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THE EVOLUTION OF THE BARITONE SAXOPHONE CONCERTO

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## ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

### **The Evolution of the Baritone Saxophone Concerto**

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Dr. Steven Kemper

Since the invention of the saxophone in 1840, there have been relatively few compositions written specifically for the baritone saxophone. Even less common are baritone concertos, defined as large ensemble works that feature a baritone soloist. Since the 1950s, however, there has been a substantial increase in this repertoire. This has been facilitated by virtuosic artists in the jazz idiom, who developed new performance techniques and commissioned many new works. The creation of large ensemble compositions featuring baritone began in the 1950s through the collaboration of Harry Carney and Duke Ellington. This trend continued with baritonist Gerry Mulligan commissioning several works, and then creating a concerto himself. Following the use of the baritone as a solo instrument in jazz, classical composers inspired by jazz predecessors began creating works for baritone and large ensemble in the 1980s. Jazz composers have also been influenced by classical music, as evidenced by the application of concerto forms and practices beginning in the 1970s. The increase in virtuosity, timbral effects, and instrumental range has aided the exploration of these baritone compositions. This dissertation explores the history and development of the baritone saxophone and how the confluence of jazz and classical music have led to the increased

development of baritone concerto repertoire. I have analyzed nine important works for baritone saxophone and large ensemble, as well as composing and analyzing my own twenty-two-minute concerto for baritone, chamber orchestra, and drum set titled the *Jeru Concerto*.

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I dedicate this dissertation to my two children, Ruby and Jeru. I love them endlessly and am so very grateful to have their joy, happiness, and love in my life. They have endured many years of me practicing, composing, and researching music.

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## Introduction

Since the invention of the saxophone in 1840 there have been relatively few compositions written specifically for the baritone saxophone. Even more uncommon are large ensemble works featuring a baritone soloist. Jazz composers were first to feature the instrument in this context, followed by classical composers who have since deeply explored the available extended techniques. Beginning in the 1950's, and especially from the 1980s onward, there has been a large increase in baritone saxophone literature. Baritone saxophonists Harry Carney and Gerry Mulligan pioneered the use of the instrument as a featured soloist in a large ensemble context.

Saxophone is one of the most recently developed instruments to be widely adopted. Although used extensively in many genres, its use as a solo instrument has primarily been confined to jazz and popular music. By far, the most common saxophone utilized in classical music has been the alto saxophone. Although occasionally featured as soloist in small ensembles, such as Jean-Baptiste Singelée's Op. 53 for baritone saxophone and piano (1857), works featuring baritone soloist with large ensemble did not exist until the mid 20th century. These early pieces came from the world of jazz, and the earliest examples of the baritone used in a "classical" concerto didn't occur until the 1980s.

The first instance of baritone being featured as soloist with a large ensemble is the 1954 recording *Harry Carney with Strings*. This album features eight songs with chamber orchestra instrumentation. The use of baritone as featured instrument stems from the collaboration between the composers Duke Ellington and Billy Strayhorn with baritone



soloist (and longest member of the Duke Ellington Orchestra) Harry Carney. The Duke Ellington arrangement of the composition “Sophisticated Lady” in 1957 was next to introduce the baritone saxophone as lead instrument. Another composition from 1964, “Agra” by Billy Strayhorn, featured Carney as a soloist leading the ensemble. Both compositions include orchestration that allows the baritone to be heard clearly over the ensemble.

Gerry Mulligan became a popular baritone saxophonist from the late 1950s onward. He initially worked as a soloist in small group settings (notably two horns plus acoustic bass, and drums), but later went on to work with several big bands. Mulligan’s Concert Jazz Band, led by trombonist and composer/arranger Bob Brookmeyer from 1960-64, was one of the first large ensembles to feature baritone as a lead melodic instrument and soloist. This group recorded four albums with music arranged by some of the leading jazz composers and arrangers of the 1960s.

Mulligan himself was an innovator in the use of baritone saxophone in several ways, such as soloing in the higher range of the instrument, commonly performing in ensembles without a chordal instrument such as guitar or piano, and performing in ensembles without a tenor or alto saxophone present. His lyrical tone ran contrary to many of the baritone saxophonists before him who displayed a barking and percussive approach. Mulligan’s lyrical tone led him to be featured as soloist in several historically-important ensembles, including those by Miles Davis, Chet Baker, Stan Getz, Bob Brookmeyer, Gil Evans, Thad Jones, Mel Lewis, & Stan Kenton.

Mulligan commissioned composer Frank Proto to compose a concerto for him in 1973, *Concerto for Saxophone*, which was premiered by the Cincinnati Orchestra. This

important composition marks the first time the baritone was featured as a solo instrument in a concerto with a classical orchestra. In 1984 Gerry Mulligan composed *Entente* for baritone saxophone with symphony orchestra in a somewhat altered version of a classical concerto. Although this large-scale work doesn't include movements in the traditional sense, it produces the impression of different movements by applying varying tempos, key centers, meters, and three distinct melodies.

Several additional pieces for baritone and symphony orchestra have been composed since *Entente*. For example, Mark Watters composed *Rhapsody for Baritone Saxophone and Orchestra* in 1985. This piece is approximately fifteen minutes in duration and was originally scored for symphony orchestra, although the concert band version has been performed more frequently. American jazz composer Bob Brookmeyer created a thirty-minute, four-movement concerto for Mulligan in 1995. The composition titled *Celebration Suite* was orchestrated for traditional jazz big band, with the addition of synthesizer and auxiliary percussion. Brookmeyer had a long history with Mulligan, including being his band-leader of the critically-acclaimed Concert Jazz Band which featured compositions and arrangements by many leading artists of the 1960s. *Celebration Suite* includes a multitude of improvisational moments for the soloist to insert their individuality.

In 2008 Austrian composer Georg Friedrich Hass composed *Konzert for Baritone Saxophone and Orchestra*. This contemporary classical composition utilizes a vast array of colors and textures available to the baritone through extended techniques developed by avant-garde jazz musicians. Multiphonics, overtones, and circular breathing are utilized extensively. This twenty-five minute composition displays how the baritone saxophone

soloist has become an accepted instrument in contemporary classical tradition.

Several other recent compositions since 2008 feature baritone saxophone, including Satoshi Yagisawa's 2015 composition *Vongole!* for solo Eb baritone saxophone and concert band, *Tres Piezas* by Argentinian composer Fernando Lerman for baritone saxophone and string orchestra (2015), Sixto Herrero's *TAS Concerto for Baritone Saxophone and Percussion* (2016), and Albena Petrovic's *Concerto for Baritone Saxophone, Piano and String Orchestra* (2018). Of these compositions, the only two to be performed is Satoshi Yagisawa's and Albena Petrovic's.

With the intention of adding to the lineage of baritone concerto repertoire, I composed the *Jeru Concerto* for baritone saxophone and chamber orchestra. I used classical chamber orchestra instrumentation with the addition of drum set. This composition was completed in 2017 and is approximately twenty-two minutes in length.

To aid in the discussion, I have interviewed some prevalent baritone saxophonists in both the jazz and classical genres for the perspective of active performers who include: jazz saxophonists Claire Daly, Roger Rosenberg, and Frank Basile, and classical baritonists Henk Van Twillert and Joan Martí-Frasquier (for a full transcript of these interviews, see Appendix A).

This dissertation explores the development of the baritone saxophone, low instrument concertos, and more recent examples of baritone concertos in order to provide context for contemporary baritone solo practice. In Chapter 2, I describe the history and development of saxophone, and the mechanical progress of the instrument. I also examine the saxophone's increased acceptance as a viable instrument in the jazz and classical realms, the increase in saxophone, and specifically baritone literature,

heightened virtuosity on baritone, and the increase of baritone manufacturing because of the increased demand.

Chapter 3 highlights the role baritone saxophone has played as a solo instrument in various genres of music. In this chapter I discuss the tradition of concerto, the history of low instrument concertos, the history of saxophone concertos, the history of compositions featuring baritone saxophone and various ensembles, and the development of virtuosity of baritone soloists.

Chapter 4 consists of analysis of nine important works featuring baritone saxophone soloist. I have analyzed each of the compositions listed in table 1.1 for orchestration, harmony, rhythm, texture, and historical context. More specifically, I have explored how the accompaniment of the composition hinders or shines a light on the baritone melody, how improvisation is implemented, how each piece compares to the classical idea of a concerto, how the instrument may be used in an unusual way, how the piece relates to other saxophone concertos, the relation between jazz and classical composition, and how jazz and classical music have influenced one another.

**Table 1.1: Compositions Analyzed**

Composer	Arranger	Title	Orchestration	Year
Harry Carney	Gerald Wilson	“We’re In Love Again”	Small Jazz Ensemble & Strings	1954
Duke Ellington, Irving Mills, Mitchel Parish	Duke Ellington	“Sophisticated Lady”	Bigband – Jazz Orchestra	1956
Billy Strayhorn	Billy Strayhorn	“Agra”	Bigband – Jazz Orchestra	1964
Frank Proto	Frank Proto	<i>Concerto for Saxophone</i>	Symphony Orchestra	1973
Gerry Mulligan	Gerry Mulligan	<i>Entente</i>	Symphony Orchestra	1984
Mark Watters	Mark Watters	<i>Rhapsody for Baritone Saxophone</i>	Symphony Orchestra	1985
Bob Brookmeyer	Bob Brookmeyer	<i>Celebration Suite</i>	Bigband – Jazz Orchestra	2001
George Haas	George Haas	<i>Konzert</i>	Symphony Orchestra	2008
Brian Landrus	Brian Landrus	<i>Jeru Concerto</i>	Chamber Orchestra, Drum Set	2017

Chapter 5 details my own baritone saxophone concerto, the *Jeru Concerto* (2017). I discuss the techniques and strategies implemented to create the composition. This includes the initial improvisational and compositional process, transcription process, melodic harmonization, orchestration process, and overall structure of the composition.

## Chapter 2

### Development of the Saxophone

The saxophone is a relatively new instrument in the woodwind family. It was invented in 1846 by Adolphe Sax (1814-1894), who was a Belgian flautist, clarinetist, and instrument maker. Before the invention of the saxophone, Sax had radically redesigned the bass clarinet which increased its low range and ergonomic keywork, and also invented the ophicleide which is a conical-bore low brass instrument with a keywork mechanism similar to that of a woodwind instrument (McBride 1982, 115).

The saxophone was created with the goal of making a woodwind instrument powerful enough to compete with brass instruments in orchestras and bands of the time while still maintaining the timbral characteristics of woodwinds. To that end, the body of the saxophone is brass, but it possesses a conical bore and uses a single reed similar to the clarinet. Adolphe had created several sizes of the saxophone by 1840, but the patent for all fourteen models wasn't approved until 1846. The newly-developed saxophones ranged from sopranino all the way to contrabass. Interestingly, the first saxophone created was the bass saxophone in the key of C (McBride 1982, 113). Ultimately the most successful models were those in the keys of Bb and Eb, as these were found to be the most sonically pleasing to Sax, and his fellow composers (Pinksterboer 2007, 145). Sax also created models in F, as well as the C instrument mentioned above, but these were less common and haven't been manufactured since the late nineteenth century.

The range of the saxophone is officially two and a half octaves, and the instruments are all keyed identically for nearly two octaves, from the low D to the high

C#. Switching octaves is facilitated by the use of the octave key. The clarinet possesses a similar key which is called the register key. The difference is that the clarinet's register key raises the pitch by a twelfth instead of an octave. The mechanical layout of the saxophone has remained close to the original design, although important keywork modifications were invented by Selmer Paris saxophones in the 1930s with their "Balanced Action" line of saxophones.

Sax originally invented the saxophone for use as an orchestral instrument, but it wasn't initially adopted by classical composers. Rather, it became used by French and Belgian military bands. The four instruments most commonly used in these bands were the Bb soprano saxophone, Eb alto saxophone, Bb tenor saxophone, and Eb baritone saxophone, with the soprano/tenor and alto/baritone an octave apart (DeVillers 2014, 21). One reason for the adoption of these specific instruments is that they were the easiest of the saxophones to march with for parades and military events.

### **Development of Saxophone Performance Practice**

The mechanical improvements made to the saxophone since its original development have led to increasingly virtuosic performances through the twentieth century. The original saxophone was a very fine instrument, yet it had some mechanical problems which prevented it from being as agile as other woodwind instruments such as the flute or clarinet. The large size of baritone saxophone made the mechanical problems more extreme, which is likely one reason the instrument wasn't utilized as a solo instrument. For example, the cumbersome double octave key which was on the original design of the saxophone and not re-engineered until the very late 19<sup>th</sup> century. The tone

hole placement was executed by calculus and the ergonomics were designed around this system (Reeves 2009).

The lack of rollers between adjacent keys meant that performers struggled to maneuver between some notes on the instrument. This was particularly true for the lowest three notes of the instrument which were activated by the left pinky finger. The lowest standard note on the saxophone was a low B until the bell was lengthened and the lowest note became Bb, standardization of which began in 1881. After Sax's temporary patent on the saxophone expired in 1866 he began to add rollers between the keys after seeing other competitors' versions of his instrument (De Villiers 2014, 23).

The problematic double octave key in Sax's original design was redesigned by several competitors. The single octave mechanism was developed in 1888 by Lecomte, and rollers were added to the right-hand keys of Eb and C. The tone holes on several models of the saxophone were too small as to let the instrument perform at loud volumes. Manufacturers continued to experiment with alterations for the next 20 years (Howe 2003, 117).

Sax was keenly aware of the problems with his design, which also included issues with intonation because of the conical bore and tone hole placement. The placement of the tone holes and keywork have been continuously modified until today, but by the 1920's a very in-tune and ergonomic instrument had been manufactured by Selmer Paris (the company which bought Sax's company) and also Conn in the United States. Both of the companies had drastically different bore dimensions, key placement, and octave mechanisms. To this day most modern saxophones are built on either the principles of Conn, or Selmer.



Although Sax had intended for the saxophone to be primarily used in the low range, as evidenced by the fact that his first model was a bass instrument, as time passed the alto and tenor saxophones had become the favorite instrument for the soloist. Upon hearing the instrument in the early years after being invented, composers enjoyed the tone and understood that technical mastery was needed for proper expression. For example, in 1851 Berlioz wrote:

The [alto saxophone] possesses incomparable and expressive qualities; the trueness and beauty of a sound which can only be produced when one really masters the technique are such that it can, in slow pieces, challenge the finest singers. (Hemke 1975, 345)

In 1853 Liszt wrote:

Sax produced for our benefit the next day, his large family of saxophones, saxhorns, saxotubas, etc. Several of these (especially the alto and tenor saxophones) will be exceedingly useful, even in our regular orchestras and the ensemble has a really magnificent effect. (Hemke 1975, 296)

The saxophone's use in classical music was facilitated in part by Sax commissioning composers to write new music for the instrument, most notably, composer Jean-Baptiste Singelée. Saxophone quartets, which incorporated the same four instruments used in the military bands (SATB), represented some of the most popular music composed for saxophones. Four Parisian composers were important for the creation on saxophone repertoire in the late 19th century: Joseph Arban (1825-1889), Jules Demersseman (1833-1866), Hyacinthe Klosé (1808-1880), and Jean-Baptiste Singelée (1812-1876). Each of these composers created solo pieces and/or small ensemble works featuring the saxophone.

In addition to these commissions, much of the early repertoire for the saxophone came in the form of transcriptions of existing classical pieces. For the premiere of a saxophone-focused concert in 1842, Berlioz arranged a hymn for two trumpets, one

trombone, two clarinets, and tenor saxophone played by Sax himself. The other pieces on the concert were arrangements and transcriptions of well-known compositions designed to attract other composers to create new works for this new instrument. To this day, much of the most commonly performed repertoire for the saxophone continues to be that of transcriptions (Etheridge 2008, 7).

By the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, the saxophone had become slightly more common in classical music, often featuring as a solo instrument. Some of the compositions featuring saxophone as soloist are: *Rhapsody for orchestra and saxophone* (1901) by Claude Debussy, *Concerto in Eb major for alto saxophone and orchestra* (1934) by Alexander Glazunov, *Sonata for alto saxophone and piano, Op. 19* (1939) by Paul Creston, *Sonata for alto saxophone and piano* (1943) by Paul Hindemith, and *Fantasia for saxophone, three horns, and strings* (1948) by Heitor Villa Lobos.

Classical composers also envisioned the saxophone as an accompanying instrument and began using it for this role, which occasionally included short solo passages. As Table 2.1 demonstrates, the popularity of saxophone has steadily increased in the classical world throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century. These represent only a small list of the repertoire for saxophone and there are many more compositions utilizing saxophone since the 1950s.

**Table 2.1: Selected Repertoire for Classical Saxophone from the late-nineteenth through mid-twentieth centuries**

Composer	Title	Year
Georges Bizet	<i>L'Arlésienne</i>	1872
Richard Strauss	<i>Symphonia Domestica</i>	1904
Béla Bartók	<i>The Wooden Prince</i>	1917

M. Mussorgsky & M. Ravel	<i>Pictures at an Exhibition</i>	1922
Darius Milhaud	<i>La création du monde</i>	1923
Charles Ives	<i>Symphony No. 4</i>	1924
George Gershwin	<i>Rhapsody in Blue</i>	1924
Giacomo Puccini	<i>Turandot</i>	1926
Maurice Ravel	<i>Boléro</i>	1928
Aaron Copland	<i>Symphony No. 1</i>	1928
Dmitri Shostakovich	<i>The Golden Age</i>	1930
Alban Berg	<i>Lulu</i>	1937
Sergei Prokofiev	<i>Romeo and Juliet</i>	1938
Sergio Rachmaninoff	<i>Symphonic Dances</i>	1940
Benjamin Britten	<i>Billy Bud</i>	1951

There are several important artists who helped popularize solo saxophone in classical music. Three important figures are German born Sigurd Rascher, French artist Marcel Mule, and American Larry Teal. Two distinct styles of classical performance emerged in the twentieth century: the French school, and American school.

### **Sigurd Rascher**

Sigurd Rascher is one of the most influential saxophonists in history. Rascher (1907-2001) was born in Germany, where he learned to play the clarinet and piano before moving to saxophone in his late teens. He began to play the saxophone in order to perform in dance bands, although he became unhappy with the music and began working on classical transcriptions. By 1930 Rascher was performing with the Berlin Philharmonic when they required a saxophone. Rascher is regarded as being one of the

most important artists to develop new repertoire for the instrument. He began commissioning composers to increase the saxophone repertoire, premiering most of these new compositions himself. When Rascher arrived in the United States, he became the first featured saxophone soloist to perform with both the New York Philharmonic and the Boston Symphony Orchestra. He continued to tour the world performing as a soloist until his retirement at age seventy in 1977. Table 2.2 provides a partial list of compositions dedicated to Rascher and premiered by him, demonstrating that he had a great influence on the creation of solo saxophone works:

**Table 2.2: Partial list of compositions dedicated to/premiered by Sigurd Rascher**

Composer	Title	Year
Edmund von Borck	<i>Konzert für Alt-Saxophon und Orchester, Op. 6</i>	1932
Paul Hindemith	<i>Konzertstück für Zwei Altsaxophone</i>	1933
Alexander Glazunov	<i>Concerto pour Saxophone Alto avec l'Orchestre de Cordes in Eb Major, op.109</i>	1934
Lars Erik Larsson	<i>Konsert för Saxophon och Stråkorkester,</i>	1934
Jacques Ibert	<i>Concertino da camera pour saxophone alto et onze instruments</i>	1935
Slavko Osterc	<i>Sonata for Alto Saxophone and Piano</i>	1935
Eric Coates	<i>Saxo-Rhapsody</i>	1936
Frank Martin	<i>Ballade for Alto Saxophone, String Orchestra, Piano and Tympani</i>	1938
Darius Milhaud	<i>Scaramouche, Suite for Alto Saxophone and orchestra, Op. 165c</i>	1939
Viktor Ullmann	<i>Slavische Rhapsodie für Orchester und Saxophon</i>	1940
Henry Brant	<i>Concerto for Alto Saxophone and Orchestra</i>	1941
Ingolf Dahl	<i>Concerto for Alto Saxophone and Wind Ensemble</i>	1949
Werner Wolf Glaser	<i>Allegro, Cadenza e Adagio for Alto Saxophone and Piano</i>	1950

Maurice Whitney	<i>Introduction and Samba for Alto Saxophone and Band (Orchestra or Piano)</i>	1951
Alan Hovhannes	<i>World Under the Sea for Alto Saxophone, Harp, Tympani, Vibraphone and Gong</i>	1954
William Grant Still	<i>Romance for Alto Saxophone and Orchestra</i>	1954
Warren Benson	<i>Concertino for Alto Saxophone and Wind Ensemble (or Orchestra, or Piano)</i>	1955
Erland von Koch	<i>Concerto for Alto Saxophone and Orchestra</i>	1959
Karel Husa	<i>Elegie et Rondeau for Alto Saxophone and Piano</i>	1960
Henry Cowell	<i>Air and Scherzo for Alto Saxophone and Small Orchestra (or Piano)</i>	1961
Henry Cowell	<i>Air and Scherzo for Alto Saxophone and Small Orchestra (or Piano)</i>	1961
Alois Hába	<i>Suita pro Saxofon-Solo, Op.99</i>	1968
Walter Hartley	<i>Octet for Saxophones</i>	1975

Rascher was also an important educator and published several books that are considered a required part of any saxophonist's education. His most important book, *Top-Tones for the Saxophone*, was published in 1941 (Rascher, 1973). When this book was published, Rascher was the only performer with usable technique into the altissimo range (Chin 2017, 7). *Top-Tones for the Saxophone* describes in depth how a saxophonist can learn to control the instrument into the fourth octave. This is achieved through a series of overtone exercises based on overblowing the lowest five notes of the saxophone, enabling performers to become comfortable with the changes in the oral cavity needed to perform altissimo. His overtone exercises were demonstrated by though performances on a custom-built saxophone without keys. Rascher encouraged composers to write into the altissimo range to further push the capabilities of the instrument and performer.

The Rascher Saxophone Quartet was started in 1969. Composers who have

written for the ensemble include Phillip Glass, Iannis Xenakis, Luciano Berio, Sofia Gubaidulina, and many more. The Rascher Saxophone Quartet was one of the first saxophone ensembles to tour internationally, and Sigurd Rascher was a member of the ensemble until 1981.

### **Marcel Mule**

Developer of the French performance style, Marcel Mule was born in 1901 in Normandy, France. By the age of 16 he was performing professionally in military bands and also jazz-influenced dance bands (Miracle 2015, 4). He was classically trained but also embraced styles popularized in the jazz ensembles. While performing in the *Opéra Comique* he decided to try a new vibrato technique only used in jazz until then:

I agreed to play this style of vibrato, although I played it with more restraint than I did in the jazz bands. To my great surprise, it was a huge success among the members of the orchestra. In particular, there was a horn player from the Guard sitting next to me who said, 'You should play like that in the Guard.' And that is what I did from that day forward, but always with great caution, sometimes using the vibrato only on one note from time to time while observing the reactions of my colleagues. As their reactions were favorable, I became bolder until, relating the vibrato to the needs of the symphony orchestra, I arrived at a sort of compromise between the complete freedom of jazz and the rigidity of my previous approach (Rousseau 1982, 15).

Marcel Mule played an important role in popularizing the saxophone quartet. He began transcribing popular string quartets into SATB (soprano, alto, tenor and baritone) arrangements. Mule was responsible for many newly-composed saxophone quartets (Miracle 2015, 4), and he also premiered the first saxophone concerto composed by Pierre Vellones in 1935. In 1958, Marcel Mule began a concerto concert tour of the United States with the Boston Symphony which helped raise him to international recognition. Mule was appointed professor of saxophone in 1942 at the National

Conservatory of Music in Paris where he taught for twenty-six years. Of all his memorable students, some of the most well-known are: Eugene Rousseau, Frederick Hemke, and Guy Lacour.

### **Larry Teal**

The highly influential American saxophonist and multi-instrumentalist, Larry Teal, was born in Michigan in 1905. Teal was the son of a violinist who encouraged him to begin playing saxophone as a child. When Teal was in his early twenties he chose to drop out of dentistry school and became a full-time professional musician. While living in Detroit, Teal began playing flute and clarinet as doubles and became a strong doubler. He played in many dance bands and for silent films (Miracle 2014, 8).

Self-taught, Teal performed with many different ensembles from jazz, popular, and classical music genres. He became well known for playing both clarinet and saxophone at a virtuosic level. While performing with a radio show in 1930, Teal was invited to perform “Rhapsody in Blue” by George Gershwin on Bb clarinet. Shortly after this performance, Teal became a fixture of the Detroit Symphony Orchestra where he performed bass clarinet most commonly. Throughout his twenty-year career, Teal switched back and forth from the clarinet chair to the flute chair, and continued to play saxophone parts as needed. In 1937 Teal performed Ibert’s *Concertino da Camera* at the Detroit Museum of Art. The performance was a success and a reviewer wrote:

Teal, the saxophonist, is a man who frequently plays that instrument with the symphony when modern scoring demands it. The work is a little chamber-concerto, in two movements, and is by Ibert, who brilliantly combines modernity and scholarship and a sense of humor. It was a lofty piece of sating, which the audience heard; everything from high tones as pure as a fiddle’s, to pizzicato that seemed to be done with a valve. There was pandemonium when Teal finished (Teal, M, 2008, 101).

Cecil Betron's review of another concert where Teal performed demonstrates the disregard for saxophone as a legitimate concert instrument:

Mr. Teal is a courageous man to adopt the saxophone as a solo instrument. It has definite limitations, many of which he overcomes, but it is likely to be many musical moons before Larry Teal succeeds in storming the formidable walls before him and establishes permanently his chosen instrument within the proud circle of aristocratic music makers (Teal, M, 2008, 95).

In 1953 Teal was appointed professor of saxophone at the University of Michigan which made him the first full time saxophone professor in America (Miracle 2014, 13). Teal taught at the university for twenty years and helped to establish the first doctoral degree for saxophone in the world.

Larry Teal was very aware of the poor reputation of the saxophone in classical concert settings and he wrote as much in 1954:

It must be admitted that the saxophone as a concert instrument has lagged in its performance level...No composer or arranger is going to write an important part for an instrument if he doubts that he will get a good performance...The saxophone is one of the most difficult instruments to play well...The situation seems to be improving, thanks to the efforts of interested music educators and teachers who appreciate the sound of a good saxophonist. When this improved sound and facility become the expected thing, it is reasonable to assume that composers and arrangers will assign it a more important role. The formula for producing a good saxophonist is the same as for any other instrumentalist: a sincere student with musical talent, a knowledgeable saxophone teacher, an adequate instrument and mouthpiece reed set-up, plus lots of hard work. It is unfair to the saxophone to settle for less (Teal, M, 2008, 179).

A common problem for classical saxophonists is that there aren't enough performance opportunities to make a living as a soloist. Steve Duke describes the challenges that limit the possibilities for professional saxophonists,

The unfortunate thing in classical saxophone is that the models are not particularly mature. If you go and hear Horowitz play or you hear Heifitz play the violin, those are extremely mature models. But classical saxophone does not have people at that caliber who only play concertos. We have to teach... We don't have that on saxophone; the model is the teacher and the studio. "Do it this way. Let me show you..." There are good recordings, but there has never been a recording that becomes the standard that everyone aspires too. And yet, this



exists in jazz. If you want a sound like Coltrane, no one sounds better at doing Coltrane than Coltrane (Eriksson 2012, 35).

### **The Use of Saxophone in Popular Music**

While the saxophone was incorporated into classical music in a limited fashion as described above, it also grew extremely popular as an instrument for amateur musicians, stemming from its use in more publicly popular forms of music. This adoption by amateurs impacted the saxophone's ability to be re recognized as a legitimate instrument in the world of "serious music." Hundreds of thousands of saxophones were manufactured from the turn of the century to the 1930s which is referred to as the "Saxophone Craze" (de Villiers, 2). As an example of the prevalence of the instrument in popular forms of music during this time, American saxophonist Larry Teal states,

From 1915-1919, it was possible that a typical saxophonist might have purchased an instrument on Thursday and by Saturday that same week made 35 cents on a vaudeville stage. The requirements for securing work as a saxophonist were low because there were almost no examples of what the instrument was capable of. (Hester 1995, 57)

The use of saxophone as a novelty instrument is highlighted by Michael Segell in his book *The Devils Horn*,

Although they [Six Brown Brothers] did much to demonstrate the saxophone's humorous personality to wide audiences, they also contributed to its reputation as a lowbrow instrument, suited to imitating the braying of donkeys, laughing hyenas, a flatulent dowager, and the roar of an approaching locomotive. In a business in which a family of seals playing "My Country 'Tis of Thee" on batteries of horns was thought to be wildly hilarious, they were advancing a certain ignoble tradition (Segel 2005, 65-66).

Some performers who attempted to represent the saxophone in a more professional setting were Clay Smith, and G.E. Holmes. Both Smith and Holmes performed on vaudeville and toured the United States, but they were performing a much more serious concert by playing adaptations of popular classical works written for other

instruments (Vanderheyden 2010, 5).

Although Smith and Holmes were trying to cultivate a more serious reputation for the saxophone, they simultaneously insulted jazz as a whole (Vanderheyden 2010, 5). In the amateur musician publication *Dominant*, Smith wrote that jazz musicians are “human hangnails,” and also that “The ‘Jasser’ should be subject to the same quarantine restrictions as if he had foot and mouth disease” (Vanderheyden 2010, 69). This disdain for jazz saxophonists is possibly related to racism of the era, and the prevalence of African American jazz saxophonists.

A musician who was important to bringing serious saxophone performance to the public was saxophonist H. Benne Henton of the John Phillip Sousa band. Henton was a featured soloist in many of Sousa’s compositions and was a pioneer in the extended technique of altissimo (Segell 2005, 10). In a 1919 publication, a reviewer of the *Kohler Wisconsin Sheboygan Press* wrote:

...saxophone solo, *Nadine*, by H. Benne Henton, composed by himself, was a beauty. Although the saxophone is considered by some critics to be best suited for mere ‘jazz’ and useless for concert purposes, Mr. Henton proved that there really is a ‘tone’ in a saxophone, if played right. A violin has no sweeter sound than Mr. Henton produced on his ‘sax’ (Hester 1995, 55).

As interest in vaudeville began to diminish in the 1920s, performers started to take the saxophone more seriously as an instrument. This coincided with the development of jazz and other forms of popular music. Additionally, the advent of the radio helped introduce the saxophone to a wider audience who was able to hear the instrument featured in jazz ensembles for the first time (Vanderheyden 2010, 7). In 1923 Henton himself describes how saxophonists began to focus more on their craft and raising the level of the instrument:

...Jazz foolishness and trick saxophone playing seem to be a thing of the past. Of course there may be a few orchestras in remote places doing that sort of thing, but I have not heard a wail, or a sneeze, or any of those similar disgusting things for over a year. Within that time I have listened to nearly all of the more prominent dance and café orchestras in the east and middle west. The saxophone boys in these orchestras and those who are drawing the big money are playing just about as straight as it is possible to play and I want to tell you, are doing a mighty good job of it, too...Some of the special arrangements that are being used in these better orchestras have very beautiful and very difficult saxophone passages. Every one of the saxophones in these orchestras are spending what spare time they have, between engagements and rehearsals, in practice and study. The past year has brought about great changes in the dance orchestras and these have been of much benefit to the saxophone and to the players of the saxophone who studied their instrument. It has also marked the exit of those who could not read but who managed to get by for a time with faking. (Hester 1995, 58)

The use of saxophone as a lead instrument was popularized in jazz music beginning in the 1920's. Throughout the twentieth century, many musicians have provided important contributions to the use of the saxophone as a solo instrument. These include Coleman Hawkins (1904-1969), Lester Young (1909-1959), Charlie Parker (1920-1955), and John Coltrane (1926-1967).

Saxophone was further popularized in the 1950s through its use as a soloist instrument in early rock & roll and R&B (rhythm and blues). Artists such as Big Jay McNeely, Red Prysock, and King Curtis created new and wild timbres through their use of growling and altissimo. Their wild stage performances which included walking on the bar while playing solos created excitement for rock & roll audiences. These artists created recordings with their own ensembles and were also featured in the popular bands of Little Richard, Ray Charles, and the doo-wop bands The Coasters and The Drifters.

Although saxophone had become one of the most popular solo instruments in jazz and other popular music genres by the 1930s, it was still not commonly used in classical orchestras or taught as an instrument at universities until much later. The introduction of saxophone as an instrumental major at the university level was uncommon until the late

1960s when jazz degrees began to be offered at several schools, including The University of North Texas, The New England Conservatory, and Towson University. Classical saxophonist Ramon Ricker, who teaches at the Eastman School of Music, describes this development:

...degrees in saxophone did not exist in many schools in the United States until around the 1960's. Prior to that you would have to major in clarinet or flute and play saxophone on the side. I started on clarinet around age 10 and when I was 16 I took up the saxophone and five weeks later played my first gig. From then on I always played jazz on saxophone and classical music on clarinet, and that was typical for a lot of musicians. (Vanderheyden 2010, 7)

It is now common for universities around the world to grant both bachelor's and advanced degrees in saxophone performance. Most university programs require the student to focus on either classical or jazz saxophone. This strange divide between the two genres is seen on nearly all campuses, and includes my own experience completing a Master of Music Degree at the New England Conservatory (NEC). As is common, there was nearly no interaction between the classical studio and jazz studio. I did have some very nice conversations with Ken Radnofsky, the classical saxophone teacher at NEC, but could not formally study with him because his studio only included classical majors. It is my experience that most jazz saxophonists study classical music for technique, although most classical saxophonists do not play jazz or improvise.

### **Development of the Baritone Saxophone**

As previously mentioned, the baritone saxophone has been relegated to an accompanist role in classical music until recently. Specifically, baritone would be used to play the bass line and provide a low support role in the saxophone quartet or concert band. Francis Mayer described the typical role for the baritone in Sousa's band:

Although there is no complete score, only the fragmentary working materials, it is possible to discern that the greatest reliance is placed on the woodwind section with considerable independent bass writing achieved by using the combination of bass clarinet, tenor saxophone, and baritone saxophone both at the unison and at the octave. (Mayer 1960, 51)

The baritone has been included in the instrumentation of several orchestral works in the twentieth century, such as *Sinfonia Domestica* (1903) by Richard Strauss, *The Wooden Prince* by Béla Bartók (1917), *Symphony No. 4* by Charles Ives (1924), *Rhapsody in Blue* by George Gershwin (1924), *Gruppen* by Karlheinz Stockhausen (1957), and *Die Teufel von Loudun* by Krzysztof Penderecki (1969).

The use of the baritone as a lead instrument began soon after the invention of the saxophone, including in Jean-Baptiste Singelée's Op. 53 (1857), for baritone and piano. This is the earliest work composed for baritone and was commissioned by Sax. However, after Singelée's compositions for baritone *Solo de Concert no. 7*, Op. 93 (1863) for Baritone Saxophone and Piano, it took nearly a century before another piece was composed for the same instrumentation, Walter Hartley's *Little Suite for Baritone Saxophone and Piano* (1974).

Apart from Singelée's early compositions, the jazz community was the first to embrace baritone saxophone as a lead instrument. By the 1950's baritone saxophone had become a widely acknowledged soloist instrument in jazz. Although its primary use was in the large ensemble, several soloists on the instrument brought the unique timbral possibilities of the baritone to light. Harry Carney (1910-1974) from the Duke Ellington Orchestra is possibly the first to play as a soloist on the baritone. Carney played a large role in making Ellington's unique sound, and was a member of the Ellington Orchestra for forty-five years (Crinelli 2015, 18). His role is described by Dan Stother, "The use of the baritone saxophone as a solo instrument (and Harry Carney's strength and facility on

the instrument) is a distinguishing characteristic of the Ellington orchestra” (Strother 2011, 16). Carney featured on several of Ellington’s compositions as lead soloist in the late 1920’s such as on “East St. Louis Toodle-O” and “Cottontail.” Carney was unique because of his enormous tone, deep vibrato, and often used circular breathing. Some compositions were based upon Carney’s unique voice as the lead melodic instrument and improvisational soloist.

Serge Chaloff (1923-1957) is known as the first bebop baritone saxophonist. He was heavily influenced by Harry Carney and Charlie Parker. He played in Woody Herman’s band where he was consistently featured as an improvising soloist, but not often as lead melodic voice. Chaloff struggled with drug addiction and died at the young age of 33. In this short life he had already established himself as a leader of baritone saxophone and pushing the possibilities of the instrument forward.

Leo Parker (1925-1962) had a more blues-based approach than Carney and also played with more of a virtuosic and complex bebop approach. His tone was massive and similar to Carney, yet his technical abilities surpassed those of Carney. Leo Parker was featured as a leader in several small group recordings, including the album *Mad Lad* (1947) with Charles Thompson, and his album as a leader titled *Let Me Tell You ‘Bout It* from 1961.

Pepper Adams (1930-1986) played baritone with a very different tone than his predecessors. Adams had an aggressive and cutting tone that many musicians enjoyed. This tone let him stand out in ensemble textures and established an “ideal” baritone sound for the next generation of performers. His tone was clear and precise. He played in the bebop style and tended to play many notes in his improvisations. His cutting tone was

aided by a specific mouthpiece, manufactured by Berg Larsen, which was stainless steel instead of brass, wood, or hard rubber. This produced a more percussive and punching quality than his predecessors. His highly articulated style was utilized by many bandleaders and he is acknowledged as one of the most important baritonists ever to live.

Gerry Mulligan (1927-1996) is perhaps the most famous baritone player in history. Mulligan played with a very light, gentle, and airy tone. His tone had a flute-like quality to it and was very different from his predecessors. As opposed to Adams, Gerry chose a tone that was much less direct or forceful. He brought the instrument to the forefront as a soloist by playing with small groups consisting of baritone saxophone, trumpet (or trombone), bass, and drums. This ensemble, without a chordal instrument (i.e. no piano or guitar), gave Mulligan a wide-open sonic texture to explore.

Mulligan began his career playing with Claude Thornhill, Stan Kenton, Miles Davis, and Chet Baker. His style of playing fewer notes than the bebop musicians became known as the “Cool Jazz School,” and “West Coast Style” (Crinelli 2015, 5). This style emphasized melody, slower tempos, more sonic space, and an overall more relaxed feel than that of bebop. This style was popularized by Miles Davis in his 1950 recording *Birth of The Cool* and brought many more listeners back to jazz after their exodus due to the difficulties of listening to bebop (Dyas 2019).

Throughout Mulligan’s career he played with an extremely high level of technical and harmonic virtuosity. Much of his career employed a quartet without a chordal instrument, (such as piano or guitar) which enabled Mulligan to be heard with pristine clarity and allowed substitute harmonic exploration. Up to this point most of the baritone saxophonists tended to play very loudly and aggressively. Mulligan displayed a much

more sensitive style which resonated with the public and other musicians. Mulligan's focus on melodic and less rhythmically active improvisation polarized the baritone community, where players had to belong either to the "Mulligan school" or the "Pepper school" of playing. The more aggressive style of Pepper Adams has arguably been more imitated due to the ease of playing forcefully opposed to sensitively.

Hamiet Bluiett (1940-2018) was a highly influential avant-garde jazz baritone saxophonist, multi-instrumentalist and composer. Bluiett began playing music as a young child on piano and clarinet, but switched to saxophone at age eleven. Bluiett played saxophone in local dance bands and switched to baritone saxophone in his late teens. Bluiett was inspired by Harry Carney and began to focus on baritone saxophone as a soloist instrument opposed to being in the background.

Bluiett co-founded the Black Artist's Group (BAG) in 1968 in St. Louis, which was similar to the Association for the Advancement of Creative Musicians in Chicago (AACM). The AACM has been a very powerful association since its inception in 1965 by Muhal Richard Abrams. A core principal of the AACM which the BAG adopted was that of a solo performance by every member of the organization. Each member of both organizations would be responsible to perform a concert by themselves. This forced the musicians to explore many sonic possibilities on their given instrument. We can hear Hamiet Bluiett's influential solo concert on his album *Birthright: A Solo Blues Concert* in 1977.

Bluiett became a well-known baritone saxophonist while touring Europe with legendary bassist and composer Charles Mingus in 1972, and continued to play with Mingus until 1975. Mingus encouraged Bluiett to improvise on baritone saxophone,



clarinet, and wood flute. Bluiett co-founded the World Saxophone Quartet in 1976 which was one of the first jazz saxophone quartets, and certainly the most famous of all jazz saxophone quartets.

In a personal communication with classical baritonist Joan Marti-Frasquier, I asked him about the growing demand for baritone. He replied

In my opinion, the specialization in the baritone by saxophone players is more recent in classical/contemporary music than jazz. In spite of the copious amount of saxophone quartets, “classical” baritonists used to play other saxophones and didn’t focus on the baritone as jazzmen like Harry Carney, Serge Chaloff, Gerry Mulligan or Pepper Adams did in the middle of the 20th Century. Fortunately, the number of baritone specialists in classical/contemporary has grown up and now it is easy to find performers who put the baritone as their first saxophone as Damien Royannais and Eric Devallon (France), and more recently Jay Byrnes (Australia), Makoto Hondo (Japan) and The Four Baritones (The Netherlands). (Marti-Frasquier 2018)

I asked Henk van Twillert why he thinks there has been an increase of repertoire for baritone and he confirmed that commissioning composers has been crucial. “The last twenty years I am activating composers to write for Baritone, [including] Chiel Meijering, Gijs van Dijk , & Jacob TV” (van Twillert 2018).

### **Tone Difference and Manufacturers of Classical vs Jazz**

A difference between saxophone tone can easily be heard when listening to a classical saxophonist versus jazz saxophonist. The classical saxophonist usually aims for a very dark and warm tone which is more closely related to a warm-toned string instrument. This tone tends to favor low and mid-range frequencies. The tone wanted by most classical saxophonists has been described as, “...focused, consistent, round and warm” (Hasbrook 2005, 3). This type of tone is achieved by the use of a large-chambered hard rubber mouthpiece with a small tip opening. This mouthpiece has no baffle which

helps create a darker tone by allowing the air to pass through the mouthpiece with no interruption. The small tip opening creates a uniform sound without much flexibility in terms of tone change.

In a personal conversation with classical baritone saxophonist Henk Van Twillert about tone, he said, “The difference is just the mind-set, that will change your concept of sound, and that can also change the material such as reed and mouthpiece choices” (Twillert 2018). I also spoke to baritonist Clare Daly about the difference in tone and she replied, “I’ve played classical sax quartets (I have a pretty extensive collection) but I haven’t cultivated a classical sound. The tone—to my ears—of classical sax sounds almost like a string instrument. I’ve never tried to do that” (Daly 2018).

Jazz musicians tend to be more experimental with their instruments than classical performers. The tone of a jazz saxophonist tends to be brighter and louder. This is accomplished partly through the use of metal mouthpieces and large tip openings. The rubber mouthpieces used by many jazz saxophonists are also different internally than the classical mouthpiece. The jazz mouthpiece usually has some kind of baffle which increases the air speed and brightens the tone. The baffle is placed at the entrance of the mouthpiece (close to the tip opening) to squeeze the air and therefore increase its speed, creating a brighter tone. The metal mouthpiece can also have a dark tone if the internal dimensions are the same as the classical hard rubber mouthpiece and there is no baffle. The idea that any metal mouthpiece is bright is unfounded and has been disproven by many artists including myself.

The tip opening of the saxophone mouthpiece allows the reed to vibrate more which can increase the power and projection. This tip opening also enables the musician

to have a wider palette of sonic options. This is desirable for the jazz artist searching for individuality, but this can come at the cost of the ability to blend in an orchestra. The classical saxophonist desires to blend as well as possible as to not stand out, but the jazz musician wants to be able to be heard when a solo opportunity arises.

Beginning in the 1950s, saxophone mouthpiece makers began experimenting with new materials and internal dimensions to change the tone. Some manufacturers such as Berg Larsen in London and Bobby Dukoff in Miami created metal mouthpieces which had a large baffle to increase the velocity of air and thus increasing the volume and projection. This was taken even further by decreasing the size of the internal chamber of the mouthpiece to effectively squeeze the air even faster. This greatly improves the power of the sound, but this at the detriment of tone quality. The louder the tone, usually the harsher and thinner the sound.

When Rock & Roll was invented in the 1950s it became necessary for pop and jazz saxophonists to use the high baffle metal in order to compete with the electric guitar. It wasn't only a matter of sheer volume, but also the specific frequencies that were boosted by the high baffle. Boosting the high frequencies helped the player to be heard at any volume. The thick bottom of the tone was sacrificed, but the buzz of the high frequencies was increasingly present. Roger Rosenberg told me through personal communication, "The fact that everything is so loud and that we are always playing with electric instruments its beneficial to have something like that [high baffle mouthpiece]" (Rosenberg 2018).

A musician who has a uniquely identifiable tone who plays on a high baffle Berg Larsen mouthpiece is Lenny Pickett. Pickett rose to fame as the tenor saxophonist for the

Sacramento based jazz rock band named *Tower Of Power*. The screaming tone first heard on their album *Live & In Living Color* from 1976 revolutionized what musicians thought possible on the tenor saxophone. Aided by the high baffle mouthpiece Pickett was able to play into the third and fourth octave of the instrument, known as the altissimo range. This bright tone easily cut through the band as can be heard on the song “What Is Hip.” (1973) Lenny Pickett is currently one of the saxophonists for the television show *Saturday Night Live*. He has been on the show as the featured soloist since 1985, and the musical director since 1995.

### **Preference of Saxophone Manufactures**

Another difference between classical saxophonists and jazz saxophonists is their choice in instruments. Many of the classical musicians choose to play modern instruments made in the last twenty years. The new instruments have superior mechanism and intonation, yet somehow lack the tonal color of the vintage instruments. The most common brands of new saxophones are Selmer (Paris), Yamaha, Yanagisawa, Keilwerth, and recently P. Marriat. The new Selmer and Yamaha saxophones appear to be the favorite instrument for both classical and jazz musicians. These models are extremely precise in regard to mechanism and intonation. The build quality is extremely high on both models and some jazz musicians also choose to play with these models. The cost of the new Selmer saxophones has increased exponentially in the last decade and makes it impossible for most students or professionals to afford. The Yamaha saxophone is also popular because the price new is nearly half of the cost (c. \$8,500) of a new Selmer Paris saxophone (c. \$16,000.00).

The favorite saxophone for jazz musicians is the Selmer Mark VI (1954-73) and the Selmer Super Balanced Action (1948-53) (Rosenberg 2016). Closely behind these vintage instruments are the Conn saxophones made in the 1920s-1945. Conn was the largest manufacturer of saxophones until World War II when their production changed to military parts. After the war the quality was never as high and they changed some of the manufacturing to cheaper methods, such as eliminating the rolled tone holes.

The Selmer Mark VI and Super Balanced Action were used, and are used by many of the top jazz saxophonists in history: John Coltrane, Wayne Shorter, Ornette Coleman, Sonny Rollins, George Coleman, Joe Henderson, Branford Marsalis, Pepper Adams and many others. Because of the historical influence and overall tone quality, the vintage Selmer is still the most sought out instrument in the jazz saxophone idiom. The tone of the vintage Selmer surpasses most all instruments, combined with the excellent ergonomics has solidified its place in history.

The Conn saxophones of the 1920s-1945 arguably have a better tone, but the ergonomics are inferior to the Selmer which has caused most musicians to shy from them. The tone is massive and powerful, and the layout of the tone holes and mechanism are quite different than the Selmers. The baritone saxophone of this era, known as the 12M has been the preferred instrument of many well-known baritonists such as Gerry Mulligan, Leo Parker, Harry Carney, and Gary Smulyan. Other musicians who have chosen the Conn saxophone is: Charlie Parker, Benny Carter, Dexter Gordon, Lester Young.

A vintage instrument worth mentioning is the Buescher 400. Buescher was an American company that was favored by classical saxophonist Sigurd Rascher. Because of

Rascher's influence, this vintage model is still preferred in some classical saxophone circles. This was also the model used by Duke Ellington's lead alto saxophonist Johnny Hodges.

### **Low Bb or A Baritone?**

Specific to the baritone is the addition of the low A. The addition of the low A (concert pitch C) was first introduced in the early 1950's on Selmer Paris saxophones. This was initially accomplished by cutting the bell and soldering on another few inches of brass to increase its length to allow for the lower fundamental. This changed in 1953 when Selmer introduced a one piece longer bell to the instrument. In a personal communication from 2018, Selmer historian Douglas Pipher informed me that this was done by Selmer because they found that the two-piece bell dampened the vibrations. No one I spoke to knows exactly why the low A was added, but speculation is that it can play the low concert C with the cellos in an orchestral setting. Soon after the invention of the low A, it became standard and by the 1980's no manufacturer (with the exception of Keilwerth which is custom ordered) was manufacturing a Low Bb baritone.

The addition of 7-9 inches of brass (depending on brand) changes the vibration and resonance of the baritone. It seems to dampen the entire instrument and affect the projection. It muffles the tone of the horn and boosts low frequencies while diminishing the high frequencies. The professional music world expects the baritonist to have a low A saxophone and this is commonly written for. In a personal communication with classical saxophonist Joan Marti-Frasquier, he wrote, "I always play with a low A baritone because a great part of the contemporary music repertoire contains low A. It is a little bit

heavier than the low Bb, but it allows me to have the opportunity to play all the repertoire” (Marti-Frasquier 2018).

Classical saxophonist Jay Easton wrote in his dissertation that most performers utilize the low A baritone, “Today the low A extension is nearly universal on new baritone saxophones, and since most players today use this type the low concert C is now considered standard” (Easton 2006, 85). In my own experience I find this to be untrue, at least in the jazz idiom. The jazz world is much more open to the fact that the low A instrument is sonically inferior to the low Bb and accepts that most jazz soloists prefer a Low Bb instrument. Some well-known baritonists who have chosen the low Bb include Gerry Mulligan, Pepper Adams, Harry Carney, and Gary Smulyan. Personally, I own four vintage Selmer Super Balanced action baritones, two low Bb horns from 1948, a low Bb from 1952, and a low A from 1953. All the low Bb saxophones play with a much more open sound than the Low A (or any low A saxophone that I’ve played) and I much prefer them over the A. I only use the low A baritone when I absolutely must.

There are several fantastic baritonists who prefer the low A, such as Ronnie Cuber, Claire Daly, and Alex Harding, but they are in the minority. In a personal conversation, Frank Basile told me, “I’d say what really guided my decision to use a low Bb horn was the fact that all the baritone players who were my favorites (Harry Carney, Leo Parker, Cecil Payne, Charlie Fowlkes, Pepper Adams, Gary Smulyan) all played on a low Bb horn” (Basile 2018). Similarly, Roger Rosenberg explains, “There was a period of time when people like Danny (Bank) and Joe (Temperly) would say the low A baritone is no good. At a certain point I believe it effected their careers. If you don’t have the equipment there are consequences to pay, but that’s up to you” (Rosenberg 2018).

Evidence that the popularity of baritone has increased can be seen in the rising percentage of baritones being manufactured compared to the other saxophones from 1948-1979, the last year data is available. They still are a small percentage of all saxophones produced, but as we can see below in the information from Selmer historian Douglas Pipher, the percentage tripled from 2.4% to 6.3% in 1948-1979.

**Table 2.3: Selmer Paris Baritone's Made in Percentages Compared to Sopranino, Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Baritone, and Bass**

YEARS	MODEL	SERIAL NUMBER	PERCENTAGE OF BARITONES
1948-1953	Super Balanced Action	35801-55200	Approximately 550 manufactured, 2.4%
1954-1974	Mark VI	55201-220800	Approximately 10,600 manufactured, 5.8%
1974-1979	Mark VII	220801-315500	Approximately 4,300 manufactured, 6.3%

As I have shown in this chapter, saxophones in general have gained a much wider acceptance as a “serious” instrument from the way that they were viewed at the turn of the century. This has occurred both in the worlds of classical music and Jazz. Even more recently, the baritone has increased in popularity due to mechanical advances making the instrument more easily playable, the increased numbers of virtuosic musicians performing on the instrument, the creation of compositions featuring the instrument, and the increase in baritone manufacturing because of demand.



### Chapter 3

#### Development & History of Baritone Saxophone Concertos

New Grove Dictionary defines a concerto as, “an instrumental work that maintains contrast between an orchestral ensemble and a smaller group or a solo instrument, or among various groups of an undivided orchestra” (Hutchings, Talbot, Eisen, Botstein, Griffiths 2001). The term concerto originates from the 18th century, when it was used to refer to a composition that featured a solo instrument with a large ensemble. The most common form is a three-movement work which alternated slow-fast-slow movements. While this format became established in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, this format, and the definition of a concerto itself, has become broader over the past century.

As previously stated, the concerto originated as a form for solo instrument and orchestra. During the late 18th century, concertos were being composed for strings, the woodwind family, harp, guitar, mandolin, and keyboards. In the 19th century the concerto became a vehicle for virtuosic display of a performer’s abilities. Composers in the 19th century also began to alter the established form. For example, Liszt’s *Piano Concerto No. 2* (1857) broke formal expectations by utilizing a single movement broken into six sections which transform and meld into one another.

In the 19th century composers also began to write concertos for a wider range of orchestral instruments. For example, there were several cello concertos, including the Schumann *Concerto in A minor op. 129* (1850), Camille Saint-Saëns *Cello Concerto No. 1 in A minor*, and Dvorak’s *Cello Concerto in B minor* (1895). The baritone has a similar range to that of cello and bassoon making transcriptions of their repertoire performable.

Mozart had composed clarinet and bassoon concertos in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Several composers began writing concertos for clarinet and bassoon such as Weber, Hummel, and Berwald, following Mozart's concertos for these instruments.

**Table 3.1 Partial list of 19<sup>th</sup> century concertos composed for bassoon and clarinet**

Instrument	Composer	Title	Year
Clarinet	Gioachino Rossini	Variations for Clarinet and Orchestra in C Major	1809
Clarinet	Carl Maria Von Weber	Clarinet Concerto No. 1	1811
Clarinet	Carl Maria Von Weber	Clarinet Concerto No. 2	1811
Clarinet	Felix Mendelssohn	Concert Piece No. 1 for Clarinet, Basset Horn, and Orchestra	1832
Clarinet	Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov	Concertstück for Clarinet and Military Band	1878
Bassoon	Johann Nepomuk Hummel	Bassoon Concerto in F Major	1805
Bassoon	Gustav Kummer	Concerto in F Major	1806
Bassoon	Peter Josef von Lindpaintner	Bassoon Concerto in F Major, Op. 44	1832
Bassoon	Ferinand David	Concertino, Op. 12	1838

An interesting facet of early concertos (pre 19th century) was the improvised cadenza. In 1752 Johann Quantz wrote the highly influential treatise *On Playing the Flute*. After describing appropriate melodic embellishments, Quantz moves on to discuss a higher level of creativity, harmonic dexterity, and technical ability: the cadenza. He describes cadenzas as an improvised part of a concerto where the musician is able to create a new piece which is closely related to the feeling of the overall composition. He states this generally occurs at the end of a piece before the final gesture and often centers of the V chord of the work. The cadenza must contain material from the rest of the work. This can include repetitions of the work and also those ideas shifted into new keys. The

overall theme of the composition is often included and should be used for structural cohesion. Quantz warns of the difficulty of properly executing an improvised cadenza, and gives instructions to focus and avoid letting one's mind wander. If one's mind isn't focused the instruction is to use a strong melodic passages from the work and use it as a point of reference and departure. This will cover a musician's lack of creativity and still keep the structure of the work intact. The cadenza must be performed with passion as to create excitement for the listener and to not drop the intensity of the work as a whole. (Quantz 1752, 179-182)

Another important treatise about improvisation and the cadenza is the *Essay on the True Art of Playing Keyboard Instruments* by C.P.E. Bach from 1753. The final chapter of his treatise is titled "Improvisation," and provides instructions for musicians to have success in the various situations requiring improvisation and embellishments. Bach gives directions on how to improvise properly:

Following are the briefest and most natural means of which a keyboardist, particularly one of limited ability, may avail himself in extemporizing: With due caution he fashions his bass out of the ascending and descending scale of the prescribed key, with a variety of figured bass signatures; (a) he may interpolate a few half steps (b), arrange the scale in or out of its normal sequence (c), and perform the resultant progression in broken or sustained style at a suitable pace. A tonic organ point is convenient for establishing the tonality at the beginning and end (d). The dominant organ point can also be introduced effectively before the close (e). (Bach 1753, 431-432)

By the 19th century many performers lacked the ability to improvise and the composers began to write out the cadenza (Moore 1992, 79). The two most common locations of the cadenza are at the end of the first movement and at the end of the third or final movement. Mendelssohn, Grieg, Joachim, Brahms, and Auer composed cadenzas for commonly performed concertos such as the Beethoven violin concertos.

By the mid-19th century, composers used cadenza/improvisational material throughout a work to display soloistic virtuosity. Instead of cadenzas being placed at the end of a movement, it could be placed in other locations, such as before the recapitulation of the final movement in Mendelssohn's violin concerto in e minor, op. 64 from 1844. Formal freedom is also displayed in compositions such as Liszt's *Piano Concerto in A* from 1839 which is a single movement concerto in sonata form. Further innovations were explored by altering the fast-slow-fast scheme to fast-slow-slow, or exploring other permutations of this formula.

Since the turn of the 20th century, the definition of a concerto has been challenged in nearly every way. Concertos by Schoenberg and Berg included new harmonic language and also created pieces that did not fall into formal conventions of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. For example, Berg's violin concerto *Kammersinfonie no. 1* is composed in two movements. Stravinsky composed the *Ebony Concerto* in 1945 for clarinet and jazz band. This piece was highly influenced by jazz, yet no improvisation is indicated in the score.

The term concerto has since evolved such that it can be used to describe any work which features a soloist with an ensemble. According to Grove Online, "By this stage [the present day], the word 'concerto' has lost any residual formal meaning; it could therefore be used simply to indicate a work with one or more soloists" (Hutchings, Talbot, Eisen, Botstein, Griffiths 2001). The label 'concerto' has been removed from many compositions in the twentieth century even though they could fit into what we recognize as a concerto. Several of the compositions analyzed below fall into this category, yet they

fit within existing definitions of the form, for example Gerry Mulligan's *Entente* and Bob Brookmeyer's *Celebration Suite*.

### History of Low Instrument Concertos

Concertos written for low-pitched instruments are nowhere near as common as those for higher-pitched instruments. This can be seen in the string repertoire, brass repertoire, and woodwind repertoire. The limitations of these low instruments' ability to project through an orchestra presents an orchestrational challenge, as with increased density the low-pitched instruments are easily covered. Because a higher-pitched instrument such as a violin will project through a large ensemble with ease, it is logical that concertos featuring the higher tessitura instruments are more common. Composing a concerto for a low-pitched instrument means always considering the other instruments which are competing in the same frequency range.

Of the low-pitched instruments, the highest number of concertos have been written for cello and bassoon. Table 3.2 displays an estimate of the number of concertos composed from 1760-1910 for the given instruments according to the Petrucci Music Library (IMSLP).

**Table 3.2: Table of Concertos Listed on IMSLP<sup>1</sup>**

Instrument	Number of Concertos
Violin	1198
Viola	60
Cello	224
Double Bass	44
Flute	249
Clarinet	72
Bass Clarinet	1
Bassoon	103

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<sup>1</sup> <https://imslp.org/wiki/Category:Concertos>

Alto Saxophone	12
Trumpet	35
Trombone	10
Tuba	4

From this list we can see that the higher pitched instruments, flute, clarinet, alto saxophone, trumpet, viola, and violin have 1642 concertos composed for them, as opposed to 386 concertos written for bassoon, bass clarinet, trombone, tuba, cello, and double bass.

### History of Saxophone Concertos

The first concerto for saxophone is the *Aurora Serenade* (1853) composed by Henri Wuille. This piece received a positive response, but quickly fell into obscurity (Pituch 1998, 5). The next wave of saxophone concertos resulted from Elise Hall (1853-1924), an amateur saxophonist who was responsible for commissioning many well know composers to create new works for her instrument. A partial list of early concertos which were composed for saxophonist Elise Hall are as follows in table 3.3. Not all of the compositions listed are actual concertos, however they include a significant component of solo saxophone passages (Pituch 1998, 6).

**Table 3.3: Compositions Commissioned by Alto Saxophone Soloist Elise Hall**

Composer	Title	Year
Charles Martin Loeffler	<i>Divertissement Espagnol</i>	1901
Paul Gilson	<i>Premier Concerto</i>	1902
André Caplet	<i>Légende</i>	1903
Georges Longy	<i>Impression for Saxophone and Orchestra</i>	1903
Claude Debussy	<i>Rapsodie</i>	1903
Vincent d'Indy	<i>Choral Varié op 55</i>	1903
Georges Spork	<i>Légende op. 54</i>	1905

Jules Mouquet	<i>Rapsodie op. 26</i>	1907
Henry Woollett	<i>Sibéria</i>	1909
Léon Moreau	<i>Pastorale</i>	1910
Philippe Gaubert	<i>Poème élégiaque</i>	1911
Gabriel Marie	<i>Grovlez, Suite</i>	1915
Florent Schmitt (1918)	<i>Légende, op 66</i>	1918
François Combelle	<i>Fantasie Mauresque</i>	1920

Table 3.4 lists concertos composed for alto saxophone after Hall. Each of these compositions features alto saxophone in the conventional definition of a concerto and were composed for either Marcel Mule, or Sigurd Rascher (Pituch 1998, 10).

**Table 3.4: Alto Saxophone Concertos Composed Post 1920**

COMPOSER	TITLE	YEAR
J. Beach Cragun	<i>Concerto no. 1, op.21</i>	1925
Jascha Gurewich	<i>Concerto in E Minor, op. 102</i>	1926
Joseph Holbrooke	<i>Concertino in Bb, op. 88</i>	1928
Manuel Rosenthal	<i>Saxophone ' Marmelade</i>	1929
Edmund con Bork	<i>Concerto</i>	1932
Erwin Dressel	<i>Concerto</i>	1932
Svend Eric Tarp	<i>Concertino</i>	1932
Eigen d'Albert	<i>Saxophone Musik</i>	1932
Pierre Vellones	<i>Concerto, op. 65</i>	1934
Jacques Ibert	<i>Concertino da camera</i>	1934
Lars Erik Larsson	<i>Concerto op. 14</i>	1934
Werner Wolf Glaser	<i>Suite</i>	1935
Georges Lonque	<i>Images d'Orient</i>	1935
Alexander Glazounov	<i>Concerto op. 109</i>	1936
Eric Coates	<i>Rhapsody</i>	1936
Will Eisenmann	<i>Concerto op. 38</i>	1936
Darius Milhaud	<i>Scaramouche, op. 165c</i>	1937
Roman Palester	<i>Concertino</i>	1938
Frank Martin	<i>Ballade</i>	1938
David Bennett	<i>Concerto in G minor</i>	1938
Eugene Bozza	<i>Concertino</i>	1938
Norman Dernuth	<i>Concerto</i>	1938
Eleuthere Lovreglio	<i>Concerto</i>	1938
Jongen Liebenberg Bentzon	<i>Introduction Variation and Allegro</i>	1939
Edvard Moritz	<i>Concerto</i>	1939
Henri Tomasi	<i>Ballade</i>	1939
Roger Vuataz	<i>Nocturne et Danse Op. 58/2</i>	1940
Jaromir Weinberger	<i>Concerto</i>	1940
Armand Heck	<i>Concertino Op. 41 en Sol Major</i>	1940
Henry Dreyfus Brant	<i>Concerto</i>	1941
Roger Vuataz	<i>Impromptu, Op. 54/4</i>	1941

Paul Creston	<i>Concerto, Op. 26</i>	1941
Arthur Meulemans	<i>Rhapsodie</i>	1942
Raymond Moulsert	<i>Tango-Caprice</i>	1942
Charles Koechlin	<i>2 Sonatines</i>	1942

### **Glazunov Concerto**

To gain historical perspective of saxophone concertos I have analyzed the *Concerto for Alto Saxophone and String Orchestra* composed in 1936 by Russian composer Alexander Glazunov. Glazunov composed his alto saxophone concerto to feature Sigurd Rascher. Rascher had commissioned the work and had requested that it feature his impressive altissimo register (Zinninger 2013, 34). The extensive use of altissimo helped to change what composers thought acceptable for alto saxophone. Glazunov wrote an altissimo C as the last note of the composition, although he wrote that it's optional.

The Glazunov concerto has become one of, if not the most famous saxophone concerto composed. The piece is in a Romantic style and has a duration of 14 minutes. The piece is in one continuous fourteen-minute movement with several tempo and key changes. The overall mood is consonant, with a lyrical feel that favors the middle register of the saxophone. There are also many moments where the saxophone plays in the lowest octave, such as in measures 22-25 where the saxophone performs a written D and takes on the role of accompanist. The saxophone never reaches the lowest note (Bb), but does reach to a low B natural twice in the piece. Overall the composition is not extremely difficult compared to contemporary saxophone repertoire, although the instances of altissimo prove challenging.

### **History of Compositions Featuring Baritone Saxophone and Ensemble**



The earliest jazz compositions featuring baritone could be described as “concertos” because they feature a solo instrument accompanied by a large ensemble or orchestra. “Sophisticated Lady” (1957), and “Agra” (1964) are both relatively short one movement pieces featuring baritone saxophone solos that fit into this category. Since then, there have only been around twenty widely-available concertos composed for baritone saxophone. About half of these compositions have never been performed. Table 3.5 shows a partial list of large ensemble compositions featuring baritone.

**Table 3.5: Compositions Featuring Solo Baritone Saxophone and Large Ensemble**

Composer	Title	Year
Harry Carney	<i>“We’re In Love Again”</i>	1954
Duke Ellington	<i>“Sophisticated Lady”</i>	1957
Billy Strayhorn	<i>“Agra”</i>	1964
Frank Proto	<i>Concerto for Baritone Saxophone</i>	1973
Gerry Mulligan	<i>Entente</i>	1984
Mark Watters	<i>Rhapsody for Baritone Saxophone and Orchestra</i>	1985
Werner Wolf Glaser	<i>Concerto for Baritone Saxophone and String Orchestra</i>	1992
Robert Nelson	<i>Concertino for Solo Baritone Saxophone and Orchestra</i>	1996
Herb Gellis	<i>Corduroy concertino for baritone saxophone and orchestra</i>	2003
Benjamin Boone	<i>Concerto for Baritone Saxophone and Orchestra</i>	2003
Hans Vermeersch	<i>Mumbai Concerto for Alto Saxophone, Baritone Saxophone and Orchestra</i>	2004
Bernard van Beurden	<i>Concerto for Baritone Saxophone and Wind Orchestra</i>	2007
David Gaines	<i>...and dispel the miseries of the world</i> concerto for baritone saxophone and chamber orchestra	2007-2008
Georg Friedrich Haas	<i>Concerto for Baritone Saxophone and Orchestra</i>	2008
Fernando Lerman	<i>Tres Piezas for Baritone Saxophone and String Orchestra</i>	2015
Satoshi Yagisawa	<i>‘Vongole !’ for Solo Eb Baritone Saxophone and Concert Band</i>	2015
Sixto Herrero	<i>TAS Concerto for Baritone Saxophone and Percussion</i>	2016
Brian Landrus	<i>Jeru Concerto</i>	2017

Albena Petrovic	<i>Concerto for Baritone Saxophone, Piano, and String Orchestra</i>	2018
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### **Developing the Virtuosity of the Baritone Saxophone**

As described in previous sections, until very recently the baritone had not been treated as a viable soloist in a classical concerto setting. This is partly due to the lack of consideration of it being a capable virtuosic instrument. In the past, the baritone has had the reputation of an unwieldy and slow instrument due to its size. When the saxophone was invented, the mechanical limitations were exacerbated on the large baritone and bass saxophones. It was impossible to execute rapid passages, leap from notes in different ranges, and perform fast scales. This lack of virtuosic capability lead the instrument to being used to accentuate a bassline, similar to the string bass or tuba. Only after the 1920's did the changes in the design of the instrument make it much easier to perform with, enabling the execution of virtuosic material.

The baritone saxophone is one of the most transformed saxophones from the “Saxophone Craze” of 1915-1930. Not only did mechanics improve drastically, but the mouthpiece also evolved. Musicians such as Gerry Mulligan and Harry Carney adopted mouthpieces with new internal designs to augment the tone production. This was further achieved by the Berg Larsen company who endorsed Pepper Adams. The sound that Pepper Adams was able to achieve was much brighter than the baritonist before him. This enabled him to project through the entire big band of fourteen horns. In the classical genre the baritone was only used in the role of accompaniment and in the saxophone quartet. The tone achieved by new equipment was dismissed by the classical artists and the large-chambered dark tone prevails today.

Virtuosity in baritone performance practice began in the bebop generation. Artists such as Serge Chaloff, Leo Parker and Gerry Mulligan began to play the instrument at the same rapid tempos first popularized by Charlie Parker on alto saxophone. It was the next generation of musicians, most notably Pepper Adams, who solidified the ability of baritone to play at the same breakneck tempos as the other bebop musicians. Ronnie Cuber also displayed high-tempo improvisational virtuosity on George Benson's 1966 album *The Cookbook*.

The next major step in the evolution of baritone performance practice came with Hamiet Bluiett's 1977 recording *Birthright: A Solo Blues Concert*. This album contains seven solo baritone tracks. Bluiett explores the baritone's timbres in more detail than any other artist up to this time. Bluiett uses extended techniques including altissimo, multiphonics, slap tongue, key clicks, growls, bends, and circular breathing. Some of these techniques were not new, for example growling which had been common since the fifties on all saxophones and circular breathing which was accomplished first on baritone by Harry Carney. Bending notes is another technique used by Harry Carney and Johnny Hodges in Duke Ellington's band. Bending from one note up to the other or vice versa was common from the 1920s onward, yet the way it would be used became more drastic. Many of the other effects had never been heard before.

Sigurd Rascher's book *Top Tones for the Saxophone* was printed in 1941, although the techniques described weren't used until Bluiett, who used fingerings to achieve the altissimo range, as well as guttural squeals accomplished by pinching or biting the reed. Because of Bluiett's extreme altissimo abilities, he often performed in the range of alto saxophone.

The multiphonics employed by Bluiett were innovative and aggressive. Many saxophonists took note of the new timbres that were currently being explored by AACM members such as Roscoe Mitchell and Julius Hemphill. The multiphonics were often achieved by using the Rascher technique of overblowing the fundamental tones (the lowest four notes on the saxophone) and holding the sound when the single note breaks into several. This produces an abrasive timbre by the creation of dissonant chords when multiple pitches are performed simultaneously.

Slap tongue was a technique that had been around since before Rascher had advocated for its use in tonguing exercises. Once again, the massive sound of this technique on baritone saxophone was wildly exotic. Key clicks were also used by Bluiett during the recording, and because they are used while he is playing solo, the effect is quite powerful. The use of growling on the saxophone can be heard in many early Rock and Roll solos of the 1950 and was heavily used by Bluiett in conjunction with other effects such as multiphonics.

An interesting aspect of the development of baritone repertoire is that after these extended techniques were first explored by jazz musicians, they were often adopted by contemporary classical composers in their works for saxophone. It is unusual for a contemporary classical composition not to include at least some of these extended techniques initially utilized in jazz. This can be easily seen in *Konzert for Baritone Saxophone and Orchestra* by Georg Friedrich Haas from 2008, which employs all of the previously described effects.

Over time, virtuosity has increased on all instruments, not just the saxophone. Many musicians are able to play at rapid tempos, but the term virtuoso is overused. In

Reuben Chin's dissertation, *Saxophone Virtuosity: Manifestation and Effect in the Saxophone Repertoire*, he argues that virtuosic altissimo required by the Ibert's *Concertino da Camera* was avoided by Marcel Mule, but was added at Rascher's suggestion (Chin 2017, 7-9). This is a technique that most saxophonists can execute today, although it is still uncomfortable for the majority of baritonists. Technical abilities have increased drastically to the level of what used to be considered virtuosic is now considered standard performance practice.

An issue to overcome on baritone saxophone is that the altissimo range requires different fingerings than the alto and tenor saxophones. Not only that, but the fingerings differ by baritone model. For example, the fingerings to achieve altissimo on a Conn baritone are a different than the fingerings of a Selmer baritone. Robert A. Luckey's book *Saxophone Altissimo: High Note Development for the Contemporary Player* explores different fingerings for soprano, alto, tenor, and baritone saxophones (Luckey 1992). Each page has a set of four to six different fingerings that will work on different brands of saxophones. With the aid of this book and creating a customized fingering chart, I established an altissimo range fluidly reaching an octave above where the baritone normally stops.

The increase in technical abilities of performers, understanding of the timbral qualities, and understanding of the practical capabilities of the saxophone have led to a large increase in repertoire featuring the instrument. As seen above, the alto saxophone was first to become accepted into the strata of classical composition. Once jazz performers and composers began exploring the virtuosic capabilities of baritone, classical

composers followed. After the slow start of repertoire creation for the baritone we have seen the drastic rise in repertoire since the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

## Chapter 4

### Analysis of Baritone Concertos

In this chapter I describe nine compositions that represent a growing repertoire of large ensemble compositions featuring baritone soloist. Technical demands have increased from the application of extended techniques of altissimo, multiphonics, and slap tongue. After the initial usage of baritone in jazz orchestra setting performing common AABA forms, the use of classical concerto form has been utilized. The growth of baritone repertoire has drastically increased since the 1980s.

#### **“We’re in Love Again” from *Harry Carney with Strings***

The 1954 recording session of *Harry Carney with Strings* proved to be an important moment in baritone saxophone history. This piece represents one of the earliest, if not the earliest example of the baritone saxophone being the featured, solo instrument with a large ensemble that includes strings. The music was conducted by Ralph Burns who also arranged and orchestrated much of the album. The pioneering producer Norman Granz was in charge of the recording session. Granz had extensive experience recording jazz artists with strings including being the producer of the highly influential 1950 recording session *Charlie Parker With Strings*.

The arrangement of Harry Carney’s four-minute composition “We’re In Love Again” is a slow ballad, at approximately 75bpm. The arrangement and orchestration were executed by jazz pianist and composer Gerald Wilson. The composition is based on AABA form, yet the arrangement strays from this slightly by incorporating a four bar

introduction, and after the initial melody is heard in AABA form, the ensemble modulates and plays an A section with the baritone which then leads to the bridge for Carney to improvise. The final A section restates the melody, and the piece reaches its conclusion through a rubato coda.

Because Carney composed this piece, it fits him perfectly and utilizes the rich timbral changes in his range. Carney performs the first A section in a low register, then the second A section an octave higher. Carney maneuvers the saxophone part through several different octaves after this by changing register depending on how he embellished the melody. The arrangement highlights Carney's cavernous tone, and wide vibrato.

The arrangement is through-composed with no clear repeating sections in terms of orchestration. There are effective changes in timbre, such as at the last A of the melody when the strings are tacet and the guitar takes the traditional accompaniment role for four measures. The strings are effective at responding to the melody by filling the spaces while the baritone holds long notes in the phrases. The overall timbre of the strings is in a high register partly from the heavy reliance on violins. According to the album liner notes, there are three cellos and nine violins (*Harry Carney with Strings* liner notes 1954). It may be the way the recording is mixed, but the cellos are barely audible through much of the song.

The arrangement is very consonant and sounds like it was made to be commercially accessible. There aren't any moments of dissonance through the piece and the focus on melody is obvious throughout. The tone of Carney is lush, wide, and powerful.



### **“Sophisticated Lady” by Duke Ellington**

“Sophisticated Lady” is a ballad that was composed by Duke Ellington, Irving Mills, and Mitchell Parish in 1933. “Sophisticated Lady” has existed in several incarnations, and one of the most famous is the arrangement by Duke Ellington which featured Harry Carney on baritone saxophone with the Duke Ellington Orchestra. This arrangement was made popular by the Ellington Orchestra’s performance in 1957 at the Newport Jazz Festival in Newport, RI. While not a “classical” concerto in the traditional sense, we can approach this piece as a concerto since it uses a featured within a large ensemble. The arrangement is unique in several ways, one of which are the changes to the standard AABA song form.<sup>2</sup>

It’s important to notice the amount of open harmonic freedom provided by the lush and spacious orchestration. The saxophone section is used sparingly in the arrangement, and is only heard at the beginning of the composition performing what is usually recognized as a jazz sax soli harmonized in block voicings. This beginning section functions as an introduction and alludes to the melody by using the rhythm of the melody, but not the actual notes. After two A sections, the piano executes the bridge of the song and then Harry Carney begins the AABA melodic form thereafter. The use of ensemble introduction Ellington employed is one way this arrangement can be considered in the formal tradition of the classical concerto.

The orchestration often shifts from trombone accompaniment to trumpet accompaniment, or the combination of the two. The saxophones aren’t heard again after

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<sup>2</sup> Both Ellington Orchestra compositions analyzed have been examined through the use of transcriptions of David Berger for Jazz at Lincoln Center.

the beginning, which allows the timbre of the baritone saxophone to be heard unchallenged. There are also numerous moments where the baritone plays solo with piano, bass, and drums, identical to a small combo ensemble.

The use of mutes in the brass section further enables the baritone to soar above the orchestra without confrontation. The trumpets are muted throughout the performance, and the trombones are muted until the solo section, where they have an active sixteenth note figure to give momentum to the final bridge before the last melodic A section. For the final A section melody, Ellington chooses to utilize the baritone and rhythm section only. This changes the timbre and allows the baritone to take front and center. The piece ends with Carney continually holding out a concert Ab by circular breathing while Ellington embellishes and improvises underneath on piano.

The melody uses most of the range of the baritone saxophone, yet it favors the higher range of the instrument. It is playable in this form on the tenor saxophone without the need to be transposed. This is a tendency we will see again with Gerry Mulligan's playing style. The top note of the melody reaches to a major second below the highest note possible (not including altissimo) on the baritone. Carney utilizes most of the range of the instrument for his improvisation, although he never reaches the lowest note of the instrument. The lowest note we hear is a concert G which is still a tri-tone above from the lowest note of the instrument. One reason for this is that in a solo context, the lowest notes of the baritone would be less clear and more difficult to project above the rest of the ensemble.

### **“Agra” by Billy Strayhorn**

Another jazz-based piece for solo baritone and ensemble is “Agra,” a composition by Billy Strayhorn (1915-1967) and Ellington from 1964. The composition is short yet powerful, and is indicative of a concerto in that it has the soloist accompanied by large ensemble with the ensemble leaving many large spaces for virtuosic material to be executed by the baritone. The piece features Carey and is included on the Duke Ellington Orchestra’s album *Impressions Of The Far East Suite*. *The Far East Suite* was created after the Duke Ellington Orchestra conducted a U.S. State Department-sponsored tour in Asia in 1963. “Agra” is named after the Indian city home to the Taj Mahal. Ellington and Strayhorn heard many styles of music which excited and inspired them. The compositions of the *Far East Suite* were intended to create a style of jazz blended with the cultural styles they were exposed to while traveling (Lomanno 2012, 155).

“Agra” has a very mysterious, sensitive, and passionate energy. Much of this short piece features swelling and diminishing pads in the horns. The active melody contradicts the surrounding long tones, and helps the baritone to be heard, although there are moments where it is nearly impossible to hear the soloist because of the dense orchestration and sheer volume. Ellington solves the issue by inserting moments of solo baritone to clear the aural palette and re-center to the low horn.

Unlike “Sophisticated Lady,” the melody in “Agra” travels from the lowest possible note up to the altissimo range of the baritone, which creates a much stronger and guttural sound. Another difference from “Sophisticated Lady” is the fact that there is no improvisation. Ellington had become immersed in classical music, which influenced his compositional techniques to evolve including much longer through-composed

compositions. “Agra” is one piece of the nine compositions included in the “Far East Suite.” Similar to “Sophisticated Lady,” Ellington chose to keep the saxophones out of the way for Carney to be heard. There are moments where the saxophone section echoes the lead melody, as in measures 29-34, but the saxophones still don’t compete for the aural spotlight. Also similarly to “Sophisticated Lady,” the use of mutes throughout in the trumpet section further aids in helping the baritone stand out. Although the trombones aren’t muted, they are written at the pianissimo and piano dynamic level for the majority of the accompaniment.

The drum set has a distinctly Middle Eastern flavor, from the one measure ostinato in the drum set repeated through most of the composition. This ostinato uses kick drum, and mallets on the floor tom. This is a much different rhythmic feel than used in “Sophisticated Lady,” which is squarely in the jazz swing tradition. The acoustic bass consists of open fifth double stops (F and C) for the entire composition, while the horns use shifting harmony on top. There is no chordal instrument present, which is unique for Duke Ellington’s orchestration. The modal harmony and exotic drum pattern help create a new timbre related to the Middle East.

### ***Saxophone Concerto by Frank Proto***

Frank Proto (b. 1941) is one of the first composers to write a classical form baritone concerto for symphony orchestra. Proto was born in Brooklyn, NY and earned his Bachelor’s and Master’s Degrees on double bass at the Manhattan School of Music. His compositions have often been created to feature well-known soloist including Dave Brubeck, Gerry Mulligan, Duke Ellington, Eddie Daniels, and Richard Stoltzman. Proto

was appointed composer-in-residence for the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra from 1972 through 1997. He has composed a massive catalog of music featuring a wide array of instruments and instrumentation (liben.com 2019).

In the early 1970's, Gerry Mulligan had been actively commissioning large ensemble works for the baritone saxophone. Frank Proto was commissioned by Mulligan and his *Saxophone Concerto* was premiered in 1973 with the Cincinnati Symphony. This composition was created in the traditional concerto of three movements and included cadenza type moments for improvisation to occur. The piece itself was based on sonic languages of Stravinsky, Berg, Ravel, and Ellington. The composition is approximately twenty-five minutes in length.

The first movement has many dense moments consisting of harmonic ambiguity mixed with orchestral jazz tertian sonorities. The influence of modernist harmonic language can be heard from the beginning of the work and throughout many moments. The mix of drum set with traditional symphony orchestra and percussion was revolutionary. Proto's use of harmony seems influenced by the impressionist composers as well as orchestral jazz composers such as Claude Thornhill and Gil Evans. The ensemble performs for over two minutes before the entrance of the baritone. This is then followed by a large cadenza for the baritone which contains moments of completely solo baritone followed by slowly shifting pads in the orchestra. The harmony changes rapidly between consonance and dissonance, aided by the application of pizzicato strings against shifting colors in the brass and woodwinds. The hints of jazz drums are momentarily present with increasing duration until four minutes into the composition where the drum set begins playing a full-blown jazz swing pattern accompanied by a walking bass line.

This section sounds improvised.<sup>3</sup>

The composer does an excellent job of combining jazz tradition with classical language. Pizzicato strings mixed with the jazz drum set at the five-minute mark are reminiscent of the jazz and classical album titled *Focus*, by Stan Getz from 1961 which featured a jazz rhythm section with string orchestra arranged by Eddie Sauter. At the six-minute mark the orchestra returns to a more classical arrangement because of the sudden absence of drum set. This moment is followed by another solo baritone cadenza which lasts approximately forty-five seconds before the drum set and orchestra enter again without the baritone soloist. The language shifts back to what was introduced in the start of the composition, yet more forcefully. The swing feel returns strongly at eight minutes and thirty seconds and we hear the baritone playing what sounds like improvisational material again. I say this because the material executed is more in the jazz style than the surrounding material. This evolves into the ensemble Mulligan is most famous for: baritone saxophone, acoustic bass, and drums. The return of the orchestra isn't far behind and is heard again for the remaining minute and a half. For the last moments of the first movement, the baritone has yet again returned to the language of dissonance from impressionism, and Stravinsky's Russian period.

The second movement follows classical tradition by being slower than the first movement and more lyrical. The language is still ambiguous yet it is more tonal. There are pedal tones which result in harmonic stability. A rich alto flute solo is featured, highlighting this change in character from the first movement. Similar to the first movement, the baritone only enters after two minutes of music by the ensemble. Viola is also featured as soloist with the baritone. This focus on lower timbre instruments (alto

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<sup>3</sup> Due to the unavailability of the score, this claim cannot be made with certainty.

flute and viola) blends well with the baritone timbre. The use of very jazz-centric chords such as the dominant 13<sup>th</sup> with sharp 11<sup>th</sup> is heard three minutes into the movement. This chord was used by Ellington, Strayhorn, Bill Evans, and many other jazz composers. The piece seems to rotate between a large minor 9<sup>th</sup> chord moving to the dominant 13<sup>th</sup> sharp 11<sup>th</sup> chord to give a strong foundation yet also creating tension for Mulligan to improvise over. This short movement is used to let Mulligan solo sensitively over the thick and clear tertian harmony established by the orchestra. Drum set is used in the movement but only to keep steady quarter notes lightly on the ride cymbal to apply forward momentum.

The third movement begins in the way one would expect from a classical concerto, with power and speed. The percussion section is now used as a classical percussion section with snare, timpani and cymbals. The baritone enters after one minute with a brief iteration of more classically-influenced music where the rhythm is straight and not swung. After this we hear a sudden shift to up-tempo jazz swing (approximately 295 bpm) which only lasts for eight measures before the drum set stops and more dissonant language returns with pedal notes and ambiguous rhythm. Once we get used to the shift back to classical influence, the drums start again for another eight bars of up-tempo jazz swing feel. From this moment we can feel the swing and rhythmic propulsion from the hi-hat on beats two and four which pushes the orchestra forward in a method similar to a traditional big-band.

The shift to a much slower tempo reminiscent of the second movement occurs three minutes into the third movement. This clear tertian harmony supplies Mulligan an ample bed to improvise over before the orchestra is featured again without the soloist. When the baritone returns it is with a singing melody shifting between the two harmonic

worlds, ever slightly building dissonance.

At the five-minute mark of this movement the tempo again increases to the rapid tempo from the beginning, yet in a more classical style aided by instrumentation of the percussion without drum set. This section turns into a recapitulation with the rhythm section again playing the up-tempo swing feel, this time with Mulligan improvising on top. The ensemble builds excitement through the use of tremolo in the strings and percussive attacks by the brass and dynamic building pads in the winds. After a large build, the drum set drops out and the orchestra hits a large minor 11<sup>th</sup> chord. This moment turns into low volume shimmering tremolo chords in the strings with Mulligan improvising above. The piece then returns to the rapid tempo with the orchestra for thirty seconds before a powerful build by virtuosic material in the baritone leads to a final short punch from the tutti orchestra.

Proto's Saxophone Concerto is an extremely diverse mix of languages and forms. This concerto is one of the first for baritone to fit into the classical tradition of while incorporating jazz vocabulary. It is very successful and the blend of classical and jazz percussion is innovative. The application of improvisation makes the piece difficult or impossible for classical musicians to perform, and that may be one reason this piece is rarely performed or recorded.

### ***Entente* by Gerry Mulligan**

After commissioning several works by other composers, Gerry Mulligan (1927-1996) chose to compose his own concerto, *Entente* in 1984 for baritone saxophone and orchestra. The work is dedicated to conductor Zubin Mehta and was premiered the same



year with Mehta conducting the Filarmonia Veneta in Italy. Mulligan went on to perform the composition with several major orchestras, including the London Symphony Orchestra, New York Philharmonic, Israel Philharmonic, Houston Symphony Orchestra, Philadelphia Orchestra, Los Angeles Philharmonic and others (gerrymulligan.com 2018). Mulligan wrote in the liner notes of his album featuring *Entente*, titled *Symphonic Dreams* (1987), “The Dictionary definition of entente is: an understanding or agreement, and that’s what I was aiming for, a meeting of the minds between the solo instrument for jazz and the symphony” (Mulligan 1987).

*Entente* is close to thirteen minutes in duration and moves through several different moods and tempos. Although the piece is continuous, it could be interpreted as having internal movements. It is clear from this composition that Mulligan was highly influenced by classical composers as well as jazz composers. The language used by Mulligan primarily comes from the jazz vocabulary he has proven to be comfortable with, and the orchestration and application of strings is tied more to the classical tradition. Unlike the Duke Ellington Orchestra, Mulligan (like Proto) uses a classical symphony orchestra opposed to a jazz orchestra. Further connecting this piece with the classical tradition, rather than jazz, Mulligan’s percussion section consists of classical instruments, including timpani, snare, and cymbals opposed to a jazz drum set. There are moments similar to Beethoven and Mozart accompaniment such as in measures 300-307 where we can hear the influence of fugue in his writing. Mulligan chose to use his most comfortable range for the composition, which is the top two thirds of the instrument (written low F up to high F). Much of the composition is in the very top of the instrument’s range.

In the official recording of *Entente* on *Symphonic Dreams*, the introductory

material in the score is omitted and the orchestra begins at measure 52 of the score in altered form with the basses accenting beats one and four of the six four signature. I imagine that the original score was revised to indicate this substantial change. The original score would fall more into the established idea of concerto where the ensemble has a significant introduction before the entrance of the soloist instrument.

The piece begins in C minor and remains consonant for the entire composition, much more than Proto's concerto. The beginning has a spacious texture created by the ostinato figures in the bass and cello, along with the pads employed by the violins, viola, and woodwinds. Mulligan supports the melody with the similar timbre of bassoons at measures 89-97 to add to power of melody without taking away the attention from the soloist. In measure 97 the bassoon's role changes to assume the "response" function in a call and response section by filling in the holes of the baritone melody.

In measure 101 a much more jazz-based section is initiated by the accented rhythm of hitting the downbeats in the low strings along with the swing-style melody in the baritone, and the back beat feel of the high pizzicato strings. We finally hear the addition of the full brass in measure 105 building to the change from six-four to the four-four of measure 109.

Measure 109 returns to a classically-influenced section specifically aided by the use of timpani instead of drum set. The use of strings with *mp* bassoon and horn at 113 give the listener a drastic timbre change that only lasts four measures of 3/4 meter before the return of all horns minus strings at 117. This trading of timbre alternates until a large fermata in measure 127 that functions as a momentary cadenza, supported by a Bbm<sup>7</sup> chord, which we have not heard before. This change signifies a transition to a new

section of the composition aided by the re-harmonization of the existing material and the drum set simulation by the percussion section.

Measure 136 makes the most drastic coloristic change heard thus far when the piece modulates to the parallel key of C major. This new key is solidified by the use of what can be characterized as a vamp in jazz, executed by the low strings, low woodwinds, and glissandi harp. When the baritone enters we hear a jazz-based melody of minor thirds against the major thirds in the harmony (measure 148 and measure 152). This is a common application of blues inflection and is further aided by Mulligan strongly swinging the melody against the orchestra. This section can be thought of as the second movement of the concerto.

The melody we first hear at measure 147 is repeated at measure 164 with thicker orchestration and the addition of a violin counter melody. This melody in C major beginning at 147 is in AABA song form. The B section, which begins at measure 180 shifts to the relative A minor. This section is lushly orchestrated with strings in a higher tessitura utilizing tremolo for the first eight measures before rising higher with the high woodwinds before the eventual return of the final A section of the melody.

The final A section (in C major) begins at measure 196 and is much thicker, orchestrated with the entire orchestra with the woodwinds taking the melody from the baritone in measure 204 in the recording, although in the score the baritone continues another seven measures before resting. In measure 213 the orchestra performs the melody first introduced as a countermelody by solo violin. Measure 226 signifies a conclusive A section with modifications to end this large section of the concerto and enter a new and much faster area.

A fast new section, or third movement, of the concerto begins in measure 236. The 208bpm tempo is akin to that used in fast bebop. The eighth note melody is punctuated by downbeat accents in the orchestra on beat one of every other measure. This functions similar to soloistic trading in jazz. The orchestra joins in on measure 241 with steady time to solidify the forward momentum. The use of pizzicato in the strings is effective at maintaining momentum while establishing a light texture. This material is repeated while notated differently from four-four to two-four in half time with sixteenths instead of eighths.

As we know from previous examples, the recording differs from the score. The baritone is tacet beginning in measure 262 all the way to measure 318. This provides a chance for the listener to hear the ensemble without the soloist and to provide contrast. During this section the ensemble performs the material from measure 241 in an altered form reminiscent of fugal compositions from the classical period. The clearest example of this writing is heard in the section from measure (8:08) 279 to measure 307.

In the score the section beginning at measure 309 is an improvisation area for the baritone, but Mulligan chose not to play this part in the recording session and further features the orchestra until his momentary entrance at measure 318. The baritone is featured again at measure 329 with virtuosic writing while the string section functions as a jazz orchestra section with rhythmic hits commonly used in big band writing. This is then turned into an orchestral response to Mulligan's eight measure solo starting at 337 with the violins, violas, and cellos taking the material previously performed by the baritone. Instead of what is notated in the score at 348, the baritone begins to improvise. Mulligan continues to improvise over this eight bar chord progression for four cycles for

a total of 32 measures, (measure 380) a common number in the jazz idiom.

When we arrive at measure 380 the orchestra plays a highly embellished version of the melodic material heard initially by the baritone in measures 241-249. At this powerful moment the recording again deviates from the score. In the score, Mulligan joins the orchestra, however in the recording Mulligan rests until measure 396 where he joins in with the broad and singing melody. The drums during this section are playing a jazz-based ride cymbal pattern.

The final build of the composition is very powerful from the baritone playing the melody with the orchestra and the high strings. Measure 412 is the climax of the concerto and begins the slow decline in energy to end the composition. The way Mulligan chose to dissipate energy is through the percussion section resting and changing the subdivision from sixteenth-notes to eighth-note triplets. After a series of powerful hits and rising triplet motives, the orchestra lands on a large multi-octave concert C. This large ensemble moment gives way to the reiteration of the first material we heard in the piece. The diminutive orchestration clears a wide space for the baritone to be heard as it slows to the final low utterance.

The blend of jazz vocabulary, integration of both classical and jazz form, and improvisation with the classical symphony orchestration is very well executed in *Entente*. The internal form of three distinct sections (beginning through m.138, mm.139-235, and mm. 236-442) is indicative of a three movement concerto form within a single movement. Also, the use of different tempos and feels coincides with a multi-movement internal form. *Entente* is more rooted in consonant harmony than Proto's *Concerto for Saxophone*, yet both are extremely successful in their unique ways.

### ***Rhapsody for Baritone Saxophone* by Mark Watters**

Mark Watters (b. 1955) composed a classical concerto for baritone saxophone in 1985 titled *Rhapsody for Baritone Saxophone and Orchestra*. In a personal communication with Watters, he informed me that although it was originally composed for full orchestra, he also has a version for wind ensemble that has received more performances. Watters is an accomplished baritone saxophonist himself, and has toured the country performing with Harvey Pittel's saxophone quartet. Watters composed this piece as a, "showpiece for baritone saxophone," intending to increase the concert repertoire for the instrument (Watters 1985).

During a personal communication with the composer he wrote "My favorite composers at the time were Leonard Bernstein and Aaron Copland so I should not be surprised that their language had influence on me" (Watters 2018). The overall form of the piece is a traditional sonata form, including a large cadenza in the development section. The piece is in C major and modulates to F major as is to be expected in sonata form. Watters wrote that the piece, "is patterned after the Mozart wind concertos, primarily his bassoon concerto B flat K. 191" (Watters 1985). The overall harmonic content is consonant and based upon major seventh chords along with Lydian harmony and generally rotates between C major to F major (#11) when the baritone soloist is introduced. There are moments of minimal dominant flavored dissonance (diminished) such as at measures 44-57 where a pedal Eb is utilized while E diminished is emphasized above in the woodwinds. This harmonic gesture is commonly known as a dominant

seventh flat ninth chord in jazz (Eb7b9), but the harmonic consonance returns by measure 58 when this resolves to F major.

The composition is a single movement and has the duration of approximately thirteen minutes. It is extremely well orchestrated in both versions leaving ample space for the baritone to soar above the ensemble. There are many moments where the baritone is written near the top of its range and the accompanying orchestration is thin to allow clarity. This can be seen at rehearsal letter D where the horns and clarinets (strings in the symphony orchestra version) give ample space both vertically and horizontally to hear the baritone as the top voice.

The only extended technique in the piece is the use of the altissimo register. The composition requires a baritone with a low A and Watters extends the range a tritone above standard saxophone writing up to altissimo B. This is executed well by approaching the note step-wise as opposed to leaping to the note unprepared. We can see this six measures before the end of the cadenza. There are several other moments where the baritone reaches into the altissimo range (Figure 4.1). They occur at measure 83, where a G# is required, measure 163 with a high Bb, and lastly measure 368 with a G#. There is one instance of a low A, which is heard in the cadenza, and there is one instance of a low Bb in measures 144-146.

**Figure 4.1: Altissimo Examples in *Rhapsody for Baritone Saxophone and Orchestra***

Composed by Mark Watters

Measures 83-85

Measures 161-166

Measures 366-369

*fp*

### ***Celebration Suite* by Bob Brookmeyer**

Bob Brookmeyer (1929-2011) was a well-known valve trombonist, pianist, and composer born in Kansas City. He was one of the most influential jazz composers of his generation, and recorded with great artists such as Bill Evans, Chet Baker, Jimmy Giuffre, Jim Hall, Gil Evans, Thad Jones, Mel Lewis, Gerry Mulligan, Claude Thornhill, Miles Davis, and many others (Kernfeld 2002, 311).

Brookmeyer was one of the most influential big band composers of the twentieth century. He was nominated for eight Grammy awards and taught some of the most innovative composers and arrangers in the next generation including Maria Schneider, Darcy James Argue, and John Hollenbeck to name a few. He composed and arranged jazz orchestra music for Thad Jones, Mel Lewis, Gerry Mulligan, Claude Thornhill, New Arts Orchestra, and many others. He revolutionized jazz composition by incorporating classical concepts, as heard in his 1980 arrangement of “Skylark.” He also worked with electronic instruments as can be heard in his 1990 album *Electricity* featuring John



Abercrombie. A trademark of Brookmeyer's style was to incorporate new harmonic and rhythmic language while maintaining the swing style in the drum set.

Brookmeyer's *Celebration Suite* is a thirty-minute, four movement concerto composed for Gerry Mulligan in 1995.<sup>4</sup> *Celebration Suite* is orchestrated for a traditional big band with several augmentations: baritone saxophone soloist, two alto saxophones (doubling on soprano saxophone and clarinet), two tenor saxophones (doubling on soprano saxophone and clarinet) baritone saxophone (doubling on bass clarinet), five trumpets (lowest two doubling of flugelhorn), three tenor trombones, bass trombone, percussion (primarily vibraphone), synthesizer, piano, double bass, and drum set. Unlike many big band compositions, Brookmeyer chose to notate the exact voicing he wanted performed in both the synthesizer and piano parts for all four movements. There are some moments where he chose to give the players interpretational freedom by notating chord changes. This is most commonly done during improvisation sections of the baritone, and also in sections where the melody is being performed by the baritone alone with the rhythm section, such as in the second movement at measures 78-84.

Mulligan premiered the work in 1995, but due to his illness and subsequent death, the recording session included saxophonist Scott Robinson instead of Mulligan.

Brookmeyer had a long history with Mulligan, including being his band-leader of the successful Mulligan Concert Jazz Band which featured compositions and arrangements by leading artists in the 1960s. Brookmeyer composed the piece for a low Bb baritone

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<sup>4</sup> I was fortunate to study with Bob Brookmeyer from 2004-7 at the New England Conservatory. We became great friends and he completely supported my journey as a baritone saxophonist and composer. His concept of baritone was enlightening because he had so much experience working with Gerry Mulligan, Pepper Adams, Gary Smulyan, Ronnie Cuber and many other top baritonists to grace our planet. In the spring of 2018 Dr. Ken Schaphorst, director of jazz studies at the New England Conservatory, organized a celebration of Bob Brookmeyer's life. I was fortunate to be invited as the guest artist to perform the *Celebration Suite* with the New England Conservatory Jazz Ensemble.

because he was aware that Mulligan only played that instrument. The composition includes many moments of improvisation for the soloist to express their individuality.

Brookmeyer's writing for the baritone is exquisite. His awareness of the possibilities and limitations are evident throughout. He often decreases the density of orchestration for the baritone to be heard perfectly. There are moments in each movement where the baritone is either completely alone, accompanied by the rhythm section (piano, guitar, double bass, drums), or in duet with the drum set. There are breaks in the writing where the baritone captures the attention of the listener by being completely alone, such as in measures 69-101 of the fourth movement titled "Two And." These one bar solos function in the jazz tradition of "trading" with another group of solo instruments, yet it is with the entire jazz orchestra. This is an instance of call and response that is important to the overall work, the need for baritone saxophone to have space to be heard was well understood by Brookmeyer. We can see breaks in measures 203-219 where the ensemble has rhythmic hits while the baritone improvises on top of the texture, taking the role of time-keeper and propulsive device. This makes the piece extremely challenging for the soloist because the intensity of the piece can't decrease and the tempo can't fluctuate.

The tessitura of the solo baritone part is in the highest third of the baritone range. This decision was probably made because that is where the saxophone projects most effectively, and also because that is where Mulligan tended to play melodies. Unlike Carney, who would perform melodies in the lowest range of the baritone, Mulligan usually played near the top, which effectively makes the instrument seem more agile and less heavy in tone. The lowest note written for the baritone is a B natural in the middle of the staff, more than an octave above the lowest Bb possible, and this only happens twice

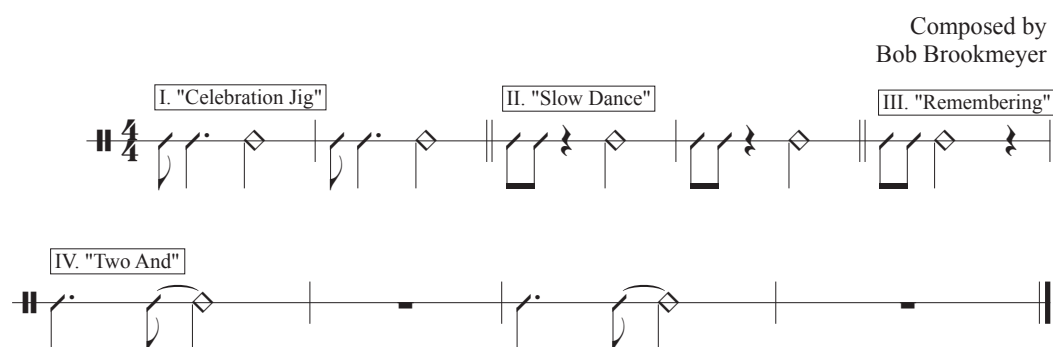
in the composition. There is one moment in the first movement, where Brookmeyer wrote a solo break for the baritone which reaches down to a low D, but the entire jazz orchestra is tacet so we can hear this. With the exception of this low D, the entire work could be played on tenor saxophone without the necessity of octave displacement.

The first movement, “Celebration Jig,” is fast (224 bpm), forming a powerful yet short introduction to the work with a duration of two and a half minutes. The motive of the piece is initially heard with the first musical entrance by the high trombones and synthesizer. This rhythmic and harmonic motive is used as the primary melodic material and is manipulated by off-setting the rhythmic motive in a variety of ways. This initial melody is reminiscent of a jig by superimposing a 6/8 feel on top of the fast notated 4/4. Brookmeyer creates excitement by holding off from the low tessitura of the bass until absolutely necessary. He also uses the solo breaks effectively for creating variety in the texture. The solo baritone part includes written melodies and the option to improvise. The piece is only playable by an experienced jazz improviser because of the consistent interjections of improvisation. The use of open harmony for the baritone saxophone to improvise is highly effective in the middle of the work, which then turns into an ensemble shout section style until the fermata? ends the piece strongly.

The second movement, “Slow Dance,” is medium tempo (144 bpm) and full of many elements of swing that come directly out of the big band tradition. This movement is longer, with a duration of eight and a half minutes. “Slow Dance” begins with a similar motive to “Celebration Jig” but the rhythmic motive becomes evened out by eliminating a dotted eighth rhythm and instead uses two eights, followed by a quarter rest and a half note. This creates cohesion from the initial movement. Brookmeyer is patient to allow the

ensemble ample time to establish the feel of the new movement before the entrance of the baritone.

**Figure 4.2 Comparison of Rhythmic Motives in *Celebration Suite***



When the entrance of the baritone occurs we have solid grounding of suspended dominant seventeenth tonality, a favorite of Brookmeyer. Brookmeyer uses modulation to create new color with the same material. The piece consists of groups of either three or four four-bar phrases (twelve measures or sixteen measures).

The third movement, “Remembering,” is the slowest at 72bpm. This eleven-minute movement is a ballad with gorgeous melodies and lush orchestration. Brookmeyer chose to change the instrumentation of the saxophone section in this movement, introducing three clarinets and two bass clarinets in the section to create a woody and warm timbre for the baritone to be heard instead of competing against saxophones.

After the introduction (mm. 1-17), the form of the melody is A, A, B, C, C. This corresponds relatively closely to a traditional AABA song form. Brookmeyer makes it more interesting than a simple eight or twelve bar phrase structure by occasionally adding two or four measures such as at mm. 40-41 and 58-61. The movement then enters a solo section, followed by an ensemble shout chorus, followed by the B material orchestrated

differently. The movement ends with the A material in similar orchestration as we initially heard beginning in measure 18.

The final movement of the *Celebration Suite* is “Two And,” which is a rhythmic figure Brookmeyer has favored in many of his compositions. Brookmeyer chose to utilize the eighth note upbeat in much of his music which gave it an excited and anticipatory energy. “Two And” has a duration of slightly over ten minutes with a tempo of 208 bpm. This final movement is highly powerful and energetic, and the most technically challenging of the composition.

“Two And” has some new attributes which help build the intensity from the start. The drum set is a featured soloist through the entire piece and plays high tempo duets with baritone and trombone. The piece begins with a four bar drum solo to build excitement. This is followed by many one bar solos in call and response with the orchestra. The addition of trombone soloist also changes the texture of the work. This was done because of the tradition that Brookmeyer and Mulligan established playing together since the 1950’s. Brookmeyer performed the trombone part when he recorded the *Celebration Suite*. The timbre of baritone and trombone further changes the texture of the composition and brings a welcome new color. The large solo breaks for the trombone and baritone are very dramatic and dangerous because of the possibility to de-rail the ensemble if rhythmic inaccuracies occur. There is a large solo break for the baritone at measures 203-219 where the band only hits the and of four in the fourth measure, and again on the and of four of the eighth bar. After this the drummer joins the baritone for the last four bars before the entire rhythm section joins for the official solo section.

As would be expected from the title, the dominant rhythm of the movement is the

upbeat of beat two. This rhythm is established by the ensemble playing between the one bar drum solo trading from the beginning and used as the prime rhythmic motive of the composition. This rhythm is moved around throughout in a multitude of fashions by offsetting the eighth note onto downbeats and onto different off beats. We can see the rhythmic usage of tied quarter to eighth moved the and of four in measures 124-129. This change in rhythmic motives can be seen below in Figure 4.3.

**Figure 4.3: Changes in Rhythmic Motives in *Celebration Suite***

Composed by  
Bob Brookmeyer

Primary Rhythmic Motive

Measure 124

Measure 163

Measure 295

Measure 313

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Brookmeyer creates a dramatic conclusion to the concerto by requesting the baritone and trombone trade four-bar improvisations. This decreases to two-bar alternations, which then morphs into collective improvisation. An unexpected ending occurs from the first iteration of alternating quarter note tom toms beginning measures 359 in the drum set before a massive G minor thirteenth chord by the entire ensemble (minus piano).

### ***Konzert für Baritonsaxophon und Orchester* by George Haas**

Georg Friedrich Haas' (b.1953) twenty-two-minute *Konzert für Baritonsaxophon und Orchester* (2008) is vastly different than the other compositions being examined. These differences are rooted in the fact that Haas is a composer from the classical tradition. This piece is an excellent example of classical composers using the techniques pioneered by the jazz saxophonist Hamiet Bluiett in the 1970s. Haas's *Konzert* relies heavily on extended techniques for the baritone as well as the orchestra. This contemporary classical composition asks the baritone soloist to utilize extreme altissimo, multiphonics, and growling. The music itself exemplifies post-spectralism as it is largely focused on timbre. For example, at several moments in the piece the ensemble draws pitches from multiphonics in the baritone.

The majority of Haas's *Konzert* is built on tone clusters with a moving melodic line around them, which creates rhythmic ambiguity and lack of forward momentum. Much of the string writing is reminiscent of Krzysztof Penderecki's compositions *Threnody to the Victims of Hiroshima* from 1960 composed for 52 string instruments, and Penderecki's 1962 composition *Polymorphia*, which is a work that incorporates a 48-piece string orchestra. Both pieces use a vast array of extended techniques including rhythmic propulsive devices, which are absent in Haas's work, which is more static. Divisi strings in Haas's *Konzert* contribute to the sound mass, which are unison for moments only to break into more clusters in measures 31-32. The piece mostly rhythmically free. The rhythm of the baritone seems as though it is improvised out of time, yet it is meticulously notated.

Haas's piece is mostly based on tone clusters. This is evident in the first few

measures of the work, which include the low notes C, G, E, with high F#, G, D, A, Bb, and B natural. This dense tonality based on the harmonic series sets the mood of what is to come for the rest of the piece. The pedal C is a common theme through the first few measures, this allows the baritone to play the written low A (concert C) at a triple forte dynamic for the initial appearance. The baritone overblows the low A to achieve the overtone series which supports the surrounding orchestration. An ostinato figure is heard in the cello using the same note of concert low C. The use of alternating tri-tones is heard throughout and can be seen at 51 between the C#-G, Eb-A, D-Ab, and Db-A. This is further explored by the ostinato figure in measure 54 where the double bass and cello are fighting over the D and Ab.

This texture continues for a substantial duration as different half-step dissonances intersect, with the baritone hoping to squeal its way to the top of this dense harmonic cluster. The texture is broken many times by shifting dynamics and tessitura, although a clear moment isn't heard until measure 120 where the baritone changes textures by utilizing multi-phonics on top of the same half step dissonance heard previously. This change to the baritone performing multiphonics occurs at the middle point of the piece. This is only momentary before the half step atrocities enter again. Then the half step movement returns, except the baritone is now employing pianissimo multiphonics.

The use of multiphonics is important to the construction of the piece, and we can see that the pitches created by these multiphonics are supported by the orchestra. This also happens in reverse, where pitches played by the orchestra lead to multiphonics in the baritone. In measures 247-248 we can see the notes played by the baritone being repeated by the clarinets. This is heard in reverse order at measures 269-272 where the orchestra



introduces the pitches included in the baritone multiphonic in measure 272. A baritone multiphonic answer is heard similarly in measures 283-284.

**Figure 4.4: Application of multiphonics for pitch material**

The figure displays a musical staff in 4/4 time, divided into six measures. Above the staff, boxes indicate the instruments and measures for multiphonic applications: Baritone at measure 247, Clarinet 1, 2, 3 at measure 248, Orchestra at measure 271, Baritone at measure 273, Orchestra at measure 283, and Baritone at measure 284. The notation shows various clusters of notes and accidentals (sharps and flats) on the staff, representing the multiphonic material. The first two measures (247-248) show a low, sustained note with a flat. Measures 271-273 show a cluster of notes with sharps and flats. Measures 283-284 show a similar cluster of notes with sharps and flats.

The baritone begins performing single note melodies in measure 162, but this time the brass is playing low pitched moans which quickly become a half step apart. This timbre continues until measure 186 where the baritone plays the most melodic line we have yet heard, based upon tritones and an augmented dominant 7th chord (C-F#, F-A-C#-Eb). The baritone then returns to the altissimo register we heard after the introduction based upon half steps and/or major sevenths. This constant movement between either half steps or tri-tones is seen again in the melody at measures 207 and 218-219.

After a break in texture the baritone returns to multi-phonics at measure 236, and at 253 marks the return to a denser version of the material in measures 12. The return to the low A melody from the beginning of the piece is heard at measure 299. This texture asks the baritonist to play the low A as loud as possible and let the instrument break its core to achieve the overtones in an upward motion. This is similar to an exercise from the Sigurd Rascher *Top Tone* altissimo book (1941). After the loud ensemble return of half steps and tri-tones, there is a textural break for the baritonist to hold an altissimo concert C# against the crotales C natural in the same octave for the remaining two minutes of the piece while the orchestra exits and enters with more of the same half steps with

fluctuating dynamics and rhythmic entrances.

These nine compositions show a diverse and growing repertoire for baritone saxophone and large ensemble. It is evident that the demands on the baritone soloist have increased. The use of altissimo and multiphonics are recent additions to the baritone palette. The application of improvisation is still a large divide between classical and jazz composers, yet contemporary classical composers such as Haas have included dense sections simulating avant-garde jazz improvisation. The application of classical concerto form beginning with Frank Proto's composition *Saxophone Concerto*, displays the blending of jazz and classical music. Many of the composers have chosen to utilize the higher range of the baritone while accompanied by the orchestra to be heard through the texture, although the entire range is often utilized once the orchestration is reduced or minimized.

## Chapter 5

### *Analysis of the Jeru Concerto*

The four-movement *Jeru Concerto* is twenty-two minutes in duration and scored for baritone saxophone soloist, flute, oboe, Bb clarinet, bassoon, contrabassoon, two trumpets, horn, trombone, tuba, harp, vibraphone, drum set, four violins, two violas, two cellos, and double bass. The concerto is named after and dedicated to my son Jeru, who wasn't yet born when I began composing it the fall of 2014. Jeru was the nickname of Gerry Mulligan given to him by Miles Davis. One of my best friends who passed away in 2013 was Gerry Genuario, who I called "Jer." Genuario was an outstanding drummer who toured with Debbie Reynolds, Sammy Davis Jr., and Frank Sinatra. I was thinking of both of these musicians when naming my son.

One reason I composed the *Jeru Concerto* was to add to the repertoire for baritone saxophone soloist and create a composition that incorporates many different genres that have influenced my journey. My original intention was to have three movements similar to a traditional concerto, but after completing the three movements, it was clear that a fourth movement needed to be composed to fulfill my goal to properly capture my son's inquisitive, intense, and loving spirit. This was accomplished by creating a rapid fourth movement with power, propulsion, and intensity throughout.

I began the compositional process by recording improvisations I performed on the baritone. I took this route because I wanted to compose for the saxophone in the most organic approach I could imagine. This kept the composition idiomatic to the possibilities of the instrument included in my vocabulary. When I found that my improvisations

accurately characterized my son, I transcribed them. I began improvising the material before Jeru was born, and found that I needed to start fresh once I began to see his personality emerge.

Over the course of several months after Jeru was born, I performed and recorded improvisations while concentrating on my son's personality. Sometimes I would play with Jeru and then pick up my saxophone and record while he was listening. On one of the recordings, which turned into the first movement, you can hear him cooing. The transcription process was extremely time consuming because the rhythmically and metrically free nature of my performance was filled with metronomic fluctuations. I had to make decisions as to where one measure began and the other ended and try to fit the melodies into usable rhythmic groupings. This required extensive editing to achieve positive results.

Once the transcriptions were complete, I began to harmonize the melodies by transposing the saxophone part into concert pitch and then using a piano to play the melody in the right hand while finding the appropriate chords in the left. Sometimes I would input the melodies into Finale, export them as a MIDI file and work on them in Logic. This would enable me to use different sounds to compose for a fresh perspective. Much of the harmonization was in my ear before I began at the piano and it was a matter of finding the chord that I was already hearing when I initially improvised. This was largely based on the harmony implied by the melody, however occasionally what I was hearing was contrary to the implied harmonic outline.

Orchestration was another important aspect of the compositional process. One focus was to keep the tessitura of the baritone saxophone melody out of the range of

competing instruments. Many times while orchestrating I would clear a third above and below the saxophone as to make sure there weren't competing frequencies close to the baritone. This window above and below proved to be useful at moments where the saxophone needed clarity.

The harmonic language of the composition is a culmination of my influences and is more grounded in consonance than that of dissonance. My compositional and improvisational voice is melodic and I have the desire to create memorable melodies with consonant and dense harmonies. My use of dissonance is usually short lived and only for the purposes of creating of tension and release. The harmonies I used come from my favorite artists, including Bill Evans, Wayne Shorter, Motown Record's Artists, Maurice Ravel, Claude Debussy, Gerry Mulligan and Duke Ellington. I was also inspired by the Great American Songbook, where many jazz artists took inspiration. Movements one, three, and four are in minor keys, G, D, and D respectively, with the second movement being in D major.

Once the harmonization was complete, I began to orchestrate the music and attempted to capture the fluidity and nature of the original improvisation. Although improvisation is at the core of the composition, I only included one large area for improvisation, which is the beginning of the second movement. This "cadenza" shifts from D minor to D major (concert pitch). The cadenza is used to link the first movement to the second. The soloist has the option to improvise within the confines of this progression from minor to major, or to perform the transcribed solo included in the baritone part. I included a transcription to enable a non-improviser to execute the concerto, although during the recording session I chose to improvise the cadenza.

I composed some of the accompanying rhythms of the concerto by using transcriptions of drum rhythms composed by producer and composer J Dilla (James Yancey) from his 2006 album *Donuts*. I transcribed the entire album and used the most effective drum patterns throughout. I also transcribed several drum patterns from the master of syncopation, James Brown. These rhythms provided punctuated momentum to the instruments performing the harmonic and rhythmic accompaniment function.<sup>5</sup> While this type of accompanying gesture was mostly used in the strings, I also used this technique in other sections of the orchestra depending on what textures were required for momentum. This strategy enlivened what might otherwise be static pads of harmony throughout the movements while the baritone performed the primary melody.

Something I find to be extremely important is composing for specific artists. I read Duke Ellington's autobiography *Music Is My Mistress* when I was eighteen and the impact was life lasting (Ellington 1973). Ellington wrote extensively about composing music for specific artists opposed to a generic musician. He wrote for Harry Carney, not just any baritonist, and he knew his strengths and weaknesses. I took this route and booked the recording session before finishing any of the concerto, and had in-depth conversations with most members of the orchestra to learn from them and write something specifically for them. This approach isn't always possible, especially with large ensemble commissions for an unfamiliar orchestra or group, but whenever possible I have found this to be important to the soul and integrity of my music.

The only extended techniques I used for the *Jeru Concerto* were altissimo and circular breathing. I have developed a strong octave above the standard saxophone range.

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<sup>5</sup> See measure 74 in Figure 5.1 below for an example of drum set emulation in the strings to create forward momentum.

I commonly use the altissimo range up to altissimo F, and when I was improvising and recording the core material I went into the altissimo out of necessity for the melodic lines. The concerto has altissimo notes in all movements, yet the highest notes are heard in the fourth movement where the melody drives up to an altissimo F. This was aided in the recording process by doubling these notes with trumpet and vibraphone to thicken them and avoid the shrillness possible in that extremely high range of the baritone.

### **Movement One**

I chose to open the composition with powerful and rhythmic entrances by the majority of the ensemble at a tempo of 128 bpm, but left the drum set out of this opening. This creates power once they enter in the eighth measure with a snare roll before an explosion into the highly active drum pattern. The acoustic bass also doesn't play until the ninth measure to build excitement. Once the primary melody, played by the baritone soloist and woodwinds, is heard, the energy is withdrawn by removing the drum set and utilizing a rubato. I chose not to include any repeats in the work to make it easier to read and to avoid the exact repetition of material. However, there is a repeat of the melodic material I thought of as the A section from measure 23-30, and then we hear it again from measures 31-39 orchestrated differently and with the melody embellished (Figure 5.1).

**Figure 5.1: Melodic material in measures 23-30 repeated differently in measures 31-39**

2

JERU CONCERTO  
ONE

3

JERU CONCERTO  
ONE



The drum set part is entirely notated, unlike the majority of jazz music repertoire. I wanted the drummer to play precise rhythms to inter-lock with the acoustic bass, low brass, low woodwinds, or other instruments depending on the moment of the work. You can see a steady increase of activity in the drum set after the large introduction. Much of the piece utilizes the simple instrumentation of bass drum and snare drum, although the actual notation is very difficult to execute. The choice to use drum set was to build a bridge between jazz and classical music. I wanted to apply the momentum and clarity only an actual drum set could deliver. I chose one of the top drummers in the world to play on the recording, Justin Brown, who tours with Herbie Hancock, Flying Lotus, Thundercat, Ambrose Akinmusire, and several other groundbreaking artists.

One influence on the form of my concerto is the call and response between the orchestra and soloist found in Mozart's concertos, Brookmeyer's *Celebration Suite*, and Watters' concerto. I wanted the orchestra to respond to the baritone melodies and sometimes the most effective technique was to take the melody from the baritone and pass it to the orchestra. We can hear this idea at measures 36-39 where the orchestra takes the end of the phrase from the baritone. This is heard again at measures 78-81 (Figure 5.2).

**Figure 5.2: Displaying the orchestra performing the main melodic idea in measures 36-39 and 78-81 in Movement One**

The musical score is presented in two systems. The first system covers measures 36-39, and the second system covers measures 78-81. The score is for a full orchestra, including Flute (Fl.), Oboe (Ob.), Clarinet (Cl.), Bassoon (Bsn.), Horn (Hn.), Trumpet (Tpt.), Trombone (Tbn.), Tuba (Tuba), Violin (Vln.), Viola (Vla.), Violoncello (Vcl.), and Double Bass (D.B.). The tempo is marked 'allegro' and 'tempo'. The dynamics range from *mp* (mezzo-piano) to *f* (forte). The score shows the main melodic idea in measures 36-39 and 78-81, with the woodwinds and strings providing harmonic support.

The interlocking rhythms proved to be highly effective, yet very difficult to execute. By breaking the drum set part into different sections, I was able to keep momentum without relying on the drum set. You can see a moment of this at measure 40 where the drum set only plays the bass drum. This pattern interconnects with the bass and cellos, while the violins and viola function as a snare drum. This figure is augmented in measure 47 when I add the woodwinds to this drum set emulation technique. Much of the reason for this usage comes out of the desire to provide rhythmic interest to the ensemble in their function of establishing the harmony.

Overall, I attempted to keep the orchestration thinner when the baritone was

highly active, and thicker when the baritone was performing long tones. At high-energy moments I doubled the baritone melody with other instruments to maintain power and the ability to hear the primary melody. You can see this in measures 96-106 where the flute, horn, and vibraphone join the melody along with the baritone.

The first movement ends with a large ensemble section at forte and fortissimo dynamics. After the first iteration of the melody I chose to modulate up a whole step from G minor to A minor. This facilitated a large sonic change for the entrance of the solo baritone cadenza that links the two movements.

### **Interlude**

A baritone cadenza is placed between the first and second movement. I recorded and transcribed a cadenza so a non-improvising musician can effectively perform the concerto. I believe the ideal situation is for an improvising soloist to take the energy from the first movement and spontaneously transfer that into a musical bridge between the two very different movements. C.P.E Bach (Bach 1753, 431-432) and Quantz (Quantz 1752, 179-182) both describe in detail how to properly include an effective cadenza applicable to this situation. The directions in the score are: “Baritone can play the written music, or improvise between D minor and D major, ending with the resolution to D major as the prevailing key at measure 43.” I chose to improvise in the recording session and it seemed natural and effective.

### **Movement Two**

The second movement begins with lush chords played by the entire orchestra. In

this movement the drums are tacet because I felt a need to change timbre and use a more fluid melodic, and consonant palette. I wanted to experiment with the drum-set emulation technique previously discussed to provide forward momentum which began at measure 78 (Figure 5.3).

**Figure 5.3: Example of drum set emulation in the string section in measures 79-81 of Movement Two**

As opposed to the first movement, this movement is in a major key: D major. The melody first introduced on the baritone saxophone is now performed by flute and violin. The baritone takes the melody again at measure 58 and continues this role for the remainder of the movement. As in the first movement, I reinforced the baritone melody by doubling it with other members of orchestra in important moments such as at measures 73-77 where the harp performs the melody with the baritone.

The movement has a more “chorale”-like quality than any of the other movements. There are very large and long chords built up to the 13<sup>th</sup> for color. I used this to sonically

represent the love I have for my son. He is a very loving boy and I wanted to represent how kind and gentle he is. There are textural changes, such as a move to pizzicato in measure 78 to further describe Jeru's active, yet sweet spirit. This is another moment where I executed my drum set emulation technique to establish harmony while creating momentum. A moment of optional improvisation is heard in measures 85-89, yet I chose not to improvise in the recording session because the timbral change was more effective than a solo which could muddy the palette.

The second movement has a slow build which eventually leads to a large and powerful section at measure 101 with the entire orchestra playing strong and contrapuntal sixteenth note rhythms with the baritone soaring on top aided by flute and horn doublings.

### **Movement Three**

The third movement is the most mysterious and haunting movement of the *Jeru Concerto*. This was accomplished by the use of major seventh flat five chords followed by suspended fourth dominant seventh chords a half step below. This ambiguous repetition provides a mysterious bed for the baritone soloist to improvise on. This is the most harmonically ambiguous movement, including contradictory harmonies on top of the pedal points established. This can be seen in measures 7-12 in the vibraphone and harp against the strings (Figure 5.4).

**Figure 5.4 Harmonic ambiguity in the beginning of Movement Three in measures 1-21**

**FULL SCORE IN C** **JERU CONCERTO THREE** **BRIAN LARSEN DECEMBER 2016**

♩ = 80

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The third movement was the first section of the concerto I composed. The mysterious color corresponds with my anxiety about having my second child. He was due to be born about a month after I began composing. I was scared to have my second child and my emotional state is obvious in the sonic language of this movement. As the piece progresses the fear is transformed into joy and excitement, although it ends how it began, with wonder and ambiguity.

During the majority of the movement the drum set is employed sparingly, only using the bass drum and snare, in order to create a groove while avoiding the cymbals as to not cover the other orchestral timbres. The drummer doesn't play heavily except for fourteen measures (mm.59-74) where he performs on cymbals along with the kick drum and snare drum.

After the powerful tutti section I decreased the energy by removing the

instruments through decrescendos and decreased the energy by changing the prevailing sixteenth note rhythms to half time eighth notes. There is improvisation suggested for the baritone, but it isn't required. I chose to lightly and spaciouly improvise for the recording session, but a non-improvising saxophonist can rest during this section.

### **Movement Four**

The fourth movement was composed in a different fashion than the others. It became clear that I needed to include a powerful movement that was fast and energetic to properly represent my son. I decided to record myself improvising at a fast tempo. I set my metronome at 208 bpm and improvised. I took the recording and imported it into Logic. I matched the metronome clicks of 208 with the program and used "Flex Pitch" function in Logic to transform the audio file into a MIDI file. I had never used this before but was interested to see if it was accurate. As it turns out it is highly accurate, and although I had to spend several hours editing, it saved me many hours that I would have had to spend to transcribe it all by hand. After I had the concert pitch transcription I took it to the piano and harmonized it the same way that I did the other three movements.

Because of the tempo and my use of drum set emulation in the instrumental parts, this is by far the most difficult movement to perform. All instruments in the orchestra have virtuosic passages and are required to play in extreme ranges. I further employed techniques from the other movements such as melodic doublings, ensemble melodic takeover (via call and response), and timbral shifts.

There is a large section in the middle (m. 240) where the tempo is reduced to half time and the orchestra gets a moment to breathe before the tempo doubles again. Even

though this wasn't part of my original improvisation, I felt that the movement needed a moment of rest. The inclusion of this slow section with large chords cleanses the palette for the next rapid section. The rapid tempo returns at m. 253 for the duration of the piece (Figure 5.5).

**Figure 5.5: Example of half-time section in measures 240- 252 in Movement Four**

The image displays a musical score for "JERU CONCERTO: FOUR", measures 240-252. The score is for a full orchestra and includes parts for Flute (Fl.), Oboe (Ob.), Bassoon (Bn.), Clarinet (Cl.), Bassoon (Bsn.), Horn (Hr.), Trumpet (Trp.), Trombone (Tbn.), Tuba (Tuba), Violin (Vln.), Viola (Vla.), Violoncello (Vcl.), and Double Bass (Db.). The score shows a half-time section with large chords and a tempo change to 104. The score is divided into two systems, with the first system ending at measure 252 and the second system starting at measure 253. The tempo change is indicated by a "104" in a box. The score is for a full orchestra and includes parts for Flute (Fl.), Oboe (Ob.), Bassoon (Bn.), Clarinet (Cl.), Bassoon (Bsn.), Horn (Hr.), Trumpet (Trp.), Trombone (Tbn.), Tuba (Tuba), Violin (Vln.), Viola (Vla.), Violoncello (Vcl.), and Double Bass (Db.). The score shows a half-time section with large chords and a tempo change to 104. The score is divided into two systems, with the first system ending at measure 252 and the second system starting at measure 253. The tempo change is indicated by a "104" in a box.



The powerful fourth movement ends with a baritone cadenza shifting from Db major to D major (Figure 5.6). This improvisation required me to stay in Db for the majority of the cadenza and then momentarily shift to D major for the ensemble to enter with their fast melodic line we first heard as the opening gesture of the movement to end the concerto.

**Figure 5.6: Conclusion of *Jeru Concerto***

## Recording Session

The recording session for the *Jeru Concerto* occurred on January 4th and 5th of 2017 at the Systems Two recording studio in Brooklyn, NY. The orchestra was comprised of well-known New York City musicians who perform in the classical, jazz, and popular music idioms.<sup>6</sup> The music was recorded for my record label, BlueLand

<sup>6</sup> Musicians on Generations include: Brian Landrus-baritone saxophone and bass clarinet, Jamie Baum-flute, Tom Christensen-flute

Records, and released on July 29, 2017 as part of the Brian Landrus Orchestra's *Generations* album. This album received international acclaim including being on the "Best Of The Year 2017" lists released by *NPR*, *Huffington Post*, *Downbeat Magazine*, *JazzTimes Magazine*, and many other international publications. Giovanni Russonello of the *New York Times* declared: "With "Generations," his new album for 25-piece orchestra, Mr. Landrus, a baritone saxophonist, takes the jazz big band tradition into the mesosphere" (Russonello 2017).

Composing this piece was one of the most important and challenging experiences of my life. The *Jeru Concerto* fits into the lineage of large ensemble baritone compositions which continue to mix genres, experiment with formal structures, and use extended techniques. I wish to have the piece performed by many other saxophonists but the demand of extreme altissimo has so far limited the performance possibilities. I believe this is currently changing because of the increase in standardized performance practices of extended techniques. I am currently organizing performances of the work internationally and am beginning to compose a concerto for the similar instrumentation featuring bass clarinet, my second instrument.

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and oboe, Darryl Harper-clarinet, Michael Rabinowitz-bassoon, Alden Banta-Contra Bassoon, Debbie Schmidt-horn, Ralph Alessi-trumpet, Igmarr Thomas-trumpet, Alan Ferber-trombone, Marcus Rojas-tuba, Brandee Younger-harp, Mark Feldman-violin, Sara Caswell-violin, Joyce Hammann-violin, Meg Okura-violin, Lois Martin-violin, Nora Krohn-violin, Jody Redhage-cello, Maria Jeffers-cello, Joe Locke-vibraphone, Jay Anderson-acoustic bass, Lonnie Plaxico-acoustic and electric bass, Billy Hart-drum set, Justin Brown-drum set, JC Sanford-conductor, Robert Livingston Aldridge-producer, and Frank Carlberg-producer.

## **Appendix A**

### **Full Interview Transcripts of Composers and Performers**

#### **Composers**

##### **Frank Proto interview with Brian Landrus, March 1, 2019:**

**BL:** Can you please tell me about this composition?

**FP:** In our original discussions, Gerry specifically mentioned that he wanted me to “push him in any direction that I wanted.” He wasn’t out to woo jazz critics of the day. He wanted to “stretch” himself and find new places where a soloist who was comfortable with written music as well as being an improviser, could find new avenues of expression.

I remember completing the piece in the mid 70s and Gerry performing it quite a few times during that period, including one that I remember VIVIDLY. It was in Chicago with the Grant Park Orchestra on the night Richard Nixon resigned the presidency! A great memory - especially the part about Nixon! In fact I’d write another concerto, gratis, for anyone who could guarantee me that Trump would be resigning on the night of ANY performance!

The only performances - about 10 or 12 - were done by Gerry and since he passed away the piece has not been performed. The reasons get involved ranging from some feeling that it was designed strictly for Gerry - which is entirely wrong, to it really isn’t that good a piece.

##### **Mark Watters interview with Brian Landrus, August 26, 2018:**

**BL:** What was your primary inspiration for the piece?

**MW:** My composing career began when I took a course on film scoring at the UCLA Extension. The class was taught by a wonderful man named Don Ray. Don was a wonderful composer who had worked on such TV shows as “Hawaii Five-O” “The Twilight Zone” “Gunsmoke” “Gilligan’s Island” and “Wild Wild West.” He was a dear, dear man and we became friends immediately. Don was the conductor of a small orchestra in Los Angeles called the Committee On the Arts Symphony or COTA as it was affectionately referred to. He commissioned me to compose a piece for the 1982-83 season. When I told him I wanted to compose a piece for baritone saxophone and orchestra he was not that thrilled, I’m afraid. He was not a big fan of the saxophone. I’m happy to say that I changed his opinion!

**BL:** What do you think are the stylistic influences?

**MW:** I think most composers may not be the best person to recognize a specific inspiration. I know I’m not. Reviewers have noted Leonard Bernstein’s influence. My favorite composers at the time were Leonard Bernstein and Aaron Copland so I should not be surprised that their language had influence on me. Ironically, the opening of the piece sounds so similar to Bernstein’s “Candide” but it was actually a cue from Elmer Bernstein’s “To Kill a Mockingbird” score that gave me the idea to start the piece with a bang. I also was a fairly accomplished guitarist and was a big fan of many rock guitarists. I think the B section, the part that is based on the diminished scale, is more influenced by Carlos Santana than any classical composer.

## **Performers**

### **Frank Basile interview with Brian Landrus, September 3, 2018:**

**BL:** Do you know of any other large ensemble works I should include in the lineage of the baritone literature?

**FB:** As ubiquitous as it may be, you may want to discuss 'Moanin' by Charles Mingus. It's unfortunately a somewhat hackneyed theme nowadays, but I think its popularity has inspired a generation of young baritone saxophonists (specifically the Mingus Big Band arrangement). I can speak to this personally because one evening in 1993 as a middling high school baritone saxophonist, I happened to hear Ronnie Cuber playing this on the radio and it was like a bolt of lightning. I look at it as a life-changing experience. I said, "I want to do THAT!" This was also my gateway to checking out Pepper Adams, as I subsequently sought out the original 1959 recording.

Less common than Moanin' but just as much of a powerhouse showpiece for baritone is "Lickety Split" written as a feature for Gary Smulyan by Jim McNeely. You're probably hip to it.

**BL:** What do you think has lead to the increase of large ensemble baritone compositions since the 1950s?

**FB:** I'm not sure... Perhaps simply that more composers and instrumentalists were inspired to follow the path that Duke Ellington and Harry Carney forged.

**BL:** Do you see an increased role as a soloist? If so, I'm what settings?

**FB:** Other than trying to play well at all times, not really. ;)

**BL:** Have you played in jazz and classical situations on baritone? What do you see as the difference in approach/tone/rhythm?

**FB:** I have only played in limited classical situations in college, so I'm probably not qualified to answer this.

**BL:** Do you have a favorite large ensemble piece to perform?

**FB:** As a soloist? "Little Rascal on a Rock" and "My Centennial" by Thad Jones; "Thank You" by Jerry Dodgion.

**BL:** Do you prefer a low Bb, or Low A baritone?

**FB:** The first horn I owned was a low A (Selmer Super Action 80 II). As an aspiring baritone saxophonist, people told me that if I wanted to work at all, I'd need the low A. But as I began to get more interested in jazz playing and less interested in the prospect of being a woodwind doubler/show player, my perspective began to change. I'd say what really guided my decision to use a low Bb horn was the fact that all the baritone players who were my favorites (Harry Carney, Leo Parker, Cecil Payne, Charlie Fowlkes, Pepper Adams, Gary Smulyan) all played on a low Bb horn. I wanted to take their cue. The only person on my list of favorites who uses a low A is Ronnie Cuber (and sometimes Cecil Payne). To me a low A baritone almost feels like a different instrument altogether. I like that a low Bb baritone feels like a saxophone. The fact that it weighs less doesn't hurt either! I know there's much discussion as to intonation/resonance issues with low A horns, and there may be something to that, but I personally can't speak to it.

**Claire Daly interview with Brian Landrus, January 6, 2019:**

**BL:** What do you think has lead to the increase of large ensemble compositions featuring baritone since the 1950s?

**CD:** I think the baritone has come into it's own since the 50s because of players like

Gerry Mulligan, (maybe Leo Parker). Mulligan was probably the first bari player to receive attention as a soloist (I might be wrong here), for whatever reasons, he really was well known and gave the big horn credibility in the public eye. Harry Carney was a muse of Duke's, but I don't think his name was as well known, and as you know, he wasn't known for his soloing.

**BL:** Have you commissioned or premiered any works for baritone?

**CD:** I've not commissioned or premiered any works, but composer David MacBride wrote one for me called "Where in the World is Claire?" It hasn't been performed yet.

**BL:** Do you see an increased role as a baritone soloist? If so, in what settings?

**CD:** Yes, I see increase in bari soloists in jazz groups, big bands, large ensemble pieces and contemporary composition. I think there is a healthy representation of good players who are bari players. There will always be a percentage of listeners who tune into the lower frequencies.

**BL:** Do you believe increased understanding of the possibilities of the instrument has played a role?

**CD:** Yes, increased understanding of possibilities would play a role there. Creative players have extended the range, used multiphonics and more to expand the palate.

**BL:** Have you played in jazz and classical situations on baritone? What do you see as the difference in approach/tone/rhythm?

**CD:** I've played mostly in jazz settings, but have done a good amount of modern composition. I've played classical sax quartets (I have a pretty extensive collection) but I haven't cultivated a classical sound. The tone - to my ears - of classical sax sounds almost like a string instrument. I've never tried to do that.

**BL:** Were you trained as a classical and/or jazz musician?

**CD:** My training was at Berklee, so not so much classical.

**BL:** Do you primarily practice transcriptions originally written for other instruments, or music written specifically for saxophone?

**CD:** I primarily practice saxophone stuff. I think because the horn was only invented in the 1850's, it's come a long way in a short time. While the bari might at one time have been relegated to playing bass line/root kind of work, it's now a fully integrated instrument. Thinking of harry carney in duke's band, Leo parker in dizzy's big band, Motown, rock bands like morphine, lots of different settings for the bari.

**Joan Marti-Frasquier interview with Brian Landrus, January 7<sup>th</sup>, 2019:**

**BL:** What do you think has lead to the increase of large ensemble compositions featuring baritone since the 1950s?

**JMF:** I think that there are many facts. One of them, the curiousness of some composers to find different colors in the sound palette of the orchestras took them to develop and improve the baritone parts. At the same time, the engagement of some very good baritonists to encourage composers to write more and more advanced pieces for the instrument.

**BL:** Have you commissioned or premiered any works for baritone?

**JMF:** Yes, I have both commissioned and premiered several works (around 40) for baritone solo, with electronics, with piano, etc. (even concertos).

**BL:** Do you see an increased role as a baritone soloist? If so, in what settings?

**JMF:** In my opinion, the specialization in the baritone by saxophone players is more



recent in classical/contemporary music than jazz. In spite of the copious amount of saxophone quartets, “classical” baritonists used to play other saxophones and didn’t focus on the baritone as jazzmen like Harry Carney, Serge Chaloff, Gerry Mulligan or Pepper Adams did in the middle of the 20th Century. Fortunately, the number of baritone specialists in classical/contemporary has grown up and now it is easy to find performers who put the baritone as their first saxophone as Damien Royannais and Eric Devallon (France), and more recently Jay Byrnes (Australia), Makoto Hondo (Japan) and The Four Baritones (The Netherlands).

**BL:** Do you believe increased understanding of the possibilities of the instrument has played a role?

**JMF:** Yes, of course. In contemporary music, composers and performers usually try to go further with the possibilities of the instruments and this kind of sound exploration has benefited the baritone saxophone a lot. I think that an increasing amount of a good quality of repertoire is producing an increasing amount of baritonists who want to showcase the possibilities of this instrument in concert.

**BL:** Have you played in jazz and classical situations on baritone? What do you see as the difference in approach/tone/rhythm?

**JMF:** I have only played jazz with my baritone sax in a few big bands but played it a lot in wind bands. I think that the role of the baritone saxophone in these formations is quite similar harmonically/rhythmically but a little bit different melodically. I see the baritone as a one more saxophone in a big band and, on the other side, as one more member of the low section in the wind bands beside the tuba, euphonium and bassoon.

I never played jazz as a soloist but when I do some free improvisations I realize that we

contemporary music players have lot of common things with jazzmen as the exploration of sound, the research of open structures and models, etc.

**BL:** Were you trained as a classical and/or jazz musician?

**JMF:** I was trained as a classical saxophone player. However, I have always been a curious person and opened to all kind of music styles and art.

**BL:** Do you primarily practice transcriptions originally written for other instruments, or music written specifically for saxophone?

**JMF:** I always try to play original pieces for baritone saxophone in my concerts.

As a teacher, I often practice transcriptions because there is not a large amount of easy/intermediate level pieces originally composed for the instrument and so, I take advantage to play works for other instruments from other ages in order to enlarge the musical background and culture of my students.

**BL:** Do you prefer a low A, or low Bb baritone?

**JMF:** I always play with a low A baritone because a great part of the contemporary music repertoire contains low A. It is a little bit heavier than the low Bb, but it allows me to have the opportunity to play all the repertoire. I play with a Selmer Series III. It is fantastic for the intonation of treble register, projection, weight (a little bit lighter than the Selmer Series II) and ergonomics

**BL:** Please tell me about your career and your website dedicated to baritone saxophone techniques and repertoire.

**JMF:** In 2011, I started my career as a baritone saxophone soloist in classical/contemporary music. Since then, I tried to promote the instrument by encouraging some composers to write for this instrument, convincing some young

students to go a step beyond in their careers and put the baritone as their second (after the alto) saxophone, performing the original repertoire in different festivals and making a website with interesting contents about the instrument. I would like to highlight some posts about techniques, repertoire, comments on works and a list of more than 650 works (and it keeps growing!) in order to be useful for all baritone players.

**Henk van Twillert interview with Brian Landrus, September 11, 2018:**

**BL:** Do you see an increased role as a soloist? If so, in what settings?

**HVT:** The last 20 year's I am activating composers write for Baritone; Chiel Meijering, Gijs van Dijk, Jacob TV.

**BL:** Has increased understanding of the possibilities of the instrument played a role?

**HVT:** of course, when I started I just could choose the cello.

Suites of Bach, now I have a huge choice in compositions, and it doesn't stop!!

**BL:** Have you played in jazz and classical situations on baritone? What do you see as the difference in approach/tone/rhythm?

**HVT:** The difference is just the mind-set, that will change your concept of sound, and that can also change the material such as reed and mouthpiece choices.

Rhythm has the same, although timing has the same value in Bach as well in Ellington.

**BL:** Do you have a favorite large ensemble piece to perform?

**HVT:** Well, I played recently a great arrangement of Pavel Chesnokov; Salvation is Created., also Air of Bach with 4 baritones, and of course compositions of the before mentions composers.

**BL:** Please tell me anything else that you believe to be important to the baritone

lineage/literature.

**HVT:** The most important is changing concept of sound, including changing reeds etc. and let the music be heard what comes from the heart!!!!

**Roger Rosenberg interview with Brian Landrus, December 31, 2018:**

**BL:** What do you think has lead to the increase in large ensemble compositions featuring the baritone since the 1950's?

**RR:** As time goes on composers are looking for more kinds of mediums. Its a place for the composers to go that's new territory. The innovation has come from the soloist. We used to only get to play over the blues in a big band, not the more interesting solos. People tend to ask someone they know who can really play the instrument to take solos. It isn't like it was at one time. Its more of a possibility.

My teacher Danny Bank thought of the baritone as a cello. I think more people are playing baritone than ever before. Its been a rare instrument before now. Mulligan was a writer and arranged and made the stuff himself. Harry Carney was an innovator-he had a huge sound and you could hear him through the entire orchestra. The range of the baritone has ben extended. Using the altissimo is great, but only when its an extension of the instrument. Not just squeaks out of nowhere. I don't think the musicians are necessarily better musicians than they were before.

**BL:** Have you commissioned or premiered any works featuring baritone?

**RR:** I haven't commissioned anything, but Buddy Rich arranged "Round Midnight" for me. When we went into the studio we played the arrangement but Buddy didn't like the arrangement-it wasn't traditional enough. Dick Lead wrote a new arrangement of the

song for me. After I left the band Steve Marcus played the arrangement on tenor.

Once I was asked to play a baritone feature on movie called *Family Business* with Dustin Hoffman. But when the movie came out the song was coming out of the radio when two people were fucking. And that was that.

I have some baritone solos on several Steely Dan records. I have one on the *Everything Must Go* record, on “Pixeleen”. They recognize the instrument as a valuable member of the band. There’s also a Walter Becker record called *Circus Money* where I have two solos. Bob Mintzer has had me solo on most of his records.

**BL:** What do you see as the difference in approach to the baritone as time goes on?

**RR:** The baritone players play less like Gerry and Harry and more like Ronnie and Pepper. The sound is grainier with more highs in it. One thing that gets me with a baritone player is if the horn sounds like it’s playing them. It doesn’t sound like a voice. It sounds like they’re trying to defeat the instrument or in combat with it.

**BL:** What have you seen as evolution in your own performance practice?

**RR:** When I was coming up, after I stopped listening to Mulligan, Coltrane was my big influence. So my approach had a lot of that element in it. I didn’t feel influenced by Pepper, but Coltrane. I was also influenced by Ronnie Cuber’s early work. When I was playing with Chet Baker I played many notes, and now that I’m older I tend to play slower.

**BL:** Were you trained as a classical and/or jazz musician?

**RR:** I wasn’t trained as a classical musician. The school offered a baritone to my family because my family didn’t have money to buy an instrument. I had a feeling for baritone and could play it immediately. I began getting opportunities to play at camps with

outstanding players. After going to college and hearing Michael Brecker I began playing tenor saxophone. I studied with Eugene Rousseau and Joe Allard. I never studied legit saxophone. I never went through all the literature. I would take lessons with classical teachers, but I never went through the official classical training, I learned on the job. I'm a good enough musician to blend with ensembles.

I've played with the New York Philharmonic and many other classical orchestras. You almost have to become a religious fanatic to get really good, but if you stay that way it becomes a problem. I tend to be much more influenced by Joe Allard.

**BL:** Do you primarily practice transcriptions originally written for other instruments, or music written specifically for saxophone?

**RR:** I practice the Bach Cello Suites but I don't truly know how to phrase them like a classical musician. I find that when I play these its wonderful growth for a musician.

**BL:** How has your equipment choices changed over the years?

**RR:** First of all I've tended to as the years have gone on I tend to use brighter setups. I use a Jody Jazz DV 6 with a Legere reed. I got into baffles years ago. Several different makers have made me custom pieces with a baffle. Eugene Rousseau sent me several mouthpieces that were very very good. Right now I'm playing in a saxophone quartet so I needed a totally different mouthpiece. I got a very old rubber Otto Link 4 from the legendary doubler Ray Benckenstein which is incredibly closed, and for this kind of playing, it's more cello-esque and its what I'm using for this project. Ideally you have a mouthpiece that works for everything, but realistically that doesn't always work.

One day when I was kid I boiled my mouthpiece, it changed colors, and that was it with that one. After that I was taken to a music store and bought a rubber Berg (Larsen).

I took a Berg to Frank Wells (In Chicago) who customized it for me. I don't know if it made a big difference to the tone, but it made a big difference to the feel and response. I use a medium closed setup. The fact that everything is so loud and that we are always playing with electric instruments its beneficial to have something like that (high baffle mouthpiece). We don't exactly know how it sounds out front. It's funny cause theres less and less work, but there's more and more makers of saxophones and mouthpieces.

**BL:** Do you prefer a Low A or Low Bb baritone?

**RR:** For years I played on low Bb horns, and then after many years I had to get a Low A Mark VI (Selmer). It was in the early 80's when I switched to the low A. A lot of the first recordings I did were on a Conn (Low Bb). It was a question of the work that I began doing. There was a time in NYC when all saxophonists had to play a Dukoff mouthpiece to get a gig. You have to adjust to whatever your situation is. There was a period of time when people like Danny (Bank) and Joe (Temperly) would say the low A baritone is no good. At a certain point I believe it effected their careers. If you don't have the equipment there are consequences to pay, but that's up to you.

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