

## MUSE Proposal

Name:

Title: Assistant Professor

Department: Music

Email:

Number of years at TCNJ: 2.5 (August 2018 – present)

Tenure status: Pre-tenure

Date of most recent MUSE award: n/a

Student collaborator:

Email address:

Project Title: Reorchestrating George Antheil's *A Jazz Symphony*

IRB/IACUC approval: not required

Requested Dollar Amount: \$4598

## Project and Learning Plan:

### I. Intellectual Merit

This is a proposal to create a chamber-winds arrangement of George Antheil's (1900-55) [\*A Jazz Symphony\*](#) (1925). This project has particular relevance to the local TCNJ community as George Antheil was born and raised in Trenton, NJ. The piece was originally scored for a large ensemble consisting of 2 oboes, 2 clarinets, 3 saxophones, 3 trumpets, 3 trombones, tuba, xylophone, glockenspiel, whistle, drum-set, 2 banjos, guitar, solo piano, 2 ensemble pianos, and a full string section (violin, viola, cello, and double bass). The eclectic instrumentation, particularly the inclusion of three pianos, two banjos, a full string section, and saxophone trio, places the work outside of the typical instrumentation associated with the symphonic orchestra or the wind band. While the instrumentation of the original orchestration contributes to the composition's unique timbre and color pallet, it also has positioned the work as an outlier in regular concert programming. To that end, this project, through a re-scoring the work for a chamber-winds instrumentation, seeks to increase access to and awareness of *A Jazz Symphony*, George Antheil the composer, and his musical roots in the Trenton community. One of the first steps of this project will be to study and understand the unique timbres created by Antheil's original orchestration and to identify a more accessible and smaller-sized chamber-winds instrumentation that captures the nuances of the original score. The main work of this project will be dedicated to the reorchestration of the original score for a chamber winds instrumentation, using *Sibelius* music notation software. This will include studying each individual part of the original version, understanding its role and relation to the larger composition, and reorchestrating it to fit the new instrumentation. The final part of the project will focus on music engraving and part editing, with the final product of this 8-week project, being a performance-ready score and set of parts of the chamber-winds version of *A Jazz Symphony*.

It is important to note that the chamber winds instrumentation is also particularly relevant as the music profession adapts and evolves in response to the current COVID-19 pandemic. The pandemic has greatly limited the opportunity for any large-ensemble (e.g. orchestra and concert band) rehearsals and performances, resulting in the need for new and relevant chamber winds repertoire. The pandemic has also accelerated trends in the wind band profession, with university band programs favoring a more malleable and flexible approach to instrumentation.

The potential outcomes of this project are multiple, with implications both locally and for the entire music profession. Upon completion of the arrangement, I intend to program the work for TCNJ's Wind Ensemble—this would include at least one on-campus performance, tentatively during the 2021-22 academic year, the opportunity for a pre-concert discussion featuring the student collaborator and faculty from other departments across campus, and the potential for professional recording the work. The completed score will be submitted for publication, making the version available for performances by other university band programs and professional music ensembles at the regional, national, and international level. There is also the potential to pair the new arrangement with more robust research surrounding George Antheil's, life, compositions, and musical roots in Trenton—providing pedagogical resources to musicians studying the work.

Note: As part of the planning of this project, I have secured the rights to create the arrangement of the work from G. Schirmer Inc., on behalf of Weintraub Music.

## II. Role of Student and Mentor

I have recruited \_\_\_\_\_, a junior Bachelor of the Arts in Music and Marketing Minor at TCNJ, to work on this project. In working with \_\_\_\_\_ since his freshman year, his interest and experience in music arranging, orchestration, and engraving made him an ideal student collaborator for this project. As a mentor, I will work with \_\_\_\_\_ on a number of topics, including an aural analysis of the original score and Antheil's broader compositional output in order to understand timbral implications of the work's instrumentation. We will work together to determine the chamber-winds instrumentation, and each contribute to the re-orchestration, editing, and engraving of the new musical score. The eight-week project will include:

***Week 1: Understanding Antheil the composer and chamber winds instrumentation.*** We will begin with listening, analysis, and score study of the original work. We will also identify and listen to additional representative works to develop an understanding of Antheil's compositional style.

***Week 2: Chamber winds and setting the stage.*** We will engage in a survey and aural analysis of various chamber winds repertoire. Through daily guided listening, discussion, and reflection, \_\_\_\_\_ will expand his understanding of the timbral possibilities of various chamber winds instrumentations. This, combined with the study of Antheil's music during week 1, will lead us to collaboratively determine the instrumentation we will use for the chamber winds arrangement of *A Jazz Symphony*. With the instrumentation set, we will craft a process, timeline, shared working score, and expectations for the re-orchestration of the composition.

***Weeks 3-6: Re-Orchestration.*** This period will be dedicated to creating the re-orchestration of the musical composition. A schedule will be developed that will include regular check-in meetings to discuss progress and questions. Both \_\_\_\_\_ and I will contribute to the re-orchestration process, meeting each day to share our progress and integrate our work. Significant mentorship will be dedicated to wind-instrument and percussion orchestration choices within the score.

***Weeks 7-8 Engraving and the final bar.*** The project will also focus on music engraving: editing the new score and parts to create professional-quality sheet music. We will analyze parts from the player perspective to ensure idiomatic writing and usability in a rehearsal setting.

## III. Broader Impacts

This is my first application to the MUSE program at TCNJ. As a pre-tenure assistant professor in the Department of Music, I am eager to collaborate and mentor TCNJ students through the MUSE program. As \_\_\_\_\_ at TCNJ, my primary means of scholarly-creative work is that of artistic-expression, through my role as a conductor. Given the adverse impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on the field of live-music performance and ensemble conducting (I conducted no rehearsals or performances from March 12, 2020 to February 8, 2021), this project will enable me to invest in other areas of my scholarly-creative agenda, specifically the arranging and transcribing of works for wind band and chamber winds. I am also eager to represent TCNJ's Department of Music in the MUSE program as it appears there have only been three projects (all by the same faculty member) associated with the Department in the last ten years.

In working with \_\_\_\_\_ in a variety of settings since his freshman year, I have always been impressed by his intellectual curiosity, enthusiasm for music arranging and engraving, and passion for all that he does. As a student who is marginalized in the field of music and underrepresented at TCNJ, I am eager to create opportunities for him that support his academic development, nurture his artistry, and advance his professional goals.

## **Appendix II: Budget**

Student Stipend (1): \$3000  
Student housing: \$0  
Faculty Stipend (1): \$1250  
Project Expenses: \$348

**Total Request: \$4598**

Project Expenses Detail:

### **Sibelius Subscriptions**

\$198 of the project expenses is dedicated to the purchase of two, one-year education licenses of Avid's Sibelius music notation software. This is the software that \_\_\_\_\_ and I will use to create the new arrangement of the composition.

### **Score and Part Printing/Binding**

\$150 of the project expenses is dedicated to the professional printing and binding of the score and parts of the new arrangement. These are the score and parts that will be used in the tentative performance by TCNJ Wind Ensemble.