

# Cambridge Elements

Elements in Creativity and Imagination

edited by

Anna Abraham

*University of Georgia, USA*

## VISIONS AND DECISIONS

*Imagination and Technique in Music  
Composition*

Bruce Adolphe



CAMBRIDGE  
UNIVERSITY PRESS

Cambridge University Press & Assessment  
978-1-009-35050-1 — Visions and Decisions  
Bruce Adolphe  
Frontmatter  
[More Information](#)



Shaftesbury Road, Cambridge CB2 8EA, United Kingdom  
One Liberty Plaza, 20th Floor, New York, NY 10006, USA  
477 Williamstown Road, Port Melbourne, VIC 3207, Australia  
314–321, 3rd Floor, Plot 3, Splendor Forum, Jasola District Centre,  
New Delhi – 110025, India  
103 Penang Road, #05–06/07, Visioncrest Commercial, Singapore 238467

Cambridge University Press is part of Cambridge University Press & Assessment,  
a department of the University of Cambridge.

We share the University's mission to contribute to society through the pursuit of  
education, learning and research at the highest international levels of excellence.

[www.cambridge.org](http://www.cambridge.org)  
Information on this title: [www.cambridge.org/9781009350501](http://www.cambridge.org/9781009350501)

DOI: 10.1017/9781009350518

© Bruce Adolphe 2023

This publication is in copyright. Subject to statutory exception and to the provisions  
of relevant collective licensing agreements, no reproduction of any part may take  
place without the written permission of Cambridge University Press & Assessment.

First published 2023

*A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library.*

ISBN 978-1-009-35050-1 Paperback  
ISSN 2752-3950 (online)  
ISSN 2752-3942 (print)

Additional resources for this publication at [www.cambridge.org/adolphe](http://www.cambridge.org/adolphe).

Cambridge University Press & Assessment has no responsibility for the persistence  
or accuracy of URLs for external or third-party internet websites referred to in this  
publication and does not guarantee that any content on such websites is, or will  
remain, accurate or appropriate.

## Visions and Decisions

### Imagination and Technique in Music Composition

Elements in Creativity and Imagination

DOI: 10.1017/9781009350518  
First published online: January 2023

Bruce Adolphe

**Author for correspondence:** Bruce Adolphe, [bruce.adolphe@gmail.com](mailto:bruce.adolphe@gmail.com)

**Abstract:** This Element investigates the balance and interaction of imagination (visions) and technique (decisions) in the composition of music and includes current scientific research on dreams, the hypnagogic state, emotions, and feelings. It also includes thoughts of composers past and present and examines how works start from visions in a range of music, comparing musical ideas and techniques to models in other creative disciplines. The Element elucidates aspects of musical discourse by imagining how Haydn, Mozart, and other composers would order falafel for takeout. This unorthodox approach emphasizes parallels between music and theater that are central to this Element.

**Keywords:** composing, imagination, improvisation, hypnagogic, creativity

© Bruce Adolphe 2023

ISBNs: 9781009350501 (PB), 9781009350518 (OC)  
ISSNs: 2752-3950 (online), 2752-3942 (print)

## Contents

1 A Roundtrip Ticket to Hypnagogia	1
2 The Big Vision: <i>A Whole Work</i>	31
3 Music about Music	36
4 A Personal Voice	39
5 Press Any Key to Start	44
6 MacGuffins and Falafel Platters: <i>Subject and Syntax</i>	48
7 Gardens, Wilderness, and Dreamscapes	61
8 Heart and Mind Work Together, Always	63
9 Coda	65
References	69

Further online supplementary material can be accessed  
at [www.cambridge.org/adolphe](http://www.cambridge.org/adolphe)