June 1981).; "London Diary for April," *The Musical Times* 108, no. 1489 (March 1967): 283.

<sup>113</sup> Egoyan and Young, "Composition as Enquiry," 40.



her early music for solo piano. As illustrated in the excerpt from pp. 15-16 in Figure 2.6, the pitch material covers a wide range of the piano with note configurations creating un-singable, disjunct melodic lines and gestures that leap around the piano keyboard. The pacing is flexible, using accelerandos that suddenly shift back to a slower tempo. The dynamics reach the extremes of *fortississimo* which then abruptly shift to a gentler *mezzo piano* at the end of p. 16. All of these expressive extremes paired with the dissonance of the twelve-tone system create an emotionally charged, edgy, and discordant sound that is highly evocative.

Handwritten musical score for piano, page 19 from *Altitude Lake*. The score is written on three systems of staves. The top system has a tempo marking of quarter note = 40. The music features dense chordal textures with many notes per measure, often beamed together. The notation includes treble and bass clefs, various accidentals, and dynamic markings like 'f' and 'cresc'. The bottom system shows a diagonal line crossing out the first two staves, indicating a section that is not to be played.

Figure 2.5: p. 19 from *Altitude Lake* illustrates the dense chordal textures of Southam's early music for piano.

The image displays five systems of handwritten musical notation for piano. Each system consists of two staves (treble and bass clef) with various musical symbols and annotations. The first system includes a tempo marking 'accelerando' and a '3' over a triplet. The second system has a tempo marking '♩ = 60' and a 'rit.' marking. The third system features a 'b' marking above a note. The fourth system shows a '5' over a note. The fifth system includes 'mp subito' markings in both staves. The notation is dense and expressive, with many slurs and dynamic markings.

Figure 2.6: Half of p. 15 through p. 16 of *Altitude Lake* showing the expressive extremes of Southam's early music for piano.

Southam's treatment of rhythm in her early works reflects the complex trends of the avant-garde. As observed in the passages from her *Sonata in One Movement for Piano* (Figure 2.7), both shifting and irregular meters are prominently featured. This passage also shows Southam's use of complex polyrhythms. Polyrhythms are a particularly pertinent feature of this piece, but also appear in her other early works. Shifting and irregular meters are also used in Southam's *Four Bagatelles*, as exemplified in the excerpt from the fourth Bagatelle in Figure 2.8. This example also shows Southam's application of thinner textures and fast, perpetual, and virtuosic passages that capture the same forceful, dissonant intensity of her more densely textured writing. We will later see this style of writing return in pieces such as *Figures* and *Qualities of Consonance*.

The *Bagatelles* also shed light on Southam's application of musical form in her early works for solo piano. Each movement is written in a traditional rounded binary or ternary form paired with a modern treatment of the other musical elements. The use of traditional forms is a common aspect of her early works. The structure of *Suite for Piano* resembles that of a Baroque dance suite. It opens with a slow prelude followed by two fast dances, one more contrapuntal and the other like a Gigue, and a third slow Sarabande. It concludes with a complex three-voice Fugue in 5/8 time. We see the use of traditional forms again in her three character pieces for piano entitled, *Strangeness*, *Nocturne*, and *Fandango*. Each of these pieces are in rounded binary form; again, pairing traditional structures with the modern sensibilities of the mid-twentieth century. This juxtaposition of two seemingly opposing concepts is further reflected in the twelve-tone minimalist music she would later write.

The image displays a handwritten musical score for a piano solo, titled "Sonata in One Movement". The score is divided into two main sections. The upper section consists of four systems of music, each with a treble and bass staff. The first system is in 6/4 time, marked with a piano (*p*) dynamic. The second system is in 4/4 time, marked with a mezzo-forte (*mf*) dynamic. The third system is in 4/4 time, marked with a mezzo-piano (*mp*) dynamic. The fourth system is in 4/4 time, marked with a mezzo-forte (*mf*) dynamic. The lower section consists of two systems of music, both in 4/4 time, marked with a mezzo-forte (*mf*) dynamic. The tempo is indicated as  $\text{♩} = 208$ . The score is characterized by complex polyrhythms, including triplets, sextuplets, and eighth-note patterns. The key signature is B-flat major, and the piece features frequent changes in meter and time signature.

Figure 2.7: The passages from p. 2 and p. 16 from *Sonata in One Movement*, show the irregular and shifting meters as well as the complex polyrhythms in Southam's early music for solo piano.

The image displays a musical score for the Fourth Bagatelle "Allegro con moto," measures 10-18. The score is written for piano and consists of four systems of staves. The first system shows the beginning of measure 10 with a mezzo-piano (*mp*) dynamic and a crescendo leading to a mezzo-forte (*mf*) dynamic. The second system continues the piece with a piano (*p*) dynamic marking. The third system features a fortissimo (*ff*) dynamic and includes an 8va (octave) marking. The fourth system concludes with a piano (*p*) dynamic. The music is characterized by intricate sixteenth-note passages and shifting, irregular meters, as indicated by the various time signatures (4/8, 3/8, 2/8) and the complex rhythmic patterns throughout the piece.

Figure 2.8: mm. 10-18 of the Fourth Bagatelle "Allegro con moto," illuminating both the shifting and irregular meters as well as Southam writing with thinner textures of perpetual sixteenth note passages.

Tamara Bernstein argues that it is difficult to “find traces of Southam’s later voice within these examples of the ‘gnarly’ 12-note writing expected from young Canadian composers at the time.”<sup>114</sup> I, however, disagree. If you look closely at these earlier works, there are not only hints of the more romantic leanings of her teenaged years, but one can also hear and see glimpses of the gentle lyricism and use of patterns that would become an essential part of her works for piano. The second bagatelle is a prime example (Figure 2.9). This piece features a cantabile melodic line, and although constructed from the dissonant pitch material of a tone row, it is conjunct, singable, and phrased using a conventional rising and falling arc. The influence of the romantic style is also reflected in the marking “tempo rubato” indicating a flexible sense of pacing. She also writes an intense emotional build in the passages from mm. 5-11 that draws from the writing styles of Chopin, Brahms, and Rachmaninov. Next, Southam’s affinity for patterns can be found in the A sections. These sections feature a gentle ostinato that is repeated in the lower voices that supports the cantabile soprano line. In summation, Southam’s, romantic sensibilities, lyricism, and fondness of patterns is not completely lost in her early twelve-tone works.

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<sup>114</sup> Bernstein, “Ann Southam,” *Grove Music Online*.

Cantabile - very slowly - tempo rubato

*mp*

a little faster

*dim.*

accelerando e cresc.

*f*

Molto rit. e dim.

Tempo I

*pp*

Molto rit.

*ppp*

The image displays a musical score for a piano piece, identified as the second bagatelle. It consists of five systems of music, each with a treble and bass clef. The first system is marked 'Cantabile - very slowly - tempo rubato' and 'mp'. A red box highlights a repeating pattern in the bass line. The second system is marked 'a little faster' and 'dim.', with another red box highlighting a pattern. The third system is marked 'accelerando e cresc.' and 'f'. The fourth system is marked 'Molto rit. e dim.' and 'Tempo I', with a red box highlighting a pattern. The fifth system is marked 'Molto rit.' and 'ppp', with a large red box highlighting a pattern. The score includes various musical notations such as slurs, accents, and triplets.

Figure 2.9: The second bagatelle reflects Southam's romantic side as well as her lyricism and affinity for patterns (the ostinato is surrounded by the red boxes).



In addition to the aforementioned early non-minimalist works, there are two more solo piano pieces that are pedagogical in nature from Southam's student years that are worth mentioning. *Sea Flea* (1962) was originally part of "The Festival Series," a collection of new beginner and intermediate piano solos by Canadian composers.<sup>115</sup> Reviewed as a piece that "tosses interesting patterns between the hands," by Maurice Hinson,<sup>116</sup> *Sea Flea* is an effective piece for exposing students to polytonality as well as more advanced polyphonic textures. It is included on the Level 6 repertoire list by the Royal Conservatory of Music and in class 105 (grades 5 and 6) of the Contemporary Showcase Festival.<sup>117</sup> *Quodlibet* (1966) is a second pedagogically inclined work that is an effective study for introducing early advanced students to non-tonal systems.<sup>118</sup> The word *Quodlibet* references a musical idea popular in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries that combined unrelated text or counterpoint.<sup>119</sup> This notion is reflected in the dissonant two-voice counterpoint that creates an intriguing uneasiness. This piece is included on the repertoire list for class 109 (grades 9-10) of the Contemporary Showcase Festival.<sup>120</sup>

#### 2.4.2 Jazz Style Works

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<sup>115</sup> "The Festival Series for Piano," *American Music Teacher* 14, no. 6 (July-August 1965): 6.

<sup>116</sup> David L. Albee, David Carr Glover, Maurice Hinson, Despy Karlas, and Nelle O. Taylor, "Reviews music and books for studio, classrooms, rehearsal, halls and leisure: Piano," *American Music Teacher* 13, no. 6 (July-August 1964): 18, accessed April 6, 2018, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/43532792>.

<sup>117</sup> Alliance for Canadian New Music Projects, *Contemporary Showcase Festival: Piano Syllabus*, <http://acnmp.ca/syllabus/english-syllabus/>.

<sup>118</sup> Cameron McGraw, "An Annual Survey: Piano Music for Children," *Notes* 25, no. 2 (December, 1968): 345.

<sup>119</sup> Ann Southam, "Quodlibet," in *Ann Southam's Audio Archive*, performed by John Felice, (Banff Alberta: The Paul D. Fleck Library and Archives at the Banff Centre), CD. [AS-AS6-AS6.4-AS6.4.008]

<sup>120</sup> Alliance for Canadian New Music Projects, *Contemporary Showcase Festival: Piano Syllabus*, <http://acnmp.ca/syllabus/english-syllabus/>.

In addition to writing twelve-tone music, Southam also experimented with jazz style composition as a student, and then again later in 1970. Her jazz style pieces were written with piano students in mind, but should not be overlooked. They are a fun addition to a pianist's repertoire that are perfect for an encore or to add a bit of flair to a more classically inclined repertoire list. *3 in Blue: Jazz Preludes* (1965) and all five movements of *Five Shades of Blue* (1970) utilize the jazz language and feature quasi-improvisatory melodies, blues scales, syncopated rhythms, and the twelve-bar blues structure.

The third prelude from *3 in Blue* is an excellent example of Southam composing in a conventional jazz style. As observed in Figure 2.10, the piece begins with a slow introductory passage reminiscent of an improvised jazz solo. At the *tempo giusto*, a walking bassline is introduced that supports a melody of jazz style riffs constructed from the C blues scale. The piece also follows the twelve-bar blues structure. It comes to an exhilarating conclusion, using musical elements including rambunctious gestures that cover a wide range of the piano, accented chords, full dynamics, and tremolo figures. The final movement from *Five Shades of Blue* also captures this showy, virtuosic side of jazz style writing, with its fast, perpetual eighth-note passages that build to a spectacularly impactful conclusion.

Musical score for the third movement of *3 In Blue*, measures 8-35. The score is in 4/4 time and features a piano accompaniment with a walking bassline and a melodic line. The tempo is marked "Meno mosso" and the time signature is 4/4. The score includes dynamic markings such as *mf*, *f*, *p*, and *mp*, and performance instructions like "rit.", "espr. ad lib", and "sempre staccato". The key signature has one flat (B-flat).

Figure 2.10: mm. 8-35 of the third movement from *3 In Blue* illustrating Southam's use of using conventional jazz elements like solo passages, blues scales, walking bassline, and 12-bar blues structure.

Not all of Southam's jazz style pieces, however, follow tradition so conventionally. The third movement marked *Allegro* from *Five Shades of Blue* is written in the irregular meter of 5/8, features a chromatically altered walking bassline, and highly chromatic melodic riffs that reflect the spontaneity of jazz improvisation (Figure 2.11). These musical attributes create what sounds like a jazz style piece with a peculiar edge. This treatment of harmony is reflective of what became known as the "red-disonant line" or Southam's notable play on the tension between consonance and dissonance that would later appear in her minimalist works.

The image shows a handwritten musical score for the third movement of *Five Shades of Blue*. The score is written in 5/8 time, marked *Allegro* with a tempo of ♩ = 54. The dynamics are marked *mf sempre staccato*. The notation features a chromatically altered walking bassline and highly chromatic melodic riffs in both hands. The score is divided into three systems, each with a grand staff (treble and bass clefs). The first system includes a 'Ped' (pedal) marking and a '(b)' marking. The second system includes a 'Ped' marking. The third system includes a 'Ped' marking. The score is written in a style that suggests improvisation and spontaneity.

Figure 2.11: mm. 1-13 of the third movement of *Five Shades of Blue*, showing Southam's use of chromaticism, irregular meter, and spontaneous melodic riffs in her jazz style pieces.

Some of Southam's pieces in this style have a more relaxed groove. As observed in Figure 2.12, the second movement from *3 In Blue* is written in a compound time that allows for an exaggerated blues feel. Movement four from *Five Shades of Blue* also emphasizes the laidback blues style through the use of compound time and a distinct blues-swing accompaniment pattern supporting a quasi-improvisatory melodic line (Figure 2.13). Although Southam's jazz style pieces make up only a small portion of her output, they remain a beloved part of Canadian pedagogical repertoire. These pieces are a worthwhile pursuit for any classically trained pianist wishing to play in the jazz style.

The image displays a musical score for the second movement of *3 In Blue*, measures 1 through 8. The score is written for piano in a compound meter of 9/8. It begins with the tempo marking "Andantino" and a note value of "♩ = c.112". The first system shows measures 1 and 2, with a piano (*p*) dynamic marking. The second system shows measures 3 and 4. The third system shows measures 5 and 6, with a mezzo-forte (*mf*) dynamic marking. The score features a quasi-improvisatory melodic line in the right hand and a blues-swing accompaniment pattern in the left hand, both supported by a relaxed groove emphasized by the compound meter.

Figure 2.12: mm. 1-8 of the second movement of *3 in Blue* illustrates the relaxed blues style groove emphasized by the compound meter.

Figure 2.13: The fourth movement from *Five Shades of Blue* also demonstrates the laidback blues style of Southam's jazz pieces accentuated by the compound meter and blues-swing accompaniment.

Before moving on to Southam's minimalist music, there is one more set of pieces worth mentioning called *Cool Blue & Red Hot*, written for the Contemporary Showcase Festival in 1980.<sup>121</sup> Although not arguably in the jazz style,<sup>122</sup> *Cool Blue & Red Hot* has been included in this section due to its pedagogical nature. *Cool Blue* features irregular rhythmic groups and shifting meters. Sympathetic vibration through silently depressed keys creates an intriguing hue of overtones. Extended piano techniques like this are a prominent feature in other solo piano works including many of the pieces in *Rivers*, *3<sup>rd</sup> Set*, *Stiches in Time*, as well as *Qualities of Consonance* and *Strangeness*. *Cool Blue* is

<sup>121</sup> Alliance for Canadian New Music Projects, *Contemporary Showcase Festival: Piano Syllabus*, <http://acnmp.ca/syllabus/english-syllabus/>.

<sup>122</sup> Although some harmonies used in *Cool Blue* reflect the jazz style.

contrasted by a peppery, toccata-like piece that features a staccato ostinato accompaniment, dissonant harmonies, and shifting meters. This quirky set will add much needed variety to the piano teacher's late elementary repertoire library.

### 2.4.3 Minimalism

Southam's remarkable minimalist works are the highpoint of her music for solo piano. The following discussion captures the essence of her minimalist works and sheds light on Southam's wide-ranging compositional approach within the over-arching genre of minimalism. Music that is considered minimalist typically features pared-down musical materials, repetitive patterns, seamless textures, drones, and consonant harmonies. Conventional minimalist pieces are a-teleological, meaning they do not build towards climaxes or follow the typical patterns of musical tension and release of traditional Western music.<sup>123</sup> Musical processes outlining the contexts in which the sounds occur are an important aspect of minimalist music.<sup>124</sup> Southam openly proclaimed that she liked process,<sup>125</sup> and would "cook up," one when composing her minimalist pieces for piano.<sup>126</sup> When she created a process she liked, Southam would compose multiple works exploring the possibilities of that single compositional scheme.

Southam's *Glass Houses* (1981, revised in 2009) uses one of her most clearly perceptible minimalist processes. Each of the 15 pieces are based on a single, continuous ostinato played with the left hand. Most feature 7- or 13-note ostinatos, with one using a

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<sup>123</sup> Wim Mertens, *American Minimal Music*, trans. J. Hautekiet (Amersham UK: Kahn & Averill, 1983) 17.

<sup>124</sup> Michael Nyman, *Experimental Music: Cage and Beyond*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 4.

<sup>125</sup> Kim Echlin, "Glass Houses #5: Playing Plan," *The Citizen's Weekly* (Ottawa, ON), Oct. 5, 1997.

<sup>126</sup> Robert Everett-Green, "Ann Southam: A One-Woman Tone Poem," *Globe and Mail* (Toronto, ON), July 6, 2009: <https://www.theglobeandmail.com/arts/ann-southam-a-one-woman-tone-poem/article1199935/>.

15-note pattern, another 19, one other 9, with *Glass Houses No. 8*, using an ambitious 33-note ostinato. The ostinato supports the gradual addition and repetition of melodic cells, or “tunes,” that are spun out in a planned order until they are all present.<sup>127</sup> These tunes were inspired by the east coast fiddle music Southam would listen to as a child,<sup>128</sup> and capture this music’s beloved energy and peppiness. The pieces in *Glass Houses* are not only a prime example of a minimalist process based on the gradual addition and repetition of melodic cells, but also feature the quintessential seamless textures, repetitiveness, quick tempos, energetic nature, and bright tonal colours of minimalist music. In fact, Southam named these works *Glass Houses* to associate them with the well-known minimalist composer Philip Glass: “the ‘glass’ part of the title I actually got from Philip Glass. The repetitive nature of the music rather reminded me of him. The word ‘houses’ then came to me by word association. In this case, it probably refers to the structure.”<sup>129</sup>

Christina Petrowska Quilico describes the *Glass Houses* as “fiendishly difficult etudes for piano,” comparable to playing Ligeti’s Etudes and Liszt’s *Transcendental Etudes* mixed with the dense counterpoint of Bach.<sup>130</sup> She assisted in the revision of all the *Glass Houses* in 2009, transforming the score from their original “tune sheets,” as seen in Figure 2.14 to the more approachable and easily readable score observed in Figure 2.15. Originally the pieces had an optional tape accompaniment that linked Southam’s electroacoustic composition with her renewed interest in writing for acoustic instruments. The optional tape parts were left out of the 2009 revision. In all, there really is no doubt

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<sup>127</sup> Ann Southam, *Glass Houses*, ed. Christina Petrowska Quilico (Toronto: Canadian Music Centre, 1981/2009), preface.

<sup>128</sup> Ibid.

<sup>129</sup> Larry Lake, liner notes to *Glass Houses: Music of Ann Southam*, performed by pianists Stephen Clarke, Eve Egoyan, and Composers’ Orchestra & String Quartet conducted by Gary Kulesha, CBC Records MVCD 1124, 1999, CD.

<sup>130</sup> Petrowska-Quilico, *Glass Houses*, preface.



as to why the *Glass Houses* are Southam's best known works. Although they may be difficult at first, requiring proficient hand independence paired with an instinct for creating musical phrases out of what, on the page, appears to be calculated patterns, they are exhilarating showstoppers, great for an encore, or just to add a fantastically fun, bright, and intriguingly challenging work to a pianist's repertoire.

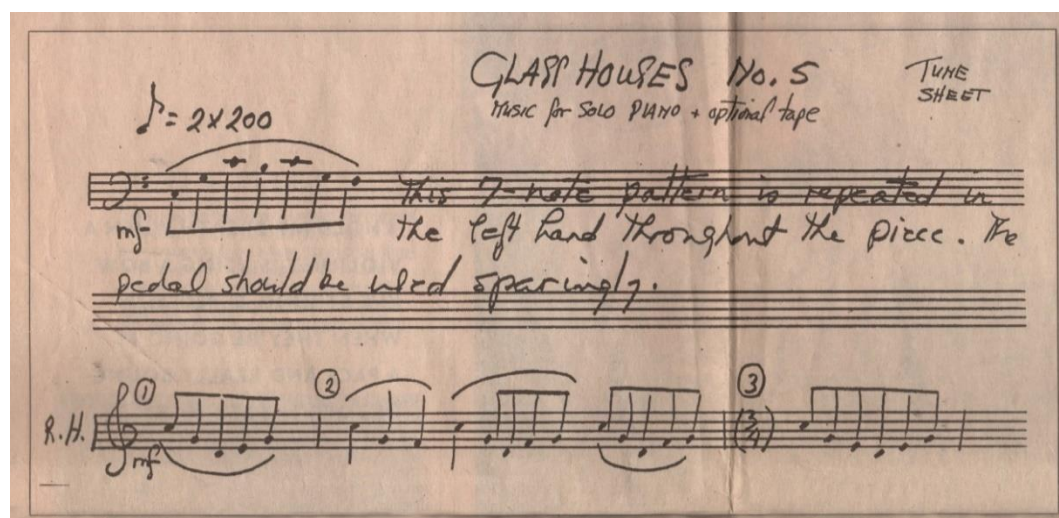


Figure 2.14: An excerpt from the original "Tune Sheets" for *Glass Houses No. 5*.

The image shows a revised musical score for "Glass Houses No. 5". It consists of three systems of staves. The first system has a grand staff (treble and bass clefs). The bass clef part has a 7-note pattern with fingerings 1-7. The treble clef part has a 5-note pattern with a circled 5 above it. The second system has three staves. The top staff has a 6-note pattern with a circled 6 above it. The middle staff has a 2-note pattern with a circled 2 above it, followed by a 1-note pattern with a circled 1 above it, and then a 4-note pattern with a circled 4 above it. The bottom staff has a 5-note pattern with a circled 5 above it, followed by a 7-note pattern with a circled 7 above it. The score includes various musical notations such as slurs, ties, and repeat signs.

Figure 2.15: mm. 1-38 of the revised score for *Glass Houses No. 5*.

Southam's next most popular minimalist pieces are her three sets of works titled *Rivers*. The 9 pieces in the *3<sup>rd</sup> Set* are similar to *Glass Houses* as they are also highly virtuosic while encompassing many of the defining features of typical minimalist style: they are fast and exuberant, consisting of continuous, gradually changing patterns made of brighter harmonic material that flow from beginning to end. Unlike *Glass Houses* however, the melodic material better reflects the scant patterns and small melodic motifs typically expected of music in the minimalist style. In the *3<sup>rd</sup> Set*, different patterns are played in each hand. As observed in Figure 2.16, one hand plays on the onbeats that alternates quickly with the other hand playing on the offbeats.<sup>131</sup> Each hand plays a different pattern, and as they overlap melodic motifs are revealed from the texture. This was Southam's favourite part of these works, explaining that, "I love the sound and I loved what was happening as the hands interacted and I love the little tunes and motifs that can be found in the interaction between the hands."<sup>132</sup> These motifs are rarely marked in the score, giving the performer the freedom to "find," the melodic material within the texture.<sup>133</sup>

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<sup>131</sup> This is the predominant writing approach to *Rivers, 3<sup>rd</sup> Set*, however there are occasionally passages where the hands play in unison.

<sup>132</sup> Cornfield, producer of *Ann Southam: Canadian Composer Portraits*, Track 6 05:02, speaker Ann Southam.

<sup>133</sup> Ann Southam, *Rivers (3rd Set)*, (Toronto: Canadian Music Centre, 1981/2005), preface.

Figure 2.16: mm. 63-68 from *Rivers No. 5, 3<sup>rd</sup> Set*, illustrating the overlapping texture and seamless patterns of this writing style.

Southam used this approach of writing quickly moving, gradually changing patterns in four other major minimalist works. *Stiches in Time* (1979) is a collection of short minimalist pieces called *Sonocycles I, II, III* and *Soundspinning I through VII*. Each piece can be considered precursors to *Rivers, 3<sup>rd</sup> Set* as they use the same intertwining textures of seamless, gradually changing patterns that produce hidden melodic motifs, but on a smaller scale. Southam's well-known work, *Remembering Schubert* (1993), also utilizes overlapping patterns, and although there are no direct quotes of Schubert's music, Southam felt there was "a vague reminiscence of Schubert in the music."<sup>134</sup> *Where?* is a

<sup>134</sup> Lake, liner notes to *Glass Houses: Music of Ann Southam*.; This author believes that while minimalistic, Schubert's style is reflected in this piece through the use of common compositional idioms of Schubert's era including the use of rondo form and patterns of pitches that are suggestive of the tonal harmonic

miniature composed in 1995 for Barbara Pritchard's Variation project<sup>135</sup> that also features interweaving textures, this time utilizing wide gestures and patterns of pitches that reflect the ambiguity of the title. Lastly, there are four pieces that can be considered a set written in 2007 called *Commotion Creek*, *Fiddle Creek*, *Fidget Creek*, and *Noisy River*. These pieces were inspired by *Rivers* and were written for Christina Petrowska Quilico.

Although similar in style, the patterns move simultaneously with the left hand consisting of cascading eighth note passages that are punctuated by longer, bell like pitches played by the right hand.

Southam is known for integrating the twelve-tone language with the minimalist style. She would do this through a process where a tone row is unfolded one note a time within a consonant framework of an ostinato and drone. The two pieces in *Rivers*, *1<sup>st</sup> Set* (1979, revised in 2004) and the eight pieces of *Rivers*, *2<sup>nd</sup> Set* (1979, revised in 2005) use this compositional approach. As observed in Figure 2.17, *Rivers No. 1*, *1<sup>st</sup> Set* features a seamlessly continuous sixteenth-note ostinato that is based on the consonant intervals of a Perfect 4th and Perfect 5<sup>th</sup> (the pitch combinations suggest D major triad with an added G). In the lower staff, a D drone is established and maintained from beginning to end. This drone, paired with the ostinato, creates a consonant soundscape that can be viewed as a sort of tonal centre on which the notes of the tone row are unfolded in the middle voice. Southam explained that the pitches in the row can be considered a twelve-note

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practices. There are also sudden shifts between sections that could possibly be reflecting Schubert's approach to modulation.

<sup>135</sup> Jaeger, liner notes to *Soundspinning: Music of Ann Southam*.

melody being presented twelve times, each time starting on a different note in the row,  
 “as if telling a story from twelve different points of view.”<sup>136</sup>

Figure 2.17: mm. 1-8 from *Rivers No. 1, 1st Set* illustrating Southam’s process where a tone row is built within the consonant framework of an ostinato and drone.

<sup>136</sup> Ann Southam, liner notes to *Canadian Composers Portrait Series: Ann Southam*, performed by Christina Petrowska Quilico, Centrediscs CMCCD 10505, 2005, CD.

Unlike the *1<sup>st</sup>* and *3<sup>rd</sup>* *Sets* that capture the faster and virtuosic side of minimalist music, the eight pieces in the *2<sup>nd</sup>* *Set* embrace the slower, reflective, and meditative qualities of minimalism. Each of the pieces in *Rivers*, *2<sup>nd</sup>* *Set* feature a tone row treated through a linear additive process<sup>137</sup> where the pitches of the row are gradually introduced one at a time. As observed in Figure 2.18, a slowly moving ostinato provides a continuous “consonant ground,”<sup>138</sup> of a minor third that supports the building of the row. Drones are also introduced to enforce this tonal foundation as well. The right-hand ostinato is, however, not meant to be solely in the background as the pattern does have some melodic value when interacting with the offbeat entries of the row pitches played by the left hand. The resulting motifs from this interaction can be “noticed,” like in *Rivers*, *3<sup>rd</sup>* *Set*.<sup>139</sup> When discussing the *2<sup>nd</sup>* *Set*, Southam explained how she liked the emotional quality of the changing intervals (row notes) against the tonal centre (ostinato):

Sometimes [the sounds] suggest sort of a diatonic context, and you expect that it’s going to go in a certain direction — and it doesn’t. It all falls apart and goes off somewhere else. And this can be frustrating and you work to rationalize this. I like the changing emotional quality in these intervals that are set up as the piece goes along.<sup>140</sup>

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<sup>137</sup> A musical process where notes are added after every cycle of the already added pitches (i.e., 1, 1 2, 1 2 3, 1 2 3 4, 1 2 3 4 5 etc.). Dan Warburton, “A Working Terminology for Minimal Music,” *Integral*, vol. 2 (1988): 146, accessed January 28, 2019, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/40213909>.

<sup>138</sup> Southam, liner notes to *Canadian Composers Portrait Series: Ann Southam*, CD.

<sup>139</sup> Ann Southam, *Rivers (2nd Set)*, (Toronto: Canadian Music Centre, 1979/2005), preface.

<sup>140</sup> Bathory-Kitsz and Gunn, “If Only I Could Sing,” 27.

$\downarrow = 60$  approx. Serene.

The musical score is handwritten and consists of three systems, each with two staves. The first system begins with a tempo marking of  $\downarrow = 60$  and the word "Serene." The first staff of each system contains a melodic line in treble clef, while the second staff contains a bass line. The first staff starts with a piano (*p*) dynamic. The bass line in the first system introduces an ostinato pattern. The second and third systems show the continuation of this ostinato and the introduction of tone row pitches in the upper staff. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, slurs, and dynamic markings.

Figure 2.18: mm. 1-9 from *Rivers No. 1, 2nd Set*. Observe the initial introduction of the ostinato, followed by the tone row pitches, and then the drone.

Before moving on to the next pieces, it is worth noting that Southam wished for consistency in writing the titles of her *Rivers*. I have both written and seen variations such as “Rivers Set 2” or “Set 3, Rivers.” There is however a particular way Southam wished for these works to be labeled, and in correspondence with pianist Louise Bessette, Southam explained that, “the collection of pieces is now being referred to as Rivers, 2<sup>nd</sup> Set (or 1<sup>st</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> Set) as opposed to Set 2 (or 1 or 3).”<sup>141</sup> As we write these titles, especially in concert programs, we can strive to honour Southam’s wish regarding the labeling of these beloved works.

Next, Southam began to explore the emotional qualities of the tone rows even more deeply in her slow reflective works that fully embody the reductive side of minimalism. These works, including *Soundstill* (1979, revised in 1999), *Slow Music: Meditations on a Twelve Tone Row* (1979), *Soundings for a New Piano: 12 Meditations on a Twelve Tone Row* (1986), *Spatial View of Pond I* (1983, revised in 2006) and *II* (2007), *In Retrospect* (2004), *Simple Lines of Inquiry* (2007), and *Pond Life: Simple Forms of Inquiry* (2008), differ from *Rivers, 2<sup>nd</sup> Set* as Southam leaves out the unifying force of an ostinato. Instead, these pieces follow processes where tone row pitches are gradually introduced in a thin, single voice texture. With the exception of some movements from *Soundings for A New Piano* that are slightly more forceful in character using *forte* dynamics and some octaves, these works are typically quiet, reflective, calm, and gentle. They are therefore wholly in opposition to both her fast and busy minimalist works and densely textured, emotionally overt early twelve-tone works for piano.

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<sup>141</sup> Ann Southam to Louise Bessette, February 18, 2005, unpublished letter (Banff Alberta: The Paul D. Fleck Library and Archives at the Banff Centre). [AS-AS2-AS2.006]



Southam described her works like this as “investigations into the emotional possibilities of the 12-tone row.”<sup>142</sup> In these reductive works, melodic cells are turned around, and as row pitches are added, the emotional effects caused by the gradually changing sonorities are highlighted. The slow tempo and long notes add an even deeper, contemplative nature to the “investigation.” As the pieces in this style evolved, Southam began to develop the use of space and silence even further, explaining that she liked the “business of waiting,” and integrated this idea into her pieces through even slower tempos and longer moments of stillness that demand great patience.<sup>143</sup>

*Slow Music: Meditations on a Twelve Tone Row*, is one of Southam’s first pieces written with this slow and reductive minimalist approach. The opening of the first movement can be observed in Figure 2.19. The piece is based on the first four notes in the row. These notes are rotated circularly (i.e., 1234, 2341, 3412, 4123), while each new tone row note is introduced phrase by phrase. As the notes are added, the sonorities are affected, and so is the “emotional climate.”<sup>144</sup> Southam used this term emotional climate to describe the effects of the sound qualities created by the mixing of the tone row notes. The “climate” or mood shifts as more notes are added to the soundscape. The notes in the row are added through ascending gestures with a rhythmic scheme of fast notes, in this case sixteenth notes, leading to a longer sustained pitch (the new pitch). Although there are slight variations, this process where the initial pitches are used as a foundation or drone figure to support the addition of more pitches from the row in a thin texture, along with the rhythmic scheme of faster moving notes leading to sustained pitches, is applied

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<sup>142</sup> Ann Southam, “Rivers: CD editing notes by Southam,” (Banff Alberta: The Paul D. Fleck Library and Archives at the Banff Centre): 3-4. [AS-AS2-AS2.33]

<sup>143</sup> Bathory-Kitsz and Gunn, “If Only I Could Sing,” 28.

<sup>144</sup> Egoyan and Young, “Composition as Enquiry,” 42.

in *Soundings for a New Piano* (movements 1-7, 10 and 12), *Simple Lines of Inquiry*, and *Pond Life*.

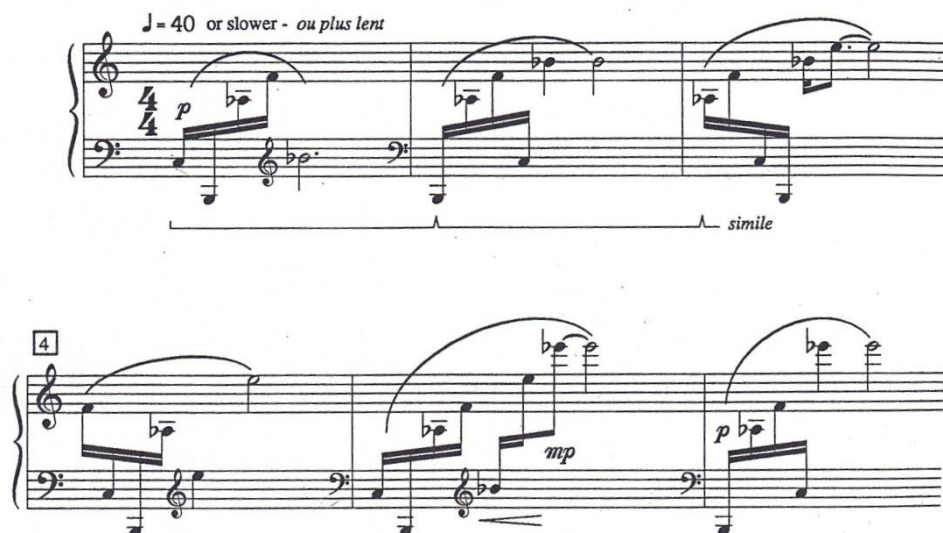


Figure 2.19: mm. 1-6 from the first movement of *Slow Music: Meditations on a Twelve Tone Row* exemplifying the thin textures and tone-row building processes of Southam's highly reductive minimalist pieces for solo piano.

Southam had a longstanding collaborative relationship with pianist Eve Egoyan. In a 2008 interview, Southam praised Egoyan's ability to draw listeners into these slow, reflective minimalist works, and credits Egoyan for encouraging her to focus on the timbre of the piano even more deeply.<sup>145</sup> This notion of deep listening is reflected in the very still, highly minimal work *In Retrospect* written in 2004 (Figure 2.20). The process of tone-row building is still present, but this time the notes are added even more gradually than what has been seen and heard before. Barlines have been eliminated, and the quintessential melodic gestures of faster notes leading to sustained longer pitches is

<sup>145</sup> Egoyan and Young, "Composition as Enquiry," 42.

replaced with slower moving patterns of quarter and half notes that lead to sustained whole notes and dotted half notes. An attempt has been made to encourage performers to allow the sounds to decay away before starting the next gesture through specific tempo markings that shift even slower for the sustained pitches. From this point on, Southam would write this style of minimal works, including *Simple Lines of Inquiry* and *Pond Life*, without barlines and even slower tempo indications because “when the music is slow, there is lots of time to appreciate the actual sound of the piano itself.”<sup>146</sup>

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<sup>146</sup> Egoyan and Young, “Composition as Enquiry,” 42.

**IN RETROSPECT**

$\text{♩} = 58-60$  Quietly expressive, reflective

pp

$\text{rit. } \text{♩} = 40-42$

$\text{♩} = 58+$   $\text{rit. } \text{♩} = 40+$

$\text{♩} = 58+$   $\text{♩} = 40+$   $\text{♩} = 58+$   $\text{rit. } \text{♩} = 40+$

$\text{♩} = 58+$   $\text{♩} = 40+$   $\text{♩} = 58+$   $\text{♩} = 40+$

$\text{♩} = 58+$   $\text{rit. } \text{♩} = 40+$   $\text{♩} = 58+$   $\text{♩} = 40+$

$\text{♩} = 58+$   $\text{♩} = 40+$   $\text{♩} = 58+$   $\text{♩} = 40+$

© 2004 Ann Southam. \* All such *Pens* durations and all tempo markings are approximate.

Figure 2.20: p. 1 from *In Retrospect*, illustrating the evolution of Southam's reductive writing style. The music is sparser, slower, and more gradual.

Listening deeply to the quality of the piano's sound is also an essential part of the final minimalist process created by Southam. This type of piece has been coined "Returnings style," by Tamara Bernstein.<sup>147</sup> It first appeared in *Given Time* composed in 1993, and then reappeared fifteen years later in a work titled *There and Back*. Southam hit her stride with this process in *Returnings I* and *Returnings II: a meditation*, both composed in 2010, the last year of her life. *There and Back*, along with five other works in this style, *Returnings A Flat* (2009), *Returnings II: alternate version* (2010), and three unnamed pieces now known as *In G*, *In Bb* and *In Ab*, were found after Southam's death.

Although there are some slight variances, each of these Returnings style works follow the process of gradually building tone rows within the consonant framework of drones and chords. As can be observed in Figure 2.21, there is a three voiced texture. In the middle part, a tone row is assembled in octaves one note at a time. The unfolding of the row is accompanied by the consonant compositional devices of a perfect fifth drone in the lower part, and triads and cluster chords in the upper part. The droning chords and perfect fifth work together to "accommodate the dissonance (of the row)."<sup>148</sup> These slow, contemplative pieces are written in a compound meter and use persistent fermatas that prolong time while highlighting the gradually shifting sonorities of juxtaposing forces. Southam has been praised for creating an unending and emotionally subtle musical experience within these pieces.<sup>149</sup>

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<sup>147</sup> Tamara Bernstein, liner notes to *5*, performed by Eve Egoyan, Centrediscs CMCCD 19113, 2013, CD.

<sup>148</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>149</sup> Tamara Bernstein, liner notes to *Returnings*, performed by Eve Egoyan, Centrediscs CMC CD17211, 2011, CD.

The image shows a handwritten musical score for three staves: Upper, Middle, and Lower. The tempo is marked as quarter note = 108. The key signature has one sharp (F#). The score includes dynamic markings like 'p' and 'simile', and a performance instruction '\* = ♩ throughout.' The music features a complex texture with overlapping patterns, characteristic of Southam's 'Returnings Style'.

Figure 2.21: mm. 1-16 from *Returnings II: a Meditation*, illustrating Southam's "Returnings Style" where tone rows are assembled within the consonant framework of a droning perfect fifth and chords.

In conclusion, Southam's minimalist pieces cover a wide range of compositional approaches within the genre of minimalism. Some are fast, energetic, and bright, featuring gradually changing, seamlessly repeating patterns. Others are highly reductive, offering an exquisitely subtle expression of sounds. Some lie between these extremes, featuring the ostinatos and drones of minimalism interacting with the tension of the twelve-tone language. Her original minimalist processes also contribute to the distinctiveness of her music. All are outstanding works, offering pianists interesting options to add minimalism, a style that is often misunderstood and under-represented, to their performance repertoire.

#### 2.4.4 Blended Works

This final group of works for solo piano blend both the minimalist and conventional twelve-tone style of Southam's writing. They unify the full-textured, emotionally overt, twelve-tone music she cultivated as a young student composer (that will be referred to as the maximal), with elements of the reductive, patterned, process music of her minimalist style. These pieces were written from the point of her return to writing for acoustic instruments in the late 1970s, through to 2001, and include *Fifteen* (1977), *Patterns of Nine* (1977), movements 8 and 11 from *Soundings for a New Piano: 12 Meditations on a Twelve Tone Row* (1986), *Qualities of Consonance* (1998), and *Figures* (2001). These works portray both Southam's maximal and minimal sides.

Two works, *Fifteen* and *Patterns of Nine*, stand out in Southam's creative output. They are unique specimens. Both pieces capture the seamless textures and process aspects of minimalist music as they use planned patterns presented in a fuller form that are gradually broken down into smaller fragments leading to sustained chords interrupting the forward motion of the piece. *Patterns of Nine* uses a tonal sounding series of nine notes (D G A G C D G F# A) and *Fifteen* uses Tone Row No. 3 illustrated in Figure 2.3. Both pieces are written with a mostly two voice texture of propelling sixteenth notes. Although patterned and continuous with the eventual addition of long sustained tones, these pieces do not sound wholly minimalistic. As observed in the first page of *Patterns of Nine* in Figure 2.22, one part presents the pattern over and over in actively moving sixteenth notes, while the other part presents the pattern at a slower rate in sixteenth notes that punctuate the active part. The two parts also switch hands often. There are three main phrases in this work. When repeated, they all start the same way, but Southam varies the ending while still following the prescribed pitch order. The pitches in the pattern are not

restricted to the same note on the piano keyboard, but appear in varied ranges. This wide range and a disjunct melodic writing reflect the maximal style of her early twelve-tone music more than her minimalistic style. *Fifteen* is written in a similar manner, and the use of a tone row captures the dissonant sounds of Southam's early writing style even more.

Handwritten musical score for mm. 1-8 of *Patterns of Nine*. The score is written in 3/4 time with a tempo marking of quarter note = 108 and a dynamic marking of *mf*. The notation is spread across four systems, each with a treble and bass staff. The music features disjunct, rhythmic patterns and a complex harmonic structure, characteristic of Southam's early twelve-tone style. A handwritten instruction "(use pedal sparingly)" is present below the first system. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings.

Figure 2.22: mm. 1-8 from *Patterns of Nine* is an example of Southam's blended stylistic approach to writing.



Two movements from *Soundings for a New Piano* (1986) reflect Southam's blended approach to composition as well. *Soundings for a New Piano* consists of 12 "meditations" on a tone row that are within the minimalist style with the exception of no. 8 and no. 11. No. 8 strictly processes through a tone row over and over, but rather than maintaining the thin texture and repetitive rhythmic scheme presented in the first seven movements, Southam writes a bombastic romp, using mostly loud octave gestures of tone-row fragments leaping around the piano keyboard. These gestures encapsulate Southam's early writing style that was inspired by the "massive physicality," "fistfuls of notes," and "immense complexity," of works like Ives' *Concord Sonata*, perfectly.<sup>150</sup> No. 11 includes similar forceful passages but as observed in Figure 2.23, these weighty sections are contrasted with reductive phrases that introduce row pitches using parred down musical forces. Therefore, movement no. 11 acts as a perfect example of Southam blending both her minimal and maximal sides.

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<sup>150</sup> Bathory-Kitsz and Gunn, "If Only I Could Sing," 22.

Figure 2.23: mm. 1-24 from movement no. 11 from *Soundings for a New Piano: 12 Meditations on a Twelve Tone Row* demonstrating the blending of Southam's minimal and maximal sides. The piece alternates between reductive and forceful sections.

Unlike *Patterns of Nine, Fifteen*, and movements no. 8 and no. 11 from *Soundings for a new Piano*, Southam's work for solo piano and string orchestra composed in 2001 called *Figures*, does not seem to contain any obvious use of minimalist composition techniques. In fact, when interviewed about the piece she was asked if she was turning away from minimalism, to which Southam responded, "I haven't given that up all together by any means, but I just felt like being kind of all over the shop this time."<sup>151</sup>

<sup>151</sup> Canadian Music Centre, "Centre Streams: Ann Southam," *Figures*, accessed June 5, 2018, <https://www.musiccentre.ca/node/37211>.

However, one could argue that the long periods of uninterrupted patterns of sixteenth notes in the final section of the work are reminiscent of minimalist music.

*Figures* is fifteen minutes of energetic and at times aggressive and discordant musical passages that explore the entire range of the piano: from the highest extremes to the lowest rumbles. The busy, mostly two-voice texture is similar to the writing style of her fourth *Bagatelle*, featuring shifting meters and complex rhythmic patterns. Southam explained that when writing this work, she would take groups of notes from her favourite row as a starting point for the melodic shapes.<sup>152</sup> The piece was called *Figures* in reference to these musical figurations assembled from the row.<sup>153</sup> It was premiered by pianist Eve Egoyan and the Toronto Symphony Orchestra Strings.<sup>154</sup>

Our discussion of Southam's works for solo piano culminates with her masterpiece *Qualities of Consonance*. Southam dedicated this work to composer and producer David Jaeger and pianist Eve Egoyan. It was completed in 1998, and seemed to be a gratifying project for Southam as reflected in her personal correspondence sent to David Jaeger on July 24, 1998:

Dear David: Here, finally is the music. I don't think there will be any more changes! It was such a pleasure to work on this piece, and the dedication to you and to Eve is heartfelt, believe me. See you soon – Best to you – Ann S.<sup>155</sup>

*Qualities of Consonance* is tremendously significant as it portrays Southam's wide-ranging approach to composition, blending the maximal and minimal perfectly. Like her reductive minimalist works, Southam also describes this piece as an investigation into

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<sup>152</sup> Canadian Music Centre, "Centre Streams: Ann Southam," *Figures*, accessed June 5, 2018, <https://www.musiccentre.ca/node/37211>.

<sup>153</sup> Ibid.

<sup>154</sup> Premiered at Roy Thompson Hall with Gary Kulesha conducting.

<sup>155</sup> Ann Southam to David Jaeger, July 24, 1998, unpublished letter (Banff Alberta: The Paul D. Fleck Library and Archives at the Banff Centre). [AS-AS5-AS5.007]

the “emotional possibilities of a 12-tone row.”<sup>156</sup> As can be observed in Figure 2.24, Southam sets up a process where a row is gradually built within her quintessential reductive writing style. This calm and contemplative approach is contrasted by wild outbursts of aggressive, fast, loud, and dissonant melodic fragments that continually disturb the assembly of the row.<sup>157</sup> The row is however eventually completed three times. The second time (Figure 5.25) is left uninterrupted and follows a similar process to that seen in *Rivers, 2<sup>nd</sup> Set*, where tone row fragments are gradually added within the consonant framework of an ostinato. On the third attempt, this minimalist texture is maintained, but the dramatic outbursts return, each time becoming longer and more persistent (Figure 2.26). At the climax of the work, a lengthy virtuosic passage of complex, and highly emotional twelve-tone writing seems to imply that the maximal side has won (Figure 2.27). However, *Qualities of Consonance* ends where it begins (Figure 2.28), bringing this skillful unification of Southam’s juxtaposing approaches to writing music to a peacefully cyclical close.

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<sup>156</sup> Southam, “Rivers: CD editing notes by Southam,” 2.

<sup>157</sup> Ibid.

The image displays a musical score for three systems of music, each consisting of three staves (treble, bass, and a lower bass staff). The score is marked with various dynamics and articulations.

- System 1 (mm. 1-6):**
  - Tempo:  $J = 100$  (measures 1-2),  $J = 60$  (measures 3-6).
  - Measures 1-2:  $f$  dynamics, 3/4 and 4/4 time signatures.
  - Measures 3-6:  $mp$  dynamics, 2/4, 5/4, 4/4, and 6/4 time signatures.
  - Articulation:  $g^{ua}$  (glissando) markings with dashed lines.
- System 2 (mm. 7-12):**
  - Tempo:  $J = 100$  (measures 7-8),  $J = 60$  (measures 9-12).
  - Measures 7-8:  $f$  dynamics, 3/8 and 8/8 time signatures.
  - Measures 9-12:  $f$  and  $mp$  dynamics, 2/4, 4/4, and 6/4 time signatures.
  - Articulation:  $g^{ua}$  markings.
- System 3 (mm. 13-18):**
  - Tempo:  $J = 2 \times 200$  (measures 13-14),  $J = 60$  (measures 15-18).
  - Measures 13-14:  $f$  dynamics, 2/4 and 5/8 time signatures.
  - Measures 15-18:  $f$  and  $mp$  dynamics, 4/8, 2/4, 4/4, and 5/4 time signatures.
  - Articulation:  $g^{ua}$  markings.

Figure 2.24: mm.1-18 of *Qualities of Consonance* where the reductive assembly of the row is continually interrupted by dramatic outbursts.

64  $\text{♩} = 66-69$

The musical score consists of three systems of three staves each. The first system (measures 64-67) features a treble clef with a melody of eighth notes, a middle staff with a piano accompaniment of eighth notes, and a bass staff with a piano accompaniment of eighth notes. Dynamics include *p* and *mp*. The second system (measures 68-70) continues the melodic and accompaniment patterns. The third system (measures 71-74) shows a change in the middle staff's accompaniment to a triplet of eighth notes in measure 71, followed by a return to eighth notes. Dynamics include *p*. The score includes various musical notations such as slurs, ties, and dynamic markings.

Figure 2.25: mm. 64-74 of *Qualities of Consonance* show the second section where row fragments are introduced within the consonant framework of an ostinato.

The image displays three systems of musical notation for measures 131-145 of the piece *Qualities of Consonance*. Each system consists of three staves: a vocal line (top), a piano line (middle), and a bass line (bottom). The piano line includes a sequence of numbers (3, 4, 6, 8, 6, 5, 4) positioned above the staff, likely indicating fingerings or specific notes. The tempo markings are  $\text{♩} = 112$  for measures 131-137,  $\text{♩} = 112$  for measures 138-141, and  $\text{♩} = 60$  for measures 142-145. The dynamics range from *f* (forte) to *p sub.* (pianissimo). The key signature is B-flat major. The notation includes various rhythmic values, including eighth and sixteenth notes, and rests. A large slur covers the piano line across all measures. The bass line features a prominent eighth-note pattern in measures 131-137 and 142-145.

Figure 2.26: mm. 131-145 of *Qualities of Consonance* show the re-introduction of the fast, dissonant passages that disrupt the minimal assembly of the tone-row.

Figure 2.27 shows three systems of musical notation for measures 252-266. The first system (measures 252-257) features a complex rhythmic structure with time signatures 9/16, 5/16, 3/16, 9/16, and 3/16. It includes dynamic markings such as *sf* and *f*, and a *grace* note. The second system (measures 258-261) continues with time signatures 9/16, 8/16, and 9/16, featuring a *grace* note and a *grace* note with a dashed line. The third system (measures 262-266) includes time signatures 5/16, 9/16, 3/8, and 5/16, with dynamic markings *mp*, *non legato*, *espr.*, and *mp*, and a *grace* note with a dashed line.

Figure 2.27: mm. 252-266 of *Qualities of Consonance* is a portion of the climax showing the maximal twelve-tone writing that seems to have conquered the piece.

Figure 2.28 shows a system of musical notation for measures 319 to the end of the piece. It features a complex rhythmic structure with time signatures 8/4, 2/4, 5/4, 4/4, and 6/4. The notation includes a *lunga* marking, a *p* dynamic marking, and a *grace* note with a dashed line.

Figure 2.28: m. 319 to the end of *Qualities of Consonance* illustrating the cyclic and peaceful conclusion.



## 2.5 Conclusion

Working by hand from her beloved Bechstein, Southam created an outstanding collection of works for solo piano. She provided pianists with a true gift of wide-ranging, remarkable pieces that are perfect for those looking to explore, understand, and perform minimalist works, serialist works, a unique combination of the two, and even in a jazz style. The scores for the majority of Southam's works for solo piano are available through the Canadian Music Centre, with the exception of some of her early works housed at The Paul D. Fleck Library and Archives at the Banff Centre for Arts and Creativity. Many of her works have been recorded, and these recordings are listed in the catalogue entries of Appendix 1. The Canadian Music Centre also has several archival recordings available on their website as well. The intention of this chapter was to provide an overview of her complete works for solo piano, and I hope this information will help keep Southam and her piano music an esteemed and accessible part of the rich mosaic of Canadian music.

## Chapter 3: Southam's Minimalist Music for Solo Piano

### 3.1 Introduction

Southam's remarkable minimalist music is her largest creative output for solo piano and is therefore the sole focus of this chapter. It begins with a review of what minimalism is commonly understood to be in Western Art music. This review will not only help classical pianists better understand a style of music not commonly part of the standard repertoire, but will also help determine where Southam sits within the school of minimalist composition. This is followed by a summary of significant features of Southam's minimalist music for solo piano including: her flexible processes that represent a feminist aesthetic, her unique harmonic language, and the teleology in her minimalist works. Analyses of her works appear throughout the chapter to support the discussion. Although the majority of her minimalist works typically contain most or all of the elements discussed, pieces have been selected that best portray the idea being examined in each section. This discussion paired with the analyses is meant to present information that may offer performers of Southam's minimalist works a deeper understanding of the music. This deeper understanding may support thoughtful and meaningful interpretations of Southam's minimalist music.

The ambiguity surrounding the goal of creating "thoughtful" or "meaningful" interpretations deserves more thorough consideration before embarking on the discussion of Southam's minimalist music. As pianists we are trained to play with "expression." What this actually means is difficult to define, but one can hear it when it is present. In my view, an important part of playing with expression is developing an understanding of a work's construction and the possible meaning, whether abstract or concrete, behind it.

For instance, a poem recited without an understanding of the text can result in a boring, monotone, and flat performance. With further study, however, the possible meaning of the poem exposes itself, making it easier to adjust the delivery to include appropriate inflections and nuances that bring the poem to life. This is “expression.” Gaining a deeper understanding of a composer’s approach to composition through analysis can incite a similar result for pianists, but instead of words, we adjust how we deliver the sounds. Comprehending a piece through analysis is one tool that can help performers make appropriate interpretive choices that transform a string of organized sounds into “thoughtful” and “meaningful” expressions of music. It is my hope that the contents of chapter three will help performers of Southam’s minimalist music do just that.

### **3.2 Minimalism in Music & Southam’s Place Within the “School”**

Minimalism is a borrowed term from the visual arts used to describe a style of music “characterized by an intentionally simplified rhythmic, melodic, and harmonic vocabulary.”<sup>158</sup> Composer and musicologist Michael Nyman (b. 1944) was the first to apply the label to music, and associated it with the American composers La Monte Young (b. 1935), Terry Riley (b. 1935), Steve Reich (b. 1936), and Philip Glass (b. 1937).<sup>159</sup> Nyman explained that minimalist music “not only cuts down the area of sound-activity to an absolute minimum, but submits the scrupulously selective, mainly tonal, material to mostly repetitive, highly disciplined procedures which are focused with an extremely fine

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<sup>158</sup> Keith Potter, “Minimalism (USA),” *Grove Music Online*, (2014), accessed 6 Feb. 2020, 1, <https://doi.org/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.A2257002>.

<sup>159</sup> Mark A. Radice, *Concert Music of the Twentieth Century: Its Personalities, Institutions, and Techniques* (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 2003), 284.

definition.”<sup>160</sup> These controlled procedures are also known as processes. The early composers of minimalist music were also influenced by non-western music such as Indian Raga, Balinese Gamelan, and West African Drumming. They embraced the “contemplative, time suspending qualities” of these music types.<sup>161</sup> Further influence was drawn from the harmony, pulse, and rhythmic drive of jazz and rock and roll.<sup>162</sup>

A prominent feature of minimalist music is the repetition of musical cells or patterns. While repetition is used in other Western Art Music styles, in minimalism, repetition replaces goal-oriented motion with stasis.<sup>163</sup> Wim Mertens, author of *American Minimal Music*, argues that this non-narrative or “a-teleological” aspect is the essential defining feature of minimalist music.<sup>164</sup> Mertens also argues that “repetitive music” is a better label for this type of music as “minimal” only captures the very reductive attributes of this music, which really only wholly applies to the earliest music of this type.<sup>165</sup> Possessing a history of controversy, with its major composers rejecting the designation due to its diminishing connotations,<sup>166</sup> minimalism in music emerged in mid-twentieth century America as a type of music that opposed the conventions of the time by embracing reduction, tonality, drones, simplified instrumentation, repetition, patterns, and processes in music.

Where does Ann Southam and her minimalist music for solo piano fall within this understanding of minimalism in music? Much of the literature available on minimalism

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<sup>160</sup> Michael Nyman, *Experimental Music: Cage and Beyond*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 139.

<sup>161</sup> Potter, “Minimalism (USA),” 9.

<sup>162</sup> Ibid.

<sup>163</sup> K. Robert Schwartz, *Minimalists* (London: Phaidon Press Limited, 1996), 9.

<sup>164</sup> Wim Mertens, *American Minimal Music*, trans. J. Hautekiet (Amersham UK: Kahn & Averill, 1983) 17.

<sup>165</sup> Ibid., 11.

<sup>166</sup> Radice, *Concert Music of the Twentieth Century*, 284.

focuses exclusively on the composers La Monte Young, Terry Riley, Steve Reich, Philip Glass, and John Adams. With the exception of Elaine Keillor's book *Music in Canada: Capturing Landscape and Diversity*<sup>167</sup> where Southam is mentioned briefly, and Sarah Feltham's 2015 Dissertation "Middle Power Music: Modernism, Ideology, and Compromise in English Canadian Cold War Composition,"<sup>168</sup> Southam has been largely left out of the scholarly discussions surrounding minimalist music.

To gain some historical context, performers can turn to the work of music theorist Timothy Johnson. Johnson's article "Minimalism: Aesthetic, Style, or Technique?" provides a succinct summary of the history of minimalist music through the second half of the twentieth century.<sup>169</sup> He offers classifications that elucidate how minimalism in music evolved, arguing that minimalist music shifted from an aesthetic, to a style, then to a compositional technique. In my view, Johnson's framework can be used to understand Southam's style and help determine where Southam and her music sit within the school of minimalist composition. This historical examination is indeed preliminary, and deeper historical studies are required, but it is a start, and I believe will help pianists gain some historical background on minimalism.

To begin, Johnson explains that the early minimalist composers of the 1950s and 1960s turned away from goal-directed harmonic motion, and instead wrote music that seemed suspended in time.<sup>170</sup> He argues that this non-teleological approach to writing

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<sup>167</sup> Elaine Keillor, *Music in Canada: Capturing Landscape and Diversity* (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2006), 255.

<sup>168</sup> Sarah Feltham, "Middle Power Music: Modernism, Ideology, and Compromise in English Canadian Cold War Composition," (dissertation, Stony Brook University, 2015), 142, accessed from: <https://search-proquest-com.proxy1.lib.uwo.ca/pqdtglobal/docview/1767779451/1086E3C5C33A4A31PQ/1?accountid=15115>.

<sup>169</sup> Timothy A. Johnson, "Minimalism: Aesthetic, Style or Technique?" *The Musical Quarterly* 78, no. 4 (1994).

<sup>170</sup> *Ibid.*, 745.

paired with the use of scaled down resources (fewer instruments, thinner textures, simpler harmonies, and use of drones) reflected a new minimalist aesthetic. La Monte Young's *For Brass* (1957) and *Trio for Strings* (1958) fall in this category as they "employ single tones and simple combinations of tones held for extraordinarily long periods of time."<sup>171</sup> Johnson also includes Reich's early experimental tape pieces *It's Gonna Rain* (1965) and *Come Out* (1966) within the aesthetic classification as the gradually changing patterns are highly non-teleological.<sup>172</sup>

As minimalism developed in the 1970s, Johnson argues that it transitioned from an aesthetic into a style. Minimalist music became more active. Johnson explains that although the works in the minimalist style remained primarily continuous, an unbroken stream of rhythmic figuration flowing from beginning to end generally without any distinctly obvious formal sections, the texture began to consist of more active interlocking musical patterns. The harmonic palette became even brighter while still progressing at a slow harmonic rhythm. Lastly, although melodic content was more perceptible, it was confined to scant patterns and small motifs.<sup>173</sup> Johnson considers Riley's famous *In C*, along with Reich's *Music for 18 Musicians* (1976) and "Knee Play 1" from Glass's opera *Einstein On the Beach* (1975) within the minimalist style classification.<sup>174</sup>

Johnson explains next that by the 1980s and beyond, minimalism transitioned into a compositional technique rather than a style.<sup>175</sup> Arguing that a piece consisting of at least two of the minimalist style characteristics warrants the distinction of minimalist

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<sup>171</sup> Johnson, "Minimalism: Aesthetic, Style or Technique?," 745.

<sup>172</sup> *Ibid.*, 747.

<sup>173</sup> *Ibid.*, 748.

<sup>174</sup> *Ibid.*, 749.

<sup>175</sup> *Ibid.*, 751.

technique, Johnson believes that considering minimalism a technique is the most effective way to encapsulate the broad variety of music typically labeled minimalist.<sup>176</sup> Johnson draws on the music of American composer John Adams (b. 1947) to exemplify minimalism as a technique. Adams's work for orchestra, *Harmonielehre* (1985), mixes minimalist techniques of cell or pattern repetition and simple harmonies with more traditional musical elements like large performing forces, contrasting dynamics and textures, and directional melodic lines.<sup>177</sup>

When Johnson's framework is applied to Southam's minimalist music for solo piano, it can be determined that Southam's minimalist compositions straddle Johnson's understanding of minimalism as a style and aesthetic. While some pieces fit within the minimalist style, other pieces consist of musical elements considered defining attributes of the minimalist aesthetic. For example, Southam's *Glass Houses* (1981, revised in 2009) are prime models of the minimalist style. *Glass Houses No. 3*, as observed in Figure 3.1, consists of a continuous seven note ostinato that supports the sounding of repeated melodic cells. The process of melodic cell repetition is pre-compositionally determined, with this repetitive process setting out the introduction of a new melodic cell with every restatement (i.e., 1 2, 1 2 3, 1 2 3 4 etc.). The music is seamless, repetitive, and patterned. Furthermore, the melodic cells are centred within the brighter harmonic palette of B Major. In summation, *Glass Houses No. 3* includes the quintessential elements of the minimalist style, and in fact, as noted in Chapter 2, the "Glass" part of the title was

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<sup>176</sup> Johnson, "Minimalism: Aesthetic, Style or Technique?," 752.

<sup>177</sup> *Ibid.*, 752.

inspired by the composer Philip Glass, whose many repetitive works fit within this style as well.<sup>178</sup>

Figure 3.1: mm. 1-36 of *Glass Houses No. 3* where tunes 1, 2, 3 and 4 are introduced.

Southam's pieces in *Rivers, 3<sup>rd</sup> Set* (1981, revised in 2005) also warrant Johnson's label of minimalist style, with *Rivers No. 3, 3<sup>rd</sup> Set* shown in Figure 3.2, illustrating the seamless, interlocking textures from which melodic motifs emerge. In this piece, one pattern is played on the onbeats in the left hand, while another pattern is played on the offbeats with the right hand. When played together, the patterns interact to create small melodic and rhythmic motifs. Therefore, *Rivers No. 3, 3<sup>rd</sup> Set* epitomizes the understanding that melodic material in minimalist style pieces is typically made from

<sup>178</sup> Larry Lake, liner notes to *Glass Houses: Music of Ann Southam*, performed by pianists Stephen Clarke, Eve Egoyan, and Composers' Orchestra & String Quartet conducted by Gary Kulesha, CBC Records MVCD 1124, 1999, CD.



scant patterns and motifs even more than the short, directionalized, melodic cells in the *Glass Houses*.

The image shows a musical score for "RIVERS III" in 8/8 time, marked *mp*. It consists of three staves. The top staff is a treble clef with a melodic line. The middle staff is a bass clef with a rhythmic pattern. The bottom staff is a grand staff with a pedal point. The initial lower pattern in the bass staff is outlined in red, and its first repetitions are also outlined in red. The upper pattern in the treble staff is outlined in blue. A handwritten note indicates "Optional. Otherwise pedal ad lib."

Figure 3.2: mm. 1-3 of *Rivers No. 3, 3<sup>rd</sup> Set*. The initial lower pattern plus its first repetitions outlined in red. The upper pattern outlined in blue.

There are more attributes of *Rivers No. 3, 3<sup>rd</sup> Set* that encapsulate the minimalist style. Specifically, this piece embodies the gradual pattern changes of minimalist style significantly. In the A section, the onbeat pattern remains the same with only one slight alteration to include a repetition of the C#5 in m. 9 (Figure 3.3). The offbeat pattern changes more frequently. The opening pattern consists of a B and A#, and as the section progresses, this pattern changes three times. First the A# is doubled beginning in m. 3 (Figure 3.4). Next, a neighbour tone G# is added in m. 5 (Figure 3.5). Lastly, tension is increased with the addition of E# in m. 7 (Figure 3.6). At this point both the onbeat and

offbeat pattern is at its fullest. The music has reached the most ecstatic point, or climax, of the A section which lasts for approximately three measures (Figure 3.7). Following the climax, the right-hand patterns gradually phases back through the previous pattern shifts until the A section ends where it began; unmistakably illustrating the gradually changing repetitive patterns of the minimalist style.

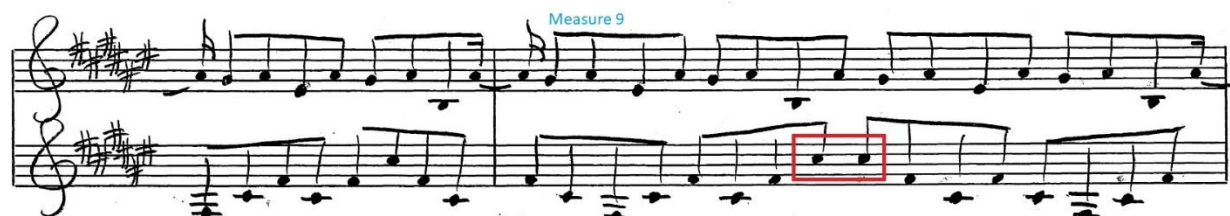


Figure 3.3: m. 9 of *Rivers No. 3, 3<sup>rd</sup> Set*. The doubling of the C# is the only change to onbeat pattern throughout the A section.

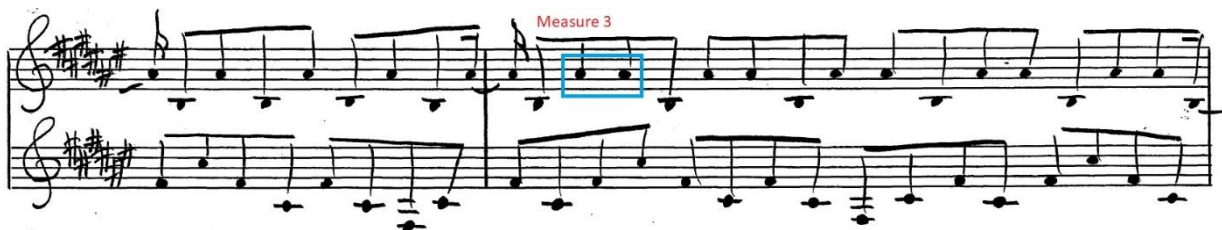


Figure 3.4: m. 3 of *Rivers No. 3, 3<sup>rd</sup> Set* where the first change to the upper pattern occurs. The A# is now doubled.

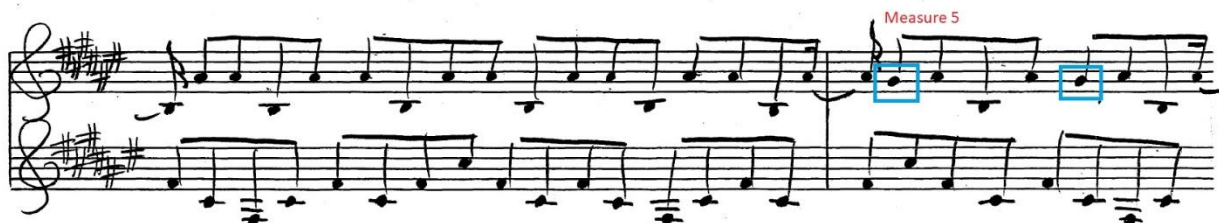


Figure 3.5: m. 5 of *Rivers No. 3, 3<sup>rd</sup> Set* where the second change to the upper pattern occurs. A G# is added.

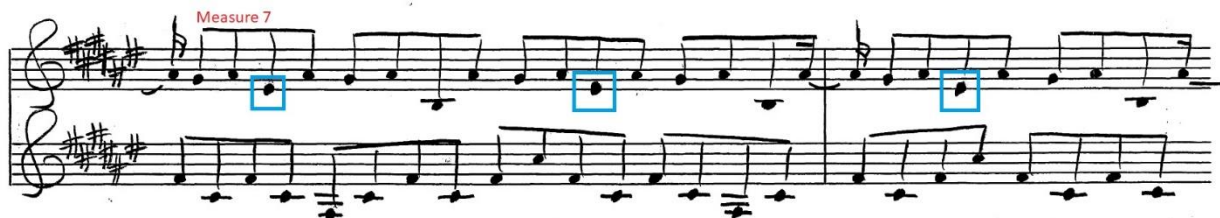


Figure 3.6: m. 7 of *Rivers No. 3, 3<sup>rd</sup> Set* where the third change to the upper pattern occurs. An E# is added.

Figure 3.7: The climax (approximately mm. 9-11) of *Rivers No. 3, 3<sup>rd</sup> Set* A section, where each pattern is at its fullest.

While pieces like *Glass Houses* and *Rivers, 3<sup>rd</sup> Set* fall within Johnson's label of the minimalist style, some of Southam's minimalist works express the understanding of minimalist aesthetic. Shown in Figure 3.8, movement 2 from *Soundings for a New Piano* (1986) contains the reductive musical elements of the aesthetic. The texture is thin, consisting of a single melodic line to be played softly and slowly. The harmonic material is also limited as it uses only a single tone row whose pitches are introduced through a linear additive process.<sup>179</sup> The piece includes repetitive melodic gestures that build up to sustained pitches reflecting the long drones or "time-suspending," element of the aesthetic. The persistent repetition of the triplet figure consisting of B D G and G# also adds a droning effect to the piece. Although this work has many attributes of the minimalist aesthetic, one could argue however, that there is more harmonic direction than other pieces in this category. After the tension steadily increases with each addition of the row pitches, the return of pitch one, G#, at the end creates a sense of arrival and resolution. But, even with the slightly more directionalized harmonic scheme, one can see and hear that Southam's second movement from *Soundings for a New Piano*, is reductive; encompassing the attributes included in Johnson's understanding of the minimalist aesthetic.

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<sup>179</sup> A musical process where notes are added after every cycle of the already added pitches (i.e., 1, 1 2, 1 2 3, 1 2 3 4, 1 2 3 4 5 etc.). Dan Warburton, "A Working Terminology for Minimal Music," *Integral*, vol. 2 (1988): 146, accessed January 28, 2019, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/40213909>.

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Handwritten musical score for the second movement of *Soundings for a New Piano: 12 Meditations on a Twelve Tone Row*. The score consists of five systems of two staves each. The first system includes a tempo marking of quarter note = 40. Blue boxes highlight a repetitive droning figure in the bass line of the first two systems. A red box highlights a "Resolution" in the bass line of the fifth system, occurring upon the return of tone row pitch 1, G#. The word "attacca" is written at the end of the fifth system. The score features complex rhythmic patterns, including 3/4 and 4/4 time signatures, and various musical notations such as slurs, accents, and dynamic markings.

Figure 3.8: The second movement from *Soundings for a New Piano: 12 Meditations on a Twelve Tone Row*. Repetitive droning figure is outlined in blue. "Resolution" upon the return of tone row pitch 1, G#, outlined in red.

This exercise of applying Johnson's framework to Southam's music provides some historical context that can help pianists understand where it falls within the evolution of minimalism in music. Although further studies are needed to fully comprehend how Southam's music compares to her more well-known contemporaries, her music can be considered alongside the major contributors of minimalist music. As pianists looking for answers as to how Southam's music should be interpreted, we can look to the more commonly performed music of her contemporaries to help inform how we may play and express her minimalist music.

In addition to stylistic similarities, Southam's background also has some elements in common with the more well-known minimalists. Many of the first minimalists, including Reich and Glass, were some of the first composers to experiment with electronic music. Their creations in the electroacoustic studio impacted the acoustic minimalist music they would later write. Southam was a trailblazer in Canadian electroacoustic composition and her experience with electronic music certainly impacted her minimalist music for acoustic instruments. A further similarity concerns the origins of minimalism. Some believe that minimalism in music was a reaction against trends in Western Art Music composition in the mid-twentieth century including both the discordant sounds of twelve-tone serialism, and the "circus-like" results of aleatoric composition.<sup>180</sup> In *The History of American Classical Music*, Warthen-Struble explains:

...Composition students born in the late 1930s took the full brunt of the serialist storm when they entered college or conservatory in the 1950s. It is no accident, therefore, that four of the five premier minimalist composers were born between 1935 and 1937, because, in many important respects, the so-called "minimalist" movement was and is a specific conscious reaction against dogmatic serialism, and the repellent

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<sup>180</sup> Michael Broyles, *Mavericks and Other Traditions in American Music* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004), 259.

effect of 12-tone music had on audiences and performers throughout the 1940s, 1950s and 1960s.<sup>181</sup>

With her birth in 1937 and entry into the Royal Conservatory of Music at the height of the twelve-tone era, aspects of Southam's lived experience align with the more well-known minimalists. She too was faced with the task of giving up tonality to be taken seriously as a composer. When Southam found minimalism, however, she was thrilled to be able to openly embrace tonal centres again, with her bright and sunny *Glass Houses* a testament to this fact.<sup>182</sup> Southam did however continue working with tone rows, developing a personal language that mixed minimalist style with tone rows that will be further explained shortly. In summation, Southam and her minimalist pieces for solo piano fit within the school of minimalist composition; however, as explained next, her music also encompasses style attributes and unique extramusical perspectives that make it unique.

### **3.3 Process: Flexibility and the Feminist Aesthetic**

Process is an important aspect of minimalist music and Southam created a variety of processes for her minimalist works. For pianists, process is a concept not often encountered in the standard piano repertoire. So, to understand process in music composition we can again turn to Michael Nyman. He explains in his book *Experimental Music: Cage and Beyond* that composers of experimental music, which includes minimalist composers, were interested in outlining, or setting up, "a situation in which sounds may occur, a *process* of generating action (sounding or otherwise)."<sup>183</sup> In his

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<sup>181</sup> John Warthen Struble, *The History of American Classical Music* (New York: Facts on File, Inc., 1995), 323.

<sup>182</sup> Robert Everett-Green, "Ann Southam: A One Woman Tone Poem," *Globe and Mail* (Toronto, ON), July 6, 2009: <https://www.theglobeandmail.com/arts/ann-southam-a-one-woman-tone-poem/article1199935/>.

<sup>183</sup> Nyman, *Experimental Music*, 4.

paper “Process as a Means to an Ends in Minimalist and Postminimalist Music,” Galen H. Brown explains that end-oriented processes are a key-part of minimalist composition, and argues that the sonic means used in the pre-determined pattern repetitions can be aesthetically pleasing.<sup>184</sup> Essentially, a process in minimalist music sets up how the patterns will repeat and evolve. Southam liked process,<sup>185</sup> often composing several pieces using a single process. Many of her processes involve the unfolding of a tone row, and Southam explained that, “I devise ways of spinning it out, adding one note of the row at a time to the repeating patterns until they’re all there.”<sup>186</sup>

A dictation book of Southam’s believed to be from the 1980s, contains an early sketch of a piece that can be used to exemplify musical process within the minimalist style.<sup>187</sup> Shown in Figure 3.9, Southam begins the sketch by writing one of her favourite rows at the top of the manuscript paper. The first two pitches of the row, C and F, are stacked, creating a harmonic interval of a perfect fourth. The remaining row pitches are divided into four note cells. Each new four note cell adds the next pitch in the row while removing the first pitch of the previous cell (i.e., Cell One: 3 4 5 6, Cell Two: 4 5 6 7, Cell Three: 5 6 7 8, Cell Four: 6 7 8 9, Cell Five: 7 8 9 10, Cell Six: 8 9 10 11, Cell Seven: 9 10 11 12). Below the row she begins to write the piece. The C and F perfect fourth interval is held as a consonant drone in the Soprano and Alto, and Tenor and Bass voices. The tone row pitches from Cell One punctuate the texture in quarter notes on beat

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<sup>184</sup> Galen H. Brown, “Process as Means and Ends in Minimalist and Postminimalist Music,” *Perspectives of New Music* 48, no. 2 (2010): 187, accessed September 4, 2018, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/23076970>.

<sup>185</sup> Kim Echlin, “Glass Houses #5: Playing Plan,” *The Citizen’s Weekly* (Ottawa, ON), Oct. 5, 1997.

<sup>186</sup> Elissa Poole, “Composer has a tough tone row to hoe,” *The Globe and Mail* (Toronto, ON), Mar. 15, 1997.

<sup>187</sup> Ann Southam, Untitled drafts and notes by Ann Southam (Banff Alberta: The Paul D. Fleck Library and Archives at the Banff Centre, 19-?). [AS-AS3-AS3.20] This sketch could likely be a draft of her piece *Song of the Varied Thrush* (1991) for string quartet.



three of each measure. Southam cycles through Cell One pitches four times, each time varying the registral placement of the pitches slightly. The compositional sketch ends with the addition of the third tone row pitch, B $\flat$ , to the drone.



Figure 3.9: An early sketch of a composition by Ann Southam. Found at the Paul D. Fleck Library and Archives at the Banff Centre for Arts and Creativity (AS3.020).

Based on the process set up in the existing measures of the sketch, one can predict how the sonic material would proceed if the sketch was completed. In the next section, the perfect fourth drone consisting of C and F will remain in the Soprano and Alto voices, and the Tenor and Bass voices will sustain a perfect fourth of F and B $\flat$ , B $\flat$  being the next pitch in the row. The pitches from Cell Two would then punctuate the texture on beat three. A complete cycle of four repetitions following the same shifting registral

placements set up in the first section would likely occur. The piece would then proceed through new sections where each tone row cell is treated in the same fashion. The treatment of the drone is a little less predictable, however. Two possibilities come to mind. The first possibility could be the replacement of each voice in the drone with the next row pitch until it is completely transformed much like the evolving pitch material of the cells. A second possibility would maintain the C and F drone throughout with only one voice changing to the next row pitch at the beginning of each new section. These of course are just predications, but these musings are made possible by the clear outlining of the piece's compositional scheme, or process, in this draft.

We can also turn to the early writings of Steve Reich to better understand process in minimalist music. In his 1968 manifesto "Music as a Gradual Process," he emphasized that processes "determine all the note-to-note (sound-to-sound) details and the overall form simultaneously."<sup>188</sup> Reich discovered his ideal process when experimenting in the electroacoustic studio and later applied it to acoustic instruments. He called this process *phasing*. In phasing, "two or more voices begin a pattern, and while one continues the pattern with no variation, the other shifts the pattern an incremental amount rhythmically," until the patterns align in the original position again.<sup>189</sup> This process can be heard in Reich's works *Piano Phase* (1967) and *Music for Six Pianos* (1973), among others. When listening, one can hear that the process is very gradual and therefore perceptible, which Reich believed was an important aspect of process. Not only should the process be perceptible, but it is also inflexible; once set up, it should "run by itself."<sup>190</sup>

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<sup>188</sup> Steve Reich, "Music as a Gradual Process," in *Writings on Music 1965-2000*, ed. Paul Hillier, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 34.

<sup>189</sup> Broyles, *Mavericks and Other Traditions in American Music*, 252.

<sup>190</sup> Reich, "Music as a Gradual Process," 34.

Processes, he believed, give composers control while being impersonal. When we examine Southam's minimalist music we find, however, that her processes are both flexible and highly personal, which stands in opposition to Reich's understanding of process in minimalist music.

In her 2015 dissertation "Middle Power Music: Modernism, Ideology, and Compromise in English Canadian Cold War Composition," Sarah Feltham argues that Southam's "idiosyncratic handling," of musical processes is one aspect of how her use of compositional models and practices, in this case processes, differ from the white American men that originally created them.<sup>191</sup> She argues that in contrast to Reich, who believes the process should run on its own, Southam's processes are "flexible, intuitive, and individualized."<sup>192</sup>

The first movement of Southam's *Pond Life: Simple Forms of Inquiry* (2008) for solo piano clearly illustrates Southam's flexible application of process. Shown in Figure 3.10, this piece is highly reductive, featuring a single line to be played softly, slowly, and "quietly expressive." She uses a single tone row spelled D G C B A $\flat$  F B $\flat$  E E $\flat$  A C $\sharp$  F $\sharp$ . Unlike the process designed in the compositional sketch explored above, where the piece gradually shifts through a tone row one four note cell at a time, Southam sets up a process that slowly unfolds the row by gradually adding pitches until it is complete. In Figure 3.10, I have divided the piece into five Phrases. The first four Phrases consist of four Gestures. All four Gestures are built on the rotation of the first four row pitches, which

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<sup>191</sup> Sarah Feltham, "Middle Power Music: Modernism, Ideology, and Compromise in English Canadian Cold War Composition," (dissertation, Stony Brook University, 2015), 125, accessed from: <https://search-proquest-com.proxy1.lib.uwo.ca/pqdtglobal/docview/1767779451/1086E3C5C33A4A31PQ/1?accountid=15115>.

<sup>192</sup> Ibid., 146.

are numbered Figure 3.10 (Gesture One: 1234 or DGCB, Gesture Two: 2341 or GCBD, Gesture Three: 3412 or CBDG, Gesture Four: 4123 or BDGC). In all but the fifth phrase, where each pitch has been introduced and the music returns “home” to D (Pitch 1), the next row pitch is added at the end of Gesture One and Gesture Three in the form of a sustained pitch. After a new pitch is introduced, it is added to the end of the sixteenth note patterns in Gestures One and Three.

Notice how the new tone row pitches are repeated twice when introduced. For example, in Phrase One, the  $A\flat$  (Pitch 5) is presented at the end of Gesture One and played again at the end of Gesture Two. F, (Pitch 6) is introduced at the end of Gesture Three and played again at the end of Gesture Four. The addition of  $B\flat$  (Pitch 7) and E (Pitch 8) in Phrase Two follows the same process. Based on this process, one would expect  $E\flat$  (Pitch 9) and A (Pitch 10) to be introduced in the same way in Phrase Three. However, in Phrase Three, Southam deviates from the established process. After introducing  $E\flat$  (Pitch 9) in the expected way in Gestures One and Two, A (Pitch 10) is added at the end of Gesture Three, however, notice that in Gesture Four, the music returns to  $E\flat$  (Pitch 9) rather than repeating A (Pitch 10). A similar event occurs in Phrase Four, with the addition of the  $C\sharp$  (Pitch 11) and  $F\sharp$  (Pitch 12). If the process was allowed to proceed “on its own,” as convention states, this would not have happened.

Figure 3.10: *Pond Life*, First Movement. The 5 Phrases are marked in red and rotation of the first four pitches marked in green.

Figure 3.10: *Pond Life*, First Movement. The 5 Phrases are marked in red and rotation of the first four pitches marked in green.

So, it has been illustrated that Southam treated this process flexibly. This begs the question “why?”. Broadly, Southam used her personal artistic voice to enrich a typically rigid compositional practice. In her training with Samuel Dolin, Southam was taught that the rules of composition were there to “help rather than hinder,” musical expression.<sup>193</sup> This notion allowed Southam to treat the rules of composition with flexibility to meet her expressive goals. More specifically, the return to the Eb in Gesture Four of Phrase Three

<sup>193</sup> Jim Hiscott, producer of *Samuel Dolin Documentary*, June 6, 2002, CD, The Paul D. Fleck Library and Archives at the Banff Centre, Time Stamp Speaker [AS6.3.001]

may have likely been done to resolve, so to speak, the tritone between Eb and A. Southam perhaps chose to deviate from the established process to soften the sound of the harsher dissonance and instability that would occur if the phrase ended on A by returning the Eb at the end of Phrase Three. In Phrase Four, Southam continues to follow this change to the process. The same argument of tritone resolution may not justify the deviation in this phrase, but perhaps she chose to repeat the idiosyncrasy to create a sense of cohesion with the previous phrase.

Comprehending Southam's flexible application of process within the first movement of *Pond Life* is important for a pianist playing this work. First, knowing what process is helps a pianist understand how the sounds are organized in the piece, which can transform a seemingly dissonant spattering of notes into a cohesive musical being. Second, if one is aware of this significant moment where the process changes, more expressive possibilities become available. For example, a sensitive nuance can be applied to the moment where the process changes. Within the context of the *mezzo piano* tone quality, a pianist can take some expressive liberties and lean into the tension of the tritone by playing a slight crescendo through to the arrival of A in Gesture Three of Phrase Three. Then a pianist can follow the release of the tension when the music returns to the Eb in Gesture Four by playing a diminuendo. Not only can a pianist enhance this moment through dynamics, one can also highlight the significance of this point by adjusting the pacing. A slight push forward through Gesture Three to be complemented by relaxing the pace would be an appropriate way to shape this gesture. In all, altering the delivery of the sounds through changes in dynamics and pacing creates a more profound level of

expression. These expressive choices were made possible, in part, by a deeper understanding of the piece through analysis.

As illustrated, Southam used process in a gently flexible way to achieve her expressive goals. Another important and unique feature of Southam's processes is that she attached a personal extramusical perspective to this compositional approach. Southam believed that the repetitive processes of minimalist music could represent the female experience musically. Southam defied the traditional expectations placed on her by her upper-class upbringing in the 1940s and 50s, and declared that she, "was born a feminist, although I didn't know it until 1975."<sup>194</sup> Finding a way to write music that encapsulated the feminist message is something Southam clearly pondered. In the archives at The Paul D. Fleck Library and Archives at the Banff Centre, an old paper bag from Curry's Art Supply (Figure 3.11) has this question written in Southam's hand twice: "Do women have the potential for a unique aesthetic?"<sup>195</sup>

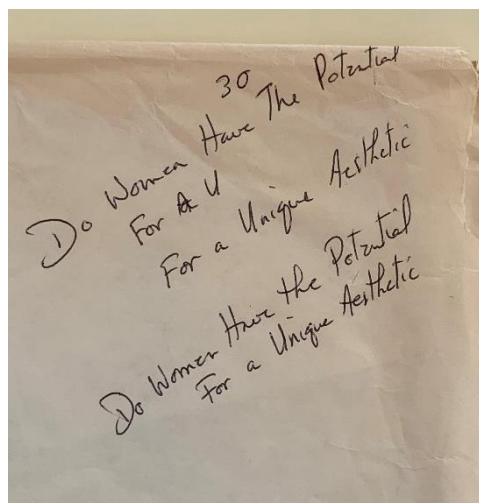


Figure 3.11: Image of question "Do women have the potential for a unique aesthetic?" written in Southam's hand. [AS2.012]

<sup>194</sup> Lake, liner notes to *Glass Houses: Music of Ann Southam*.

<sup>195</sup> Ann Southam, "Do women have the potential for a Unique Aesthetic," note, (Banff Alberta: The Paul D. Fleck Library and Archives at the Banff Centre). [AS-AS2-AS2.12]

Frustrated with the feminist message being represented only in song lyrics but not more abstractly in the structure of a piece, Southam wanted to “find a way in which the very workings of the music reflected some kind of feminist idea.”<sup>196</sup> Her discovery of feminism in the mid-70s happened to coincide with her first encounters with minimalism in music.<sup>197</sup> It was in this approach to composition that she found the answer: the repetitive minimal processes, she felt, were similar to the repetitive, life-sustaining tasks like mending, weaving, knitting, and doing dishes that are traditionally viewed as women’s work.<sup>198</sup> The everyday tasks that are often completed patiently and inconspicuously by women. The processes in minimalist music became the perfect metaphor for the female experience in Southam’s view. Although it is not perceptible unless one is told, this extramusical conceptualization weaved into Southam’s minimalist works is a hallmark of her music that instilled a personal touch unique in minimalist composition.

Of all her minimalist solo piano works, I believe that pieces in Southam’s “Returnings Style”<sup>199</sup> embody the presence of the extramusical concept of the female experience most clearly. As shown in Figure 3.12, *Returnings I* (2010) begins with a quiet and slow introduction of the tone row used in the piece. In what follows, this row is built one note at a time in the middle part, accompanied by consonant compositional devices of chords and clusters in the upper part and a persistent perfect fifth drone of A $\flat$  and E $\flat$  in

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<sup>196</sup> *Tributaries: Reflections of Aiko Suzuki*, directed by Midi Onodera (Toronto, ON: Daruma Pictures Inc., 2009), DVD.

<sup>197</sup> Eitan Cornfield, producer of *Ann Southam: Canadian Composer Portraits, Documentary*, 2005, Centrediscs CMCCD 10505, CD, track 7 01:49.

<sup>198</sup> Eve Egoyan and Gayle Young, “Composition as Enquiry: The Explorational Music of Ann Southam,” *Musicworks* 101, summer (2008): 12.

<sup>199</sup> Tamara Bernstein, liner notes to *Returnings*, performed by Eve Egoyan, Centrediscs CMC CD17211, 2011, compact disc. This term was coined by Tamara Bernstein.



the lower part (Figure 3.13). The process by which the row is unfolded is very gradual. In m. 2, the  $D\flat$  (Pitch 1) is introduced and repeated twice. In m. 4,  $A\flat$  (Pitch 2) is introduced, also repeated twice. Then the music proceeds back to  $D\flat$  (Pitch 1). In m. 8, B (Pitch 3) is added, and the music again proceeds back through  $A\flat$ , and  $D\flat$ . In m. 14, D (Pitch 4) is introduced, and then, as expected, the music progresses back through to the first pitch in the row. This process of moving back through the row after the introduction of the next row pitch is followed until all 12 tone row pitches have been introduced. The musical line, therefore, becomes longer and longer as the piece proceeds as illustrated in the statement of the final completed row in Figure 3.14.

The image shows a handwritten musical score for the opening of 'Returnings I'. It is written on a grand staff with treble and bass clefs. At the top left, there is a tempo marking '♩ = 48'. The music begins with a mezzo-piano (mp) dynamic. The first staff shows a melodic line starting with a quarter note, followed by a series of chords and notes. The second staff shows a bass line starting with a half note, followed by a series of notes. The piece concludes with a final chord marked 'ff'.

Figure 3.12: The opening of *Returnings I*. The tone row used in the piece is freely introduced:  $D\flat$   $A\flat$  B D G E A  $F\sharp$  C  $B\flat$   $E\flat$  F.

RETURNINGS

Upper

Middle

Lower

octave lower than written with pedal

\* = approx

Figure 3.13: mm. 1-20 of *Returns I*. The introduction of the first four tone row pitches are outlined in red. The parts are labeled in blue.

Targa

writ by Rand,  
played by hand.  
Approx 13'30"  
For Eve Eggen

Figure 3.14: mm. 132-153, the final and longest statement of the tone row in *Returns I*. The red box indicates the start of the final complete statement of the row.

In an interview with Ina Dennekamp in 1988, Southam explained that she was experimenting with the idea of establishing a repetitive order that would create long phrases. Southam believed that patiently playing through long phrases holds similarities to the completion of “life-sustaining” tasks traditionally performed by women. These everyday tasks take patience, care, and time to complete.<sup>200</sup> Therefore, the process in *Returns I* where the musical line becomes increasingly longer, depicts this experience of completing these tasks in the structure of the piece. Southam also adds that these tasks are completed over and over, with subtle variances. I believe this idea is also present in *Returns I* through the chords and clusters. These chords do not appear to progress in a fixed pattern (see the “upper part” in Figures 3.13 and 3.14). Each time the row is played, the pitches are accompanied by a varied progression. This creates a subtly different harmonic colouring each time, and therefore musically portrays the concept of slightly varying a repetitive task. In addition to the process, other elements in the piece like the slow tempo, lingering fermatas, stationary rhythmic motion, and reserved dynamics add to the musical portrayal of this extramusical concept: the completion of tasks like mending, knitting, and weaving, repetitive tasks that are patiently completed by women in a dignified, quiet, and understated manner.

Awareness of Southam’s perspective that minimalist process is a musical representation of the female experience is important for pianists studying *Returns I* and works like it. Knowing that this idea motivated, at least in part, the piece’s construction provides context to a musical work that on the surface may look plain,

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<sup>200</sup> Ann Southam, interview by Ina Dennekamp, May 12, 1988, page 12, transcript and recording, The Paul D. Fleck Library and Archives at the Banff Centre, ID-ID06-ID06.71-ID06.71.2, <https://albertaonrecord.ca/transcript-of-interview-with-ann-southam>.

boring, or uninteresting to some. The message can provide a narrative for pianists to inform their interpretation. Pianists can trust the deliberate simplicity. They can play gently and steadily, subtly colouring the sounds to portray Southam's conceptualization of the repetitive and unassuming, yet important life-sustaining tasks considered traditional women's work. Furthermore, understanding the process will help performers track the gradual unfolding of the row, which allows us to purposefully play the lengthening musical line with the care Southam envisioned. Ultimately, we are not here to argue whether or not this was the best way to encapsulate the feminist message in music. But we can acknowledge that Southam was a creative leader who strove to represent the female experience in music. Therefore, as pianists we can aim to portray Southam's message through the interpretive choices we make when playing these works.

### **3.4 Southam's Harmonic Language**

Southam's creative flexibility and personal touch not only made her musical processes distinctive, but also helped her skillfully merge tonal centres with the atonality of the twelve-tone system to create a unique harmonic language. In 2008, when speaking about *Rivers, 2<sup>nd</sup> Set* in an interview, Southam explained:

I began experimenting with a twelve-tone row in a minimalist context. This was back in the early eighties and I have been using this device pretty well ever since...I like the idea of taking this atonal sequence or thread of notes, intervals (I have always managed to work in a perfect fifth or two), and spinning it out, one additional note at a time, through more or less consonant and repeated patterns of notes.<sup>201</sup>

Southam's expression of tone rows within a minimalist context is approached in varied ways in her works for solo piano. I believe that Southam's pieces in *Rivers, 2<sup>nd</sup> Set*

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<sup>201</sup> Egoyan and Young, "Composition as Enquiry," 41.

(1979, revised in 2005) effectively illustrate her mixing of contrasting musical languages. This set of *Rivers* follows the process described by Southam above: a row is built within the consonant framework of a repeated pattern of notes. In *Rivers No. 4, 2<sup>nd</sup> Set*, shown in Figure 3.15, a perfect fifth ostinato consisting of D and G is established in the right hand, sounding steadily and seamlessly on the onbeats. These pitches are the first two in the tone row used in the piece: D G C B G# F A# E D# A C# F#. Although there is a hollow sound due to the absence of the third, the perfect fifth ostinato sets up G as a tonal centre. In m. 3, C (Pitch 3) is introduced on the offbeat. This starts the building of the row with the addition of pitches 4, 5 and 6 or B, G#, and F. Each new pitch is added at the end of a tone-row segment consisting of the already introduced pitches, a process that creates a longer line, or phrase, each time the next pitch is added. At the end of m. 7, Southam confirms the tonal centre of G by introducing the G major triad paired with a D in the lower register. This G major triad and D are sustained, and going forward, are struck again at the end of each tone row segment. Together with the already sounding ostinato, the G major triad and low D drone provide a consonant tonal platform on which the dissonant row unfolds.

$\text{♩} = 76$  (or slower) *Quietly ecstatic.*

The image shows a handwritten musical score for 'Rivers No. 4, 2nd Set', measures 1-9. The tempo is marked as quarter note = 76 (or slower) and the mood is 'Quietly ecstatic'. The score is written on three systems of two staves each. The first system begins with a dynamic marking of *mp*. The second system features a red box around a G Major triad in the bass staff. The third system features two red boxes around G Major triads in the bass staff. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and ornaments.

Figure 3.15: mm. 1-9 of *Rivers No. 4, 2<sup>nd</sup> Set*. Statements of the G Major/Low D drone are outlined in red.

*Rivers No. 4, 2<sup>nd</sup> Set* contains three distinct sections. In Section A, the row is fully assembled, and then disassembled through a process of removing the first note of the tone row segment, as illustrated in Figure 3.16. Section A resolves the tension of the row by ending with only the G Major triad drone and ostinato, now in a slightly lower registral placement, sounding. In the B Section, the row is assembled again, but not disassembled. The registral placement of the pitches is varied as well, as observed in Figure 3.17. Notice also that the ostinato continues to persist, but the G Major Triad and D Drone is left out, making the music slightly more unsettled in this section. There is, however, a resolution at the end of the section with the reintroduction of the triad. Next, the C Section unfolds

in the most interesting way. Shown in Figure 3.18, the ostinato consisting of G and D continues to persist. The next row pitches introduced, however, do not belong to the prime form used in sections A and B. Southam instead cleverly unfolds a transposition of the row that still contains subsequent statements of those essential pitches D and G spelled: A D G F# D# C F B Bb E G# C#. Using this particular transposition allows for more sonic variety in the piece while maintaining the consonant patterns and drones rooted in G Major on which the dissonant tone row unspools. In all, *Rivers No. 4, 2<sup>nd</sup> Set* illustrates Southam's blending of the consonant, persistent, unifying drones and repeated patterns of minimalism with the tone rows of the twelve-tone system: a true juxtaposition of compositional elements.

The image displays three systems of handwritten musical notation. Each system consists of two staves: a treble clef staff on top and a bass clef staff on the bottom. The notation is dense, featuring various rhythmic values, accidentals (sharps, naturals, flats), and dynamic markings such as 'p' (piano) and 'f' (forte). The music appears to be a complex interplay of melodic lines and harmonic textures, consistent with the description of a twelve-tone system integrated with minimalist patterns.

Figure 3.16: Approximately mm.19-25 of *Rivers No. 4, 2<sup>nd</sup> Set*, the end of the A Section.

Figure 3.17: mm. 22-31 of *Rivers No. 4, 2<sup>nd</sup> Set*, the beginning of the B Section.

Figure 3.18: mm. 34-41 of *Rivers No. 4, 2<sup>nd</sup> Set*, the opening of the C Section.



Southam considered this juxtaposition of the consonant devices of minimalism and the discordance of tone rows a “red dissonant line,” in the music.<sup>202</sup> She viewed the pressing of the consonance and dissonance together as a metaphor for accommodating the discomfort or conflicts that occur in every day life.<sup>203</sup> Southam felt that the twelve-tone row was a useful device for creating music, and by pairing it with consonant devices she liked to think she was “bringing some tonal sense into it.”<sup>204</sup> As observed in *Rivers No. 4, 2<sup>nd</sup> Set* Southam utilizes the tonal aspects within the row, in this case the perfect intervallic relationship between G and D, to do just that.

Comprehending Southam’s harmonic language is yet another way to help pianists play her music with more thoughtful expression. Analysing the harmonic construction of her compositions, as done above with *Rivers No. 4, 2<sup>nd</sup> Set*, allows pianists to not only understand how a potentially confusing mix of musical materials work together, but also allows a pianist to differentiate the functions of the notes themselves. When the function is understood, then the notes or gestures can be played accordingly. For example, knowing that the G major triad paired with the low D is meant to function as a consonant drone, then one will know to choose to play those gestures with a subtle, soft, yet warm tonal colour so that the drones remain present, but do not overpower the musical line in the texture above. Furthermore, one can observe the interplay between the overlapping ostinato and tone row pitches. Not only can the performer listen for the resulting melodic motifs and project them appropriately, one can also track the less predictable patterns of

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<sup>202</sup> Tamara Bernstein, liner notes to 5, performed by Eve Egoyan, Centrediscs CMCCD 19113, 2013, compact disc.

<sup>203</sup> Ibid.

<sup>204</sup> Everett-Green, “One Women Tone Poem.”

tension and release and play them with a fitting nuance, therefore creating a more sensitively expressed interpretation made possible by analysis.

### 3.5 Teleology in Southam's Minimalist Music

Another element of Southam's minimalist music for solo piano that deserves discussion is the teleological nature of a significant portion of her works. Teleology is most prevalent in *Rivers*, *3<sup>rd</sup> Set* and *Remembering Schubert* but is also part of other works as well. As established in Section 3.2 of this chapter, minimalist pieces are typically continuous, lacking clear structural points of arrival and resolution. Furthermore, they certainly do not include any abrupt shifts. This seamlessness is, in part, caused by the interlocking repeated patterns that define minimalist music. The harmonic make-up of these patterns contributes to the non-directional or a-teleological nature of the music. As explained by Wim Mertens in his book *American Minimalist Composers*, traditional Western art music is teleological, meaning it is end-oriented; the musical elements work together to presume "a linear memory in the listener that forces him or her to follow the linear musical evolution," towards an end goal.<sup>205</sup> In teleological works, repetition is used to reference what has occurred before in the linear unfolding of the piece.<sup>206</sup> The music of the American minimalists, however, uses repetition differently to create "non-narrative and a-teleological," music that "discards the traditional harmonic functional schemes of tension and realization" and therefore typically lack the distinct structural points of arrival and resolution heard in conventional tonal works. For example, the a-teleology of minimalist music is clearly illustrated in Reich's *Piano Phase*. As

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<sup>205</sup> Mertens, *American Minimal Music*, 17.

<sup>206</sup> Mertens, *American Minimal Music*, 17.

shown in Figure 3.19, *Piano Phase* includes two piano parts. Piano 1 contains the repeated pattern played continuously from beginning to end. Piano 2 then phases through the same pattern until it reaches the unison starting position once again. The cluster of pitches used in the pattern is E F# B C# D. The pitches in the pattern never shift to another harmony, and the results of the phasing process creates a very gradual, non-directionalized sonic experience that leaves one feeling as though time is suspended.

♩. = ca. 72

Repeat each bar approximately number of times written. / Jeder Takt soll approximativ wiederholt werden entsprechend der angegebenen Anzahl. / Répétez chaque mesure à peu près le nombre de fois indiqué.

Figure 3.19: the opening of *Piano Phase* by Steve Reich.

While there are some similarities between Reich's *Piano Phase* and Southam's *Rivers 3<sup>rd</sup> Set*, including the seamless interlocking repeated patterns, *Rivers No. 9, 3<sup>rd</sup> Set* contrasts *Piano Phase* as there are underlying harmonic progressions embedded in the patterns. These chord progressions follow more traditional patterns of tension and release and therefore create a teleological musical experience. Measures 29-46 from *Rivers No. 9, 3<sup>rd</sup> Set*, shown in Figure 3.20, offer a clear example of these teleological harmonic progressions. This section of the piece is in B $\flat$  Major. There are four patterns in this

section which are shown in more detail in Figure 3.21. The pitches in Pattern 1 imply the subdominant harmony, E $\flat$  Major, with an added F and C. This subdominant harmony then progresses to a second inversion tonic chord, B $\flat$  Major, with an added G and C in Pattern 2. Next, this tonic chord shifts back to the subdominant harmony in Pattern 3, except this time the root of the chord, E $\flat$ , sounds securely in the bass voice. The A in Pattern 3 can be considered a passing tone. Finally, this embedded harmonic progression reaches a point of resolution when Pattern 3 shifts to Pattern 4. The pitches in Pattern 4 suggest the tonic harmony with the root of the chord, B $\flat$ , in the bass. This creates an even more grounded sense to this resolution.

The frequent harmony shifts through this section of *Rivers no. 9, 3<sup>rd</sup> Set* not only sonically disrupt the continuous nature of the piece, but also create a moving harmonic progression based on the plagal relationship of the E $\flat$  and B $\flat$  major chords. The tension built in the progression from the subdominant (Pattern 1) to the tonic in second inversion (Pattern 2) then back to the subdominant chord (Pattern 3) finally releases at the arrival of Pattern 4, creating a rather moving and expressive musical effect. Another reason why the entry of the Pattern 4 is so emotionally stirring is because Southam also embeds the dominant relationship between scale degree 5 and scale degree 1 within Patterns 1, 2, and 3. Notice how the dominant note F is present in every pattern. The F always appears in a pertinent place within the texture; sounding in the bass in patterns 1 and 2, and most perceptively placed in the highest voice on strong beats in patterns 1, 2, and 3. As the harmonies shift, this pitch remains persistent and obvious to listeners, creating a sense of dominant tension. Therefore, when the music finally arrives at the B $\flat$  major chord in

Pattern 4 with the B $\flat$  securely in the lowest voice, the dominant tension built through Patterns 1, 2 and 3 is finally released in the most moving fashion. This passage from *Rivers No. 9, 3<sup>rd</sup> Set* is just one small example of Southam's use of more traditional harmony within the minimalist writing style. Doing so creates a more linear evolution in her music than most conventional minimalism. Many of her pieces, especially those *Rivers, 3<sup>rd</sup> Set*, contain both progressions on a micro and macro scale that create abrupt shifts and clear points of arrival within her music.

Pattern 1

Pattern 2

The image displays a musical score for the piece "Rivers No. 9, 3<sup>rd</sup> Set". The score is presented in five systems, each consisting of a treble clef staff and a bass clef staff. The first system is unlabeled. The second system is labeled "Pattern 3" in red text above the treble staff. The third system is unlabeled. The fourth system is labeled "Pattern 4" in red text above the treble staff. The fifth system is unlabeled. The music features complex rhythmic patterns and melodic lines in both hands.

Figure 3.20: mm. 29- 46 of *Rivers No. 9, 3<sup>rd</sup> Set*. Pattern shifts are indicated.

Pattern 1

Pattern 2

Pattern 3

Pattern 4

The figure displays four musical patterns, each consisting of two staves (treble and bass clef) in a key signature of two flats (B-flat and E-flat). Pattern 1 features a treble staff with a melodic line of eighth and quarter notes, and a bass staff with a bass line of eighth and quarter notes. Pattern 2 shows a treble staff with a melodic line of eighth and quarter notes, and a bass staff with a bass line of eighth and quarter notes. Pattern 3 shows a treble staff with a melodic line of eighth and quarter notes, and a bass staff with a bass line of eighth and quarter notes. Pattern 4 shows a treble staff with a melodic line of eighth and quarter notes, and a bass staff with a bass line of eighth and quarter notes.

Figure 3.21: The four patterns with embedded harmonic progressions in *Rivers No. 9, 3<sup>rd</sup> Set* “B Section.”



Understanding the teleology within *Rivers, 3<sup>rd</sup> Set* is important for pianists performing this work. This knowledge allows pianists to embrace the patterns of tension and release to inform the pacing. For example, if a pianist ignores the arrival point at Pattern 4 by simply playing through with a seamless “in-time” approach, he or she has missed an opportunity to enhance the expressivity of the interpretation. Instead, one can play a ritardando in the moments leading to the arrival of Pattern 4. This ritardando emphasizes the build in tension to make the release even more remarkable. Dynamics can also enhance this resolution. A pianist can perform a crescendo up to the arrival point, and then play through Pattern 4 using a rich forte dynamic to reflect the heightened emotion of this point in the music. In all, Southam’s teleological leanings create sections and arrival points within the seamlessness of her works. A pianist must make interpretive choices such as adjusting pacing and varying the volume and tone colours through dynamics to enhance this linear narrative embedded within the continuous textures of Southam’s minimalist works.

### **3.6 Conclusion**

Southam wrote music in a wide range of styles with minimalist music being, by far, her largest creative output for solo piano. Little scholarly work exists on the topic of Southam’s minimalist pieces for solo piano. Therefore, in addition to providing helpful information on minimalism itself, this chapter included discussion and analysis offering helpful information about Southam’s minimalist music. The literature review on minimalism paired with the application of Timothy Johnson’s definitions of minimalism as an aesthetic, style, and technique, provided some historical context by showing that both Southam and her music sit within the minimalist school of composition and can be

considered alongside her more well-known contemporaries including Reich and Glass. Next, the concept of process was thoroughly discussed, revealing that Southam not only used this approach to composition flexibly to meet her creative goals, but had the unique extramusical perspective that process represented the feminist message in the actual structure of a musical work. Southam's unique harmonic language, which blended the atonality of tone rows with the consonant devices of minimalism, was also explored. This exploration demonstrated her unique juxtaposition of consonance and dissonance, a true metaphor for the accommodation of conflict in one's life. Lastly, the discussion of the teleology within Southam's minimalist works showed how she created a linear musical experience within the context of minimalist writing style. In summation, this discussion paired with the analyses was meant to present information as well as a perspective that may offer performers of Southam's minimalist works a deeper understanding of the music. It is my hope that this deeper understanding may support thoughtful and meaningful interpretations of Southam's minimalist music.

## **Chapter 4: Performer's Perspective: Playing Southam's Minimalist Works for Solo Piano**

### **4.1 Introduction**

The focussed study of Southam's minimalist works for solo piano continues in this final chapter, specifically from the performer's perspective. The previous chapter offered information intended to encourage well-informed interpretations of Southam's minimalist music. In this chapter, I push this notion further by focussing exclusively on the performer's task of learning, interpreting, and performing these works. Both technical and interpretive aspects of playing Southam's pieces is discussed, informed by my personal experience performing Southam's works paired with research conducted on the topic. It is my goal that the information presented in this chapter may help make Southam's music more approachable.

The discussion begins with a summary of the challenges performers face and requirements they must fulfill when playing minimalist music generally. The experiences of performers of minimalist music will be compared and contrasted to performing Southam's minimalist music. Next the performer's autonomy and the freedom to make their own choices when interpreting Southam's music will be explored. The most substantial portion of the chapter are the performance guides. These guides offer information on the technical and interpretive aspects of playing Southam's faster minimalist style pieces and her slower pieces considered within the category of the minimalist aesthetic.<sup>207</sup> The final portion of the guides focusses on the topic of memorizing Southam's music.

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<sup>207</sup> See Section 3.2 of Chapter 3.

## 4.2 Playing Minimalist Music

Musicians learning, interpreting, and performing minimalist music face challenges and requirements that are unique to this style. Three articles published in the *Ashgate Research Companion to Minimalist & Postminimalist Music* (2013) offer insight into the distinctive experience of playing minimalist music. One is by Sarah Cahill, an American pianist known for performing contemporary music, another by John Harle, a member of the Michael Nyman Band in the 1980s and 1990s, and a third by Russel Hartenberger, a former member of Steve Reich's ensemble and one of the first to perform Reich's *Clapping Music*.<sup>208</sup> There are common elements to performing minimalist music discussed by each author.

All three authors highlight the technically demanding physical challenges caused by the repetitiveness of minimalist music, with Hartenberger explaining that creative solutions like “breathing into” tightening muscles, and taking considerable advantage of brief rests in the patterns (if there are any at all), to release the building tension.<sup>209</sup> Further to the demanding physicality of minimalist performance, players also face mental challenges. Each author alludes to a certain focus, which Harle compares to Mihály Csíkszentmihályi's concept of “flow,” that is ideal for expressing the seamless patterns accurately, because, as Cahill explains “with Chopin or Bartok or Stockhausen, you hit a

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<sup>208</sup> Sarah Cahill, “Performance Anxiety and Minimalism,” in *The Ashgate Research Companion to Minimalist & Postminimalist Music*, ed. Kyle Gann, Keith Potter and Pwyll ap Sion (Surrey: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2013) 385-387.; John Harle, “Performing Minimalist Music,” in *The Ashgate Research Companion to Minimalist & Postminimalist Music*, ed. by Kyle Gann, Keith Potter and Pwyll ap Sion (Surrey: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2013) 381-384.; Russell Hartenberger, “Clapping Music: a performer's perspective,” in *The Ashgate Research Companion to Minimalist & Postminimalist Music*, ed. by Kyle Gann, Keith Potter and Pwyll ap Sion (Surrey: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2013) 371-379.

<sup>209</sup> Hartenberger, “Clapping Music: a performer's perspective,” 379.

wrong note but you can recover. With minimalist music, if one wrong turn in a pattern derails you, recovery is next to impossible.”<sup>210</sup>

The idiosyncratic handling of pulse and rhythm in minimalist music pushes performers to find new ways to count. The pulse is the canvas on which performers paint the sounds. In minimalist music, where the length of patterns shifts over meters that are typically used in unconventional ways, it can be difficult, or simply not possible, to find a regular pattern of downbeats and upbeats. To overcome this metrical ambiguity, Hartenberger describes how he “feels” the changes in the patterns of Reich’s *Clapping Music* as they shift over the primary ostinato clapped by the other player, explaining “I do not think of the basic pattern displayed by one quaver beat in each bar. Instead, I think of the rhythm created by each new pattern with the first beat of the new rhythm on the first beat of the new bar.”<sup>211</sup> Although this is only the solution to how Hartenberger played the rhythms in *Clapping Music* and not a universal to all rhythm related challenges in minimalist music, this explanation shows the type of creative thinking required to facilitate the expression of rhythm and pulse in some minimalist works.

In addition to the physical, mental, and rhythmic challenges of performing minimalist music, there is also a certain anxiety about the potential aversion to the style. Some performers feel pressure to convince audiences that minimalist music is a valid expression of sound. Harle explained that although he feels minimalism is more widely accepted now, when he was a young performer with the Michael Nyman band he believed he was a crusader for the style, determined to play the music with as much conviction

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<sup>210</sup> Cahill, “Performance Anxiety and Minimalism,” 386.

<sup>211</sup> Hartenberger, “Clapping Music: a performer’s perspective,” 375.

needed to convert audiences.<sup>212</sup> Cahill explained that she takes on the challenge of adversity by communicating the music even more deeply through interpretive choices like favouring certain motifs through voicing, creating longer lines through reimagined meter stress, and experimenting with touch.<sup>213</sup>

Performers face similar challenges in Southam's minimalist music. Southam, a pianist herself, understood the unique requirements of performing her minimalist music. She was aware of the need for great stamina paired with a high level of technical skill and musicality to not only get through her virtuosic works, but to also find the melodic material within the overlapping patterns. When speaking about her *Rivers* sets, she explained, "I am not sure if I even thought that anybody would actually play these things, could actually get through them... I love the little tunes and motifs that can be found in the interaction between the hands, and it takes whizbang pianist to make those heard, which she does, God I don't know how she does it."<sup>214</sup> The "whizbang" pianist Southam is referring to is Canadian Christina Petrowska Quilico, a long-time friend and champion of Southam's minimalist pieces for piano.

In a variety of sources, Petrowska Quilico highlights aspects of playing Southam's minimalist music that are similar to those discussed by Cahill, Harle, and Hartenberger. For example, she explained in two separate interviews that if you do not have "good technique," Southam's minimalism can become "heavy," and "choppy."<sup>215</sup> She also emphasized that a pianist needs to play with a controlled energy that creates the essential

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<sup>212</sup> Harle, "Performing Minimalist Music," 382.

<sup>213</sup> Cahill, "Performance Anxiety and Minimalism," 385.

<sup>214</sup> Eitan Cornfield, producer of *Ann Southam: Canadian Composer Portraits, Documentary*, 2005, Centrediscs CMCCD 10505, CD, Track 6 05:02, speaker Ann Southam.

<sup>215</sup> Wendalyn Bartley, "The Current Within the Music," *The Whole Note*, August 30, 2018, <https://www.thewholenote.com/index.php/newsroom/beatcolumns-sp-2121861476/newmusic2/28242-pianist-christina-petrowska-quilico-the-current-within-the-music>.

“flow and fluidity” needed to both calmly and energetically manage the non-stop “volume of notes.”<sup>216</sup> In addition to top-notch technique and both the physical and mental stamina required of performers, she also acknowledges that Southam’s music was not totally in sync with the musical trends of the time, and therefore audiences were not always accepting of her music.<sup>217</sup> This issue is similar to the fear of aversion expressed by Cahill, Harle, and Hartenberger.

As a performer of Southam’s music, I too can attest to the technical demands, particularly of her faster works, that pianists must overcome while also striving to communicate her music with such conviction that listeners grasp its value. I can also add that the metrical ambiguity of her music has led me to discover new ways to count and feel pulse and rhythm. Furthermore, deciphering the score requires the deepest level of attention to detail I had yet to experience when learning a piece of music. These challenges and requirements will be explored in more detail later in this chapter. However, first, there is an important issue surrounding interpretive freedom posited by Cahill and Harle that is not in common with performing Southam’s minimalist music that deserves further consideration.

### **4.3 The Performer’s Autonomy in Southam’s Minimalist Music**

Some minimalist composers like control over the interpretation of their works. Little autonomy is given to or expected of the performer when it comes to the expressive

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<sup>216</sup> Robert Rowat, “How Christina Petrowska Quilico finds the flow in Ann Southam’s music,” *CBC Music*, September 24, 2018, <https://www.cbc.ca/music/read/how-christina-petrowska-quilico-finds-the-flow-in-ann-southam-s-music-1.5044794>.

<sup>217</sup> Cornfield, producer of *Ann Southam: Canadian Composer Portraits*, Track 10 00:58, speaker Christina Petrowska-Quilico.

details of their pieces. Harle's skepticism of this expectation is reflected in his explanation:

Minimalist composers seem to want to keep complete control over the musical flow, but this absolute control is something that can't happen when dealing with humans; unless one abandons human interaction in order to attain a kind of musical 'ideal.'<sup>218</sup>

This element of control is reflected in Cahill's experience working with composer John Adams on his piece *China Gates*. She explains that although Adams has become more accepting of her interpretive ideas for the piece lately, he insisted for many years that the soft resonant sound he wished for should never rise above *mezzo-forte* and that every line should be treated equally, even though Cahill felt that the communication of the piece would be enhanced if she could, for example, voice certain lines and motifs more overtly, experiment with the pedalling, and occasionally play beyond a *mezzo-forte* tone quality.<sup>219</sup> This level of authority leaves little interpretive freedom for performers, which can lead to missed opportunities for more vibrant and engaging performances of minimalist music. Southam's expectations, however, contrast this issue brought forth by Harle and Cahill. She gave plenty of autonomy to performers of her music and encouraged them to allow their ideas to influence how her pieces sounded with the greatest enthusiasm and support.

Southam allowed performers the most generous autonomy over interpretations of her works. When asked why she gave up so much "power," Southam replied, "It's hard to make decisions. Really, things can be played in many different ways and I don't like to nail it down to one. So, I very often don't put in any dynamics or indicate voicing or

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<sup>218</sup> Harle, "Performing Minimalist Music," 382.

<sup>219</sup> Cahill, "Performance Anxiety and Minimalism," 387.



anything, because, putting myself on the side of the player, I think that I would love to be allowed to work these things out for myself.”<sup>220</sup> This statement shows that Southam was flexible and open to her pieces demonstrating different characteristics depending on the creative choices of the person performing. It also shows that Southam was aware of the power imbalance that can occur between composer and performer that can result in a performer’s creative voice being outweighed by that of the composer. Southam once spoke of the thrilling freedom she felt when she began creating in the electronic music studio as there was no male dominated tradition bearing down on her.<sup>221</sup> I believe she wanted others to experience that same freedom when performing her own music.

Southam’s flexible nature is evident in her collaborative relationships with a variety of artists. She was happiest when composing for people she knew.<sup>222</sup> Artists with whom she collaborated include the already mentioned pianists Eve Egoyan and Christina Petrowska Quilico, violist Rivka Golani, percussionist Beverly Thompson, visual artist Aiko Suzuki and a host of other, musicians, composers, and dancers. Each artist with whom Southam worked left a lasting impact on the sound of her music. A most notable influence on her piano works is that on tempo and pacing. Petrowska Quilico often shares an anecdote from when she first began playing Southam’s minimalist works, likely the *Rivers* sets. Petrowska Quilico explains that she felt the tempos were too dull and decided to speed some of them up. When she played them with the faster tempo Southam became excited, and encouraged Petrowska Quilico to do whatever she wanted with the pieces

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<sup>220</sup> Dennis Bathory-Kitsz and David Gunn, “If Only I Could Sing: Ann Southam in Conversation with Kalvos & Damian,” *Musicworks* 71, summer (1998): 27.

<sup>221</sup> Kim Echlin, “Glass Houses #5: Playing Plan,” *The Citizen’s Weekly* (Ottawa, ON), Oct. 5, 1997.

<sup>222</sup> Cornfield, producer of *Ann Southam: Canadian Composer Portraits*, Track 10 00:00.

because she loved it.<sup>223</sup> This artistic choice by Petrowska Quilico influenced the sound of Southam's faster minimalist works by making a more ecstatic pacing the expected norm when these works are performed.

Southam also shared a close bond with pianist Eve Egoyan. Within the gentle safety of their special relationship, Southam cultivated her exquisite slow and reductive minimalist works for solo piano. Egoyan directly impacted these pieces as she encouraged Southam to write slow music that used space to highlight the timbre of the piano.<sup>224</sup> Southam admired Egoyan's ability to listen deeply to the decay of a piano note and highlight the remarkable "things" that happen after a note is played.<sup>225</sup> Without the influence of Egoyan's artistic voice, Southam's reductive minimalist works may not exist in the same way they do today. Overall, these two examples show Southam's willingness to work alongside others, and further emphasizes that Southam was a flexible creator, who openly allowed the ideas of others to affect the sound of her music.

It has been established that Southam gave considerable autonomy to those performing her minimalist works. To a performer who has been trained to follow the rules and conventions of certain styles, this is both a liberating yet also daunting notion. For instance, although she was flexible, Southam must have had a certain sound in mind for her pieces. How do we, as performers, fulfill our obligation to create an authentic sounding interpretation that captures Southam's vision for the work with so few details in

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<sup>223</sup> Rowat, "How Christina Petrowska Quilico finds the flow in Ann Southam's music.,"; Natasha Gauthier, "Christina Petrowska Quilico finding peace in contemporary music," *Ottawa Citizen* (Ottawa, ON), August 1, 2014, <http://ottawacitizen.com/uncategorized/christina-petrowska-quilico-finding-peace-in-contemporary-music>.

<sup>224</sup> Eve Egoyan and Gayle Young, "Composition as Enquiry: The Explorational Music of Ann Southam," *Musicworks* 101, summer (2008): 42.

<sup>225</sup> Cornfield, producer of *Ann Southam: Canadian Composer Portraits*, Track 10 00:00, speaker Ann Southam.

the score? What about the available recordings and well-known performances of her works? If the performer was taking liberties, were the resulting sounds really what Southam envisioned? What did Southam really want her works to sound like without the influence of those she collaborated with? If we truly have the autonomy to shape our interpretations, then what is acceptable, and what would be considered too many liberties? With Southam's known flexibility a factor, are any of these ideas even an issue at all?

I freely admit that I do not have any conclusive answers to the questions presented above. Furthermore, I do not believe there are absolute answers. However, they are questions that come to mind as I play Southam's works. They are also the questions that have inspired the creation of the performance guides in the following section. It is my hope that by sharing the knowledge I gained researching how to perform Southam's works and performing them myself, that I may start a discourse on playing Southam's minimalist works for solo piano. Other pianists may learn from my experiences, and then add to the discourse by sharing their own. Eventually, we may establish some conventions to follow when playing Southam's music. Having some agreed upon principles to follow makes music more approachable. By establishing some conventions to use as a starting point, pianists trained in the Western Art Music tradition may one day be just as willing to add Southam's music to their repertoire as they are to include a Beethoven Sonata, Chopin Etude, or Debussy Prelude.

#### **4.4 Performance Guides: Learning, Interpreting & Performing Southam's Minimalist Works**

The performance guides offer insights on possible technical approaches and interpretive choices one can try when learning and playing Southam's minimalist solo piano music. Technical aspects include items such as deciphering the score, feeling and controlling the pulse and rhythm, choosing effective gestures to make the sounds (technique), and possible ways to achieve and maintain the unique physical and mental state needed to play minimalist music. Interpretive aspects cover such things as pacing/tempo, voicing, dynamics, characterization, pedalling, and expression generally. Furthermore, as expressed in the previous chapters, Southam's minimalist works for solo piano can be loosely divided in two categories based on Timothy Johnson's designations; the quicker more conventional works of the style, and the slower reductive works of the aesthetic. Therefore, two guides, one to "The Minimalist Style Works" focussing on *Rivers, 3<sup>rd</sup> Set* and *Glass Houses* and another guide to "The Minimalist Aesthetic Works," focussing on *Pond Life, Returnings* style works, and *Rivers, 2<sup>nd</sup> Set* have been created. Although there may be some conceptual overlap, distinctive technical and interpretive aspects for each type of piece are more clearly communicated in separate guides.

One more important notion must be emphasized before moving forward to the performance guides. While some information was collected from the experiences of others, these guides are largely based on my experience playing Southam's works and therefore warrant an open mind to the subjectivity of my experience. My goal is to share one perspective on playing Southam's works to start a discourse on the subject. This may incite others to share their experiences which will perhaps establish some conventions to guide the performance of Southam's works within the Western Art Music community.

More widely known conventions could lead to improved approachability, which may in turn establish Southam's music as a more regular part of the pianists' repertoire.

#### 4.4.1 The Minimalist Style Works

##### 4.4.1.1 *Rivers, 3<sup>rd</sup> Set*

This performance guide begins with a discussion of Southam's *Rivers, 3<sup>rd</sup> Set*, with examples from my experience learning and performing No. 3, No. 5, and No. 9. The concepts discussed here can also be applied to similar works including *Remembering Schubert, Where?, Commotion Creek, Fiddle Creek, Fidget Creek, Noisy River*, and the pieces in *Stiches in Time*.<sup>226</sup> In fact, I recommend that those new to playing Southam's music in this style study some of the *Sonocycles* and/or *Soundspinnings* from the *Stiches in Time* collection first. *Sonocycles* and *Soundspinnings* are smaller scale versions of the pieces in the *3<sup>rd</sup> Set* and will prepare a pianist for the complexities of the larger scale works.

Southam's *Rivers, 3<sup>rd</sup> Set* contains nine pieces with seamless interlocking repeated and gradually changing patterns of eighth notes meant to be played at a quick tempo. Each hand plays a different pattern, one hand on the onbeats and one on the offbeats. In Southam's program notes she acknowledges their virtuosic nature while also explaining that the resulting motifs from the interaction between the patterns are meant to be found and highlighted by the performer. Southam gives very few interpretive details as she preferred to allow performers the freedom to make their own choices in terms of "tempo,

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<sup>226</sup> One may argue that *Commotion Creek, Fiddle Creek, Fidget Creek*, and *Noisy River* are more similar to *Glass Houses* as the patterns move simultaneously, but I believe they share more similarities with *Rivers, 3<sup>rd</sup> Set*.

dynamics, and pedalling.”<sup>227</sup> Consequently, pianists are left to stare at pages of unending streams of eighth notes, with little more than an approximate tempo marking to guide them as they embark on learning this music. This is unconventional indeed when compared to the classical pianist’s typical repertoire. I remember my first experience looking at the music for No. 5, and asking myself: how do I start learning this?

The first essential step to learning these works is to analyse the score. The sheer volume of uninterrupted eighth notes makes reading the music a challenge. To notice even the slightest pattern shift one must patiently count through the repetitions, tracking every change with a pencil or coloured highlighter. A pianist can also keep track of the pattern’s evolution on a separate piece of paper. Following the onbeat pattern first is most effective. Due to its stable metrical placement on the onbeats I typically view, hear, and feel it as the “leader” pattern. Furthermore, it is best to track the offbeat pattern in relation to the repetitions of the onbeat pattern. Doing so helps a performer navigate through the metrical ambiguity of these works as the onbeat pattern is placed securely on the accented beats and is therefore a way to count and control the pulse. Let us look at the A section of *Rivers No. 3, 3<sup>rd</sup> Set* as an example of the analysis process (Figure 4.1).

The onbeat pattern in the opening, or A section, of *Rivers No. 3, 3<sup>rd</sup> Set* is 10 notes long and played with the left hand. The only change to this pattern occurs in m. 9, where the C#5 is doubled making it 11 notes long for the remainder of the section. Notice how in Figure 4.1 I marked each pattern repetition with a slur. Marking each pattern repetition helps one visually track them with more clarity. Next, one can focus on the offbeat pattern played with the right hand. In No. 3, this pattern starts with 2 notes, B3 and A#4,

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<sup>227</sup> Ann Southam, liner notes to *Canadian Composers Portrait Series: Ann Southam*, performed by Christina Petrowska Quilico, Centrediscs CMCCD 10505, 2005, CD.

but changes soon after the piece starts. This pattern will be tracked in relation to the stable onbeat pattern. In Figure 4.1, notice I have written “3 times,” to indicate that the initial offbeat pattern phases within 3 full repetitions of the onbeat pattern. In m. 3, A#4 is added to the offbeat pattern. This altered pattern is played through another 3 full repetitions of the onbeat pattern. Next, at the end of m. 4, the offbeat pattern becomes 4 notes long (B3, A#4, G#4, A#4). This new offbeat pattern then phases over 3 repetitions of the onbeat pattern. At the end of m. 6, the patterns align in their original position again. After that, an E#4 is added to the offbeat pattern. The addition of the E# creates a pattern that is 8 notes in length: B3 A#4 G#4 A#4 E#4 A#4 G#4 A#4. The initial repetitions of this 8-note offbeat pattern are played over 4 repetitions of the stable onbeat pattern. After these 4 repetitions, the additional C#5 is added to the onbeat pattern in m. 9. This now 11-note pattern repeats 5 times while supporting the phasing of the 8 note offbeat pattern. During the fifth repetition the hands align in the original position again, which is followed by the offbeat pattern returning to the 4 note B3 A#4 G#4 A#4 pattern. This offbeat pattern is maintained for 3 repetitions of the onbeat pattern. The offbeat pattern then transitions back to the B3 A#4 A#4 pattern again for three repetitions of the onbeat pattern. Then finally the A section comes to a close, with 3 more repetitions of the onbeat pattern supporting the phasing of the offbeat pattern that has returned to the original two-notes: B3 and A#4. Notice that the final notes of the section deviate from the set onbeat pattern, which I have labelled “Transition.” It is common for there to be transitional moments like this that lead to new patterns of new sections in *Rivers, 3<sup>rd</sup> Set*.

**RIVERS III**

$\text{♩} = 126$

*mp*

3 Times

\*  $\left[ \begin{array}{c} \text{oo} \\ \text{oo} \\ \text{oo} \\ \text{oo} \end{array} \right]$  Optional. Otherwise pedal ad lib.

3 Times



Handwritten musical notation on two staves. The key signature is three sharps (F#, C#, G#). The melody is written in the upper staff with eighth notes. The bass line is in the lower staff with eighth notes. A blue slur is drawn under the bass line. A green diagonal line is drawn across the system. The text "3 Times" is written in red below the second staff.

Handwritten musical notation on two staves, identical to the first system. A blue slur is drawn under the bass line. A green diagonal line is drawn across the system. The text "4 Times" is written in red below the second staff.

Handwritten musical notation on two staves, identical to the first system. A blue slur is drawn under the bass line. A green diagonal line is drawn across the system.

Handwritten musical notation on two staves, identical to the first system. A blue slur is drawn under the bass line. A green diagonal line is drawn across the system. The text "5 Times" is written in red below the second staff.

Handwritten musical notation on two staves, identical to the first system. A blue slur is drawn under the bass line.

The image displays five systems of musical notation for the A section (mm. 1-18) of *Rivers No. 3, 3rd Set*. Each system consists of a treble and bass staff. The music is in 3/4 time with a key signature of three sharps (F#, C#, G#). The notation includes various rhythmic values and melodic lines. Annotations include blue slurs indicating repetitions of specific patterns, green vertical lines marking the start of pattern shifts, and red text indicating the number of repetitions (e.g., "3 Times") and a "Transition" point at the end of the section.

36.

Figure 4.1: Annotated A section (mm. 1-18) of *Rivers No. 3, 3<sup>rd</sup> Set*, showing how to track the repetitions and changes of the patterns. The blue slurs mark the repetitions, the green brackets mark the start of each pattern shifts, and the number of repetitions are written in red.

It is also important to note that throughout the example in Figure 4.1 I have marked the start of pattern shift with a bracket that elucidates the alignment of the hands. These cues offer a structural security comparable to the beginning or end of a phrase encountered in less seamless works. In summation thus far, although the explanation may seem densely detailed, it is intended to show the effort that needs to be applied deciphering the score when first learning these works. Pianists must take what appears to be cascades of eighth notes and conceptualize them in a way that is clear and trackable. Doing so allows a pianist to both learn the music with more ease and security, which will in turn help them perform with clarity and confidence.

The pieces in *Rivers, 3<sup>rd</sup> Set* are not particularly sight readable. Fortunately, pianist Christina Petrowska Quilico worked alongside Southam to record all of the *Rivers*. These recordings are excellent models to refer to when first learning these pieces. Furthermore, we have access to Southam's personal recording notes from this project.<sup>228</sup> These notes shed light on how she wanted the pieces to sound and include helpful information about rhythmic and technical expression. Comments in the notes stress the importance of evenness in the "fast" *Rivers*.<sup>229</sup> These comments are likely pertaining to the need to play the quick alternations between the onbeat and offbeat patterns with even rhythm. While this challenge is rhythmic in nature, it is also related to technique. If, in Southam's words, the "hands are jamming up,"<sup>230</sup> one cannot express the alternating patterns with evenly. Therefore, in *Rivers, 3<sup>rd</sup> Set*, pianists must use technique that allows the patterns to align evenly at a quick tempo. This task is more easily achieved with

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<sup>228</sup> Ann Southam, "Rivers: CD editing notes by Southam," (Banff Alberta: The Paul D. Fleck Library and Archives at the Banff Centre). [AS-AS2-AS2.033]

<sup>229</sup> *Ibid.*, 34-36.

<sup>230</sup> *Ibid.*, 28-30.

relaxed arms and wrists paired with hands using a structured bridge and firm fingertips. Closed hand positions should be used whenever feasible to facilitate as much relaxation as possible. The next and ultimately most important aspect of technique to refine is touch. Playing with a relaxed and percussive detached articulation is necessary to achieve the even and fast alternations of the hands. In addition to the detached touch, I highly recommend practice without pedal at first. Doing so allows one to master the required touch and ensure that the gestures result in absolutely even rhythmic alignment while the sounds are clear.

The metrical ambiguity of the pieces in *Rivers, 3<sup>rd</sup> Set* must be addressed alongside playing technique. Ultimately, rhythm and technique are one and the same. A pianist chooses an appropriate gesture to make the sound, but it must be executed at the correct time for it to be an effective gesture. The pianist must feel and count the pulse of the music to play a gesture that produces the rhythm at the correct time. Often, pianists look to the time signature to indicate how to feel the pulse in a piece. That is, however, not the case for *Rivers, 3<sup>rd</sup> Set*. Although written in 8/4, the accent pattern and pulse is actually dictated by the length of the onbeat pattern. The pulse can be based on an even eighth note subdivision, but not counted in 8. The counting shifts as the onbeat pattern increases or decreases in length. For example, let us revisit *Rivers No. 3* from the *3<sup>rd</sup> Set*. The onbeat pattern is 10 notes in length. Figure 4.2 shows how I subdivide this pattern into a group of 6 plus a group of 4. Figure 4.3 illustrates how the counting shifts when the additional C# 5 is added, resulting in a group of 7 plus a group of 4. Not all *Rivers* are quite as irregular. *No. 5* from the *3<sup>rd</sup> Set* begins with a much simpler onbeat pattern that can be comfortably counted in 4 beats as shown in Figure 4.4. As *No. 5* progresses,

however, the onbeat pattern changes twice more, one counted in 6 and the other 7 (Figure 4.5 and 4.6). *Rivers No. 9, 3<sup>rd</sup> Set* features a unifying downbeat ostinato that can be counted in 6 throughout (Figure 4.7). In summation, while others may conceptualize the pulse differently, I have found this method of counting an effective way to work through the challenging metrical ambiguity of this music to create a steady and even performance.<sup>231</sup>

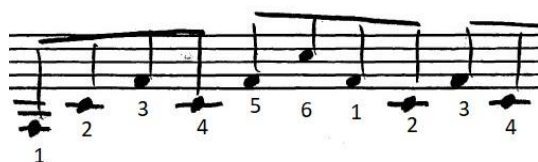


Figure 4.2: Illustrates how to count Ostinato 1 in *Rivers No. 3, 3<sup>rd</sup> Set*.

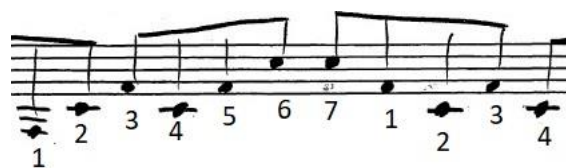


Figure 4.3: Illustrates how to count Ostinato 2 in *Rivers No. 3, 3<sup>rd</sup> Set*.

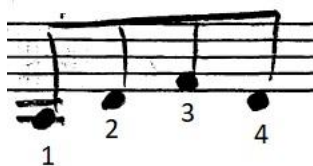


Figure 4.4: Illustrates how to count Ostinato 1 in *Rivers No. 5, 3<sup>rd</sup> Set*.

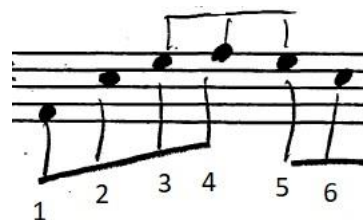


Figure 4.5: Illustrates how to count Ostinato 2 in *Rivers No. 5, 3<sup>rd</sup> Set*.

<sup>231</sup> Utilizing the metronome when practicing also helps engrain the essential steadiness. Southam provided tempos in relation to the quarter note value for each piece and we can simply double that amount on the metronome to tap the eighth note. Tapping the eighth note value is best as the quarter note beat is difficult to feel when the patterns increase and decrease in length.

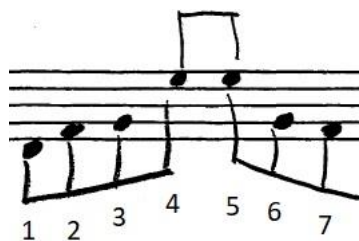


Figure 4.6: Illustrates how to count Ostinato 3 in Rivers No. 5, 3<sup>rd</sup> Set.

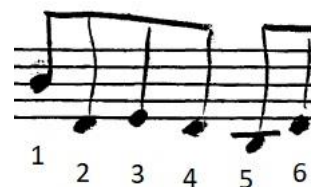


Figure 4.7: Illustrates how to count the Ostinato in Rivers No. 9, 3<sup>rd</sup> Set.

Some may question the meticulousness of this counting method. It is true that over-counting can cause these works to become rhythmically restrained and unimaginative. A pianist may ease intensity of the counting to focus attention on other musical elements once the pulse and rhythm is secure in their interpretation. However, if the performer does not remain grounded in the pulse, it is very easy to rush and lose control. Then the all-important evenness is lost and the seamless progression of the piece simply falls apart. Furthermore, the stability achieved by settling into the pulse of the piece is also essential to playing with the calm and controlled state of mind required to perform these works well. Focusing on counting is one way to cultivate the flow state needed to make it through the fast and seamless repetitions that form these pieces.

While the pulse must be as secure as possible when playing *Rivers*, 3<sup>rd</sup> Set, there is flexibility in the speed at which the pulse is expressed. Southam indicates metronome markings for each piece that sit within the range of *allegro*. Petrowska Quilico embraces the faster, ecstatic side of these tempos in many of her interpretations, and because her performances are the most well-known, faster tempos have become the unspoken standard for these works. These tempos are certainly effective for Petrowska Quilico, but

very likely may not work for other pianists. Moreover, the fast and ecstatic interpretations are only one possible vision for these works. Southam explains in her notes that “metronome markings and durations are approximate,” suggesting there are multiple possibilities for the tempo of these pieces.<sup>232</sup> Furthermore, although she later made peace with her reservations, there is some evidence to suggest that Southam had some concerns about the tempos Petrowska Quilico was using.<sup>233</sup> Therefore, while they are superb performances, a pianist should not feel obligated to follow Petrowska Quilico’s model absolutely, but make choices that suit their unique abilities and creative vision. For instance, I believe that a moderately fast tempo is ideal. Playing these pieces too slowly hinders the vibrant shimmering quality, but soaring too close to the faster end of the *allegro* tempo spectrum can be risky and uncomfortable. A moderately fast tempo offers a secure and accurate performance while creating the effervescent quality of these works. Furthermore, a moderately fast tempo also highlights the pattern shifts with an appealing introspectiveness. Pianists can turn to Louise Bessette’s recording of *Rivers No. 5, 3<sup>rd</sup> Set* for an excellent example of a moderate performance.<sup>234</sup>

Flexibility of pacing is also appropriate when playing the pieces in *Rivers, 3<sup>rd</sup> Set*. Using rubato and expressive elements like *ritardando* and *accelerando* not only lead to beautiful interpretations, but are also key to performance endurance. For example, there are many opportunities to be flexible with pacing in No. 9. This extraordinary final piece from the set is the longest, comprising of several sections seamlessly strung together. A

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<sup>232</sup> Ann Southam, *Rivers (3rd Set)*, (Toronto: Canadian Music Centre, 1981/2005), preface.

<sup>233</sup> Robert Everett-Green, “Ann Southam: A One Woman Tone Poem,” *Globe and Mail* (Toronto, ON), July 6, 2009: <https://www.theglobeandmail.com/arts/ann-southam-a-one-woman-tone-poem/article1199935/>.

<sup>234</sup> Ann Southam, “Set 3 No. 5,” in *Canadian Music for Piano* performed by Louise Bessette, CBC Records MVCD1064, recorded 1993, CD.

pianist can use rubato to shape the transitions between the sections and to heighten the expression within the sections themselves. Figure 4.8 shows the possible pacing choices a pianist can make in a climactic section that appears in the latter half of the piece. The music is growing in intensity, and the expression of this intensity can be enhanced through a slight push of pacing through to the top of each arpeggiated figure. The transition at the end of this section leads to the pinnacle of the climax. This arrival point can be highlighted by playing a ritardando that leads to the downbeat of the new pattern. Next, the tension of this climax releases in the section that follows. A pianist can enhance this release by adding a drawn-out ritardando at the transition; taking plenty of time to place the first note of the next section. This creates the most exquisite effect that allows the tension of the previous section to simply melt away. Furthermore, these pacing choices are not only for expressive purposes. Taking time also allows a pianist to bring breath into their interpretation. Every *River* in the 3<sup>rd</sup> *Set* has transitions that pianists can use as a chance to release the tension that has built both physically and mentally as they play through the seamless currents of rapidly alternating eighth notes. These opportunities to reset are essential to cultivating a performance that is secure, confident, and successful.



The image displays a handwritten musical score for measures 173-184 of *Rivers No. 9, 3<sup>rd</sup> Set*. The score is organized into six systems, each consisting of two staves. The music is written in a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#) and a 3/4 time signature. The notation is dense, featuring a variety of rhythmic values such as eighth and sixteenth notes, along with rests and dynamic markings. Several performance instructions are written in red ink: 'rit. cres.' (ritardando, crescendo) appears in the second system; 'a tempo' is marked in the third system; 'rit. dim' (ritardando, diminuendo) is in the fourth system; 'mp' (mezzo-piano), 'meno mosso' (less motion), 'accel.' (accelerando), and 'a tempo' are marked in the fifth system. The score concludes with a double bar line and a key signature change to one sharp (F#) in the final measure.

Figure 4.8: mm. 173-184 from *Rivers No. 9, 3<sup>rd</sup> Set* showing how flexibility of pacing can enhance the expressivity of the piece and improve performance endurance.

The watery quality of *Rivers, 3<sup>rd</sup> Set* is in part what makes them so appealing. The pedalling contributes greatly to portraying this characteristic. In some of the pieces, including *No. 3* and *No. 5*, Southam indicates that certain lower pitches are meant to be held open with the sostenuto pedal as shown in Figures 4.9 and 4.10. Doing so creates an intriguing hue as the lower strings sympathetically vibrate. The droning effect is highly indicative of the minimalist writing style, and brings a sense of cohesiveness to the piece. When using the sostenuto pedal Southam recommends using the damper pedal lightly.<sup>235</sup> I tend to still use a half to full pedal depending on the context. But as usual, pedaling choices depend on the instrument and the space in which one is playing. So, a pianist should listen acutely and aim to use the damper pedal in a way that creates the shimmering, flowing water quality.

The image shows a musical score for Rivers No. 3, 3rd Set. It consists of three staves. The top staff is in treble clef with a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#) and a time signature of 8/8. The middle staff is in bass clef with the same key signature and time signature. The bottom staff is a grand staff (treble and bass clefs) with the same key signature and time signature. The music features a melodic line in the upper staves and a bass line in the lower staves. A dynamic marking of 'mp' is present. A sostenuto pedal indication is shown in the bottom staff, consisting of a vertical line with a horizontal bar at the top and a bracket on the left side. The text 'Optional. Otherwise pedal ad lib.' is written to the right of the indication. A small asterisk is placed below the first note of the bass line.

Figure 4.9: Sostenuto pedal indications for *Rivers No. 3, 3<sup>rd</sup> Set*.

The image shows a musical score for Rivers No. 5, 3rd Set. It consists of three staves. The top staff is in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a time signature of 8/8. The middle staff is in treble clef with the same key signature and time signature. The bottom staff is a grand staff (treble and bass clefs) with the same key signature and time signature. The music features a melodic line in the upper staves and a bass line in the lower staves. A dynamic marking of 'mp' is present. A sostenuto pedal indication is shown in the bottom staff, consisting of a vertical line with a horizontal bar at the top and a bracket on the left side. The text 'Optional. Otherwise pedal ad lib.' is written to the right of the indication. A small asterisk is placed below the first note of the bass line.

Figure 4.10: Sostenuto pedal indications for *Rivers No. 5, 3<sup>rd</sup> Set*.

<sup>235</sup> Southam, *Rivers (3rd Set)*, preface.

On the page, the pieces in *Rivers, 3<sup>rd</sup> Set* appear melody free. Melodic and rhythmic motifs are embedded within the texture and as the onbeat and offbeat patterns interact, motifs are revealed. Southam gives the performer freedom to find the motifs within the texture. Even if they are marked in the score, which is rare, a different choice can be made.<sup>236</sup> When I first began playing these pieces, I found it challenging to settle on a certain motif in the texture due to concerns about whether it was the “correct” one to highlight. Determining the best way to balance the motifs within the busy texture was also challenging. To overcome these challenges, I first advise pianists to trust the process. What I mean is to allow time to feel comfortable playing the patterns first and not force the motifs to make themselves known. The motifs will begin to reveal themselves in the most natural way as a pianist’s understanding of the piece grows. Also, pianists can trust that Southam did not have a “correct” motif in mind and not everyone will hear the piece in the same way.<sup>237</sup>

Once a secure concept of the motifs is achieved, a pianist needs to consider the voicing. It is best to avoid forcefully projecting the motifs as doing so can cause unevenness in the rhythm as well as harsh tone quality. In fact, there are comments in Southam’s recording notes that warn against “poundy” sounds and “punchiness,” which I believe may pertain to possible issues of over-voicing.<sup>238</sup> A pianist can balance the motifs in a way where the listener can hear that the performer can hear them. While this analogy may be ambiguous, the essential meaning is that the voicing of the motifs is less about

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<sup>236</sup> Southam, *Rivers (3rd Set)*, preface.

<sup>237</sup> Rowat, “How Christina Petrowska Quilico finds the flow in Ann Southam’s music.”

<sup>238</sup> Southam, “Rivers: CD editing notes by Southam,” 56-71.

technique (i.e., playing them out with firmer fingertips), and more about the performer's awareness of the sounds they are creating made possible by deep listening.

Above I argued that the motifs organically reveal themselves from the texture. I do however advise pianists to listen deeply to all layers of the texture for potential motifs. Our ears are naturally drawn to the motifs created by higher pitches in each pattern, and while one can highlight those, there are many in the middle and lower parts that may be interesting to draw attention to as well. For example, Figure 4.11 illustrates a passage from *Rivers No. 5, 3<sup>rd</sup> Set*. In this *River* we have the rare occurrence where Southam actually indicates the voicing of certain motifs through doubled stemmed notes. A pianist can choose to follow Southam's suggestion and allow the E5 F#5 E5 to sing out of the texture. It is easy to perceive this motif as it is in the higher range. However, if awareness is broadened to the lowest pitches of the patterns, a pianist can hear an intriguing motif playing between the E4 and F#4. It is easy to miss lower and inner motifs like this one, but through awareness they become a more active part of the texture.

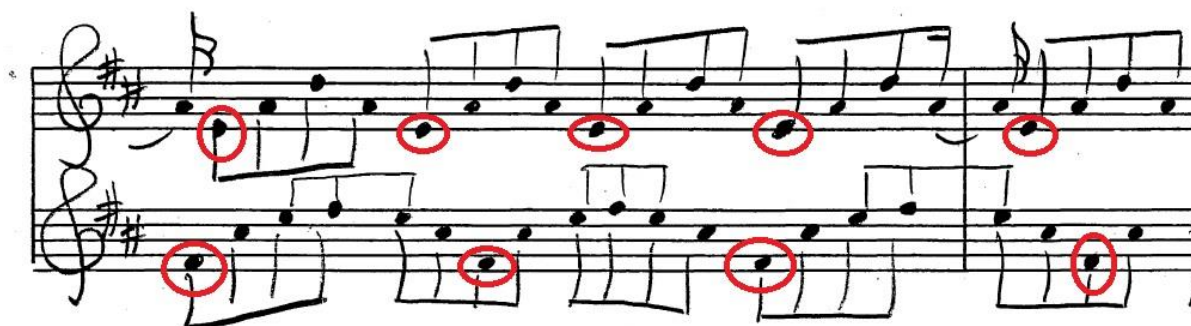


Figure 4.11: New pattern beginning at measure 37 of *Rivers No. 5, 3<sup>rd</sup> Set*. Notes circled in red create a motif in the lower end of the texture worth “noticing.”

In all, when learning the pieces in *Rivers, 3<sup>rd</sup> Set*, it is essential to begin by analyzing the score in great detail. Once that step is completed, a pianist should choose technical gestures that create an even alignment of the hands at a quick tempo. To navigate through the metrical ambiguity, count the eighth note pulse based on the length of the onbeat pattern. Next, a pianist can choose a tempo that suits their creative vision that sits within the wide range of *Allegro*. Once the sense of pulse is secure, tempo consistent, and rhythms precise, flexibility of pacing through *ritardando* and *accelerando* can enhance the expressivity and provide moments of release that are key to healthy endurance and stamina. The pedalling should not be so blurred the motifs are covered, but should contribute to a watery and shimmery effect. The embedded melodic motifs will be revealed through familiarity and deep listening. The performer should aim to voice them with ease and awareness. While there are certainly more details to learning, interpreting, and performing the pieces in *Rivers, 3<sup>rd</sup> Set*, the points made in this section are an effective start to the discourse on playing these works.

#### 4.4.1.2 *Glass Houses*

The *Glass Houses* are unique in Southam's output. Unlike *Rivers, 3<sup>rd</sup> Set*, there are no other pieces composed using the same process. Each *Glass House* is based on a seamless ostinato played with the left hand that supports the repetition and gradual addition of melodic cells played with the right hand. While it may sound conceptually straightforward, playing them can be rather difficult. No one makes a better case for their demanding nature than Petrowska Quilico, who considers them "fiendishly difficult etudes" for piano:

Fingers become whirling dervishes entering a mystical and ecstatic trance through suddenly shifting patterns and moods. The dizzying tempi, speed and control

required from the performer make them extremely demanding and require virtuosic pianistic skills. Technically, the two hands must be able to play completely independently because the pieces are based on a mathematically precise order. The interpreter must also have an intuitive grasp of the phrasing and flow of the music as well as the technical control of rhythmic articulation. The technique you need to perform these pieces is similar to the Ligeti etudes, as well as the fast fingering of Liszt's Transcendental Etudes, with a hint of Bach's most dense counterpoint.<sup>239</sup>

Like *Rivers*, these pieces require incredible physical and mental stamina from the performer. Additionally, the pianist must think creatively to make what appears to be calculated patterns with little expressive directions into something musical and engaging. Much like *Rivers*, *3<sup>rd</sup> Set*, when first learning these pieces, a pianist can be left looking at seamless repetitions of patterns wondering where to begin.

The first step is to decipher the score. The *Glass Houses* were written in 1981, and fortunately in 2009 Southam and Petrowska Quilico edited the scores, transforming them into digital versions that are easier to read. An analysed version of the score for *Glass Houses No. 5* can be observed in Figure 4.12. The structure of the piece can be determined by the order in which the melodic cells, or "tunes," are introduced.<sup>240</sup> The return of Tune 1 marks the beginning of each new section. Each new section is labeled with a letter. The sections become longer as new tunes are introduced. Each new tune can be assigned a number. Figure 4.13 is a table summarizing the tune order and therefore the structure of *Glass Houses No. 5*. Attaining a clear understanding of the structure helps pianists practice effectively, navigate the seamlessness of the music, and understand the evolution of the patterns. Comprehending the structure helps one identify climactic points such as the ones in sections H and I, which in turn helps determine the appropriate

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<sup>239</sup> Ann Southam, *Glass Houses*, ed. Christina Petrowska Quilico (Toronto: Canadian Music Centre, 1981/2009), preface.

<sup>240</sup> Southam referred to the melodic cells as tunes.; Southam, *Glass Houses*, preface.

expressive pacing to use as the music builds towards them. Similar analyses can be conducted to grasp the unique structure in each of the *Glass Houses*.

Deciphering the score is also important because I believe there are some errors in the 2009 edition of the music. By analysing the written score with a critical eye, pianists can catch these frustrating roadblocks early in the learning process and take steps to overcome them. First, notice that the left-hand ostinato pattern appears once at the beginning of the piece. Each note in the ostinato is assigned a number. An attempt has been made to show which ostinato note aligns with the first note of each tune by writing the ostinato number in the top left corner of the tune changes. While this is helpful, unfortunately after the A section of *Glass Houses No. 5*, they are incorrect. I have checked Southam's handwritten 2009 edited scores, and the errors have unfortunately been transcribed from this draft to the digital copies that are available to the public.<sup>241</sup> The error occurs at the beginning of the repetition of section A. Notice that it says ostinato note 5 should align with the first note of Tune 1. From what I determined; it really should say 6. This error then throws off ostinato alignment for the rest of the piece, which makes the planned ending impossible to play. In Figure 4.12 I have corrected the ostinato and tune alignments for the entire piece and also shown how the ending can be adapted for performance.

One may question why the alignment errors are so significant. Why must a pianist be so concerned with the alignment? Does it really affect the sound? Perhaps the sound would not be affected, but our technique and ability to play the piece with accuracy and security would be. In this piece a pianist's hands are independent, but must also work

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<sup>241</sup> Ann Southam, *Glass Houses*, unpublished draft from 2009 editing process (Toronto: Canadian Music Centre, 1981/2009).

together. I find that these alignment points bridge the gap between these independent parts and encourage cooperation. Awareness of how the patterns align prevents the left-hand from rushing, which helps pianists play in time. Also, awareness of the alignment provides a secure foundation on which the piece can be conceptually based, making the embedded technique or choreography for the piece consistent every time one plays it. Furthermore, these points allow a pianist to start and stop anywhere within the piece without losing the planned alignment. Therefore, these points are important and need to be correct.

In addition to inconsistencies in the ostinato alignment, I believe there are also errors in the notation of the tunes.<sup>242</sup> Unfortunately, these errors seem to be transcribed from Southam's handwritten scores from the 2009 editing process which I obtained for reference.<sup>243</sup> One could argue that what I consider errors are simply changes to the piece by the composer, but there is evidence to suggest that they are indeed notation errors. For example, in the D section the score leaves out Tune 3, moving straight from Tune 2 to Tune 4. This is an error rather than a deliberate choice because in all other sections of this piece Tune 3 always appears after Tune 2. Also, in the recording Petrowska-Quilico plays Tune 3 in this section.<sup>244</sup> Furthermore, the structure outlined in a 1997 newspaper article, clearly indicates that this section comprises of the order: Tune 1 2 3 4 5 6 5.<sup>245</sup> Therefore, performers should add a repetition of Tune 3 in this section when performing. This is just

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<sup>242</sup> Ann Southam, "Glass Houses #5," in *Glass Houses Revisited* performed by Christina Petrowska-Quilico, Centrediscs CMCCD16511, recorded 2011, CD.; Echlin, "Glass Houses #5: Playing Plan."

<sup>243</sup> Southam, *Glass Houses*, unpublished draft.

<sup>244</sup> Ann Southam, "Glass Houses #5," performed by Petrowska-Quilico. 01:10.

<sup>245</sup> Echlin, "Glass Houses #5: Playing Plan."



one example of the errors in No. 5. The rest are highlighted in the analysis illustrated in Figure 4.12.

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Glass Houses No. 5

The image shows a musical score for 'Glass Houses No. 5' with various annotations. The score is written in treble clef with a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The piece consists of 14 measures. Annotations include:

- A & B:** Located at the beginning of the first measure, with a red '1(5) 6' above and '1 2 3 4 5 6 7' below.
- C:** Located above the second measure, with a red '3 4' above.
- D:** Located above the fourth measure, with a red '7 4' above.
- E:** Located above the sixth measure, with a red '5 1' above.
- G:** Located above the thirteenth measure, with a red '2 5' above.

An error callout in blue text with an arrow points to the fifth measure, stating: "Error: Missing Tune 3". Another error callout in blue text with a circle around the eighth measure states: "Error: The C5 meant to follow E5 is missing."

Error: The C5 meant to follow E5 is missing.

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Error: The second A4 should be a C5.

Error: The first two quaters should be eighths.

Error: The written ending works only if two repetitions are played.

Figure 4.12: The score for *Glass Houses No. 5*. Each section is labeled with a letter in green. The ostinato alignments are corrected in red. Additional errors are marked in blue.

<b>The Structure of <i>Glass Houses No. 5</i></b>	
<b>Section</b>	<b>Tune Order</b>
A & B	1 2 3 4
C	1 2 3 4 5
D	1 2 3 4 5 6 5
E	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 6 5
F	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 7 6 5
G	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 5 6 5
H	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 9 11 12 13 11 12 13
I	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 1 3

Figure 4.13: Table summarizing the tune order and therefore the structure of *Glass Houses No. 5*.

Despite the notational errors, *Glass Houses No. 5*, is an outstanding piece worthy of regular performance. I chose to correct the errors and share my experience deciphering the score to help others learning this piece. Pianists are not alone if they are questioning of what is written. When I first began playing *No. 5*, I spent considerable time trying to make what was written work. I questioned my own abilities as a pianist rather than simply accepting that changes needed to be made. A pianist must not let the possible frustrations caused by inconsistencies deter them from playing the piece. They can use a critical eye when analysing the score. If something seems like a possible inconsistency, a performer can do some research and make the required adjustments. Hopefully, in time, a new edition of the *Glass Houses* will be released rectifying the inconsistencies that appear in many of them.

As so clearly emphasized by Petrowska Quilico in the quote presented earlier, the *Glass Houses* are indeed technically demanding. They require proficient hand independence. To build this skill I recommend practicing hands separately at first with the objective of learning ostinato so deeply that a pianist can not only recall exactly what

number corresponds to each note, but also feel the placement of each ostinato note on the keyboard. This is key to aligning the ostinato to the tunes. For example, Figure 4.14 shows the ostinato from *Glass Houses No. 3* and Figure 4.15 contains a passage from the F Section of *No. 3*. The music goes by so quickly that one cannot be thinking that ostinato note 7, F#, aligns with Tune 1 or note 1, B, strikes with the first repetition of Tune 3, or finally, that ostinato note 3, A#, aligns with Tune 4. The fingers of the left hand must feel the placement of these notes with an acute automaticity brought forth by deep practice and repetition. In her liner notes for the *Glass Houses Revisited* album, Petrowska Quilico also alludes to a memorization similar to this concept that is “essential” to playing with control at a quick tempo.<sup>246</sup> As the ostinato settles, a pianist can learn the right-hand tunes separately. Since the meter is ambiguous, I highly recommend tapping the eighth note pulse with the left hand while learning the tunes. Also, these tunes are inspired by East-Coast fiddle music.<sup>247</sup> A pianist should aim to capture the vibrant characteristics of this music when shaping their interpretation.

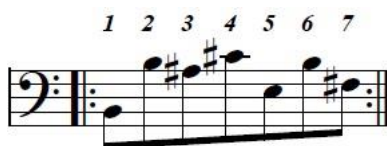


Figure 4.14: Ostinato from  
*Glass Houses No. 3*.

<sup>246</sup> Christina Petrowska Quilico, liner notes to *Glass Houses Revisited*, performed by Christina Petrowska Quilico, Centrediscs CMC CD16511, 2011, CD.

<sup>247</sup> Southam, *Glass Houses*, preface.

Figure 4.15: The opening of Section F (mm. 75-100) from *Glass Houses No. 3*, illustrating the alignment of the ostinato to the first repetition of each tune.

Once each part is mastered independently pianists can begin to play hands together very slowly and in small sections. One can start with a single tune and gradually building up to larger sections until it is one cohesive piece. A pianist should resist the urge to play quickly as playing slowly will ensure that both mental and physical tension are kept under control. As the tempo is gradually increased over time, I recommend continuing to return to slow, controlled practice to preserve the feelings of relaxation. A performer should cultivate these feelings of ease so they can be accessed when playing quickly. As for touch, pianists can strive to play with a light and nimble articulation. The finger work must be precise and quick, while the wrists, forearms and upper arms free and fluid paired with the use of rotation to help with phrasing expression.

Much like *Rivers, 3<sup>rd</sup> Set*, the tempo is a pertinent issue to consider critically when learning, interpreting, and performing the *Glass Houses* because I believe it is the fast tempos that pose the greatest challenge. Again, Petrowska Quilico's virtuosic, quick, and ecstatic interpretations have set the standard for these works. There is evidence suggesting that this is how Southam wished them to be, and unlike *Rivers, 3<sup>rd</sup> Set*, this standard of fast tempos may not be solely based on the performer's influence. A 1997 article on playing *No. 5* shows part of an original "Tune Sheet," which includes the tempo

marking: eighth note equals 2x200. The author who interviewed Southam explains, “the piece, meant to be played extraordinarily fast, has a mad dance-like quality, like a child spinning in faster and faster circles or rolling down a hill.”<sup>248</sup> So these pieces, or at least *No. 5*, are meant to be fast, but what is interesting however, is that there are actually no tempo markings included on the scores of the 2009 edition. In Southam’s written drafts of the 2009 editions she includes the tempo indication “At a fast tempo,” for *No. 5*, *No. 12*, *No. 13*, *No. 14*, and *No. 15*, but these instructions were not transcribed to the digital copy.<sup>249</sup> Was it a deliberate choice to leave them off; giving the performer more autonomy over the pacing? I do not have an absolute answer for this hypothesis, but I believe the lack of actual specific tempo markings on the score paired with our understanding that Southam did allow performers to make their own choices suggests there is flexibility regarding tempo. Embracing this flexibility is a way to overcome the challenges caused by striving to play very quickly. The tempo choice can be subjective; what is fast to one person may be different to another. What is key to a successful performance of *Glass Houses* is setting a pacing that is comfortable enough to make it through to the end while maintaining the bright and busy quality. For example, while a moderate or slow tempo would be inappropriate, playing at a moderately fast tempo still captures the essence of the piece while creating a more pleasant and comfortable experience for the pianist.

The last topic pertinent to learning *Glass Houses* is pedalling. While a deep sustain style pedalling will create a blurred sound inappropriate for these works, touches of the damper pedal can be used to connect larger leaps in the melodies, refine the tonal colours,

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<sup>248</sup> Echlin, “Glass Houses #5: Playing Plan.”

<sup>249</sup> Southam, *Glass Houses*, unpublished draft.

and enhance the phrasing. The pedal changes are based on the tunes rather than the ostinato. Figure 4.16 shows the H section of *Glass Houses No. 3*. The pedaling choices have been marked to show how the damper pedal can be utilized in all the tunes. In Tune 1 a touch of pedal is used to help connect the large leap from the D# to F#. I also like to colour the D# with a light pedal to give it a ringing quality. In Tune 3 the pedal can be used to create a smoothly connected phrase. In Tune 4, a pianist can use the pedal to connect and emphasize the harmonic intervals followed by a light pedal to connect the ascending arpeggio that ends the second phrase. The pedal is used in a similar way to connect the harmonic intervals in Tune 7. Very little pedal is needed in Tune 5, with only a light pedal connecting the final gesture. Doing so also allows the octaves to ring with a bell like quality. The cascading thirds in Tune 6 require the deepest pedalling. The deeper pedal not only makes connecting the thirds easier, but also creates a rich tone quality. Lastly, the pedal is used to connect the harmonic intervals in Tunes 8 and 9. In all, the damper pedal can be used to enhance the expression of the *Glass Houses*.

The image displays a musical score for the "H" section (mm. 133-163) of *Glass Houses No. 3*. The score is written in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a 4/4 time signature. It consists of nine staves, each labeled with a "Tune" number from 1 to 9. The notation includes various rhythmic values, accidentals, and articulation marks. A large green letter "H" is placed above the first staff. Red markings are used to indicate damper pedal utilization and corrected ostinato alignments. For example, "Tune 1" has a green "H" and a red "4" above the first measure. "Tune 2" has a red "4" above the first measure. "Tune 3" has a red "5" above the first measure. "Tune 4" has a red "5 7" above the first measure. "Tune 5" has a red "2 4" above the first measure. "Tune 6" has a red "8<sup>va</sup>-1" above the first measure and a red "3 5" above the second measure. "Tune 7" has a red "1 3" above the first measure. "Tune 8" has a red "2 4" above the first measure. "Tune 9" has a red "5" above the first measure. The bottom staff shows a bass line with a red "3 6" above the first measure and a red "8<sup>va</sup>-1 7" above the second measure.

Figure 4.16: The “H” Section (mm. 133-163) of *Glass Houses No. 3*, illustrating how the damper pedal can be utilized in each Tune. The ostinato alignment has also been corrected in red.

To conclude, Southam’s minimalist style pieces are wonderfully intriguing and challenging musical works. They require patience and perseverance throughout the learning process, but once mastered, *Glass Houses*, *Rivers*, *3<sup>rd</sup> Set*, and others like them, are incredibly fun pieces to play. By sharing my experiences working through technical and interpretive aspects like deciphering the score, technique, rhythm, tempo, pacing, and, melodic expression, I hope that I have not only made these pieces more approachable, but also inspired others to share their experiences learning and performing these works as well.



#### 4.4.2 The Minimalist Aesthetic Works

This performance guide focuses on Southam's slower, contemplative, and reductive works that capture the attributes of Timothy Johnson's classification of minimalist aesthetic.<sup>250</sup> It is interesting that Southam's minimalist works seem to be either fast and busy or slow and reflective. Southam herself acknowledged this in an interview with Eve Egoyan, saying "there is nothing much in between."<sup>251</sup> Her pared down minimalist works offer performers distinctive challenges and interpretive aspects to embrace. While they may appear simple on the page, these works compel a deep level of thoughtfulness and control from the performer. They need less technical labour to learn, but require one to think more. For example, a pianist must conceptualize how to make a phrase out of a single melodic line that is spread widely across the piano keyboard. Pianists are also required to think carefully about tone colours and how to continue the line. Furthermore, it is tempting to strive to make something grander out of the simple musical materials. It takes maturity and introspection to allow these pieces to exist as they are.

We are fortunate to have access to Southam's recordings notes from Petrowska Quilico's album *Pond Life*, which includes performances of both *Spatial View of Pond I* and *II, Pond Life*, and movements from *Soundstill*.<sup>252</sup> Southam's notes praise Petrowska Quilico's performances while also offering gentle criticisms that reveal how Southam wished these works to be. Overall, Southam's constructive criticisms focussed on ensuring that the pieces are played gently and slowly.<sup>253</sup> The most important idea found in

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<sup>250</sup> See Section 3.2 of Chapter 3.

<sup>251</sup> Egoyan and Young, "Composition as Enquiry," 42.

<sup>252</sup> Ann Southam, "Pond Life: recording notes and cue-sheet," (Banff Alberta: The Paul D. Fleck Library and Archives at the Banff Centre). [AS-AS2-AS2.025]

<sup>253</sup> Ibid.

the pages of notes reads, “Overall I think it needs to be quieter and slower and more reflective – less of a statement and more questioning.”<sup>254</sup> So, what does that sound like? Both Petrowska Quilico and Egoyan have made recordings of Southam’s reductive works that are excellent models. There is also one recording of Southam, herself, performing *Spatial View of Pond I*. This recording captures a pure vision of what of Southam’s conceptualization of what a question should sound like.

The audio recording, and subsequent video footage of the recording process, of Southam performing *Spatial View of Pond I* was done as part of a 2009 documentary honouring visual artist Aiko Suzuki.<sup>255</sup> *Spatial View of Pond I* was inspired by Suzuki’s painting of the same name (Figure 4.17) and consists of a single melodic line as shown in Figure 4.18. It follows a permutation process where notes of a twelve-tone row are explored in small units. Southam begins with the first four notes, playing them in the pattern of 1 2 3 4 1, 1 2 3 4 1 2, 1 2 3 4 1 2 3, 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4, 1 2 3 4 1. Once complete, a new section begins with the next four pitches in the row, 2 3 4 5, and presents them in a similar fashion. The row is processed in this manner until the music returns to where it started.<sup>256</sup>

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<sup>254</sup> Southam, “Pond Life: recording notes and cue-sheet,” 15-16. This comment was directed to the performance of *Spatial View of Pond II*, but is applicable to all pieces in this style.

<sup>255</sup> *Tributaries: Reflections of Aiko Suzuki*, directed by Midi Onodera (Toronto, ON: Daruma Pictures Inc., 2009), DVD.; Ann Southam, *Spatial View of Pond I*, performed by Ann Southam, recorded October 24, 2007 (Banff Alberta: The Paul D. Fleck Library and Archives at the Banff Centre). CD. [AS-AS6-AS6.4-AS6.4.025]

<sup>256</sup> *Tributaries: Reflections of Aiko Suzuki*, directed by Midi Onodera.

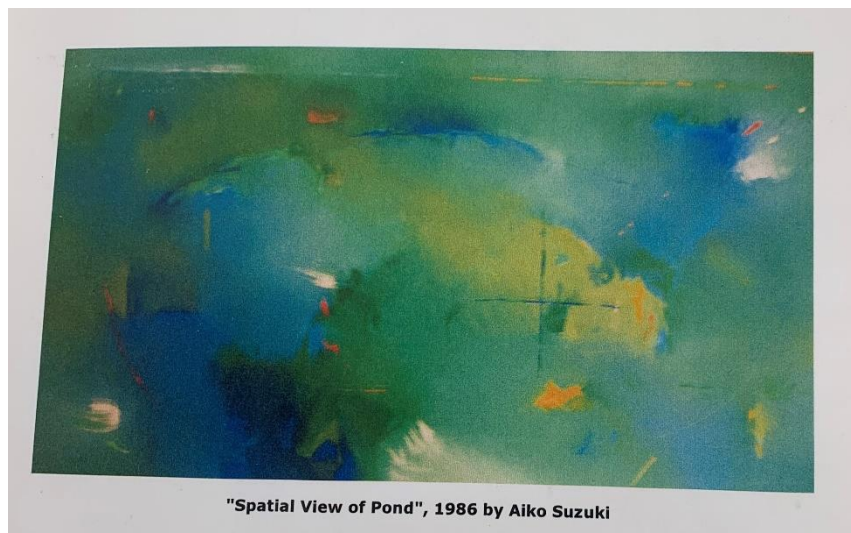


Figure 4.17: "Spatial View of Pond" painted by Aiko Suzuki. The painting that inspired Southam's piece of the same name.

SPATIAL VIEW OF POND After a painting by Aiko Suzuki.

♩ = 48. *Quietly Expressive.*

The musical score consists of two systems of staves. The first system contains measures 1-3, and the second system contains measures 4-6. The music is in 3/4 time and features a melodic line in the treble clef and a bass line in the bass clef. Fingerings are indicated by numbers 1-4 in green. The tone row pitch numbers are also marked in green below the notes.

Figure 4.18: The "A" Section (mm. 1-12) of *Spatial View of Pond I*. The tone row pitch numbers are marked in green.

Southam's performance of *Spatial View of Pond I* is sensible: never assertive, over-expressed, or over-phrased. The rhythms are played with a composed and gentle precision. From the video we can see that she plays with ease, using a relaxed technique that utilizes the vast space of this piece to shape the gestures. The tone she creates is bell-like, but never harsh. Even at the loudest points of the piece the tone maintains a reflective understated quality. Furthermore, the expression of the tone is thoughtful. Southam listens deeply to the quality of both the strike and the decay, carefully relating each note to the previous and the next one. The concept of questioning I believe is captured in all the aspects described, but it is most apparent in the phrasing. The gestures are shaped with a gentle rise and fall that closes with a slight diminuendo. This helps each phrase sound as though it is a question being asked thoughtfully and reflectively, not a grandiose statement assertively delivered.

The greatest lesson I learned from listening to Southam's performance was to trust the simple nature of the music. When I first began learning *Spatial View of Pond I*, I was concerned that due to its thin texture, slow tempo, repetitiveness, and overall pared-down musical materials, listeners would find it boring. I thought that by instilling more gusto and overt emotion into my interpretation of the work I would make it more interesting. Doing so however, always felt awkward. Choosing to follow Southam's lead by approaching this piece with a subtle and quiet expression completely transformed my interpretation. It was no longer unsettled; it was exquisite. By letting the music speak for itself no matter how simple it looked on the page, my interpretation became a reflective and calm experience that highlighted the beautiful tone colours the piano has to offer. In

all pieces in this style, not just *Spatial View*, pianists can trust Southam's creative intentions and allow these works to exist in their glorious simplicity.

#### 4.4.2.1 *Pond Life*, first movement

So, if pianists are meant to embrace the simplicity of these works, then how do we do that? How does one play in this subtly expressive way appropriate for the style? Accomplishing this task depends on of course the interpretive choices one makes, but also relies greatly on one's state of mind when playing the piece. What I mean can be made clearer by sharing my experience learning, interpreting, and performing the first movement of *Pond Life*. This work is similar to *Spatial View* in that the piece consists of a single melodic line made up of tone row pitches that are processed according to a specific scheme.<sup>257</sup> The first movement of *Pond Life* consists of melodic fragments meant to be played softly and slowly. Specific interpretive choices pertaining to rhythm, technique, and phrasing can be made that both contribute to the subtly expressive character of this work and also help cultivate the focussed, calm, state of mind needed to express the piece effectively.

How a pianist manages the rhythm and pacing affects the calm, reflective expression of the piece. *Pond Life* is unmeasured. This may suggest to some that the rhythms can be interpreted rather freely. I, however, suggest remaining grounded in the pulse of the sixteenth note subdivision to express the rhythms precisely. Doing so achieves three things. First, it helps a pianist resist the urge to rush through the ascending passages. Yes, a slight expressive push in motion may be appropriate at a certain moments like phrase 3 (see the explanation in Chapter 3, section 3.3), but it is not

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<sup>257</sup> See Section 3.3 of Chapter 3.

appropriate for every gesture. Allowing the pitches to exist on a steady canvas (the pulse) helps one achieve the calm, slow and subtle expression of the piece. Second, remaining grounded in a steady pulse cultivates a cohesive musical experience. In a piece with so much space, the sense of pulse takes the melodic fragments and sustained pitches and fuses them together into one unified piece of music. Third, one can use the awareness of the pulse as a way to cultivate a focussed, calm, and centred state of mind. Counting the pulse is much like focussing on the breath in meditation. Doing so can centre your attention on the present moment, which can help regulate the nervous system into a calmer state. This calmness contributes greatly to one's ability to play in a subtle way when performing *Pond Life*.

The gestures a pianist chooses also fosters the reflective nature of *Pond Life*. I recommend following Southam's lead in terms of technique. The performer can sit tall and centered in the middle of the piano keyboard and use fluid and graceful arm and wrist gestures that are free of tension. While fluid, the pianist can ensure that they are not overly dramatic large movements, but moderate ones that will allow the key to descend at a rate that will create a volume within the realm of *mezzo piano*. One can drop into the keys with weight focussed through a firm fingertip and then follow through the key strike with a gesture releasing forward towards the piano. Paired with listening deeply, these gestures will create a robust, yet gentle warm tone quite appropriate for these works that is not overstated, but quietly expressive. Furthermore, focussing on the feel of the gestures can also help cultivate the calm mind state. Concentrating on how each movement feels is another way to compose the busy mind, and find the serene mindset

that enhances this expression of these pieces. This is an especially effective tool when the nervous system is heightened in performance.

Careful phrasing of the melodic line is also essential to capturing the subtle expressiveness of *Pond Life* and works like it when performing. There are longer periods of stasis due to the sustained pitches in this piece. When a pitch is sustained on the piano it immediately begins to decay. Egoyan likens Southam's treatment of decay to a spiritual experience:

Even though that is sort of an irritating thing about the piano that its always in decay, its very much like we are always in decay and we're working through time, we're passing through time so there's a sound passing through time and we are always working with that sound passing through time. So, her use of harmony allows me and my audience to experience resonance and decay so time that is suspended like that, that only the piano can do in a way that I think is extremely spiritual. Like this cloud that is moving through time.<sup>258</sup>

The resonance and decay of each pitch needs to be treated carefully in order to continue the melodic line. Figure 4.19 illustrates the dynamic scheme that best accommodates the decay of each pitch when expressing the phrasing of each gesture. A pianist can aim to start each gesture softly. Because the damper pedal is held open to sustain all pitches, there will naturally be a slight growth in volume up to the whole note pitch. One can play the whole note pitch with a gentle accent that brings an effervescent quality to the tone, and when the pitch is repeated, the second note should be played softer than the first to close the phrase. Next, a pianist can acutely listen to the decay of the sustained sounds during the whole notes. While it is impossible to match the tone of the decay exactly when entering with the first note of the next gesture due to the percussive nature of the piano, the next note should enter softly and gently. To do so, a

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<sup>258</sup> Cornfield, producer of *Ann Southam: Canadian Composer Portraits*, Track 10 01:30, speaker Eve Egoyan.

small striking motion that begins at the key can be utilized. Following this model for phrasing creates a nuanced line that accommodates and showcases the decaying qualities of the piano. Lastly, focussing on the sound quality with this much intention can also contribute to cultivating the calm and focussed nervous state that in turn also brings forth the subtle musical experience.

Figure 4.19: The first two systems from the first movement of *Pond Life*, illustrating a dynamic scheme that creates a subtle phrasing sympathetic to the decaying qualities of the piano tone.

In all, these suggestions regarding *Pond Life* can be adapted to learning, interpreting, and performing all of Southam's reductive minimalist works including both *Spatial View of a Pond I and II*, the remaining *Pond Life* movements, *Soundings for a New Piano*, *Soundstill*, *Slow Music*, and *Simple Lines of Enquiry*.

#### 4.4.2.2 Returnings Style

Southam's "Returnings Style" works also fall within her slow and contemplative writing style. They are similar to Southam's reductive works in that a tone row is gradually spun out in a calm, subtle, and understated way. They differ as they have a thicker texture. The row is assembled within the consonant framework of a drone in the lower voice, and chords and clusters in the upper voice. Works in this style offer pianists unique interpretive and performance challenges when compared to Southam's other



pieces. Not only does the thicker texture of these works add an additional challenge to achieving the quietly expressive atmosphere, but the anxiety about whether minimalist music is worthwhile or not rears its ugly head again. In this section of the guide, I will also offer a perspective on approaches to technique and rhythm.

When I first begin playing *Returns I*, I thought it was, in all honesty, boring. I was committed to learning pieces spanning all of Southam's catalogue and became anxious that I would not be able to fully embrace, understand, or communicate these works with the conviction they deserve. I also felt worried audiences would lose interest while listening. Three things helped me overcome this anxiety. First, I began listening. Listening to recordings of these works helped me realize that while playing the piece may at times seem tedious, listening to the sounds from an audience's perspective was a completely different experience. Southam presses the dissonant tone row against the consonant chords and drones and therefore the music does not follow the typical patterns of tension and release of the conventional phrase model. These unexpected twists and turns in harmony are intriguing and make these works interesting. I recommend listening before playing to fully understand how interesting these pieces really are, which provides a pianist an assurance that will help cultivate confident performances. Second, I track the arcs of tension and resolution in the score to encourage myself to notice them at the same level I did when hearing the music from a listener's perspective. Figure 4.20 illustrates how I track this in the score. The third element that helped overcome my initial, and flawed perspective that these works were boring, was to embrace Southam's extramusical perspective of minimalist process music embodying the feminist message.<sup>259</sup>

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<sup>259</sup> See Section 3.3 of Chapter 3.

RETURNINGS

Upper  
Middle  
Lower

mp  
octave lower than written with pedal  
\* = approx

Figure 4.20: p. 1 of *Returns I*. The patterns of tension and release are tracked in blue. D stands for dissonance and C stands for consonance.

*Returns* style pieces are highly meditative. Pianists can enhance this attribute by falling into the gentle, almost hypnotic, groove of the music. One can feel the gentle sway of the steady eighth note pulse and stretch out the counting when lingering on each fermata. The *Returns* style pieces are not overly demanding in terms of piano technique, but choices can be that enhance the meditative expression of these works. With the exception of the single voice introductions, these pieces sit within the lower range of the piano. In order to find a free a fluid technique, a performer can move the bench to sit centered within the lower range of the piano. Next, small, gentle, and fluid gestures paired

with structured hands and firm fingertips can be used to create a warm, mellow tone quality that sits within a *mezzo piano* context. The percussive nature of our instrument can be embraced to allow the tone row octaves to punctuate through the texture, but a pianist should listen carefully and aim to keep the tone quality understated and pensive. Lastly, the perfect fifth drone and upper voice chords should be subtly balanced within the texture. In all, incorporating these ideas into one's interpretive choices will help portray the reflective and contemplative attributes of Southam's slow minimalist works within the thicker texture of the "Returnings Style," process.

#### 4.4.2.3 *Rivers, 2<sup>nd</sup> Set*

This final portion of the performance guide focuses on *Rivers, 2<sup>nd</sup> Set* (1979, revised 2004). The *2<sup>nd</sup> Set* bridges the gap between Southam's conventional minimalist style works and her slow reductive minimalist pieces. Even though they move at a slightly faster tempo, they are similar to the reductive minimalist aesthetic pieces as they are meant to be, for the most part, reflective, gentle, calm, and understated. Also, like the reductive pieces, they are based on the building of a tone row, but this time, like *Returnings*, the row is unfolded within the framework of a consonant ostinato and drone. This framework creates a texture similar to *Rivers, 3<sup>rd</sup> Set*, with the right hand playing the ostinato on the onbeats, and the left hand playing the tone row pitches on the offbeats. Like the *3<sup>rd</sup> Set*, the overlapping parts interact to reveal rhythmic and melodic motifs.

The blended compositional attributes of the *2<sup>nd</sup> Set* present pianists with performance requirements and challenges similar to what has already been discussed in both previous sections on the Minimalist Style and Minimalist Aesthetic works. The texture of these works, however, pose a challenge that is unique to the *2<sup>nd</sup> Set* when

compared to Southam's other pieces. When looking at the score, the ostinato, tone row, and drone, may appear distinctive. For example, observe the texture in the opening of *Rivers No. 4, 2<sup>nd</sup> Set* (Figure 4.21). The tone row appears to take the role of melodic line. This part would be expressed the loudest and clearest if a conventional understanding of voicing were to be applied. The ostinato appears to be the middle ground which, again if a conventional understanding of voicing a three-voiced texture were to be applied, would be more subtly coloured, and the drones the lowest and least significant would be played the softest. However, this is often not the case for voicing the pieces in *Rivers, 2<sup>nd</sup> Set*. Southam writes in the performance notes, "the right hand ostinato figures in each of these pieces do have melodic value and can be gently phrased."<sup>260</sup> The ostinato and tone row are meant to be equals that interact to create rhythmic and melodic motifs. The two parts mingle to create the melodic line; a melody that performers cannot see on the score itself, but must conceptualize aurally. When the two parts overlap within the same range on the keyboard, pianists can aim to project them using the same volume and tone quality; hearing them as if they are a single monophonic line that one could sing. Within this singable line one will find melodic motifs that stand out. Take the final phrases from the end of the A section in *No. 4* as an example. On the page it appears as a separate ostinato and tone row like in Figure 4.22, but I hear this passage as written in Figure 4.23.

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<sup>260</sup> Ann Southam, *Rivers (2nd Set)*, (Toronto: Canadian Music Centre, 1979/2005), preface.

The image shows a musical score for three systems of two staves each. The top staff of each system contains a melodic line with a *mp* *Ostinato* marking. The bottom staff of each system contains a bass line with a *Tone Row* marking. Three specific chords in the bass line are circled in green: one in the second measure of the second system, and two in the first and third measures of the third system. Handwritten annotations include "etc #" and "7 7-0" below the circled chords.

Figure 4.21: mm. 1-9 from *Rivers No. 4, 2<sup>nd</sup> Set*. The ostinato and tone row are labeled. The drones are circled.

The image displays a handwritten musical score for measures 19 through 22. It is organized into three systems, each consisting of two staves. The top staff of each system is in treble clef, and the bottom staff is in bass clef. The music is written in a complex, rhythmic style with many beamed notes and rests. Measure 19 is labeled in red at the top of the first system. Measure 20 is labeled in red at the top of the second system. Measure 21 is labeled in red at the top of the second system. Measure 22 is labeled in red at the top of the third system. The notation includes various rhythmic values, accidentals, and dynamic markings such as accents and slurs.

Figure 4.22: mm.19-22 from *Rivers No. 4, 2<sup>nd</sup> Set* in its original notation. To compare to Figure 4.23.

Measure 19

Measure 20

Measure 21

Measure 22

Figure 4.23: A transcription of mm. 19-22 of *Rivers No. 4, 2<sup>nd</sup> Set*, showing how I conceptualize the texture and hear the motifs. The ostinato and tone row parts have been merged into the upper staff. The double stemmed notes indicated the notes that I hear as the melodic line or motifs.

While the ostinato and tone row are typically treated as equals in the texture, there are sections, however, where the ostinato and tone row can be voiced differently. Sometimes the ostinato and all or most of the tone-row pitches are written in different ranges. In instances like this, one can voice them unequally to bring forth a single cantabile line. For example, Figure 4.24 shows the B section of *Rivers No. 4, 2<sup>nd</sup> Set* where the ostinato is played in the middle range of the piano using G3, D4 and G4. Most of the tone row pitches sit within a higher range centred around C5. Therefore, in this instance, it is appropriate to treat the tone row as a single melodic line meant to be voiced above a subtly played ostinato. Interpreting the texture in this manner creates a rather poignant emotional effect that I believe enhances the expressivity of the piece.

Figure 4.24: First part of the B Section (mm. 23-30) of *Rivers No 4, 2<sup>nd</sup> Set*. The range gap between the ostinato and tone row allows for a more traditional cantabile voicing.



To conclude, many of the performance aspects mentioned in the previous guides apply to interpreting *Rivers, 2<sup>nd</sup> Set*, but pianists should consider the texture of these pieces thoughtfully. A traditional conceptualization of texture is not always appropriate for these works. How we choose to voice the texture depends on the range in which the ostinato and tone row are written. If they overlap, typically one can treat them equally, allowing the motifs created by the interaction between the parts to reveal themselves as a singable single melodic line. If there is a range gap, a pianist may find a way to voice the upper line in a more traditional singing style.

#### 4.4.3 To Memorize or Not?

Due to the precedent set by romantic virtuosos like Franz Liszt and Clara Schumann, it is customary for solo pianists in the Western art music tradition to perform from memory. Memorizing is essential to fully internalizing the music and learning it deeply. Learning deeply helps pianists better understand how a piece is constructed which leads to confident and precise performances. Most importantly, memorizing the music helps pianists listen more acutely to the sounds being created. As Mark Tanner explains in *The Mindful Pianist*, “we may rely so heavily upon our bullet-proof reading ability that we pay comparatively little heed to the sound that is actually emanating from the instrument.”<sup>261</sup> Memorizing, therefore, allows pianists to pay more attention to the sounds they are creating in the moment without the distraction of the score.

The repetitive and subtly changing continuous patterns of Southam’s minimalist style works are highly challenging to commit to memory. Her sparse works also pose a challenge as it is difficult to cover up a memory slip when the music is so exposed. With

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<sup>261</sup> Mark Tanner, *The Mindful Pianist: Focus, Practise, Perform, Engage* (London: Faber Music Publishing Services, 2016), 27.

systematic practice rooted in analysis, however, it is possible to confidently memorize her music. Learning Southam's pieces deeply starts when first deciphering the score. At this stage, the advanced pianist is advised to insert the structural cues and micro cues that can be relied upon for secure recall. This information is then embedded deeply in the long-term memory through repetition and drilling. Doing so takes time, patience, and perseverance, but is worth the effort when a pianist can perform with their attention fully on the sound rather than the dots on the page. This ability to listen acutely without distraction is key to both making the motifs come to life in Southam's *Rivers* sets, and highlighting the timbre of the piano in her reductive works.

Notice I never say perform without the score. I view memorizing music as attaining a deep internalization of it; knowing the notes and rhythms so well one can play securely without always reading them. But, the seamlessness of Southam's music may mean that a performance can be more successful if the score is there to use as a mild guide, or roadmap, so to speak. For example, playing Southam's *Rivers*, 3<sup>rd</sup> Set without the score is easier than *Glass Houses*. In the 3<sup>rd</sup> Set, the patterns change frequently and culminate at structural points, creating plenty of places where cues can be inserted to help with recall. *Glass Houses* however are completely seamless and require precise alignment of the ostinato notes with the tunes. While I learn the piece so deeply that I can play from memory, I still tend to perform with the score; using it for structural reference rather than intense note reading. Doing this provides an assuredness that can lead to confident and fluent performances. The same can be said for the "Returnings Style" works where there is so little variety in the musical materials to provide easy differentiation between the phrases that one could easily fall off track when under the pressure of performance. Also,

because Southam would write several pieces following the same process, it would be an effective choice to have the score for reference if one was to, for instance, perform all movements of *Simple Lines of Inquiry* in one sitting. Doing so will help one avoid potentially mixing up the movements that share so many similarities. In summation, the sounds are the music not the score. Successful performances of Southam's music are rooted in knowing the notes and rhythms well enough to perform without reading the music while still using the score for reference to support an accurate expression of the seamless patterns when under the heightened pressure of live performance.

## **4.5 Conclusion**

In summation, this chapter focussed on the pianist's task of learning, interpreting and performing Southam's minimalist works for solo piano. First, the challenges distinct to performing minimalist music posited by performers Cahill, Harle, and Hartenberger were summarized, and compared to performing Southam's minimalist music. While there are similarities including the need for adept technique, physical and mental stamina, creative solutions for interpreting the metrical ambiguity, and confidence to overcome adversity, Southam's very generous allowance for a performer to make their own expressive choices stands in contrast. The autonomy Southam gives to performers is liberating, but also challenging to those pianists trained in the Western art music tradition. Therefore, the performance guides were written to offer a perspective on playing Southam's minimalist music. It is my hope that by sharing the knowledge I have gained from researching how to perform Southam's music and performing her works myself, that I may start a discourse on playing Southam's minimalism. Fellow pianists may learn from my experiences and add to the discourse by sharing their own. In time, some more well-

known conventions for playing Southam's minimalist works may be established and more widely known, which in turn will make Southam's remarkable minimalist music more approachable and as a result played more often.

## **Chapter 5: Conclusion & Future Directions**

This monograph is the first formal study of Ann Southam's music for solo piano. For this project, I gathered relevant information about Southam and her music from various sources and consolidated it into one helpful resource meant for performers, composers, scholars, and teachers. I also provided an informed perspective meant to encourage a deeper understanding of Southam's music and well-informed interpretations of it. My goal was to promote Southam's music, emphasize her significance as a contemporary Canadian composer, and make performing her solo piano works more approachable.

The content of each chapter started broadly and narrowed as the monograph proceeded. Chapter 1 outlined the project and included a biographical sketch providing essential background information on Southam. Although an all-encompassing biography needs to be created to fully understand the extent of Southam's career and significant impact on culture and the arts in Canada, this sketch provided fundamental information that showed Southam was an independent and extraordinary artist, who not only developed unique approaches to composition, but was also a humble and generous philanthropist. Chapter 2 was an overview of Southam's works for solo piano. Grouped into categories, this chapter discussed her Early Non-Minimalist Music, Jazz Style Works, Minimalism, and her Blended Works that unite her minimalist and non-minimalist writing styles. Since Southam's largest output for solo piano was minimalist, Chapters 3 and 4 narrowed the focus to those works for solo piano. Not only did Chapter 3 provide helpful general information on minimalism, a genre not regularly included in the Classical pianist's repertoire, it also attempted to place Southam within the minimalist

school and outlined the unique attributes of Southam's minimalist music including her flexible processes that represent a feminist aesthetic, her unique harmonic language, and the teleology in her minimalist works. Chapter 4 focused on performing Southam's solo piano music. Performance guides offered a perspective on learning, interpreting, and performing her minimalist works for solo piano with the goal of making them more approachable.

Due to the novelty of the topic, the focus of this monograph was broad indeed. Therefore, I hope that it can act as a foundation on which further research on the music of Ann Southam can develop. There is potential for countless research and creative projects. Several examples come to mind. First of all, this project only focussed on Southam's music for solo piano. She has a body of chamber works that include piano and many other pieces for both acoustic and electroacoustic instruments that deserve further research. Additionally, I have barely scratched the surface in finding Southam's place within the school of minimalist composition. Extensive studies are needed to fully compare Southam's minimalist compositional approach to her contemporaries and thoroughly determine her historical significance and impact on the style. Furthermore, it would also be interesting to compare and contrast Southam's electroacoustic and acoustic music to explore the potential connections between the two. Research can also be conducted to better understand her unique harmonic language, especially her tone rows and approaches to writing with tonal devices (including her particular infatuation with major chords with an added fourth).

Scholar performers also have their work cut out for them. There are still several pieces in Southam's catalogue that require proper recordings. Also, there is more

information to be communicated about how to learn, interpret, and perform Southam's music. More specific guides to her pieces can be crafted that will be an invaluable resource to those wishing to play Southam's music. Lastly and most importantly, we artists must have the courage to play Southam's remarkable music well and often. It is our duty to promote the music of this impactful and generous Canadian, LGBTQ, woman composer to the world. My wish is that this monograph, at the very least, encourages others to study, listen to, teach, and perform Southam's music with joy and conviction.

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## Appendix 1: Catalogue of Southam's Works for Solo Piano

### Strangeness, Nocturne and Fandango (ca. 1960s)

Early Non-Minimalist Music

**Description:** *Strangeness, Nocturne and Fandango* is a set of three short twelve-tone pieces for solo piano. Each piece is written a traditional binary or ternary form. *Strangeness* uses ambiguous harmonies and features an interesting use of sympathetic vibration that creates an eerie hue over the opening phrase. The expressive *Nocturne* reflects the open harmonies of the music of Aaron Copland tinted with the dissonances of the atonality. The set concludes with a fast dance in 5/8 time entitled *Fandango*.

**Duration:** 3.5 Minutes

**Score:** Unpublished. Found in the archives at The Paul D. Fleck Library and Archives at the Banff Centre.<sup>262</sup>

**Recording:** Canadian Music Centre – Centre Streams/Ann Southam, has a recorded live performance given by Toronto pianist John Felice (ca. 1960s). Performed in the order of *Strangeness, Fandango, and Nocturne*.

### Four Bagatelles (1961/1962)<sup>263</sup>

Early Non-Minimalist Music

**Description:** A set of four pieces for piano written for pianist Diana McIntosh. Number one is strong and aggressive with a warmer, consonant conclusion. The second is slow, tender, and expressive; held together by an ostinato pattern in the lower and inner voices. Number three, a scherzo, utilizes imitation and light articulations that create a comically mischievous character. Number four, the *Allegro con moto*, is virtuosic, featuring perpetual sixteenth note patterns that lead to a percussive and climactic ending. *Four Bagatelles* is considered grade/level ten piece.<sup>264</sup>

**Duration:** 5 Minutes

**Score:** Canadian Music Centre

**Recordings:** Canadian Music Centre – Centre Streams/Ann Southam. Three live recordings are available on the Canadian Music Centre's Centre Streams platform. The first is a performance by pianist John Felice. The second is a performance by Diana McIntosh, the pianist for which the piece was written. The third performer is unknown.

### Sea Flea (1962)

Early Non-Minimalist Music

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<sup>262</sup> Ann Southam, *Strangeness, Nocturne and Fandango*, unpublished score, (Banff Alberta: The Paul D. Fleck Library and Archives at the Banff Centre, 196-). [AS-AS3-AS3-001]

<sup>263</sup> Two dates according to two different sources. A 1981 Performing Rights Organization of Canada brochure lists the composition date as 1961. A Canadian Music Centre archival recording says 1962. Performing Rights Organization of Canada Limited, *Ann Southam*, (Toronto ON, June 1981); Canadian Music Centre, "Centre Streams: Ann Southam", *Four Bagatelles*, accessed November 21, 2019, [https://www.musiccentre.ca/centrestreams/swf?mode=play\\_by&opt=composer&id=435](https://www.musiccentre.ca/centrestreams/swf?mode=play_by&opt=composer&id=435).

<sup>264</sup> The Royal Conservatory of Music, *Piano Syllabus: 2015 Edition*, (Toronto: Frederick Harris Music, 2015), 85; Conservatory Canada, *Classical Piano Syllabus: 2018 Edition*, (London ON: <https://conservatorycanada.ca/syllabi/classical-piano>), 13; Alliance for Canadian New Music Projects, *Contemporary Showcase Festival: Piano Syllabus*, <http://acnmp.ca/syllabus/english-syllabus/>, 71.

**Description:** *Sea Flea* was originally part of “The Festival Series,” a collection of new music for beginner and intermediate piano solos by Canadian composers.<sup>265</sup> An excellent piece for exposing students to polytonality. The piece utilizes sequences and imitation. It is included on the Level 6 20<sup>th</sup>/21<sup>st</sup> century repertoire list by the Royal Conservatory of Music.<sup>266</sup>

**Duration:** 1 Minute

**Score:** Canadian Music Centre

**Recording:** An archival recording by pianist John Felice was found at The Paul D. Fleck Library and Archives at the Banff Centre.<sup>267</sup>

### **Altitude Lake (1963)**

Early Non-Minimalist Music

**Description:** Described as “massive,”<sup>268</sup> the large chords utilized encompass Southam’s early affinity dramatic gestures and thick textures. This piece was likely titled *Ballade for Piano* at first, and this notion may shed light on the structure and expressive qualities of the work.<sup>269</sup>

**Duration:** 11 Minutes

**Score:** Canadian Music Centre

**Recording:** “Soundspinning: Music of Ann Southam,” pianist Christina Petrowska Quilico, CMC Centrediscs.

### **Suite for Piano (January-February 1963)**

Early Non-Minimalist Music

**Description:** A four movement piece beginning with a prelude introducing the harmonic language used through the suite. In movements one through three, Baroque structures and textures are juxtaposed with twelve-tone harmony and modern applications of rhythm. The suite concludes with a complex three voice fugue in 5/8 time.

**Duration:** 8 Minutes

**Score:** Unpublished. Found in the archives at The Paul D. Fleck Library and Archives at the Banff Centre.<sup>270</sup>

**Recording:** Canadian Music Centre – Centre Streams/Ann Southam.

### **3 in Blue: Jazz Preludes (1965)**

Jazz Style Works

<sup>265</sup> “The Festival Series for Piano,” *American Music Teacher* 14, no. 6 (July-August 1965): 6.

<sup>266</sup> The Royal Conservatory of Music, *Piano Syllabus*, 55.

<sup>267</sup> Ann Southam, “Sea Flea,” in *Ann Southam’s Audio Archive*, performed by John Felice, (Banff Alberta: The Paul D. Fleck Library and Archives at the Banff Centre), CD. [AS-AS6-AS6.4-AS6.4.008]

<sup>268</sup> Wendalyn Bartley, “The Current Within the Music,” *The Whole Note*, August 30, 2018, <https://www.thewholenote.com/index.php/newsroom/beatcolumns-sp-2121861476/newmusic2/28242-pianist-christina-petrowska-quilico-the-current-within-the-music>.

<sup>269</sup> Ann Southam, *Ballade for Piano*, unpublished score, (Banff Alberta: The Paul D. Fleck Library and Archives at the Banff Centre, 1963) p. 1. [ASC.004]

<sup>270</sup> Ann Southam, *Suite for Piano*, unpublished score, (Banff Alberta: The Paul D. Fleck Library and Archives at the Banff Centre, 1963). [ASC.002]



**Description:** A set of three works written in the jazz style. Each utilize twelve-bar blues structure and blues scales. With its dissonant harmonic inflections, number one is the most unique of the set. It opens with a solo passage that transitions into an almost seamless, two voiced texture that returns to a solo passage conclusion. The second piece is written in compound time and has a laid back, relaxed feel. The fast tempos, jazzy riffs, and rowdy conclusion making number three the most exciting of the set. The Royal Conservatory of Music and Contemporary Showcase Festival include each movement on their level eight repertoire list.<sup>271</sup>

**Duration:** 3.5 Minutes

**Score:** Canadian Music Centre

**Recording:** “Soundspinning: Music of Ann Southam,” pianist Christina Petrowska Quilico, CMC Centrediscs.

### Counterparts (April 1966)

Early Non-Minimalist Music

**Description:** *Counterparts* is a single movement twelve-tone work for solo piano. This piece is fast and in compound time. The two voiced texture gradually increases in density as the piece moves towards an exhilarating conclusion. This build in energy is interrupted by instances of long, sustained chords, marked *adagio*.

**Duration:** 5.5 Minutes

**Score:** Unpublished. Found in the archives at The Paul D. Fleck Library and Archives at the Banff Centre.<sup>272</sup>

**Recording:** Not Available.

### Quodlibet (1966)

Early Non-Minimalist Music

**Description:** The word Quodlibet references a musical idea popular in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries that combined unrelated text or counterpoint.<sup>273</sup> This notion is reflected in the dissonant two voice counterpoint used in this work that creates an intriguing uneasiness. Features sixteenth note patterns at a moderate tempo.

**Duration:** 2 Minutes

**Score:** Canadian Music Centre

**Recording:** An archival recording by pianist John Felice was found at The Paul D. Fleck Library and Archives at the Banff Centre.<sup>274</sup>

### Sonata in One Movement: In Praise of a New Piano (1966)<sup>275</sup>

Early Non-Minimalist Music

<sup>271</sup> The Royal Conservatory of Music, *Piano Syllabus*, 69; Alliance for Canadian New Music Projects, *Contemporary Showcase Festival: Piano Syllabus*, 61.

<sup>272</sup> Ann Southam, *Counterparts*, unpublished score, (Banff Alberta: The Paul D. Fleck Library and Archives at the Banff Centre, 1963). [ASC.003]

<sup>273</sup> Ann Southam, “Quodlibet,” in *Ann Southam’s Audio Archive*, performed by John Felice, (Banff Alberta: The Paul D. Fleck Library and Archives at the Banff Centre), CD. [AS-AS6-AS6.4-AS6.4.008]

<sup>274</sup> Ibid.

<sup>275</sup> This subtitle appears on one of the copies of the score at The Paul D. Fleck Library and Archives at the Banff Centre. Ann Southam, *Sonata in One Movement: In Praise of a New Piano*, unpublished score (Banff Alberta: The Paul D. Fleck Library and Archives at the Banff Centre, 1966) p. 1. [AS-AS3-AS3.009]

**Description:** Single movement twelve-tone sonata featuring complex rhythmic patterns, including polyrhythms, as well as textures and disjunct melodic content similar to Southam's better known work *Altitude Lake*.

**Duration:** 6 Minutes<sup>276</sup>

**Score:** Unpublished. Found in the archives at The Paul D. Fleck Library and Archives at the Banff Centre.<sup>277</sup>

**Recording:** Not Available.

### **Tocatta (1966)**

**Description:** A 1981 Performing Rights Organization of Canada Brochure lists this piece under Southam's works for solo piano.<sup>278</sup> However, this author cannot locate the score. There is evidence of at least one performance of this work in a March 1967 volume of "The Musical Times," listing a performance by Pianist Norma Crawford performing a program including Southam's *Tocatta* on April 10, 1967 in London.<sup>279</sup>

**Duration:** 5 Minutes<sup>280</sup>

**Score:** Not Available.

**Recording:** Not Available.

### **Five Shades of Blue (1970)**

Jazz Style Works

**Description:** These five pieces were written for the Contemporary Showcase Festival. Number one, *Allegro*, features an intriguing use of ostinato and imitation in a shifting irregular metre. It is considered a grade 8/9 level piece.<sup>281</sup> Number two, marked *Very Slowly*, is a contemplative piece featuring short, speech-like rhythmic motifs contrasted with longer, singing style passages played over a G pedal. The festival syllabus lists it as a grade 8/9 piece.<sup>282</sup> The second *Allegro*, number three, is the strangest sounding of the set with its, repetitive, staccato bass pattern supporting fast and technically demanding jazz riffs played with the right hand. It is considered appropriate for students playing at the grade 9/10 level.<sup>283</sup> A distinctly bluesy piece, number four, marked *Andantino*, utilizes a blues swing accompaniment that supports an improvisatory melodic line. Number four is also a grade 9/10 level piece.<sup>284</sup> The final *Allegro* is a non-stop jazzy showstopper with perpetual eighth notes in 6/8 from start to finish. It is appropriate for students playing at the grade 9/10 level.<sup>285</sup>

**Duration:** Total 7 Minutes (No. 1: 1.25 Minutes, No. 2: 1.5 Minutes, No. 3 1.25 Minutes, No. 4: 1.25 Minutes, 1.25 Minutes).

<sup>276</sup> Performing Rights Organization of Canada Limited, *Ann Southam*, (Toronto ON, June 1981).

<sup>277</sup> Ann Southam, *Sonata in One Movement*, unpublished score (Banff Alberta: Banff Centre for Arts and Creativity Library and Archives, 1966). [ACS-001]

<sup>278</sup> Performing Rights Organization of Canada Limited, *Ann Southam*, (Toronto ON, June 1981).

<sup>279</sup> "London Diary for April," *The Musical Times* 108, no. 1489 (March 1967): 283.

<sup>280</sup> Performing Rights Organization of Canada Limited, *Ann Southam*, (Toronto ON, June 1981).

<sup>281</sup> Alliance for Canadian New Music Projects, *Contemporary Showcase Festival: Piano Syllabus*, <http://acnmp.ca/syllabus/english-syllabus/>, 61.

<sup>282</sup> *Ibid.*, 61.

<sup>283</sup> *Ibid.*, 66.

<sup>284</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>285</sup> *Ibid.*

**Score:** Canadian Music Centre

**Recordings:**

- Complete Recording: “Soundspinning: Music of Ann Southam,” pianist Christina Petrowska Quilico, CMC Centrediscs.
- No. 1, 2 and 4: “Canadian Compositions for Young Pianists,” pianist Elaine Keillor, Studea Musica.

**Fifteen (Jan. 13-16, 1977)**

Blended Work

**Description:** This work features a pattern made from a tone row with additional enharmonic notes to make it fifteen notes in length.<sup>286</sup> This fifteen-note row creates a main theme that provides structural stability in this seemingly chaotic piece when it recurs throughout the work in its “prime” form as well as other transpositions. The perpetual sixteenth notes where pitches are passed between the hands are interrupted by instances of minimalist like patterns that build to climactic cluster chords that are sustained for multiple measures.

**Duration:** 8 Minutes

**Score:** Canadian Music Centre

**Recording:** Not Available.

**Patterns of Nine (1977)**

Blended Work

**Description:** This interesting work demonstrates Southam’s shift to writing process music for piano in the 1970s. It utilizes a consonant nine-note pattern throughout: D G A G C D G F# A. Southam then composes three main phrases from the pattern that are repeated but also varied over and over throughout. The pattern is built at different rates in each voice in the two-voiced texture. The perpetual sixteenth note passages and disjunct melodies are similar to her earlier non-minimalist works. The cluster of notes suggests a D7 chord with an added G and Southam cleverly exploits this more tonal and conventional harmonic relationship, especially when leading towards the conclusion.

**Duration:** 7 Minutes

**Score:** Canadian Music Centre

**Recording:** Not Available.

**Soundstill<sup>287</sup> (June & September 1979, revised 1999)**

Minimalism

**Description:** *Soundstill* is one of Southam’s first works in the minimalist style. Each of the ten pieces exemplify the pared down compositional materials of the minimalist

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<sup>286</sup> The row used is Ab Eb Bb G F# A F D C# E B C. This row was found written on manuscript paper with all twelve transpositions at the Banff Centre Archives. Ann Southam, “Tone rows and drafts by Ann Southam,” 20<sup>th</sup> century music manuscripts (Banff Alberta: The Paul D. Fleck Library and Archives at the Banff Centre). [AS-AS3-AS3.051]

<sup>287</sup> It is likely the original working title was “Time-being” as a copy of the score with found at the Banff Centre Archives with this title scratched out and replaced with the title “Soundstill.” Ann Southam, *Soundstill*, 20<sup>th</sup> century music manuscript (Banff Alberta: The Paul D. Fleck Library and Archives at the Banff Centre, 1979/1999). [AS-AS3-AS3.037]

aesthetic: thin textures, repeated patterns, ostinatos, drones, and simplified harmonic language. There are three different minimalist processes followed in these pieces.

- I, II and III: The first three pieces are made from series of pitches that create melodic cells. These cells are then gently permuted in various orders in a single voice texture. Regarding movement one, Southam explained that the piece is a study “in the gentle transaction of touch and sound between the pianist and the instrument, there are very few notes and it (creates) a very transparent and delicate sound.”<sup>288</sup> A droning ascent of the same two pitches begins each melodic cell. The pitches are then turned around in a pattern that ends on a sustained pitch. The music begins to feature more dissonant tonal colours as it progresses through movements one to three. Each piece is approximately 10 minutes.
- IV and V: In movements IV and V, long sustained chords, played in the middle and lower registers of the piano, are punctuated by single pitches played in unison in the higher piano register. The cluster chord in movement four is constructed from consonant patterns suggestive of a C major triad with an added F. Each time the chord is played, the bass voice switches between G and D, giving the chord a different foundational colouring. Movement V features long sustained inversions of D major chords and D major chords with an added G, punctuated by Ds and Cs, in the higher registers. The patterns of tensions and release created by the relationship between the F sharp and F natural is cleverly highlighted when F natural appears in the pattern of punctuating pitches near the end of the movement. IV is approximately 5 minutes, and V is 6 minutes in length.
- VI, VII, VIII, IX, and X: The last five movements of *Soundstill* are some of the first minimalist process pieces where twelve-tone rows are used. These five shorter pieces share similarities with the process and structure of *Rivers, 2<sup>nd</sup> Set*, and could possibly be considered precursors to this larger work. In *Soundstill* XI through X, ostinato patterns made from the first pitches of the row are played in the upper voice. Tone row pitches are introduced on off-beats played with the left hand that punctuate through the ostinato. These row pitches cover a wide range of the piano. Unlike *Rivers, 2<sup>nd</sup> Set*, however, the row pitches are presented in order through short melodic fragments. The continuous flow of notes is also interrupted by instances of long sustained pitches. Each of these pieces are approximately 3.5 minutes in length.

**Score:** Canadian Music Centre

**Recordings:**

- Complete Recording: “Pond Life,” pianist Christina Petrowska Quilco, CMC Centrediscs.
- Movement I: Canadian Music Centre – Centre Streams/Ann Southam.

## **Slow Music: Meditations on a Twelve Tone Row (1979)**

Minimalism

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<sup>288</sup> This description is from a spoken introduction to a 1979 archival recording of the piece found on the Canadian Music Centre’s “Centrestreams.” It was likely from some type of new music radio broadcast.

**Description:** This set of four slow pieces are some of the first to feature Southam's unorthodox use of twelve-tone rows paired with the minimalist style.<sup>289</sup> The musical forces are pared down to single notes, the tempos are slow, and long resonating tones are featured, which creates moments of stillness. Each piece follows the process of building a tone row to completion. Numbers 1, 3 and 4 begin with the initial five notes of the row, and then these notes are spun around in different orders while each new tone row notes is introduced phrase by phrase. No. 2 is similar, but also includes a droning pattern that enters after the introduction of each new pitch. Each piece begins on a different pitch of the same row. *Slow Music* was commissioned for the Contemporary Showcase. Numbers 1, 3 and 4 are considered to be grade 3/4 pieces, and 2 a grade 5/6 piece.<sup>290</sup>

**Durations:**

- No. 1: Quarter note = 40 beats or slower. 2.25 Minutes.
- No. 2: Quarter note = 56. 2.5 Minutes.
- No. 3: Quarter note = 40 beats or slower, subtly expressive. 2.25 Minutes.
- No. 4: Quarter note = 40 beats or slower, subtly expressive. 2.75 Minutes.

**Score:** Canadian Music Centre

**Recordings:**

- “Canadian Composers Portraits Series: Ann Southam,” pianist Christina Petrowska Quilico, CMC Centrediscs.
- “Canadian Compositions for Young Pianists,” pianist Elaine Keillor, Studea Musica.

## Stitches in Time (1979)

Minimalism

**Description:** *Stitches in Time* is a collection of short minimalist works written for Contemporary Showcase that includes *Sonocycles I, II, III* and *Soundspinning I* through *VIII*.<sup>291</sup> Each piece in *Sonocycles* and *Soundspinning* can be considered precursors to *Rivers*, *3<sup>rd</sup> Set*, as they reflect the same intertwining textures of seamless, gradually changing patterns that produce hidden melodic motifs, but on a smaller scale. Southam enjoyed how this minimalist writing “tickled” her ears and brain, when tunes, or motifs, are inadvertently produced when the overlapping patterns are played.<sup>292</sup> Pianist Christina Petrowska Quilico explains that these pieces are “harder to play than they look,” as there are few expressive indications in the score and require well-developed technical control.<sup>293</sup> Each piece sits within the middle range of the piano keyboard, are constructed from different alternating patterns (although some are in unison), and unfold in a somewhat cyclical structure where the piece ends in a similar pattern to the opening. All pieces conclude with either sustained single notes or cluster chords.

**Durations:**

- Sonocycles I: Left hand patterns played on offbeats. 1.25 Minutes.

<sup>289</sup> David Jaeger, liner notes to *Soundspinning: Music of Ann Southam*, performed by Christina Petrowska Quilico, Centrediscs CMCCD 26018, 2018, CD.

<sup>290</sup> Alliance for Canadian New Music Projects, *Contemporary Showcase Festival: Piano Syllabus*, <http://acnmp.ca/syllabus/english-syllabus/>, 37 & 44.

<sup>291</sup> *Ibid.*, 44 & 61.

<sup>292</sup> Ann Southam, *Stitches in Time*, (Ottawa: Studea Musica, 1999), preface.

<sup>293</sup> Bartley, “The Current Within the Music,” 2018.

- Sonocycles II: Hands move together in eighth notes. 1 Minute.
- Sonocycles III: Right hand patterns played on offbeats. Darker colour and character. 1.25 Minutes.
- Soundspinning I: Left hand patterns played on offbeats. Some voicing indications. 1.5 Minutes.
- Soundspinning II: Left hand patterns played on offbeats. Dissonant. 1 Minute.
- Soundspinning III: Left hand patterns played on offbeats. Bright character. 1.5 Minutes.
- Soundspinning IV: Left hand patterns played on offbeats. Quirky character. 1.25 Minutes.
- Soundspinning V: Hands move in unison. Utilizes the sostenuto pedal. 30 Seconds.
- Soundspinning VI: Left hand patterns played on offbeats. 45 Seconds.
- Soundspinning VII: Left hand patterns played on offbeats. Bright character. 45 Seconds.
- Soundspinning VIII: Right hand patterns play on offbeats. Features both clearly mark legato and staccato articulations, utilizes the sostenuto pedal, and is in compound time. 1 Minute.

**Score:** Canadian Music Centre

**Recordings:**

- Complete Recording: “Soundspinning: Music of Ann Southam,” pianist Christina Petrowska Quilico, CMC Centrediscs.
- *Sonocycles I, II & III; Soundspinning I & II*: “Canadian Compositions for Young Pianists,” pianist Elaine Keillor, Studea Musica.

## **Rivers, 1<sup>st</sup> Set (1979, revised in 2004)**

Minimalism

**Description:** *Rivers, 1<sup>st</sup> Set* consists of two pieces featuring a seamless flow of a sixteenth note patterns that accompany a melody constructed from a twelve-tone row. Southam instructs the performer to play “as if telling a story,” as the row is repeated twelve times, each time beginning on a different note in the row making it seem that the music is telling a story from twelve different perspectives.<sup>294</sup> The sixteenth note ostinato is paired with a drone in the lower voice providing a “consonant framework” that balances the dissonance of the tone-row.<sup>295</sup> The pianist is required to move the left hand quickly from the upper register (where the tone row melody is played) to lower register (where the drone is played) while maintaining the seamless flow of the ostinato played with the right hand.

- No. 1: D Drone. 5 Minutes.
- No. 2: E Drone. Shifts between 5/4 and 6/4. 6.5 Minutes.

**Score:** Canadian Music Centre

**Recording:** “Canadian Composers Portraits Series: Ann Southam,” pianist Christina Petrowska Quilico, CMC Centrediscs.

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<sup>294</sup> Ann Southam, liner notes to *Canadian Composers Portrait Series: Ann Southam*, performed by Christina Petrowska Quilico, Centrediscs CMCCD 10505, 2005, CD.; Ann Southam, *Rivers (1<sup>st</sup> Set)*, (Toronto: Canadian Music Centre, 1979/2004), 1.

<sup>295</sup> Southam, liner notes to *Canadian Composers Portrait Series: Ann Southam*, CD.

## Rivers, 2<sup>nd</sup> Set (1979, revised in 2005)

### Minimalism

**Description:** *Rivers, 2<sup>nd</sup> Set* is the slowest of the three *Rivers* sets. The pieces feature Southam's unique paring of minimalism, through the use of drones, repeated patterns, and process, with the twelve-tone rows. Each of the slow *Rivers* utilize an ostinato made from the first two pitches in the row. This ostinato is paired with drones consisting of more tonal pitch patterns from the row to create a "consonant ground" on which the row is carried through the process of assembly and disassembly.<sup>296</sup> The ostinato is played with the right hand on the onbeats while the left hand weaves the pitches of the tone row through the ostinato on the offbeats. The play of stability (drones and ostinatos) and instability (the tone row), evoke a uniquely reflective expressive character tinged with the uneasiness of dissonant tension.

### Durations:

- No. 1: Serene. B $\flat$  D $\flat$  ostinato. 7.5 Minutes.
- No. 2: Quietly ecstatic. C $\sharp$  G $\sharp$  ostinato. 5.5 Minutes.
- No. 3: Quietly ecstatic. E E $\sharp$  ostinato. 6.25 Minutes.
- No. 4: Quietly ecstatic. D G ostinato. 6.25 Minutes.
- No. 5: Serene. B E ostinato. 5.75 Minutes.
- No. 6: Serene. D ostinato. 2.75 Minutes.
- No. 7: Serene. D $\sharp$  ostinato. 3.5 Minutes.
- No. 8: Serene. A E ostinato. 7 Minutes.

**Score:** Canadian Music Centre

### Recordings:

- Complete Recording: "Canadian Composers Portraits Series: Ann Southam," pianist Christina Petrowska Quilico, CMC Centrediscs.
- *Rivers No. 3, 2<sup>nd</sup> Set*: "Canadian Compositions for Young Pianists," pianist Elaine Keillor, Studea Musica.
- *Rivers No. 1, No. 3, No. 4, 2<sup>nd</sup> Set*: "Canadian Music for Piano," pianist Louise Bessette, CBC Records.

## Cool Blue & Red Hot (1980)

### Jazz Style Work

**Description:** This work is a pair of pieces written for Contemporary Showcase. *Cool Blue* is reflective of the blues style. It is written in an irregular meter, based on a repeated pattern in the accompaniment, and utilizes sympathetic vibration through silently depressed keys. *Cool Blue* is contrasted by a toccata-like, peppery piece called *Red Hot* that features a staccato ostinato, dissonant harmonies, and shifting meters. The set is considered a grade 3/4.<sup>297</sup>

**Duration:** 1 Minute 20 Seconds

**Score:** Canadian Music Centre

### Recordings:

<sup>296</sup> Southam, liner notes to *Canadian Composers Portrait Series: Ann Southam*, CD.

<sup>297</sup> Alliance for Canadian New Music Projects, *Contemporary Showcase Festival: Piano Syllabus*, <http://acnmp.ca/syllabus/english-syllabus/>, 30.

- “Soundspinning: Music of Ann Southam,” pianist Christina Petrowska Quilico, CMC Centrediscs.
- “Canadian Compositions for Young Pianists,” pianist Elaine Keillor, Studea Musica.

### **Rivers, 3<sup>rd</sup> Set (1981, revised in 2005)**

Minimalism

**Description:** The fastest of the three *Rivers* sets, *Rivers, 3<sup>rd</sup> Set* is the most virtuosic. Each piece features seamlessly repeating patterns that gradually change. Different patterns are played in each hand. One hand plays on the onbeats alternating quickly with the other hand playing on the offbeats. As the patterns overlap small melodic motifs are revealed from the texture. Pitches used in the patterns typically create a bright or tonal sounding cluster chord. Performers are given considerable freedom regarding tempos, dynamics, pedaling, and choice of motifs that are voiced, or “noticed.”<sup>298</sup> The quick alternations between the hands require advanced piano technique.

**Durations:**

- No. 1: Utilizes both sixteenth and eighth note patterns. Slowly phased with gradual changes and patterns that are in a small range. 8.75 Minutes.
- No. 2: Energetic, featuring a distinct opening motif. Utilizes patterns sitting within a small range. 6.5 Minutes.
- No. 3: Warm character, featuring patterns that are slightly wider in range in the middle of the piano keyboard. There are more distinct structural points where the music shifts to new patterns. 5 Minutes.
- No. 4: Quick and busy. 2 Minutes.
- No. 5: Features some marked motives, a bright character, and joyful ending. 5.5 Minutes.
- No. 6: Thinner texture with even more subtle changes. Features some darker harmonic colours. 5.25 Minutes.
- No. 7: Warm with a distinct rising and falling left hand pattern. 4 Minutes.
- No. 8: Highly virtuosic with a more expansive range covered by the patterns. 12 Minutes.
- No. 9: An epic journey through a variety of expressive characters. Highly sectional. 13 Minutes.

**Score:** Canadian Music Centre

**Recording:**

- Complete Recording: “Canadian Composers Portraits Series: Ann Southam,” pianist Christina Petrowska Quilico, CMC Centrediscs.
- *Rivers No. 5, 3<sup>rd</sup> Set*: “Canadian Music for Piano,” pianist Louise Bessette, CBC Records.

### **Glass Houses (1981, revised in 2009)**

Minimalism

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<sup>298</sup> Ann Southam, *Rivers (3rd Set)*, (Toronto: Canadian Music Centre, 1981/2005), preface.



**Description:** *Glass Houses* features the quintessential seamless textures, repetitive patterns, and brighter tonal colours of minimalist music. Each of the fifteen pieces in the set are based on continuous ostinatos that range in length from seven to thirty-three notes. These ostinatos support melodic cells or “tunes” that are presented in a prescribed order until all tunes are present. In her unfinished program notes, Southam explained that the tunes are inspired by the east coast fiddle music she would listen to on the radio as a child.<sup>299</sup> Described by pianist Christina Petrowska Quilico as “fiendishly difficult etudes for piano,” and further compared to the etudes of Ligeti and Liszt, playing *Glass Houses* requires technical control and highly proficient hand independence, paired with an instinct for creating musical phrases out of what on the page appears to be calculated patterns.<sup>300</sup> Each of the *Glass Houses* are fun, exhilarating showstoppers.

**Durations:**

- No. 1: 15-note ostinato. Bright, energetic, featuring mostly continuous eighth note tunes. 3.5 Minutes.
- No. 2: 13-note ostinato. Warm and melodious. 5 Minutes.
- No. 3: 7-note ostinato. Some tunes utilize harmonic intervals. Expresses an appealing cheeriness that is memorable. 8 Minutes.
- No. 4: 13-note ostinato. Warm colours with continuous eighth note tunes. 5 Minutes.
- No. 5: 7-note ostinato. Most popular of the set. Joyful, cheerful, and bright, with catchy tunes. 8.5 Minutes.
- No. 6: 13-note ostinato. Dissonant harmonies create a quirky character. 4.5 Minutes.
- No. 7: 9-note ostinato. Utilizes minor colours that create an appealing seriousness. 4.5 Minutes.
- No. 8: 33-note ostinato. Features longer tunes that meander over a lengthy ostinato. 10 Minutes.
- No. 9: 7-note ostinato. Warm and welcoming. 8 Minutes.
- No. 10: 13-note ostinato. Adventurous sound, reminiscent of the wild west and the style of Aaron Copland. 9 Minutes.
- No. 11: 7-note ostinato. Folk song qualities, with a daintiness and scalar patterns that is almost classical in nature. 11.5 Minutes.
- No. 12: 19-note ostinato. Crunchier harmonic colours reflective of jazz. 7 Minutes.
- No. 13: 7-note ostinato. Dark and moody. 11 Minutes.
- No. 14: 13-note ostinato. Bright, busy and electronic. Some voicing indications. 7.25 Minutes.
- No. 15: 7-note ostinato. Warm with dissonant inflections that create an edgy sound. 9 Minutes.

**Score:** Canadian Music Centre

**Recordings:**

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<sup>299</sup> Ann Southam, *Glass Houses*, ed. Christina Petrowska Quilico (Toronto: Canadian Music Centre, 1981/2005), preface.

<sup>300</sup> *Ibid.*, preface.

- Nos. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 13: “Glass Houses Revisited,” pianist Christina Petrowska Quilico, CMC Centrediscs.
- Nos. 8, 10, 11, 12, 14, 15: “Glass Houses Vol. 2,” pianist Christina Petrowska Quilico, CMC Centrediscs.
- No. 5: “Northern Sirens,” pianist Christina Petrowska Quilico, CBC and York University.

### **Spatial View of Pond, I (1983, revised in 2006), II (2007)**

Minimalism

**Description:** Although written almost two decades apart, both of these quietly reflective pieces were inspired by Japanese-Canadian artist Aiko Suzuki’s painting of the same name. Both pieces follow the same minimalist process where the notes of a twelve-tone row are spun out and built in four note cells. This process is followed until all the pitch units have been treated in the same way and the music returns to the original cell of four pitches, giving the piece a sense of home or conclusion. This process creates distinct sections, each with their own emotional climate depending on the combination of pitches.<sup>301</sup>

**Duration:** Both are 12 Minutes

**Score:** Canadian Music Centre

**Recording:** “Pond Life,” pianist Christina Petrowska Quilco, CMC Centrediscs.

### **Soundings for a New Piano: 12 Meditations on a Twelve Tone Row (1986)**

Minimalism/Twelve-Tone

**Description:** This set of twelve pieces use the same prime form of a twelve-tone row. Meditations one through seven, ten, and twelve follow the same tone-row building process that features a mostly single voice texture of gestures that ascend to long tones (similar to *Slow Music*). Each of these movements, while maintaining the pitch order, begin on a different note in the row, and therefore feature a new harmonic colour that uncovers a new or different emotional quality of the row. Number eight, an aggressive romp in a style reflective of Southam’s non-minimalist twelve tone music, is the first movement that breaks from the minimalist aesthetic and process. Although there are quieter moments, number eleven features octaves and cluster chords that also reflect Southam’s non-minimalist style, however there is a recurring cluster chord that acts as a drone throughout the louder forceful sections. Number nine shares similarities to her *Returnings* style pieces. This movement is slow, written in a compound meter, and utilizes held, quasi-tonal cluster chords created from the pitches in the row. An *Interlude* is also included in the set. Southam’s program notes explain that the pieces may be played individually, or in any combination, but the *Interlude* must be played before number eight.<sup>302</sup>

**Durations:**

<sup>301</sup> *Tributaries: Reflections of Aiko Suzuki*, directed by Midi Onodera (Toronto, ON: Daruma Pictures Inc., 2009), DVD.

<sup>302</sup> Ann Southam, *Soundings for a New Piano: 12 Meditations on a Twelve Tone Row*, (Toronto: Canadian Music Centre, 1986), 1.

- No. 1: *Fortissimo*. Quarter note = 72. Forceful. Presents the tone-row building process and rhythmic formula also used in numbers 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 10, and 11. 1 Minute.
- No. 2: *Piano*. Quarter note = 40. Slow, quiet, calm, and reflective. 2 Minutes.
- No. 3: *Mezzo piano* with a moment of *forte*. Quarter note = 40. Slow, calm, and reflective. 2 Minutes.
- No. 4: *Fortissimo*. Quarter note = 69. More forceful. 1 Minute.
- No. 5: *Mezzo piano*. Quarter note = 69. Slow, quiet, and reflective. 1.5 Minute.
- No. 6: Begins *mezzo piano* and builds to a *fortissimo* climax. Quarter note = 40. Slow, and calm with an expressive edginess. 1.75 Minutes.
- No. 7: Begins *mezzo piano* and grows to *forte*. Quarter note = 44. 2 Minutes.
- Interlude: *Piano*. Quarter note = 52. Slowly presents the row in a two voiced duet. 45 Seconds.
- No. 8: *Fortissimo*. Quarter note = 76. Forceful and energetic. 2 Minutes.
- No. 9: Begins *piano* and builds to a climax. Dotted quarter note = 69. 1 Minute.
- No. 10: Mostly *piano* throughout. Quarter note = 44. Slow, calm, and reflective. 2 Minutes.
- No. 11: Mostly *forte* or *fortissimo* contrasting with short quieter sections. Quarter note = 88. Mostly energetic with a dense texture of octaves and cluster chords. 3.25 Minutes.
- No. 12: *Mezzo piano*. Quarter note = 30. Slow, still, quiet and calm. 3 minutes.

**Score:** Canadian Music Centre

**Recording:** “Ann Southam: Soundings for a New Piano,” pianist R. Andrew Lee, Irritable Hedgehog Music.

## Remembering Schubert (January 1993)

Minimalism

**Description:** This beautiful piece utilizes the similar seamless textures and interlocking patterns that produce hidden melodic motifs as described in the entries for *Rivers*, *3<sup>rd</sup> Set* and *Stiches in Time*. It features sections that are faster and busier that contrast the main sections that are slower, gentler, and reflective. Southam explained that there are not direct quotes from Schubert’s music, however there is a “vague reminiscence of Schubert in this music.”<sup>303</sup>

**Duration:** 9.5 Minutes

**Score:** Canadian Music Centre

**Recordings:**

- “Soundspinning: Music of Ann Southam,” pianist Christina Petrowska Quilico
- “Palimpsest,” pianist Mary Kennedy, Echiquier Records.
- “Glass Houses: The Music of Ann Southam,” pianist Eve Egoyan, CBC Records.

## Where? (1995)

Minimalism

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<sup>303</sup> Larry Lake, liner notes to *Glass Houses: Music of Ann Southam*, performed by pianists Stephen Clarke, Eve Egoyan, and Composers’ Orchestra & String Quartet conducted by Gary Kulesha, CBC Records MVCD 1124, 1999, CD.

**Description:** Lasting only one minute, this short work was written as part of pianist Barbara Pritchard's Variations project.<sup>304</sup> It features similar interweaving, gradually changing patterns and seamless textures as *Rivers, 3<sup>rd</sup> Set*, *Stiches in Time*, and *Remembering Schubert*. This piece however utilizes overlapping patterns with wider ranges that require careful consideration of the appropriate fingering needed to move through these wide-ranging gestures with ease. The uncertainty of the title is evoked through the questioning dissonances created by the pitch patterns used.

**Duration:** 1 Minute

**Score:** Canadian Music Centre

**Recordings:** "Soundspinning: Music of Ann Southam," pianist Christina Petrowska Quilico, CMC Centrediscs.

### **Qualities of Consonance (1998)**

Blended Work

**Description:** This one-movement showstopper features the stark contrast between Southam's minimalist and non-minimalist writing. Two extremes are presented: Southam's quintessential still and reflective writing paired with her more twelve-tone, aggressive, fast, and virtuosic writing style. The first section introduces the two dueling extremes: minimalist long tones and drones are continually interrupted by aggressive and fast gestures. Next, Southam writes music that works through the process of seamlessly presenting sections of the tone row in a process and structure similar to *Rivers, 2<sup>nd</sup> Set*, where tone row notes are weaved through an ostinato. Interesting extended techniques that play with harmonics are used in these sections. Next, these minimalist moments are interrupted by the aggressive, exciting, and forcefully virtuosic patterns that become longer and even more conceptually and technically demanding. Constant shifts in meter add to the complexities of the sections written in this style. The climax of the work features an extended section where the forceful, rhythmic, aggressive character seems to prevail. However, *Qualities of Consonance* ends where it begins: bringing the journey through the moments of tension and relief, not unlike those faced in life, to a peacefully cyclical close. This piece is dedicated to Eve Egoyan and David Jaeger.

**Duration:** 23 Minutes

**Score:** Canadian Music Centre

**Recording:** "Returnings," pianist Eve Egoyan, CMC Centrediscs.

### **Figures (2001)**

Blended Work

**Description:** Composed for solo piano and string orchestra, this fiery twelve-tone work is written in a style more like Southam's early works. This piece consists of aggressive and energetic melodic figures constructed from Southam's favourite tone row. Southam explained that when writing this work she would take groups of notes as a starting point for the melodic shapes and create from there.<sup>305</sup> This piece utilizes the entire range of the piano, with gestures exploring the highest extremes and the lowest rumbles. Like *Qualities of Consonance*, the aggressive sections drive forward through shifting meters.

<sup>304</sup> Jaeger, liner notes to *Soundspinning: Music of Ann Southam*.

<sup>305</sup> Canadian Music Centre, "Centre Streams: Ann Southam," *Figures*, accessed June 5, 2018, <https://www.musiccentre.ca/node/37211>.

The final section consists of perpetual sixteenth notes that shift through fast, hypnotic, patterns created from the row. Incredible technique and stamina is required of the pianist when performing this concerto like masterpiece that demands full energy and clarity from beginning to end. *Figures* was commissioned by the CBC for pianist Eve Egoyan and was premiered by Egoyan and the Toronto Symphony Orchestra Strings.

**Duration:** 15 Minutes

**Score:** Canadian Music Centre

**Recording:** Canadian Music Centre – Centre Streams/Ann Southam.

### **In Retrospect (2004)**

Minimalism

**Description:** This still and reflective piece is the first where Southam takes even further the concept of listening to and exploring the actual sounds of the piano itself. Southam highlights the variety of tonal colours in each piano range through long, resonant gestures in this highly minimalist work. Again, we see a process of tone-row building, but this time the notes are added even more gradually than what has been seen before. The first four pitches in the row provide the foundational sonorities through a patterned motif that recurs throughout. An attempt has been made to encourage the pianist to allow the sounds to decay away before starting the next gesture through specific tempo markings that shift even slower for the sustained pitches. There is an enticing tonal ambiguity with the addition of each tone-row pitch and a wonderful stillness created by the long sustained tones. Tremendous patience and technical control (especially in finding the variety of tonal colours) is demanded of the performer.

**Duration:** 15 Minutes

**Score:** Canadian Music Centre

**Recording:** “Returnings,” pianist Eve Egoyan, CMC Centrediscs.

### **Simple Line of Enquiry (2007)**

Minimalism

**Description:** This work consists of twelve pieces exploring the expressive qualities of one of Southam’s favourite tone-rows. Each movement begins on a different pitch in the row and is titled as such. Like *Slow Music* and *Soundings for a New Piano*, this piece also follows the process of building tone rows to completion with a single voice texture. Faster gestures that ascend to a long tone are also present, however this work is even slower and highly meditative. This piece is also written without barlines and includes an instruction explaining that the duration of longer tones are approximate and may be longer or shorter depending on the resonance of the piano.<sup>306</sup> This piece, therefore, showcases how sounds on the piano resonant and then decay. It also highlights the sonorities created by the pitch combinations in the row, which Southam said creates different emotional climates in each of the pieces.<sup>307</sup> Although they may appear simple on the page, each movement demands patience, deep listening, and skilled technical control.

**Duration:** Approximately 1 Hour (depending on the resonance of the piano)

**Score:** Canadian Music Centre

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<sup>306</sup> Ann Southam, *Simple Lines of Inquiry*, (Toronto: Canadian Music Centre, 2007), 2.

<sup>307</sup> Egoyan and Gayle, “Composition as Enquiry: The Explorational Music of Ann Southam,” 2008, 42.

**Recording:** “Simple Lines of Enquiry,” pianist Eve Egoyan, CMC Centrediscs.

### **Commotion Creek, Fiddle Creek, Fidget Creek, Noisy River (2007)**

Minimalism

**Description:** *Commotion Creek*, *Fiddle Creek*, *Fidget Creek*, and *Noisy River* are inspired by Southam’s *Rivers* and were written for pianist Christina Petrowska Quilico. Although published separately as stand-alone piano solos, these four pieces are written using similar processes. Like *Rivers*, 3<sup>rd</sup> Set, each of these pieces are constructed from repeating and gradually changing patterns. However, the patterns move simultaneously. The left hand consists of cascading eighth notes, demanding technical flexibility and agility from the pianist. The right-hand patterns have longer pitches that produce a bell like punctuation in the texture. Southam was a collaborator, and has always given considerable interpretive freedom to performers. This notion is present in the flexible tempo indication of “Fast, (or not),” appearing on three of these pieces, paired with a lack of dynamic or pedal indications.<sup>308</sup> Like her other fast minimalist works, advanced technique with well cultivated hand independence is needed to master the seamless and subtly changing patterns. An instinct for melody is needed to find, phrase and pedal the melodic motifs.

**Durations:**

- *Commotion Creek*: Warm and inviting. 5.5 Minutes.
- *Fiddle Creek*: A sunny piece with a kind character. 5 Minutes.
- *Fidget Creek*: A fidgety and dissonant quiriness is created through the use of right patterns played on the white keys and left hand patterns played on the black keys. 5 Minutes.
- *Noisy River*: Uses patterns that are close together, creating a busy tension. 4 Minutes.

**Score:** Canadian Music Centre

**Recording:** Pond Life,” pianist Christina Petrowska Quilco, CMC Centrediscs.

### **Pond Life: Simple Forms of Inquiry (2008)**

Minimalism

**Description:** This four-movement work is slow, reflective and highly pared-down. The process of each movement of *Pond Life* involves building a tone row to completion. The notes of a row are gently and quietly turned around and around in a single voice texture, while a new note is added gesture by gesture until it is complete. Number 1 follows the most straightforward building process while numbers 2, 3 and 4 use the process flexibly, but still produce the same result in the end. Each gesture involves a succession of faster notes that lead to a long sustained note. Numbers 1, 2 and 4 are to be played softly, slowly and gently, while the third piece is marked at 116 beats per minute, beginning *forte* and gradually decreasing to *piano*. *Pond Life* was written for the dancer and choreographer Terrill Maguire.<sup>309</sup>

<sup>308</sup> Ann Southam, *Commotion Creek*, (Toronto: Canadian Music Centre, 2007), 1; Ann Southam, *Fiddle Creek*, (Toronto: Canadian Music Centre, 2007), 1; Ann Southam, *Fidget Creek*, (Toronto: Canadian Music Centre, 2007), 1; Ann Southam, *Noisy River*, (Toronto: Canadian Music Centre, 2007), 1.

<sup>309</sup> Christina Petrowska Quilico, liner notes to *Pond Life*, performed by Christina Petrowska Quilico, Centrediscs CMC CD14109, 2009, CD.

**Duration:** Total 11 Minutes 30 Seconds. No. 1: 3 Minutes 30 Seconds No. 2: 3 Minutes 30 Seconds No. 3: 1 Minute 30 Seconds No. 4: 3 Minutes

**Score:** Canadian Music Centre

**Recordings:** “Pond Life,” pianist Christina Petrowska Quilco, CMC Centrediscs.

## “Returnings Style Pieces”

Minimalism

**Description:** Southam composed several pieces in what has been coined the “Returnings Style.”<sup>310</sup> Pieces in this style have a three voiced texture. In the middle part, a tone row is assembled, in octaves, one note at a time. The tone row is built one note at a time and is processed through twelve times until the row is complete. The unfolding of the dissonant tone row is accompanied by consonant compositional devices. In the lower part a perfect fifth drone persists from beginning to end. In the upper part, patterns of triads and cluster chords work with the drone to “accommodate the dissonance (of the row),” which Southam felt was a metaphor for life.<sup>311</sup> These works are written in compound time, and fermatas are used to prolong time and demand deep listening of the shifting sonorities. Each piece is slow, creating a contemplative character. As reflected in this catalogue, once Southam created a process that she found appealing, she would use it again in other pieces.<sup>312</sup> However, unlike *Rivers*, *Soundings for a New Piano*, *Stiches in Time*, *Glass Houses*, and *Simple Lines of Enquiry*, among others, Southam created these as stand-alone solo piano pieces, published not as collections, but separately. However, some of these works were discovered after Southam’s death, so one can imagine that perhaps the intention was to create a set of pieces in this style.

- **Given Time (1993):** *Given Time* is the first known piece in this style and uses a B $\flat$  and F drone paired with B $\flat$  major triads, a triad that Southam loved the warmth of, to accompany the assembly of the tone row B F $\sharp$  C $\sharp$  B $\flat$  A C A $\flat$  F E G D E $\flat$ .<sup>313</sup> The row is built to completion and when the music proceeds to build a transposition of the row, more cluster chords are added to the upper voice. Southam felt that the processes, like the one used here, reflected the mending and knitting of traditional and life-sustaining, women’s work.<sup>314</sup> At the first performance, visual artist Aiko Suzuki sat in the curve of the piano, spooling and unspooling yarn, emphasizing this feminist message of unending work.<sup>315</sup>
  - **Duration:** 15 Minutes
  - **Score:** Canadian Music Centre
  - **Recording:** Not Available
- **There and Back (2008):** In *There and Back* Southam returns to the style that, over a decade earlier, first appeared in *Given Time*. Again, we see the same row supported by a perfect fifth B $\flat$  and F drone plus B $\flat$  major triads. Once the row

<sup>310</sup> Tamara Bernstein, liner notes to *5*, performed by Eve Egoyan, Centrediscs CMCCD 19113, 2013, CD.

<sup>311</sup> Ibid.

<sup>312</sup> Bernstein, liner notes to *5*, 2013.

<sup>313</sup> Kim Echlin, “Glass Houses #5: Playing Plan,” *The Citizen’s Weekly* (Ottawa, ON), Oct. 5, 1997; Southam, “Tone rows and drafts by Ann Southam,” 20<sup>th</sup> century music manuscripts.

<sup>314</sup> Bernstein, liner notes to *5*, 2013.

<sup>315</sup> Echlin, “Glass Houses #5, playing plan,” 1997; Elissa Poole, “Composer has a Tough Tone Row to Hoe,” *The Globe and Mail* (Toronto, ON), March 19, 1997.

has been built to completion, the music proceeds to build the retrograde of the row (hence the title). More cluster chords are added at this point. Southam highlights the tension of the relationship between B $\flat$  and B $\natural$  throughout this work, with B $\flat$  prevailing in the end. This piece was submitted posthumously to the CMC.

- **Duration:** 11.5 Minutes
- **Score:** Canadian Music Centre
- **Recording:** Not Available
- **Returns A Flat (2009):** *Returns* in A Flat, follows the same process of building a row and its retrograde as *There and Back*. This time Southam uses a row featured in many of her works: D $\flat$  A $\flat$  B D G E A G $\flat$  C B $\flat$  E $\flat$  F accompanied by an A $\flat$  and E $\flat$  drone plus A $\flat$  major triads. When the building of the retrograde row begins, more cluster chords harmonies are added. This piece was found after Southam passed away, and it seems that it could have possibly been a preliminary version of *Returns I*, as the same row and similar harmonies are used.
  - **Duration:** 15 Minutes 30 Seconds
  - **Score:** Canadian Music Centre
  - **Recording:** “5,” pianist Eve Egoyan., CMC Centrediscs.
- **Returns I (2010):** It is in this late work where we see Southam hit her stride in the “Returns” style. Using one of her favourite rows D $\flat$  A $\flat$  B D G E A F $\sharp$  C B $\flat$  E $\flat$  F Southam accompanies its assembly with an A $\flat$  and E $\flat$  perfect fifth drone and chords and clusters centering around A $\flat$  major. The tone row is built to completion once. The inclusion of more chords and clusters in the upper voice offers more tonal variety and harmonic interactions of tension and release between the chords and row pitches than previous pieces in this style. Southam also presents the row in an expressive introduction using the single voice texture similar to that seen in *Simple Lines of Inquiry* and *In Retrospect*. In the introduction Southam however flexibly replaces the F $\sharp$  with an A $\flat$ , likely for expressive purposes. This piece is dedicated to pianist Eve Egoyan.
  - **Duration:** 13.5 Minutes
  - **Score:** Canadian Music Centre
  - **Recording:** “Returns,” pianist Eve Egoyan, CMC Centrediscs
- **Returns II: a meditation (2010):** Like *Returns I*, the row in use, another often used by Southam: D B E $\flat$  G $\flat$  G E A A $\flat$  C F B  $\flat$  D $\flat$  is presented in a quiet and thinly textured introduction. In the main section of the piece, the assembly of the row is accompanied by a perfect fifth drone on A and E. Unlike the harmonic variety in *Returns I*, this piece uses a simpler palate of only A major triads and a cluster chord of GABC. The row is built to completion once, and each note in the middle texture is played once, unlike *Returns I* where each tone row pitch is played twice in a row each time. This piece is dedicated to Eve Egoyan.
  - **Duration:** 10 Minutes
  - **Score:** Canadian Music Centre
  - **Recording:** “Returns,” pianist Eve Egoyan, CMC Centrediscs
- **Returns II: alternate version (2010):** Posthumously submitted to the CMC, this piece shares the same title as *Returns II* and exemplifies the same textures, tempo and process, but returns to the tone row and B $\flat$  major harmonies used in



*Given Time* and *There and Back*. Both the prime and retrograde form of the row are assembled and each note is repeated twice, like in *Returns I*. Interestingly, the B $\flat$  in the row is spelled as A $\sharp$  in this work. This piece is dedicated to pianist Eve Egoyan.

- **Duration:** 17 Minutes.
- **Score:** Canadian Music Centre
- **Recording:** “5,” pianist Eve Egoyan., CMC Centrediscs.
- **Unnamed Pieces:** Three more untitled pieces, now known as *In G*, *In B $\flat$*  and *In A $\flat$* , in the *Returns* style were found after Southam’s death. Each were written for pianist Eve Egoyan and one could imagine that they could possibly be the start of a set of pieces using this subtly expressive process Southam grew so fond of later in life.
  - **Duration:** *In G*: 14 Minutes, *In B $\flat$* : 15 Minutes, *In A $\flat$* : 14 Minutes
  - **Scores:** Canadian Music Centre
  - **Recordings:** “5,” pianist Eve Egoyan., CMC Centrediscs.

## Appendix 2: Southam's Tone Rows

Southam created at least four tone rows that were used as the starting point for many of her compositions. This appendix contains transcriptions of the four tone rows found handwritten on staff paper with all transpositions at The Paul D. Fleck Library and Archives at the Banff Centre for Arts and Creativity and lists of some of the pieces for solo piano that utilize each of the rows. I have labeled them rows 1 to 4. While not complete, these lists both shed some light on how Southam applied her tone rows and are an effective starting point for future research on Southam's harmonic language.

### No. 1



- Soundings for a New Piano: 12 Meditations on a Twelve Tone Row (1986)
- Rivers No. 2 and No. 6, 2<sup>nd</sup> Set (1979, revised in 2005)
- In Retrospect (2004)
- Spatial View of Pond II (2007)
- Simple Lines of Enquiry (2007)
- Returnings A Flat (2009)
- Returnings I (2010)
- Unnamed Piece in Ab (posthumous)

### No. 2



- Soundstill – Movement VI (1979, revised in 1999)
- Rivers No. 1 and No. 7, 2<sup>nd</sup> Set (1979, revised in 2005)
- Qualities of Consonance (1998)
- Figures (2001)

- Returnings II: A Meditation (2010)

## No. 3



- Fifteen (1977)
- Soundstill – Movements VII, VIII, IX, and X (1979, revised in 1999)
- Rivers No. 8, 2<sup>nd</sup> Set (1979, revised in 2005)
- Spatial View of Pond I (1983, revised in 2006)
- Given Time (1993)
- There and Back (2008)

## No. 4



- Slow Music: Meditations on a Twelve Tone Row (1979)
- Rivers, 1<sup>st</sup> Set (1979, revised in 2004)
- Rivers No. 3 and No. 4, 2<sup>nd</sup> Set (1979, revised in 2005)
- Pond Life: Simple Forms of Inquiry (2008)

## Appendix 3: DMA Performance Event Programs

### Appendix 3.1: Performance Event Program One; featured selections from Southam's *Rivers*, 2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Sets.

Saturday May 26, 2018

2 p.m., von Kuster Hall

Amelia Grace Yates, *piano*

<i>Rivers</i> I (2 <sup>nd</sup> Set)	A. Southam
<i>Rivers</i> V (3 <sup>rd</sup> Set)	(1937-2010)
Étude 5 <i>pour les octaves</i>	C. Debussy
Étude 7 <i>pour les degrés chromatiques</i>	(1862-1918)
Étude 11 <i>pour les arpèges composés</i>	

**-Intermission-**

Piano Sonata, no. 15, op. 28, "Pastoral"	L. v. Beethoven
<i>Allegro</i>	(1770-1827)
<i>Andante</i>	
<i>Scherzo: Allegro vivace</i>	
<i>Rondo: Allegro, ma non troppo</i>	

**Appendix 3.2: Performance Event Program Two; featured three pieces by Southam.**

Saturday May 4, 2019

2 p.m., von Kuster Hall

Amelia Grace Yates, *piano*

Keyboard Sonata in D Major, Hob. XVI: 19

*Moderato*

*Andante*

*Allegro Assai*

Joseph Haydn

(1732-1809)

Four Bagatelles (1962)

*Allegro*

*Very Slowly*

*Allegretto – scherzando*

*Allegro con moto*

Spatial View of Pond I (1983, revised 2006)

*piano solo after a painting by Aiko Suzuki*

Glass Houses no. 5 (1981, revised 2009)

Ann Southam

(1937-2010)

Prelude in D Minor, op. 23, no. 3

Prelude in B Major, op. 32, no. 11

Prelude in E Major, op. 32, no. 3

Sergei Rachmaninoff

(1873-1943)

**Appendix 3.3: Performance Event Program Three; a complete recital of Southam's music.**

Friday October 9, 2020

4 p.m., von Kuster Hall

Amelia Grace Yates, *piano*

Strangeness, Nocturne and Fandango (ca. 1960s)

*Adagio Espressivo*  
*Andante Tranquillo*  
*Allegro*

Ann Southam  
(1937-2010)

Returnings I (2010)

Qualities of Consonance (1998)

Rivers IX, 3<sup>rd</sup> Set (1981, revised 2004)

3 In Blue, Jazz Preludes (1965)

*Allegretto*  
*Andantino*  
*Allegro ma non troppo, Tempo giusto*

**Appendix 3.4: Performance Event Program Four; a lecture recital on Southam's minimalist music for solo piano.**

Thursday April 15, 2021

4 p.m., von Kuster Hall

Amelia Grace Yates, *piano*

Rivers III, 3<sup>rd</sup> Set (1981, revised in 2004)

Ann Southam  
(1937-2010)

Pond Life: Simple Forms of Inquiry (2008)  
First Movement *Quietly Expressive*

Rivers IV, 2<sup>nd</sup> Set (1979, revised 2005)

Returnings II: A Meditation (2010)

Glass Houses No. 3 (1981, revised in 2009)

## Curriculum Vitae

Amelia Grace Yates

### Education

Doctor of Musical Arts: Solo Piano Performance <i>The University of Western Ontario</i>	2016-2021
Master of Music: Literature and Performance <i>The University of Western Ontario</i>	2014-2016
Bachelor of Music: Honours Music Education with Distinction <i>The University of Western Ontario</i>	2009-2013
Associate Diploma in Piano Performance (ARCT) <i>The Royal Conservatory of Music</i>	2013

### Honours and Awards

Doctoral Research Travel Fund Recipient	2019
Ontario Graduate Scholarship	2015
Dr. Sherwood Fox Fellowship Award	2014
W. H. Munn Memorial Scholarship	2012
Wesanne McKellar Award	2012

### Related Work Experience

Piano Instructor <i>AGYPiano Studio</i>	2013-Present
College of Examiners Member <i>The Royal Conservatory of Music</i>	2021-Present
Adjudicator <i>ORMTA London Online Festival (2020)</i> <i>Lakehead Festival of Music and the Arts (2019)</i>	2019-Present
General Integrated Musicianship Teaching Assistant	2015-2019
Graduate Performance Research III Teaching Assistant	2018



Vocal Methods Teaching Assistant 2017-2018

Choir Pianist 2014-2017

### **Service Activities**

Hamilton Music Festival 2021-Present  
*Board Member*

Ontario Registered Music Teachers Association 2016-Present  
*Hamilton/Halton Branch Vice President*

### **Selected Performances**

DMA Performance Event: Lecture Recital April 15, 2021

DMA Performance Event: Solo Recital October 9, 2020

DMA Performance Event: Solo Recital May 4, 2019

DMA Performance Event: Solo Recital May 26, 2018

Contemporary Music Studio Recital April 8, 2018

Contemporary Music Studio Recital December 4, 2017

Chamber Music Recital March 10, 2017