

New and Lesser Known Works for Saxophone Quartet:
A Recording, Performance Guide, and Composer Interviews

by

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ABSTRACT

This project includes composer biographies, program notes, performance guides, composer questionnaires, and recordings of five new and lesser known works for saxophone quartet. Three of the compositions are new pieces commissioned by Woody Chenoweth for the Midwest-based saxophone quartet, The Shredtet. The other two pieces include a newer work for saxophone quartet never recorded in its final version, as well as an unpublished arrangement of a progressive rock masterpiece. The members of The Shredtet include saxophonists Woody Chenoweth, Jonathan Brink, Samuel Lana, and Austin Atkinson. The principal component of this project is a recording of each work, featuring the author and The Shredtet.

The first piece, *Sax Quartet No. 2* (2018), was commissioned for The Shredtet and written by Frank Nawrot (b. 1989). The second piece, also commissioned for The Shredtet, was written by Dan Puccio (b. 1980) and titled, *Scherzos for Saxophone Quartet* (2018). The third original work for The Shredtet, *Rhythm and Tone Study No. 3* (2018), was composed by Josh Bennett (b. 1982). The fourth piece, *Fragments of a Narrative*, was written by Ben Stevenson (b. 1979) in 2014 and revised in 2016, and was selected as runner-up in the Donald Sinta Quartet's 2016 National Composition Competition. The final piece included in this project is a transcription and arrangement of *Tarkus* (1971), written by Keith Emerson (1944-2016) and Greg Lake (1947-2016) for the iconic progressive rock supergroup, Emerson, Lake & Palmer. This unique and unpublished arrangement was crafted by Peter Ford (b. 1964) for Ohio-based saxophone quartet Sax 4th Avenue and first featured on the ensemble's 1998 album, *Delusions de Grandeur*. These pieces were recorded in the E-Media Studios of the College Conservatory of Music at the University of Cincinnati, as well as A2 Audio Studios in Cincinnati, Ohio, in January and February of 2019.

DEDICATION

To my loving parents, Candyce and William Chenoweth. Thank you for your enduring patience and steadfast love and support throughout my tumultuous musical, academic, and personal journey.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

First and foremost, I must thank my committee chair, Dr. Christopher Creviston, for his guidance and support during this project. I also wish to extend my sincerest appreciation for his willingness to mentor a student with whom he had never worked prior to this project.

I would also like to thank the other members of my doctoral committee, Dr. Joshua Gardner, Professor Michael Kocour, and Dr. Ted Solis. Your pedagogy, professionalism, and encouragement throughout my graduate studies at Arizona State University helped me to believe in myself and my ability to complete my doctoral degree.

I also want to thank the five composers who contributed to this project: Frank Nawrot, Dan Puccio, Josh Bennett, Ben Stevenson, and Pete Ford. It was an honor and a privilege to collaborate with you and share your music.

Additionally, I would like to acknowledge and thank the other members of The Shredtet and the extended Shredtet Family. Without your contributions of time, artistic input, love, and support, this project would have not been possible.

Thank you, Aaron Almashy, for well, everything. You were essential in making this project a reality. Thanks also to Jennifer Grantham for volunteering your time and serving as primary producer during the recording sessions.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The goal of this project is to expand the repertoire for saxophone quartet. Three of the pieces included are new works written for this project. The fourth piece was written in 2016 for a call for scores for the Donald Sinta Quartet's 2016 National Composition Competition. The fifth piece is a transcription and arrangement of a progressive-rock masterpiece. The central feature of this project is a recording of all five works.

In addition to the recording, this paper also includes composer biographies, background information on the compositions, program notes, performance guides, and composer questionnaires. Questionnaires were designed to obtain background information on the composers and their compositions so that future performers have access to knowledge helpful in studying and performing these works. The questions and the composers' responses may be found in Appendices D-H.

CHAPTER 2

SAX QUARTET NO. 2

Composer Biography

Frank Nawrot's biography states:

I am from Grand Rapids, Michigan. My musical style is inspired by Bruno Mars, Maurice Ravel, Meshuggah, Julius Eastman, and Steve Martland.

I've been lucky to have my music performed at numerous venues and locales: in Hong Kong, in NYC, in Chicago, at ArtPrize, St. Cecilia's Music Center, George and Barbara Gordon Gallery, Northern Illinois University, Henderson State University, Bowling Green State University, and the Broad Art Museum. I've presented my research on composition pedagogy several conferences and in 2015, I presented my research on minimalist composer Julius Eastman at the Fifth International Conference on Minimalist Music in Finland.

My research interests are in composition pedagogy, minimalism, and popular music. My concert music is influenced heavily by my rock and pop roots and by a desire to create music that draws attention to important social issues.¹

Background Information on the Composition

I have been a fan of Frank's music for several years, ever since he started writing pieces for students in my saxophone studio at Eastern Michigan University. I knew I wanted to commission him for a piece on this project. In a happy coincidence, Frank had an unfinished saxophone quartet he started in 2016 called *Four Voices* that had never been performed. Excited to revisit an earlier, unfinished composition, he updated and made several revisions to the piece before sending me the final version in December 2019.

¹ Frank Nawrot, "About," Frank Nawrot Composer, accessed 10 March 2019, <http://franknawrot.com/about/>.

Performance Guide

In the performance notes for *Sax Quartet No. 2*, Frank writes:

Quarter notes with staccato markings are to be played unaccented and the same length as an eighth note. Because of the rhythms, this notation is much easier to read as it requires far less rests.

Always maintain precise rhythms à la a rock record on which a click track is used to ensure rhythmic and temporal accuracy between live performers.

Play notes with a staccato-tenuto articulation marking for their full duration, but separate them from one another to ensure clarity of rhythm.

Always treat upcoming dynamics as “subito” unless otherwise notated.

After the Prelude section, there are six primary motives used. They are sometimes altered but the meter of these motives remains constant and are independent of the overall meter. Each motive has a letter label (A-F). See the following page for a key for the motives.

The Piece Proper will require intense individual concentration and quarter-note synchronization among the players due to the contrapuntal peculiarities. Although there are four different meters represented among the six motives, they all have a quarter-note denominator in their time signatures.²

The piece begins with a rhythmic prelude with frequent changes in meter. The “piece proper” starts at measure 54 and consists of a series of 6 independent and overlapping motives. The lengths of these motives vary, as does the meter implied by their rhythmic groupings. This creates complex phrase structures that do not frequently align.

Nawrot’s *Sax Quartet No. 2* presents several challenges for the performers. The first challenge is to maintain a consistent tempo and subdivision throughout the piece. Performers will have to work hard to avoid slowing down. The second challenge is matching style and articulation across the ensemble. A third challenge relates to the

² Frank Nawrot, *Sax Quartet No. 2*, 2018.

work's phrase structures. Frank uses a process called metrical phrasing in this piece, which he describes as “a process where different musical voices are playing in different meters simultaneously, and the form of such a piece is determined by the re-syncing of motives or melodies.”³

³ Frank Nawrot, *Sax Quartet No. 2*, 2018.

CHAPTER 3

SCHERZOS FOR SAXOPHONE QUARTET

Composer Biography

Dan Puccio's biography states:

Dr. Daniel Puccio is a Phoenix based composer/arranger, multi-instrumentalist and educator. A saxophonist comfortable in multiple genres, he has performed with such notable artists as the Temptations, the Four Tops, Chris Potter, Dave Holland, Jerry Lewis, and Bernard Purdie. He is one of the original members of the Bobby Streng Saxomble, and is a prominently featured soloist on the group's premier recording, "Live At The Firefly." In 2010 he traveled to Cuba, where he studied the role of the saxophone in Cuban music, and performed with numerous Cuban ensembles, including Palmas y Cañes. He is the founder of the Positivity Project—a series of mixed media collaborations using music, live video and dance.

His compositions and arrangements have been performed across the United States by various collegiate and high school ensembles including the University of Michigan Jazz Ensemble, Mesa Community College Concert Band, the Newberry College Jazz Ensemble. His *Jazz Mass* (a seven movement setting of the ELW Liturgy commissioned by the University of Michigan) premiered with the LOL All-Stars in 2007. Other commissions include *Papa's Farm* (a four movement dance suite) for the West Texas A&M Department of Dance Centennial, and *Bone Portraits* for the Herberger Institute for Design and the Arts. His compositions and arrangements for the world premiere of Charles L. Mee's *soot and spit* were nominated for a 2013 AriZoni Theater Excellence Award for best original score, and his music for Liz Duffy Adam's *Dog Act* has received a 2014 AriZoni nomination for the same category.

As an educator, he has served as Faculty Instructor of Saxophone at the Interlochen Arts Camp, and as a clinician for the University of Michigan Jazz Festival, the Highland Jazz Festival, and the Crystal City Jazz Festival in Corning, NY. He has also been a featured guest artist and clinician with the University of Richmond's Cuban music ensemble.

Dr. Puccio is the instructor of Woodwinds with Arizona State University's Sun Devil Marching Band, and is the Director of the widely acclaimed ASU Dixie Devils. Dr. Puccio also serves on the teaching faculty at Desert Ridge Music Academy and Music Maker Workshops. He has previously served as the Director of Sound and Recording for the Arizona State University School of Music.

He holds degrees in Improvisation, Music Education, and Saxophone Performance from SUNY Potsdam's Crane School of Music, the University of Michigan, and Arizona State University.⁴

Background Information of the Composition

I approached Dan about this commission in August 2018. I worked and performed with Dan throughout my studies at Arizona State University. He specializes in jazz and commercial styles and is an outstanding improviser. Through our conversations we settled on creating a piece that is influenced by rock, funk, and other popular styles. A connoisseur of musical mischief and comedy, I requested that Dan also incorporate some of his well-known sense of compositional humor in its creation. According to Dan, the “piece derives its title from the direct translation of scherzo – jokes. Each movement has a gag.”⁵ The end result was collection of five scherzos that can be played as a consecutive set of movements, or performed individually as stand-alone pieces, or even as interludes.

Performance Guide

Movement I: All Together, Now

Movement 1 is “based on a turning drill, and someone always screws it up.”⁶ All members of the ensemble play a Concert A tuning note but the entrances are intentionally staggered rhythmically. This creates the sense of tuning procedures gone wrong. A performance note in the parts encourages the players to convey a sense of growing frustration. The tuning episodes are interrupted by short, chaotic interjections

⁴ Dan Puccio, “About,” Dan Puccio Music, accessed 10 March 2019, <http://www.danpucciomusic.com/about.html>.

⁵ Dan Puccio, Composer Questionnaire.

⁶ Ibid.

marked “Frantic and Angry” and “Wild and Crazy.”⁷ The movement humorously ends on a Concert E-flat.

Movement II: Play Pretty

The second scherzo is a beautiful chorale that Dan describes as “a Chacconnesque movement where the Soprano parts act as the ‘ground bass’ (even though it’s the highest voice), and chorale continues to vary itself around it.”⁸ The three lower voices change with each statement of the soprano melody, becoming increasingly more and more dissonant. The final statement of the chorale melody is extremely dissonant, emphasizing the irony of the title. The movement resolves on a “pretty” B-flat major triad. Discerning performers and audiences will no doubt recognize the harmonic progression borrowed from Prince’s iconic 1984 hit, *Purple Rain*.

Movement III: A Minute Past Crazy

The third movement of this quartet is a more traditional scherzo “based on a static unison, with occasional freak-outs by the quartet.”⁹ This movement utilizes a constant sixteenth-note subdivision as a rhythmic “motor,” propelling the piece to its boisterous conclusion. The frantic quality of the movement, coupled with a run-time of just over a minute, perfectly aligns with the purposefully chosen title.

Movement IV: Is This Funky?

The fourth movement poses a question to the listener: “Is This Funky?” The gag here is that this movement is definitely not funky, at least not in the stylistic sense. Dan describes this movement as “a Viennese-esque waltz, that sometimes winds up in four, or

⁷ Dan Puccio, *Scherzos for Saxophone Quartet*. Score.

⁸ Dan Puccio, Composer Questionnaire.

⁹ Ibid.

five, just to bother people.”¹⁰ This whimsical movement is quite reminiscent of a circus carousel.

Movement V: No, But This Is

The final movement is a “funk influenced response” to the question posed by movement four. ¹¹ As its title infers, this movement is written in a funk style reminiscent of funk and soul icons, Tower of Power. This movement includes an open section for improvisation for the soprano or tenor saxophone.

¹⁰ Dan Puccio, Composer Questionnaire.

¹¹ Ibid.

CHAPTER 4

RHYTHM & TONE STUDY #3

Composer Biography

Josh Bennett's biography states:

An active educator, freelance musician and arts administrator, Josh Bennett holds a Master of Music in Clarinet Performance from Arizona State University and a Bachelor of Music in Clarinet Performance from University of Missouri Kansas City Conservatory of Music. As an educator, Mr. Bennett is an Adjunct Professor at Paradise Valley Community College and has a private woodwind studio. His performance accolades include performing with various professional ensembles such as the Arizona Opera, Crossing 32nd Street, and Phoenix Theater. Mr. Bennett has also performed and presented at a variety of conferences including the OME Marathon Festival, ASU Contemporary Music Festival, Society for Ethnomusicology Southwest Chapter, and the ISIM Sixth Annual Festival/Conference.¹²

Background Information on the Composition

I had the opportunity to premier one of Josh's pieces on his second doctoral recital, performed at Paradise Valley Community College. One of the included new works was *Rhythm & Tone Study #2*. I enjoyed learning and performing the piece, so when I began thinking about composers to commission for this project, I knew immediately that I would ask Josh to write a piece for saxophone quartet. Initial discussions centered around creating another piece in the "Rhythm and Tone Study" series for four like-sounding instruments. *Rhythm & Tone Study #3* was completed in December 2018, and premiered at Eastern Michigan University's Alexander Recital Hall on January 12, 2019.

¹² Josh Bennet, "Bio," Black Air, accessed 10 March 2019, <https://www.blackairclari.net/bio/>.

Program Notes

In the program notes for *Rhythm & Tone Study #3*, Josh writes:

Rhythm & Tone Study #3 was written for my dear friend and colleague Woodrow Chenoweth and his saxophone quartet in Michigan. RTS3 is based on a 9-pitch [Equally Divided Octave] scale... while being in 9/8 time. The piece should begin in a meditative and plaintive fashion. Then, over time, that plaintive feeling gives way to more and more stringent and, at times, wild harmony and sound.¹³

Performance Guide

In the performance notes for *Rhythm & Tone Study #3*, Josh writes:

The intonation should be strictly adhered to. Work out fingerings ahead of time using the given pitch set.

DO NOT TRANSPOSE YOUR PART – play as written for instant harmonic complexity.

While the piece was originally written for sax quartet, ANY group of like-sounding instruments can play this piece.

All repeats are ad lib, and the length of the work should be determined by the ensemble ahead of time.

If something doesn't work in the octave written (or would work better in a different octave) feel free to change the octave. However, I like to write music "on the edge" of being impossible (and good taste) with the full expectation that some things don't work—so use that information to your musical advantage.

With the above in mind: Feel free to make changes as the group sees fit. As long as the intonation and written pitches stay intact, I don't actually care.¹⁴

This piece is based on a 9-note, Equally Divided Octave (EDO) scale. All parts are to be played without transposition to aid in the creation of "experimental harmony."¹⁵

The first part of this piece is a study in tone and intonation, centered around the

¹³ Josh Bennett, *Rhythm & Tone Study #3*, 2018.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Ibid.

ascending 9-note EDO scale in the soprano voice, with the three lower voices alternating different pitches of the scale with staggered entrances. Since the 9-note EDO scale presents challenges to all players, with the tuning of each interval needing to be adhered to strictly, players will need to experiment with fingerings to achieve the desired tunings. These microtonal fingerings may vary for each voice in the saxophone quartet. Fingerings used by The Shredtet are included in Figures one through four, to serve as a guide for future performers of this piece. The tone study builds to a dynamic climax with all voices in the quartet returning to their respective first notes of the scale.

The second part of the piece is the “rhythm study” and is much shorter than the previous “tone study” section. The primary challenge in this section is maintaining rhythmic accuracy in the individual parts to ensure alignment and cohesiveness of each four-measure cycle¹⁶ This section builds in dynamic and rhythmic density until concluding with all voices ending again on the first pitch of the 9-note EDO scale.

¹⁶ Josh Bennett, Composer Questionnaire.

Figure 1

Microtonal Fingerings for Soprano Saxophone¹⁷

The first sequence consists of five notes on a treble clef staff. The first note is a quarter note with a natural sign. The second note is a quarter note with a flat sign and a '-66' interval label above it. The third note is a quarter note with a flat sign and a '-33' interval label above it. The fourth note is a quarter note with a flat sign. The fifth note is a quarter note with a flat sign and a '-66' interval label above it. Below the staff are five fingering diagrams, each corresponding to a note. Each diagram shows a simplified saxophone body with circles representing keys. Black circles indicate which keys are pressed for that note.

The second sequence consists of five notes on a treble clef staff. The first note is a quarter note with a flat sign and a '-66' interval label above it. The second note is a quarter note with a natural sign. The third note is a quarter note with a flat sign and a '-33' interval label above it. The fourth note is a quarter note with a flat sign and a '-66' interval label above it. The fifth note is a quarter note with a natural sign. Below the staff are five fingering diagrams, each corresponding to a note. Each diagram shows a simplified saxophone body with circles representing keys. Black circles indicate which keys are pressed for that note.

¹⁷ Bret Pimental, "Fingering Diagram Builder," accessed 19 April 2019, <https://fingering.bretpimentel.com/#!/saxophone/>.

Figure 2

Microtonal Fingerings for Alto Saxophone¹⁸

The first sequence consists of five notes on a treble clef staff. The notes are: a quarter note G4, a quarter note F#4 with a sharp sign and a '-66' microtonal adjustment above it, a quarter note F4 with a '-33' microtonal adjustment above it, a quarter note E4 with a flat sign, and a quarter note D4 with a '-66' microtonal adjustment above it. Below each note is a fingering diagram for the alto saxophone, showing the positions of the keys (represented by circles and ovals) and which keys are pressed (represented by black dots).

The second sequence consists of five notes on a treble clef staff. The notes are: a quarter note G4 with a '-66' microtonal adjustment above it, a quarter note F#4 with a sharp sign, a quarter note F4 with a '-33' microtonal adjustment above it, a quarter note E4 with a flat sign and a '-66' microtonal adjustment above it, and a quarter note D4. Below each note is a fingering diagram for the alto saxophone, showing the positions of the keys and which keys are pressed.

¹⁸ Bret Pimental, "Fingering Diagram Builder," accessed 19 April 2019, <https://fingering.bretpimentel.com/#!/saxophone/>.

Figure 3

Microtonal Fingerings for Tenor Saxophone¹⁹

The first sequence consists of five notes on a treble clef staff. The notes are: a quarter note G4, a quarter note F#4 with a -66 microtonal shift, a quarter note F4 with a -33 microtonal shift, a quarter note E4, and a quarter note D4 with a -66 microtonal shift. Below each note is a fingering diagram for the tenor saxophone, showing fingerings for the left hand (index, middle, ring, little) and right hand (index, middle, ring, little) on the keys, with black dots indicating which keys are pressed.

The second sequence consists of five notes on a treble clef staff. The notes are: a quarter note D4 with a -66 microtonal shift, a quarter note E4, a quarter note F4 with a -33 microtonal shift, a quarter note F#4 with a -66 microtonal shift, and a quarter note G4. Below each note is a fingering diagram for the tenor saxophone, showing fingerings for the left hand (index, middle, ring, little) and right hand (index, middle, ring, little) on the keys, with black dots indicating which keys are pressed.

¹⁹ Bret Pimental, "Fingering Diagram Builder," accessed 19 April 2019, <https://fingering.bretpimentel.com/#!/saxophone/>.

Figure 4

Microtonal Fingerings for Baritone Saxophone²⁰

The first sequence consists of five notes on a treble clef staff. The notes are: a quarter note G4, a quarter note G4 with a flat sign and a downward arrow labeled '-66', a quarter note G4 with a flat sign and a downward arrow labeled '-33', a quarter note G4 with a flat sign, and a quarter note G4 with a flat sign and a downward arrow labeled '-66'. Below the staff are five corresponding fingering diagrams for the baritone saxophone. Each diagram shows the keys of the instrument with black dots indicating which keys are pressed. The diagrams correspond to the notes above: G4, G4 flat (-66), G4 flat (-33), G4 flat, and G4 flat (-66).

The second sequence consists of five notes on a treble clef staff. The notes are: a quarter note G4 with a flat sign and a downward arrow labeled '-66', a quarter note G4, a quarter note G4 with a flat sign and a downward arrow labeled '-33', a quarter note G4 with a flat sign and a downward arrow labeled '-66', and a quarter note G4. Below the staff are five corresponding fingering diagrams for the baritone saxophone. Each diagram shows the keys of the instrument with black dots indicating which keys are pressed. The diagrams correspond to the notes above: G4 flat (-66), G4, G4 flat (-33), G4 flat (-66), and G4.

²⁰ Bret Pimental, "Fingering Diagram Builder," accessed 19 April 2019, <https://fingering.bretpimentel.com/#!/saxophone/>.

CHAPTER 5

FRAGMENTS OF A NARRATIVE

Composer Biography

Ben Stevenson's biography states:

Kansas City based composer/librettist Ben Stevenson's music has been heard across the United States. Most recently his opera *Domestic* was chosen to be featured at the Fort Worth Opera's 2018 Frontiers Festival. His music has also been performed at festivals such as the Charlotte New Music Festival, Electronic Music Midwest Festival, and the June in Buffalo and SPLICE festivals. He has been commissioned by FuseBox New Music, Charlotte New Music Festival, SPLICE, the Missouri Music Teachers Association, trumpeter Alex Caselman, and clarinetist/conductor Luis Viquez. His orchestral work *Tracer* was read by the Kansas City Symphony in 2016 and he has had readings or performances by the PRISM sax quartet, Donald Sinta Quartet, Beo String Quartet, and Ensemble Dal Niente.

He earned his DMA and MM in Composition at the University of Missouri-Kansas City studying with Chen Yi, Zhou Long, James Mobberley, Paul Rudy, and Reynold Simpson. While at UMKC he served as assistant director of the Musica Nova Ensemble. He earned his Bachelor's degree in Music Theory and Composition from the University of Tennessee. He has had lessons or attended masterclasses with Aaron Jay Kernis, Samuel Adler, David Felder, David Dzubay, Jeffrey Mumford, Lawrence Dillon, John Allemeier, Henrik Hellstenius, Eivind Buene, Joshua Levine, Paula Matthusen and Elaine Lillios. He studied play-writing with Frank Higgins.²¹

Background Information on the Composition

Fragments of a Narrative was written in 2014 and selected for a reading by PRISM quartet. It was revised in 2016 and selected as runner-up in the Donald Sinta Quartet's 2016 National Composition Competition. Prior to this project, the only available recording was a live reading session by the Donald Sinta Quartet on YouTube.²²

²¹ Ben Stevenson, "About," Ben Stevenson Composer, accessed 10 March 2019, <http://www.bstevensoncomposer.com/about>.

²² Ben Stevenson, *Fragments of a Narrative*, performed by the Donald Sinta Quartet, September, 10, 2017, music video, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y9KC45iiBLE>.

Realizing that this project would be the capstone project for my terminal degree in saxophone, I began thinking about the beginning of my musical and saxophone studies in the Pinckney Community School District. Ben and I were both members of the band in high school, so I thought this would be a great opportunity to connect this project to my musical roots.

Program Notes

In his program notes for *Fragments of a Narrative*, Ben writes:

“...fragments of a narrative...” for Saxophone Quartet is three short exercises in mood. The first movement—Skittish—is all about nervous energy. Even during the slower sections of the piece, there is an underlying tension that seeks resolution. The second movement—Tense—is about very quiet dissonance. The third movement—Rock Forever—is a study in unbridled joy.²³

Performance Guide

Movement I: Skittish

Frequent changes in meter and subdivision, staggered entrances, and hockets create a level of rhythmic sophistication throughout the first movement that can present difficulties for the ensemble. Rhythmically driven sections are interrupted by soft, almost impressionistic harmonic language. These quiet sustained sections with slow harmonic movement provide a stark contrast to the louder, more rhythmically dense material. The movement ends with a coda based on the opening 3 measures of the movement.

Movement II: Tense

The second movement explores soft dynamics and dissonance. Measured trills, as well as *crescendi* and *decrescendi* are used to increase the tension of the slowly changing

²³ Ben Stevenson, *Fragments of a Narrative*, 2016.

harmony. Challenges in this movement include executing uniform trills and dynamic changes.

Movement III: Rock Forever

The third and final movement is focused on rhythm and groove. The sixteenth-note subdivisions create a sense of perpetual motion throughout the movement. Extra care should be taken to ensure matching style and articulation between all members of the ensemble. The contrasting middle section is written at a piano dynamic, which may make maintaining the tempo and groove difficult. The coda gets softer as well as less rhythmically active before concluding with a surprising two sixteenth-note subito fortissimo exclamation.

CHAPTER 6

TARKUS

Composer Biography

The biography for Emerson, Lake, and Palmer states:

Emerson, Lake & Palmer, also called ELP, British band known for its role in the development of art rock during the 1970s. The members were Keith Emerson (b. November 2, 1944, Todmorden, Lancashire [now in West Yorkshire], England—d. March 10/11, 2016, Santa Monica, California, U.S.), Greg Lake (b. November 10, 1947, Poole, Dorset, England—d. December 7, 2016), and Carl Palmer (b. March 20, 1950 Birmingham, England).

Before the group made its debut in 1970, its members were veterans of the British art rock scene: keyboardist Emerson had formerly led the Nice (1967–70); Lake had been bassist and lead singer for King Crimson (1968–69); and Palmer had cofounded Atomic Rooster (1969–70). ELP made synthesizer keyboards rather than guitars the centerpiece of its sound and developed an eclectic and innovative style blending classical music, jazz, blues, electronic music (then still a novelty), and Tin Pan Alley. Their numerous albums (including six live albums, drawn from concerts featuring spectacular lighting and special effects) featured lengthy, elaborate original compositions such as “Tarkus” and “Karn Evil 9”, a 29-minute multitrack piece on ELP’s hit album *Brain Salad Surgery* (1973). In addition, the band performed imaginative covers of serious classical compositions—most notably Modest Mussorgsky’s *Pictures at an Exhibition*, Aaron Copland’s *Fanfare for the Common Man*, and the hilarious blues version of Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky’s *Nutcracker Suite*—and occasional ballads or hymns, all played with great technical virtuosity.²⁴

Keith Emerson’s biography states:

Keith Emerson, (Keith Noel Emerson), British musician and composer (born Nov. 2, 1944, Todmorden, Lancashire, Eng. [now in West Yorkshire, Eng.]—died March 10/11, 2016, Santa Monica, Calif.), was a cofounder of and keyboardist for the 1970s progressive rock band Emerson Lake & Palmer (ELP). He was particularly admired for his technical virtuosity on the Hammond organ and the Moog synthesizer and for his imaginative covers of serious classical compositions, most notably Modest Mussorgsky’s *Pictures at an Exhibition*. Emerson studied classical and jazz piano as a boy. He cofounded the progressive band the

²⁴ <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Emerson-Lake-and-Palmer>, *This article was most recently revised and updated by Amy Tikkanen, Corrections Manager.*

Nice (1967–70), which had some success in 1968 with Emerson’s arrangement of Leonard Bernstein’s song “America” (with elements from Antonin Dvorak’s *New World Symphony*). In 1970 Emerson formed ELP with guitarist Greg Lake and drummer Carl Palmer. ELP made Emerson’s synthesizer keyboards rather than guitars the centerpiece of its sound and developed an eclectic and innovative style blending classical music, jazz, blues, electronic music (then still a novelty), and Tin Pan Alley. The band’s numerous albums (including six live albums, drawn from concerts with spectacular lighting and special effects) featured lengthy, elaborate original compositions such as “Tarkus” and “Karn Evil 9,” a 29-minute multitrack piece on ELP’s hit album *Brain Salad Surgery* (1973). After ELP disbanded in 1979, Emerson pursued a career as a music producer and arranger for movies and television shows. He also toured and recorded with the Keith Emerson Band and composed his own classical works, including string quartets and a piano concerto. ELP briefly reunited in the early 1990s, and in 2010 Emerson and Lake toured as a duo.²⁵

Greg Lake’s biography states:

Greg Lake, (Gregory Stuart Lake), British musician (born Nov. 10, 1947, Poole, Dorset, Eng.—died Dec. 7, 2016, London, Eng.), was a founding member of the progressive rock bands King Crimson and Emerson Lake & Palmer (ELP). Lake was admired for his soaring vocals and his musicianship on the bass and lead guitars. He studied guitar from the age of 12, and he played with a succession of groups, taking up songwriting along the way. In the late 1960s Lake was asked by a boyhood friend, guitarist Robert Fripp, to join a band. The ensemble, King Crimson, debuted in 1969 at a large free concert, with Lake playing bass and singing. Lake’s vocals anchored the group’s seminal first album, *In the Court of the Crimson King* (1969), as well as the 1970 follow-up, *In the Wake of Poseidon*. However, at a 1969 concert at the Fillmore West in San Francisco, Lake met keyboardist Keith Emerson, then playing with the Nice, and they decided to form, with drummer Carl Palmer, the art-rock band ELP. That group debuted in 1970 at the Plymouth Guildhall. The ensemble’s self-titled debut album, released in 1970, featured long eclectic songs that focused on keyboard rather than guitar and blended classical influences with rock music, and it charted on both sides of the Atlantic Ocean. The album contained ELP’s biggest hit single, “Lucky Man,” written and sung by Lake. Subsequent releases, including rock versions of classical songs, were also hits. *Brain Salad Surgery* (1973) was ELP’s most-successful LP, and it was followed by a three-album concert recording, *Welcome Back My Friends, to the Show That Never Ends* (1974). The symphonic bombast of art rock fell out of favor by the late 1970s, however, though Lake had a solo hit in 1975 with

²⁵ <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Keith-Emerson>, Melinda C. Shepherd.

“I Believe in Father Christmas,” which became a seasonal standard. He released two solo albums and later participated in a reunited ELP.²⁶

Pete Ford’s biography states:

Originally from West Terre Haute Indiana, Adrian College Associate Professor of Music Pete Ford earned bachelor’s and master’s degrees in music from Indiana State University. There he was mentored in Music Theory by Dr. John Ibberson and Dr. William Denton. He studied composition with Dr. David Ott among others, and began his study of jazz at Indiana State with Dr. John Spicknall.

Professor Ford has taught music at Adrian College fifteen-plus years. While his focus at Adrian is Music Theory, at other institutions he taught a variety of classes including Jazz History and Rock History. Equipped with a “classical” education, these experiences couple with his jazz and popular music performing background to positively and pragmatically inform his present-day teaching of Music Theory.

In addition to academia, personal musical projects continue to be eclectic, ranging from electric bass and keyboards in rock bands to composition and recording of professional broadcast commercial jingles in the late 1980’s.

After completing graduate school, an arthritic LH index finger prevented him from continuing to play upright bass, so he began serious study of jazz piano in Toledo Ohio with mentors Gene Parker and Mark Kieswetter. He also learned a great deal about jazz performance from bassist Clifford Murphy and the late pianist Claude Black. For a time Professor Ford co-hosted the Monday Night Jazz Jam Session at the piano with Clifford Murphy on bass at Murphy’s Place in Toledo. Professor Ford also appeared on occasion as a sideman playing piano at the legendary Rusty’s Jazz Cafe before its time as a jazz club sadly ended.

Outside of his teaching duties in the Adrian College Department of Music, Professor Ford actively gigs on jazz piano around the Midwest, both as a freelance musician and with his own group “The Pete Ford Trio.” He can be found playing keyboards in a variety of musical situations ranging from jazz clubs to planetarium programs to accompanying Elvis impersonators(!) to occasionally playing on Adrian Symphony Orchestra jazz concerts. Professor Ford also gigs occasionally on jazz organ.

A published composer, his composition “Ulterior Motives” for Saxophone Quartet is on the Class A Contest List for high school ensembles in Ohio, Wisconsin, Virginia, and Florida.

²⁶ <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Greg-Lake>, *Patricia Bauer*.

In May 2010 he played piano at Carnegie Hall in New York City, accompanying the Adrian College Choir on the world premiere of his own work entitled “Nahamasa—a Choral Fanfare for Asa Mahan.” Examples of many of Professor Ford’s musical endeavors can be found through his personal website, petefordtheory.com, or on his YouTube channel “PeteFordTheory.”

Professor Ford continues to compose for different chamber ensembles, recently completing five jazz fugues for saxophone quartet, and various chamber string pieces. His musical arrangements and compositions have been performed as far away as Japan. He currently lives in Toledo with his wife (and fellow musician) Shannon Ford and their three cats.

While attending the Michigan Music Conference in January 2016, he found that this piece was available, in a NEW PRESSING at the Stanton’s Sheet Music booth. (His face below reveals delight at discovery of the new pressing).

Professor Ford has just written a music theory book called “Music Fundamentals” aimed at the student who is prepping for college as a music major. It will be published by Conway Publications. More information on this book will be available soon.

As a gigging musician, Professor Pete Ford can often be heard playing keyboards or electric bass throughout the Midwest. Some of the groups he works with more regularly are listed below:

Swingmania
Hepcat Revival
Walt Sanders and the Cadillac Band
Bob Rosencrantz and his Roustabouts
Legends of Rock
The Pete Ford Trio
The Pete Ford Quartet
(Various jazz groups and combos in Northwest Ohio and Southeast Michigan)²⁷

²⁷ Peter Ford, “Bio and News,” Pete Ford Composer, accessed 10 March 2019, <https://petertford.weebly.com/>.

Background Information on the Composition

The final piece of this project is Emerson, Lake & Palmer's progressive rock masterpiece, *Tarkus*. This piece was written in 1971 and included on their second studio album of the same name. Peter Ford transcribed and arranged this version for saxophone quartet in 1997 for the Sax 4th Avenue quartet. It was included on their 1998 album, *Delusions of Grandeur*, on the AMP Recordings label.

I became interested in this piece in May of 2018 when The Shredtet was considering music to include with our application to be featured artists at Phish's Curveball Festival held in Watkins Glen, New York, in August 2018. A demo recording was submitted to the artist coordinator resulting in an invitation to be featured artist/performers for the festival. This piece quickly became a favorite to play and it seemed the obvious choice to complete the program for this project.

Performance Guide

The following excerpt from Pete Ford's thesis describes the programmatic story of the composition:

Conflict, conquest, and war are the subject matter in *Tarkus*, where battle and presumed death are symbolically portrayed by a hybrid armadillo/military tank. This armadillo/tank, or "Tarkus," hatches from an egg at the base of an active volcano ("Eruption"). It then battles in a desert with similar animal/machine hybrids, including an armored spider ("The Stones of Years"), a pterodactyl/jet ("Iconoclast"), an armored grasshopper ("Mass"), and a lion with a man's head and mechanical barbed tail ("Manticore"). The barb on the end of the Manticore's tail slices into the Tarkus's left eye ("The Battlefield"), and the Tarkus goes off into the ocean, with a bleeding eye, presumably to die ("Aquatarkus").²⁸

²⁸ Peter Ford, "The Compositional Style of Keith Emerson in *Tarkus* (1971) for the Rock Music Trio Emerson, Lake and Palmer" (Master's thesis, Indiana State University, 1994), 19-20, ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global.

Additionally, Pete describes *Tarkus* as “really a modern classical piece in rock clothing, and in a way it parallels ELP’s version of *Pictures at an Exhibition*... with vivid imagery, virtuosic requirements, and a modernized and mechanized sound.”²⁹ Furthermore, the piece has been hailed as the “quintessential progressive rock suite.”³⁰ As such, great care must be taken to understand the history and characteristics of this musical style. Attentive listening to the original version as well as the numerous other recorded versions of the song is necessary. According to Ford, this arrangement is “very crude, and does not do service to the original composition.”³¹ Therefore, the performers must be intimately familiar with ELP’s style and approach. Refer to Ford’s master’s thesis for a comprehensive analysis of musical and stylistic elements.³²

²⁹ Peter Ford, Composer Questionnaire

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Ibid.

³² Peter Ford, “The Compositional Style of Keith Emerson in *Tarkus*.”

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APPENDIX A
RECORDING TRACK LIST

Track

1 ***Sax Quartet No. 2 (2018)***

Frank Nawrot (b. 1989)

Scherzos for Saxophone Quartet (2018)

Dan Puccio (1980)

2 I. All Together, Now

3 II. Play Pretty

4 III. A Minute Past Crazy

5 IV. Is This Funky?

6 V. No, But This Is

7 ***Rhythm & Tone Study #3 (2018)***

Josh Bennett (b. 1982)

Fragments of a Narrative (2014/2016)

Ben Stevenson (b. 1979)

8 I. Skittish

9 II. Tense

10 III. Rock Forever

11 ***Tarkus (1971/1997)***

Keith Emerson (1944 – 2016)

Greg Lake (1947 – 2016)

Arr. Pete Ford (b. 1964)

APPENDIX B
IRB EXEMPTION LETTER



APPROVAL: MODIFICATION

Joshua Gardner
Music, School of

-

Joshua.T.Gardner@asu.edu

Dear Joshua Gardner:

On 12/4/2018 the ASU IRB reviewed the following protocol:

Type of Review:	Modification
Title:	Recording/Commission Research Projects
Investigator:	Joshua Gardner
IRB ID:	STUDY00007379
Funding:	None
Grant Title:	None
Grant ID:	None
Documents Reviewed:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commission-Recording Interview Questions.pdf, Category: Measures (Survey questions/Interview questions /interview guides/focus group questions); • IRB Protocol_Commission-Recording Interview Unbrella.docx, Category: IRB Protocol; • Commission-Recording_recruitment.pdf, Category: Recruitment Materials; • Commission-Recording Consent_able adult.pdf, Category: Consent Form;

The IRB approved the modification.

When consent is appropriate, you must use final, watermarked versions available under the “Documents” tab in ERA-IRB.

In conducting this protocol you are required to follow the requirements listed in the INVESTIGATOR MANUAL (HRP-103).


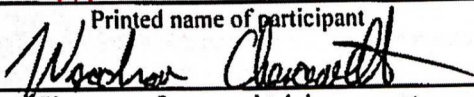
Sincerely,

IRB Administrator

APPENDIX C
LETTERS OF PERMISSION

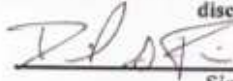
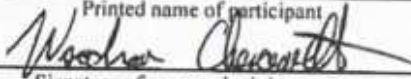
- You cannot reach the research team.
- You want to talk to someone besides the research team.
- You have questions about your rights as a research participant.
- You want to get information or provide input about this research.

Your signature documents your permission to take part in this research and disclosure of your name in research publications.

 _____ Signature of participant	<u>3/18/19</u> Date
<u>Frank Nawrot</u> Printed name of participant	
 _____ Signature of person obtaining consent	<u>2/22/19</u> Date
<u>Woodrow Chenoweth</u> Printed name of person obtaining consent	

- You cannot reach the research team.
- You want to talk to someone besides the research team.
- You have questions about your rights as a research participant.
- You want to get information or provide input about this research.

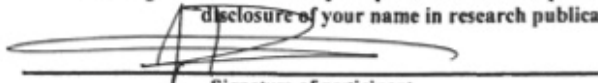
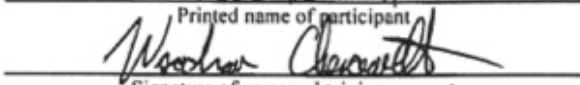
Your signature documents your permission to take part in this research and disclosure of your name in research publications.

 _____ Signature of participant	<u>3/11/19</u> Date
Daniel S Puccio _____ Printed name of participant	
 _____ Signature of person obtaining consent	<u>2/22/19</u> Date
Woodrow Chenoweth _____ Printed name of person obtaining consent	

2

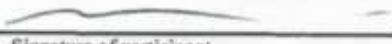
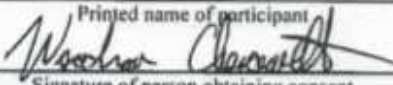
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- You have questions about your rights as a research participant.
- You want to get information or provide input about this research.

Your signature documents your permission to take part in this research and disclosure of your name in research publications.

 _____ Signature of participant	<u>3/11/19</u> Date
<u>Josh Bennett</u> Printed name of participant	
 _____ Signature of person obtaining consent	<u>2/22/19</u> Date
<u>Woodrow Chenoweth</u> Printed name of person obtaining consent	

- You cannot reach the research team.
- You want to talk to someone besides the research team.
- You have questions about your rights as a research participant.
- You want to get information or provide input about this research.

Your signature documents your permission to take part in this research and disclosure of your name in research publications.

<hr/>  <hr/>	<hr/> 3/10/19 <hr/>
Signature of participant	Date
PETE FORD	
Printed name of participant	
<hr/>  <hr/>	<hr/> 2/22/19 <hr/>
Signature of person obtaining consent	Date
Woodrow Chenoweth	
Printed name of person obtaining consent	

APPENDIX D

FRANK NAWROT'S QUESTIONNAIRE RESPONSES

1. **When and in what way did you begin your musical studies?**³³

I began studying music in fourth or fifth grade. I played clarinet throughout grade school. I also played percussion in concert band one year and sang in choirs throughout high school.

2. **How did you become interested in composition? What about your compositions differentiates you from other composers?**

I am not sure how I became interested in writing music. My first experience writing music was with the rock band that I was in from about 2006-2013. I wrote all of the songs in collaboration with my band, and this started before I went to college.

I don't think there is anything particularly unique about my compositions in the grand scheme of things. I do make an attempt to try out new methods of composition, but I am always striving to reach people rather than alienate them. So, my experimentations would probably never be considered avant-garde by my colleagues. If there is anything special about my compositions, I think it is my use of rhythm. For the past couple of years, I have been experimenting with what I call metrical phasing. This is a process where different musical voices are playing in different meters simultaneously, and the form of such a piece is determined by the re-syncing of motives or melodies. For example: If there are three musical voices and they are all playing different motives representing the meters 7/8, 4/4, and 3/4, I have to find the least common multiple of the largest common subdivision. In this case, the largest common subdivision would be the 8th note, so I would make my calculations using 7, 8, and 6 (8 8ths = 4/4; 6 8ths = 3/4).

³³ Frank Nawrot, questionnaire.

The least common multiple of these three numbers is 168. Then I divide 168 by the amount of 8th notes in each measure to determine how many repetitions of each motive will be required for the three to line back up, to be in phase again (168/7 = 24; 168/8 = 21; 168/6 = 28).

3. What are your musical influences, and from where do you draw inspiration? What was your inspiration for the piece?

The process I mentioned before is something I learned about from the band Meshuggah. They use basically the same technique in many of their songs. My main musical influences are popular musicians like Prince, Tool, Tesseract, Kodak Black, etc. Some of the composers who have had the biggest influence on me are Maurice Ravel, Steve Reich, Steve Martland, and Meredith Monk.

My inspiration for this piece was the opportunity to experiment with the process I mentioned earlier with a willing quartet.

4. Can you name a person or event that greatly influenced your musical life?

Traveling to the Bang on a Can summer festival with Bill Ryan and some of my former peers from Grand Valley State University to see the 6-hour marathon concert. The event that happened there that moved me in a significant way was hearing the BOAC All Stars perform Steve Martland's *Horses of Instruction*.

5. **What elements do you find to be the most important within your musical compositions? Are there any particular motives or thematic ideas that you use throughout the piece?**

Rhythm and catchy melodies tend to be at the heart of my compositions.

The motives that make up this piece are all presented individually after the introduction ends. They are then phased in various ways throughout the piece.

6. **Where do you find ideas for the titles of your compositions? Do you usually come up with a title first or the music? Does the title have any special meaning? If so, how would you like that meaning manifested during performance?**

Titles are extremely difficult. I am trying to get away from non-descriptive titles like *Saxophone Sonata #2* and come up with more evocative titles that allow listeners to enter the sound world before even hearing the music.

I typically come up with titles after the music is composed.

The title of this piece has no special meaning.

7. **How did your compositional career develop into what it is today?**

I am not sure how to answer that question. I have gone to a lot of conferences where my music has been selected for performance and worked with many of my colleagues to collaborate on the creation of new pieces.

8. **Do you take into consideration the qualities of an individual performer when writing for them?**

I certainly try to be as collaborative as possible. However, I find that the collaborative process is usually stunted significantly by performers' busy schedules. I will ask performers if they are willing to meet, try things out, and

discuss different options during the composition process. They almost always say they are willing, but they are rarely as communicative as I need them to be in order to make the process seem actually collaborative.

9. How do you want your compositions to contribute to the classical world? Is there a missing area of classical music that you desire your compositions fill?

I think that I want to contribute music that is challenging enough to be interesting to most performers *and* most listeners but *also* be engaging and familiar enough to draw in as many listeners as possible.

10. How does this piece fit into your body of compositional works?

It is one of a few pieces that explore metrical phasing. I will keep writing pieces using this process.

11. Do you have any stylistic concerns or considerations for this piece? What performance suggestions can you provide the musicians when preparing your piece?

The primary challenge with a piece like this is circumventing performers' desire to land on downbeats with the other players. Performers must remember that they are playing in different meters, so as long as the largest subdivision is felt by each performer, staying together is possible.

12. What are some of the main technical concerns for the performers?

As mentioned before, the rhythms remaining tight despite the loss of common downbeats.

13. Have you ever studied saxophone? If so, in what capacity?

No.

14. What is your major instrument(s)?

Guitar.

15. Do you use any particular compositional techniques when writing your music, and if so, do you think they should be brought out by the performers?

For this piece, being aware of the metrical phasing technique is important. The techniques I use often differ from piece to piece.

16. Have you ever written for saxophone quartet before? What problems did you run across? What aspects weren't you completely sure about? Did (do) you enjoy writing for saxophone quartet?

One other time—a three-movement sax quartet. I wrote it about 6 years ago so I cannot remember too much in regards to problems I ran into. I do remember needing to convince the players of some of the passages that they deemed not idiomatic. It turned out quite well though. I enjoy writing for this ensemble very much because most sax players are so open to trying new things.

17. What, if anything, did you learn about writing for saxophone while writing this piece? Anything the performer should keep in mind while performing?

Every time I write I learn—every piece is an experiment (not necessarily *experimental*, though). The most significant thing I learned from this experience is that I need to include more phrasing and dynamic information in these types of metrical phasing pieces in order to give shape to the piece.

18. For what instruments are your favorite to compose?

Voice, saxophone, piano, and winds in general (in that order).

19. Are you concerned with audience perception of your music? To what extent do you consider audience reception?

I am concerned with it. I accept that not everyone will like my music, and that acceptance is very freeing. That acceptance, however, is not a license to alienate the masses. I grew up listening to popular music primarily, so staying true to my influences actually ensures that I will reach more people than if I was primarily an avant-gardist. I have no issue with musical experimentation in and of itself, and I partake in experiments sometimes, but I would not be being true to myself if I left out the influence of rock, hip hop, and R&B from my music.

20. What are your general concerns regarding this piece? What do you think performers should know and account for when learning and performing it?

I believe my past answers regarding technical issues, etc., deals with this question. (Please let me know if you'd like for me to elaborate!)

APPENDIX E

DAN PUCCIO'S QUESTIONNAIRE RESPONSES

1. **When and in what way did you begin your musical studies?**³⁴

My formal musical education began in the fourth grade at Hugh Gregg Elementary School through the instrumental music program ran by Mr. Ken VanEtten. To this day, he says that he “taught me how to put a reed on a saxophone,” and it’s true. In sixth grade, I really became enamored with the guitar and took lessons from Steve Peao, a brilliant local guitarist—these lasted through high school. A year later, I began studying saxophone privately with Duvid Smering, and he helped give me an incredibly sound technical foundation on the instrument. Duvid passed away during the summer of 2018—a major loss for the Southern Tier of NY.

I was also active in the band and choral programs at Northside Blodgett Middle School, working with band director John Stranges and choir director Amy Story. This continued through my time at Corning East High School with band directors Jim Meckley, Mike Devine, and Tom Killian. I was also a member of the East High Choristers, and Madrigal Ensemble—a sixteen voice a capella vocal ensemble focusing on the music of the Renaissance—both directed by Mr. Richard Perry. Along the way, I participated in All-County, and Area All-State Mixed Choruses and Bands, and was selected for the 1996 NYSSMA All-State Mixed Chorus as a tenor, and the 1997 NYSSMA All-State Vocal Jazz Ensemble (also as a tenor). This is a little known secret about me—most of my friends don’t know that I was an avid singer growing up.

My informal musical education—quite frankly, I view this to be every bit as important as my early formal education—started at home. My parents own a

³⁴ Dan Puccio, questionnaire.

music store (Marich Music, Inc. in Corning, NY), and there was always music playing in the house. My Dad was (and is) a huge fan of Bluegrass (Earl Scruggs, Tony Trischka, Bill Keith, etc.), Folk (Peter, Paul, & Mary, along with the Kingston Trio), and Classical Music (he would listen to Ravel's Bolero, and Bach Organ works quite a bit). Mom would listen to classic rock and "oldies"—the Beatles, Crystal Gayle, the Eagles, and Linda Ronstadt (Linda Ronstadt's Greatest Hits would get played a lot during the weekend).

In the Spring of 1990, I began working at the music store, and that's where I met Mike Holton. Mike worked for my dad and had really eclectic tastes in music. He's the person who first introduced me to Joe Satriani, Steve Vai, and the whole instrumental guitar "Shred" scene. Shrapnel records had some great compilations (Guitar On the Edge, Vol. 1 & 2). Other big rock guitar influences were Ron Thal, Steve Morse, Shawn Lane, and Bret Garsed, but there was no bigger influence on me than Eddie VanHalen (I even made it a point to discuss Eddie in my dissertation). Mike also introduced me to artists like Phil Keaggy, Michael Hedges, Mike Oldfield, and Brian Eno.

The other big influence on my listening habits at this age was my best friend, Bob DiGiacomo. His dad was a working musician in the band Nighthawk at this time, and we would constantly raid his record, tape, and CD collection. We were listening to Jethro Tull, Extreme (Extreme II is still one of my favorite records), Primus, and The Brecker Brothers.

I'll admit that I was a bit of a weird kid. What ten-year-olds do you know that are listening to VanHalen, Primus, Ambient 1: Music for Airports, and Tubular Bells?

The last part of my early music education came from playing in a wide variety of different garage bands. The first group, called “The Cellar Session” rehearsed at Mr. VanEtten’s house, and the band members were Bob DiGiacomo, Emmet VanEtten, his big sister Sarah, and myself—I think the tape recording still exists somewhere. From there, I played guitar in the band SNAFU, and saxophone in the bands, Jazz at Willy’s, Highland Drive, and Fuzz & the Jazz Fu’s. Many of the same people were involved in these bands. It was a great social outlet as well as a chance to make music on our own terms.

2. How did you become interested in composition? What about your compositions differentiates you from other composers?

I started arranging first. When Jazz at Willy’s decided to combine with SNAFU to form the band Fuzz & the Jazz-Fu’s, Bob DiGiacomo and I took on the job of writing the charts for the horn section. We wanted to be Tower of Power or Chicago, but we were only 15 and had no experience writing for horns. The first thing that I wrote was a chart for “Gimme Some Lovin’”—the version from The Blues Brothers, not the original version by the Spencer Davis Group. Unfortunately, I didn’t understand how transposition worked, so the iconic instrumental line sounded like a giant note cluster (think The Blues Brothers meets Charles Ives). It was awful, but I learned a ton by making mistakes.

While taking an independent study course in Music Theory from Mr. Perry (during my senior year of high school), he asked me to write an arrangement of A Welsh Lullabye for the Women’s Chorus. This was the first piece that I ever had performed in public, and it was both humbling and inspiring to hear my notes come to life.

To answer the second part of the question, I think that one thing that tends to define my style is humor. For a lot of my compositions – and arrangements, for that matter – I try to place “Easter Eggs” and inside jokes, just to see if anybody gets them, as kind of a running commentary on the song or piece. Some are more obvious than others, though. For example, for my horn section arrangement of Walk The Moon’s “Shut Up And Dance”, the horns close out the song by quoting The Buggles’ “Video Killed The Radio Star”. It’s a pretty obvious quote that usually gets a nod. A couple of less obvious jokes include having the horns play the chorus from Lazlo Bane’s “Superman” for the chorus of TLC’s “No Scrubs”—“Superman” of course is the theme song for the hit TV show “Scrubs”—or in Bruno Mars’ “24k Magic” during the second verse when Bruno sings the line “Spend your money like money ain’t shit,” the horns play the bass line from the iconic Pink Floyd song “Money”. It’s kind of my “meta” approach to the Renaissance technique of “text painting”. It can sometimes be awkward, but I love both the goofy humor and intellectual challenge of making it fit without detracting from a song.

If I had to guess at another “hallmark of my style”—honestly, I think that I’m too close to the process to really discuss what defines my compositional style—it’s that I love both lush harmonies (think old Hollywood and crooner records: Bing Crosby, Andy Williams, Scott Walker), and really “crunchy” harmonies (think Kenny Wheeler, Edison Denisov, Albert Ayler, Stravinsky, Webern). If you combine these with a love for Tin-Pan Alley tunesmithery, I think you start to get close to a Puccio composition.

3. What are your musical influences, and from where do you draw inspiration? What was your inspiration for the piece?

This is a pretty broad question. My influences are quite varied: I grew up with my dad playing bluegrass, folk, and classical music around the house (he still does), and mom played her records too (The Beatles, Linda Ronstadt, Kenny Rogers). I also really loved the guitar “shredders” as a kid: Brett Garsed, Shawn Lane, Steve Morse, Joe Satriani, and Steve Vai. These guys, along with the Brecker Brothers’ album *Heavy Metal Bebop*, *Extreme II: Pornografitti* (listen to the other tracks, not “More Than Words”), and Primus’ *Sailing The Seas of Cheese*, pretty much sum up my listening diet through the end of middle school (I told you, I was a weird kid). In high school, I discovered Hendrix, jazz, and VanHalen, so I went into my undergrad having this oddly diverse background (with very little knowledge of classical music, or even classical saxophone music—my major instrument). In my undergrad, I was a sponge, and was constantly getting exposed to new and fascinating music on almost a daily basis: Stravinsky, Ingolf Dahl, Edison Denisov, Minimalism, Berio, not to mention Wayne Shorter, Keith Jarrett, Kenny Garrett, Jim McNeely, Kenny Wheeler, and Maria Schneider — for a kid like me, it was AWESOME.

For me as a composer, I really try to draw on all of these aspects of my musical experience: if it needs to rock, bring on some VanHalen-y goodness; if it needs to be structured, look to the Second Viennese School; if the piece is for a specific player, there is much to be learned from the way Duke Ellington approached writing for his band. Basically, if I like it, then it’s fair game as an influence.

I was really inspired by the use of humor in “Classical” music—Haydn, Peter Schickele (especially his work as P.D.Q. Bach), and since most people know that I love to be quirky, I looked at the term Scherzo. The translation from Italian is “joke”, and while many Scherzos from the Classical and Romantic periods kind of touch on this, I wanted to go full bore into the humor and sarcasm that are sometimes taboo in the realm of “Art Music”.

4. Can you name a person or event that greatly influenced your musical life?

There are quite a few, so I really have to say my teachers and colleagues, along with my family.

As far as important musical moments, I was at the premier of the Bolcom Concert Suite with the UM Symphony Band, and Donald Sinta as the soloist. That moment changed so much for me: I needed to go practice after that. I still remember the first tuning note from the band during freshman orientation at Crane—it was glorious. And I’m really fortunate, and grateful to have had mentors willing to share their time with me, and help me continue to grow and develop as an artist.

5. What elements do you find to be the most important within your musical compositions? Are there any particular motives or thematic ideas that you use throughout the piece?

Honestly, it really depends on the piece, but basic musical values are always important: good intonation, phrasing, tone, etc.

6. Where do you find ideas for the titles of your compositions? Do you usually come up with a title first or the music? Does the title have any special meaning? If so, how would you like that meaning manifested during performance?

For this piece, the underlying theme is the humor—all of the jokes in each movement.

I keep a list on my phone. Seriously. You can ask anyone who knows me. If something that's somewhat awkward or silly comes up in conversation, odds are it gets added. For example, here are some titles that I've used: May I Turn Off Your Oxygen?, Unreachable Skyfort of Awesomeness, Miracles Take Time, It's Even Funny From Behind, A Shorter Version of Kurt, I'd High Five You But I'm Sticky, Gig Chart Man, and I Wrote This For Jason But He Won't Like It.

Music first. It's almost always the music first, and then I find a title that fits. For this particular piece, the compositional ideas and titles happened almost simultaneously.

This piece derives its title from the direct translation of scherzo: jokes. Each movement has a gag in it. I. *All Together, Now* is based on a tuning drill, and someone always screws it up. II. *Play Pretty* is a Chaconne-esque movement where the Soprano part acts as the "ground bass" (even though it's the highest voice), and the chorale continues to vary itself around it. (It's also based on the chord progression to one of my favorite songs, closely related to a specific color. I don't want to give too much away, though). III. *A Minute Past Crazy* is based on a static unison, with occasional freak-outs by the quartet. IV. *Is This Funky?* is decidedly not—it's a Viennese-esque waltz, that sometimes winds up in

four, or five, just to bother people. V. *No, But This Is* is a funk influenced response to Mvt. IV. It's slightly self-referential, which I find hilarious.

Be as sarcastic and silly as possible. Take the gags as far as possible, and if people are laughing, or looking extremely uncomfortable, you've done your job.

7. **How did your compositional career develop into what it is today?**

In college, I took Bret Zvacek's Jazz Composition and Arranging class, which helped me grow as a writer. Unfortunately, this came after the performance of the first original tune that I ever wrote. The Crane School of Music had a Jazz Combo class each semester, and I had my group play my tune called—wait for the fresh out of high school emo-teen title—”Love Has Gone Away”. It was bad. Really, really bad. So bad, in fact, that I will still get phone calls from my friends that played it, and all they do is sing the melody instead of saying hello. At least the melody wasn't so forgettable. I kept writing a lot of tunes—nearly all of them objectively bad—and eventually I started to hone my craft a bit more. By the time I began my graduate study at the University of Michigan, I was writing tunes that I could perform in public without needing to wear a mask. The members of the Grad Jazz Quintet all contributed original music to the group, and Ellen Rowe encouraged me to write for the Jazz Ensemble (the UM Jazz Ensemble premiered my Suite for Big Band in 2005). After graduating from U of M, I was playing professionally and teaching in Ann Arbor, when Pastor Sue Sprowls and music director Tim Krohn from Lord of Light Campus Ministry commissioned me to write my Jazz Mass for the church's centennial.

8. Do you take into consideration the qualities of an individual performer when writing for them?

Absolutely. If I know the performer, I try to highlight unique aspects of their playing ability—it's an attempt at using Duke Ellington's approach. Just to be clear, though, I'm no Duke or Strayhorn. They were geniuses.

9. How do you want your compositions to contribute to the classical world? Is there a missing area of classical music that you desire your compositions fill?

Honestly, I'm just happy to write the music that I do, and it seems as though people enjoy it.

If there really is a need for Jazz-Informed-Sarcastic-Weird-Al-Insipid-Angsty-Atonal-ish-But-Not-Quite-Serial-But-Also-Semi-Tonal-Funk-Metal-Sparks-Of-Silliness, then I'm happy to fill that void.

10. How does this piece fit into your body of compositional works?

It's toward the new end right now, but hopefully somewhere in the middle.

11. Do you have any stylistic concerns or considerations for this piece? What performance suggestions can you provide the musicians when preparing your piece?

When it's funky, be FUNKY, when it's silly, be over the top silly. Don't go halfway.

The bari player should approach Mvt. V like it's Tower of Power. Mvt. I should be as awkward as humanly possible. Approach Mvt. III as fast and furious. Mvt. IV should be played like Strauss gone horribly wrong—so overly serious that the quartet is oblivious to the joke. And Mvt. II should be a chance to embrace the

pretty weirdness. Also, take my performance suggestions out of the order that they're written here. Otherwise, Mvt I is Tower of Power-y, and that would be a bit too weird, even for me (or try it, and if it's awesome, then do that).

12. What are some of the main technical concerns for the performers?

Honestly, the biggest concern for the players is not to laugh while performing the piece.

13. Have you ever studied saxophone? If so, in what capacity?

Yes. I have a BM, MM, and DMA in Saxophone Performance, and an MM in Improvisation and Creative Studies (I also have a BM in Music Education), and my collegiate professors were Timothy McAllister (BM/DMA), Donald Sinta (MM), and Donald Walden (MM Improvisation).

14. What is your major instrument(s)?

My major instrument is saxophone; however, I make a good part of my income as a doubler, as well as a composer/arranger. The instruments that I play professionally are: flute, piccolo, clarinet, bass clarinet, saxophone (all four), guitar, 5-string banjo, tenor banjo, tenor guitar, mandolin, and ukulele. I generally only list the instruments that I have been hired to perform on, but I do also own a Puerto Rican Cuatro (I played it for a recording once), a dobro, a consort of recorders, and a few other oddities (ocarinas—both pendant and transverse—pan pipes, various shakers, a Xaphoon, and I just purchased a Venova, one of the Yamaha plastic recorder-saxophone hybrids). Also, with regard to the Guitar, I play all of the standard doubles—electric, acoustic, classical, and 12-string.

15. **Do you use any particular compositional techniques when writing your music, and if so, do you think they should be brought out by the performers?**

Again, it really depends on the piece. For this one, it's definitely humor and awkwardness.

16. **Have you ever written for saxophone quartet before? What problems did you run across? What aspects weren't you completely sure about? Did (do) you enjoy writing for saxophone quartet?**

Yes, for my quartet Ohrwürm, I wrote a piece titled *Scream*, written under the pen name Skip Terwilliger, which was premiered at the 2010 NASA Biennial Conference.

One of the big difficulties is that you have a homogeneous timbral palette. How do you differentiate tone? That's a really interesting challenge to embrace.

For this piece, since it was a commission, my main concern was that it met the needs of the group. The biggest concern was that my sense of humor was too weird for the ensemble.

I love the medium, but then again, I'm a saxophonist, so...

17. **What, if anything, did you learn about writing for saxophone while writing this piece? Anything the performer should keep in mind while performing?**

There's always something to learn, and for this piece, it was to make the notation as clear as possible in order to give the performers the necessary freedom to be as silly as necessary.

If you feel like you've gone overboard with the interpretation, then you're probably doing it right.

18. For what instruments are your favorite to compose?

I love to write for horn sections, big bands, and chamber ensembles. I haven't really had any solo instrument commissions yet, but for me, I like to experiment with color and timbre, so chamber works also work really well. I also really enjoy writing for visuals: theater, film, video, etc.

19. Are you concerned with audience perception of your music? To what extent do you consider audience reception?

It depends on the piece. Usually I don't care much about the audience's reception as much as their reaction. For this piece, I want them to either laugh, or feel incredibly awkward. If they have a hard time applauding, or are generally confused, then I've been successful.

20. What are your general concerns regarding this piece? What do you think performers should know and account for when learning and performing it?

My biggest concern is that the performers won't go far enough to be silly and awkward.

The biggest thing is that, yes, the second movement gets really weird – I mean, excruciatingly so – and it's on purpose, so don't be afraid to embrace the crunchiness.

APPENDIX F

JOSH BENNETT'S QUESTIONNAIRE RESPONSES

1. When and in what way did you begin your musical studies?³⁵

Like many growing up in the Midwest, I began my musical studies at the end of elementary school. Unlike many growing up in the Midwest, however, my band director was my step-father. So for me, my musical studies were always somewhat of a family affair. I grew up in a musical household and looked forward to doing music. In this sense, my musical studies have truly been a lifelong endeavor.

2. How did you become interested in composition? What about your compositions differentiates you from other composers?

I became interested in composition after the completion of my master's degree. As a freelance musician I found that improvising and creating my own music was more enjoyable than playing other people's music. Music written by other people is still enjoyable and something that will always be a part of my musical life, but playing my *own* music is simply different and represents a *preference* on my part. Because my approach to composition has been relatively personal (i.e., writing music for *me* to play) I believe my compositions differ in that they are based around a Performer/composer perspective. (I have purposefully capitalized the "P" and NOT capitalized the "c" here.) Performance, that is the action of *musicking*, is where music is not in what is written down.

3. What are your musical influences, and from where do you draw inspiration? What was your inspiration for the piece?

My influences are wide-ranging and constantly in flux. I could tell you a list of names that would most likely satisfy any number of doctoral committees

³⁵ Josh Bennett, questionnaire.

across the country, but that would be pedantic and simply add to the idle chatter that dominates far too much academic discourse. So instead, I will write that I am influenced by extreme black metal, industrial noise, and darkwave synth music, but you should understand that this is a partial list. As I write this, I am listening to Aphex Twin and his *Windowlicker* EP. For the piece I wrote for this project, I think it would be fair to say that electronic music and Carnatic rhythm was a major influence. As an electronic artist, I am very interested in so-called process music and writing what would normally be written for a computer for flesh-and-blood humans. Carnatic rhythms, meanwhile, provided a significant amount of influence particularly in the second half of the piece where various forms of overlapping cycles intertwine together.

4. Can you name a person or event that greatly influenced your musical life?

Sure - Brian Eno.

5. What elements do you find to be the most important within your musical compositions? Are there any particular motives or thematic ideas that you use throughout the piece?

I think the most important element of my music is whether I find it interesting or not. The piece I wrote for this project is part of a series of pieces that I call *Rhythm & Tone Studies*. As the title implicates they are based on rhythm and tone and the inherent relationships between those two musical concepts. The third study is based on a 9-note equidistant octave (EDO) and 9/8 time. I think that's interesting.

6. **Where do you find ideas for the titles of your compositions? Do you usually come up with a title first or the music? Does the title have any special meaning? If so, how would you like that meaning manifested during performance?**

This was the third *Rhythm & Tone* study I wrote. I wrote it for four like-sounding instruments. So I named it: *Rhythm & Tone Study No.3: for four like-sounding instruments*. I do not name my pieces before they are written, and I rarely give my pieces titles that have any special significance. Lately, I have been using a kind of catalog numbering system such as *BA_0013*. I would prefer the performers/listeners have their own agency in determining meaning. Titles and lyrics have a tendency towards authoritarianism. And don't we have enough of that in this world?

7. **How did your compositional career develop into what it is today?**

My compositional career is my performance career. As a solo artist and person *being-in-the-world*, I keep finding myself in situations where music to be played is required. When that is the case, I go ahead and write something. It has been immensely useful as a performer to write my own music. It has saved me a lot of commission fees.

8. **Do you take into consideration the qualities of an individual performer when writing for them?**

Oh yes. Usually that performer is myself, but sometimes it is someone else. For this particular project, I knew that the performer for the first part was most likely to be Woody Chenoweth. Knowing that he has a particularly beautiful sound and an attention to sonic detail, I wrote the droning (and very, very high) top line with him in mind.

- 9. How do you want your compositions to contribute to the classical world? Is there a missing area of classical music that you desire your compositions fill?**

I hope that my music reiterates the fact that the classical period is over and done with.

- 10. How does this piece fit into your body of compositional works?**

This piece is a continuation of compositional ideas that I have been experimenting with over the years, so it fits nicely. I truly hope I can continue experimenting with how rhythm and tone are directly related and looking in to the different kind of processes that can be utilized to produce musical affect.

- 11. Do you have any stylistic concerns or considerations for this piece? What performance suggestions can you provide the musicians when preparing your piece?**

I like to write music that is just on the edge of possible. My suggestion is to embrace this concept and push yourself to go longer, faster, louder. As industrial noise outfit Throbbing Gristle likes to say, “maximum sound for maximum effect”.

- 12. What are some of the main technical concerns for the performers?**

The challenge in the first half of the piece is precisely expressing the 9-note EDO. Each performer will need to spend time figuring out how to play their version of the 9-note EDO and develop a set of fingerings on their own. The challenge in the second half is rhythmic accuracy and really locking in at the micro-level so the macro-cycles become apparent. As an ensemble one area of concern will be that each part is written for an undetermined instrument. This means that, depending on the individual instrument’s tuning, each performance

could be different, and as a group you will need to embrace the emergent dissonant harmonies. In each area of technical concern, there is a need for both independence and cooperation.

13. Have you ever studied saxophone? If so, in what capacity?

In high school I studied saxophone with several private instructors, and I have performed and continue to perform saxophone in various capacities. Mostly my saxophone career has been in and around the jazz and improvisational worlds rather than the “symphonic art music” world that this work may (or may not) be a part of.

14. What is your major instrument(s)?

Clarinet, bass clarinet, and electronics.

15. Do you use any particular compositional techniques when writing your music, and if so, do you think they should be brought out by the performers?

Sometimes yes, sometimes no. In this particular case, I created a set of rules for different sections of the piece. Simply by playing what is written, I believe these rules become apparent (though the rules may not be *specifically known* or even *understood*, just apparent). I am unconvinced that a performer *must* know how these things work in order for the music to be effective. Still, it can't hurt.

16. Have you ever written for saxophone quartet before? What problems did you run across? What aspects weren't you completely sure about? Did (do) you enjoy writing for saxophone quartet?

I have not written for this instrumentation before, and I learned a lot during the process. One of the main challenges was finding a range for my 9-note

EDO to sit comfortably on the instrument. Originally, I planned a 9-note EDO around D before the performers requested lowering the scale down a fourth to A. I was more than happy to oblige. I like writing music that is near impossible but not fully impossible! I really enjoyed writing for this group and this group of instruments. I hope to do it again.

17. **What, if anything, did you learn about writing for saxophone while writing this piece? Anything the performer should keep in mind while performing?**

I mainly learned about the upper range of the instruments and what kind of possibilities, particularly on the soprano sax. Still, the idea is that some of the notes are *almost* out of reach. I *want* to hear the performers sweat a bit. I like the sound of ensembles and musicians struggling. It adds a certain *je ne sais quoi*.

18. **For what instruments are your favorite to compose?**

My favorite is bass clarinet and electronics.

19. **Are you concerned with audience perception of your music? To what extent do you consider audience reception?**

When I am creating a piece of music, I do not concern myself with audience perception. Instead I focus on what I find interesting and trust that the audience will agree with me. When on stage, however, I am very concerned with the audience. The actual *musicking* goes on during the event, and it is at that event that performer and audience combine their collective experience(s). This is why the Performer takes precedence over composer. It is the Performer and the audience that is *doing* music!

20. What are your general concerns regarding this piece? What do you think performers should know and account for when learning and performing it?

I think the only thing performers should know about my music is that I trust you to make the music. If something needs to be changed, go ahead! Just try to stay *on the edge*. It's more interesting out there.

APPENDIX G

BEN STEVENSON'S QUESTIONNAIRE RESPONSES

1. When and in what way did you begin your musical studies?³⁶

I began formal musical studies in sixth grade when I began playing trumpet in the middle school band, though I did not really begin to study an instrument seriously until high school when I began to study classical guitar. I also took piano lessons and sang in choir during high school. I earnestly considered pursuing a career as a classical guitar performer and began my collegiate studies as a performance major.

2. How did you become interested in composition? What about your compositions differentiates you from other composers?

Composition was something I always did rather than practicing my instrument, though to be honest, the impulse to compose almost certainly came before the impulse to perform for me, and learning an instrument was more a means to an end of learning the way that music worked.

If there is anything that sets my works apart from other composers, it is probably the attention that I pay to formal design. I also do love to embed pulse and groove into most of my works.

3. What are your musical influences, and from where do you draw inspiration? What was your inspiration for the piece?

The earliest classical music I can remember loving was Aaron Copland's *Rodeo*. These days I listen a wide range of music and consider it all influential. I can honestly say that I have composed pieces inspired by music as varied as French Spectral music to John Carpenter's synth-infused horror movie scores.

³⁶ Ben Stevenson, questionnaire.

Fragments of a Narrative was composed at a time when I was deeply involved in studying the music of the late American composer Steven Stucky. The first two movements, at least, explore devices that I found especially compelling in Stucky's music: the exploitation of limited thematic material and the exploration of very quiet dissonance. The 3rd movement was inspired more by the sax quartet writing of Philip Glass and Michael Torke than by anything else.

4. Can you name a person or event that greatly influenced your musical life?

The most influential person in my musical life would probably be my high school guitar teacher, Brian Roberts from Ann Arbor, Michigan. He was the first person to really figure out how to teach me music, and I still find myself using his tactics in my own teaching.

5. What elements do you find to be the most important within your musical compositions? Are there any particular motives or thematic ideas that you use throughout the piece?

Rhythm and harmony are the two most important elements in piece I compose.

There are no real motives in *Fragments of a Narrative* to speak of, though each movement is based off one or two ideas. These are not necessarily developed in the classical manner of motivic development that one might find in Beethoven, however.

6. Where do you find ideas for the titles of your compositions? Do you usually come up with a title first or the music? Does the title have any special meaning? If so, how would you like that meaning manifested during performance?

Titles usually suggest themselves during the composition of a piece. I will, however, often have a working title though they almost never survive to the end of the composition process. The final titles of many of my pieces come from either poetry or visual art, as the consumption of both those arts very often spark musical ideas in my mind.

The title, *Fragments of a Narrative*, came from the original design for the piece. It was first conceived as a four-movement work for sax quartet, and each of the movements would correspond to a traditional plot point in a dramatic story. The original title of the piece was *Narrative Structure*, to point up the fact that the piece was designed as a sort of story without words. This version of the piece was played during a reading by PRISM that occurred at UMKC in 2016.

Several months later, I saw that the Donald Sinta Quartet was running a call for scores for sax quartet pieces by students, but there was a limit to the duration of the pieces, which *Narrative Structure* was too long to qualify. Having never been very happy with the original third movement of the piece, I decided to discard it and re-order the remaining movements, moving the original second movement to the front and making a few edits to the others. This new version of the piece needed a new title, so I settled on *Fragments of a Narrative* as a literal description of what was left. This version of the piece was awarded an honorable mention in the DSQ call and was premiered by them in Ann Arbor, MI in August of 2017.

7. **How did your compositional career develop into what it is today?**

My career is very much still developing, but I have to say that the most important factor in my career path has been meeting other musicians and offering to compose pieces for them.

8. **Do you take into consideration the qualities of an individual performer when writing for them?**

Collaboration with performers is one of the great joys of my work as a composer. I do not consider a piece truly finished until I have had a chance to work on it with a performer. Often, I will ask for something that might be technically awkward or otherwise impossible, and I really enjoy working one-on-one with the performer to achieve a similar, technically possible result.

I have had the privilege of writing pieces for some incredible musicians and will often ask if there is a certain technique at which they excel and will try to incorporate those into the work. At the same time, though, I am conscious of the realities of new music and hope to write pieces with wide appeal that many people can perform. So, I like to aim for the middle.

9. **How do you want your compositions to contribute to the classical world? Is there a missing area of classical music that you desire your compositions fill?**

Even though I write for “classical” ensembles, I don’t particularly consider my music to be classical. I hope that my music can open the door for other musical styles to be influential in more serious “art music” circles.

10. **How does this piece fit into your body of compositional works?**

The piece is my only current piece for saxophone quartet, though I am a big fan of the ensemble and would love to write more pieces in the genre.

- 11. Do you have any stylistic concerns or considerations for this piece? What performance suggestions can you provide the musicians when preparing your piece?**

Dynamics should be carefully observed in all the movements. Rhythmic elements are also quite important, as in—for example—the third movement, where the primary rhythmic pulse is 16th notes, but in several areas the soprano sax plays 8th note triplets. In spots like that where a player breaks free of the prevailing pulse, the rhythm should be played as precisely as possible.

- 12. What are some of the main technical concerns for the performers?**

There are several places where the players are asked to make large intervallic jumps, which should be rehearsed to ensure that they are played smoothly. There is also a fair amount of rather soft *altissimo* playing at the very end of the final movement, which can be difficult.

- 13. Have you ever studied saxophone? If so, in what capacity?**

No, I have not, though I have read *Hello, Mr. Sax* by Londeix many times.

- 14. What is your major instrument(s)?**

I consider myself a guitarist, though I most often use piano to compose.

- 15. Do you use any particular compositional techniques when writing your music, and if so, do you think they should be brought out by the performers?**

Not particularly.

- 16. Have you ever written for saxophone quartet before? What problems did you run across? What aspects weren't you completely sure about? Did (do) you enjoy writing for saxophone quartet?**

This was my first piece for sax quartet. I loved the experience and would love to write more pieces for the ensemble.

- 17. What, if anything, did you learn about writing for saxophone while writing this piece? Anything the performer should keep in mind while performing?**

I learned that the sax is way more capable than I thought. I already considered it a versatile instrument but discovered that I could ask for even more from the performers than I thought.

- 18. For what instruments are your favorite to compose?**

I especially enjoy writing for winds and percussion, as well as electronics, though my favorite ensemble is probably string quartet.

- 19. Are you concerned with audience perception of your music? To what extent do you consider audience reception?**

I want to write music to which people will have an emotional response. This doesn't mean that I always write "pretty" music, but I don't write to alienate the audience either.

20. What are your general concerns regarding this piece? What do you think performers should know and account for when learning and performing it?

The previously discussed issues of rhythm and groove, along with dynamics, are the most important aspects of the piece. However, future performers of the piece should try to have fun with the piece and not take it too seriously. It is not *XAS* by Xenakis or anything.

APPENDIX H

PETE FORD'S QUESTIONNAIRE RESPONSES

1. **When and in what way did you begin your musical studies?**³⁷

The family element was an informal but important part of my early musical instruction. Growing up in a rural setting with parents too busy to take us anywhere, my siblings and I found our own ways of learning and adapting. My folks ran a radio station out of the front room of our house (WPFR in West Terre Haute IN), so I was exposed to music, but more as a consumer. My mom and one of my sisters played some piano. Two of my older brothers were bass players who played in bands in high school, then began gigging in bar bands. I played violin in the public school orchestra from fifth to eighth grade, but got no formal training beyond the classroom. My playing was barely adequate. I also poked around at the piano, making my own simple pieces and playing crudely by ear, but had no real direction until I stumbled upon how to play arpeggios across the piano one day. An older brother suggested to mom that I take piano lessons, so I started that around fourteen. Prior to that it had never occurred to my folks to get any of us lessons beyond what the public school offered. I now see this was a giant missed opportunity, but again my folks grew up during the depression and didn't want to waste any money.

In piano lessons, I went through several teachers at a music store; I had a good ear but resisted learning to read well. To this day, my sight-reading is fair at best. I would listen to the teacher play and emulate what they did by watching, but consulting the notes on the page was always work. One of my brother's friends showed me how to play a blues scale at the piano, and suddenly for my age I could sound very convincing but was even more frustrated with reading. I

³⁷ Pete Ford, questionnaire.

took up electric bass like my two older brothers and excelled at that. I played bass in marching band, with another person pushing my amp with a car battery across the football field.

Then I auditioned at Indiana State University on electric bass and was accepted with the condition that I learn upright bass and play in the orchestra. In my audition, I also played a couple Bach Two-Part Inventions on piano that I had prepared over a couple years' time. That got me in as a college music major, trying to major in both piano and bass. Between high school and college, I even played bass and piano "on the road" with a lounge band, I felt very professional: just out of school getting paid to travel and play in places as far away as Colorado. Of course, those musical skills do not necessarily align with academic music skills.

Once in college, piano lessons were overwhelmingly difficult for me. The material on which I had auditioned had taken many months to work up; now the turnaround time was impossibly quicker, and I was a poor reader at piano. Also, learning upright bass was a physical challenge. I was just barely competent and never a strong player on that instrument, but I was good on electric bass and fine with keyboard when not reading.

Music Theory, on the other hand, was my thing in college. Except for sight-singing, I seemed to excel without much effort (especially compared to college piano and bass). I saw this as the gateway to composition. I got an excellent theory education from strong instructors, especially Dr. John Ibberson and Dr. William Dentel.

Throughout college, I taught electric guitar and bass at a music store, and played gigs more weekends than not, mostly in area country bands (where the money was in South-Central Indiana), so I became adept at learning tunes.

2. How did you become interested in composition? What about your compositions differentiates you from other composers?

I became interested in composition from an early age, probably during junior high orchestra, and also when composing and attempting to notate my little piano pieces before that time. All music for beginning piano players seemed overly trite, happy, and pedantic with I, IV6/4 and V6/5 sounds. I wanted to play something that sounded serious and was too impatient to wait for a teacher to bring it, so I made my own. This is probably parallel to somebody using their imagination to make their own toys because they can't afford the ones on TV.

I suspect my compositions (and arrangements) differ from others because they come from or address an improvisational perspective that recognizes the value of popular (i.e., not only serious) music and especially progressive rock music. I was always a fan of the Beatles, Emerson Lake and Palmer, Yes, Rush, and U.K., so even in high school I was a musical snob of my own kind. I played a lot of other classic rock in bands, both on bass and keys, but the progressive rock pieces were a sort of holy grail that I knew to be more complex than most of the things everybody else listened to, and I value the sophistication their music brought. Interestingly I didn't play much progressive music because I couldn't figure it out, and to most other people, it was too much work and not worth their time to help me. That created a drive to want to learn more about it myself.

Additionally, one of my friends from junior high school had taken organ lessons for years and could play Bach fugues, pedals and all. This was so

impressive to me, and it gave me a strong appreciation for counterpoint and the power of music. Obviously I also learned a great deal about the inner workings of classical music in college, and of course I have a very deep appreciation for each composer's craftsmanship and command over the score. I am interested in combining both serious and prog rock sides of knowledge, but am also fully aware that many combinations simply bring out the worst of both sides. Kind of with some third-stream classical/jazz combinations, they have the potential to come across as insipid or cheesy, like a pops concert but with some added dissonance to appease the composer's colleagues. (This is not a blanket statement, but something I keep in mind and try to avoid doing myself.) Of course there are combinations that, in my opinion, work great—Nina Simone's version of "Love Me Or Leave Me" is a true work of art. *Gulda's Prelude and Fugue* is also wonderfully complex and deep, yet still it communicates a soulfulness.

3. What are your musical influences, and from where do you draw inspiration? What was your inspiration for the piece?

In addition to the previous answer, a series of things occurred in my teens affected my musical priorities. My brother brought home an October 1977 Keyboard Magazine that featured Keith Emerson. I read the article and was intrigued. The thing that solidified my interest in learning piano and taking music somewhat seriously (except the sight-reading part) was seeing Emerson Lake and Palmer live in January 1978. That show was absolutely incredible, especially to my impressionable young self. (Life would have turned out much differently if my first concert was Ozzy Osborne, Kiss, or something like that!) I knew ELP had toured earlier with an orchestra but had to drop it, but then they played this music anyway without needing the orchestra, and I was spellbound.

I also found and purchased a copy of ELP's first songbook. Then later the Tarkus album was released in a sheet music book. Finally, an ELP anthology of selected sheet music was released. I am amazed that I had the money in my pocket and the wherewithal to know to purchase these musical scores when they appeared, because they were not in print for long.

In many ways these scores disrupted my ideas of music theory expectations; quartal chords, excitingly-placed dissonances and modal material gave me a very weird idea of whatever "normal" was supposed to be. They were a wonderful but confusing aberration.

Also, I had a Yes book, and it contained excerpts from Rick Wakeman's *Six Wives of Henry VIII*, which had Sus4 arpeggios. I knew how cool they sounded and tried to fit those sounds in wherever I could.

Regarding my inspiration for turning *Tarkus* into a saxophone quartet arrangement, I have to jump ahead in time. Eventually, I graduated from Indiana State University with a BS in music business, and for an internship, I wrote and did MIDI recordings for radio jingles and training films at a studio called Bennett Music in Indianapolis. I loved that job, but after about 18 months, the budget got tight and I was let go since I was the only one on staff who didn't also sing. I went back to ISU, found an opening in music theory for grad school, took the GRE and placement exams and by the next week was taking classes.

My thesis was "The Compositional Style of Keith Emerson in *Tarkus* (1971) for the Rock Music Trio Emerson Lake and Palmer." Also, I met Shannon. After completing two years of coursework, we moved to Bowling Green, OH so she could begin her master's in saxophone performance. She and three other members of John Sampen's studio were assigned to a quartet; I named them "Sax

4th Avenue.” They were open-minded, and as far as I could tell, they could read anything. Also they were hungry for ideas and about to make a recording. I had just gotten a DOS music software program called “Music Printer Plus”, and that was the impetus for me arranging Tarkus for saxophone quartet. I also arranged *Gulda’s Fugue* for the same recording.

4. Can you name a person or event that greatly influenced your musical life?

Honestly, Keith Emerson, but really all progressive rock musicians. From a classical standpoint, my instructors at ISU, and my friend who played organ in high school. Of course my two older brothers who got me started playing bass and giving me the gigs they didn’t want to take. My composition professors in college included John Muelheisen, Timothy Krame, and David Ott. They were helpful in getting me to both find my voice and pushing me beyond my comfort zone.

After completing my master’s degree, I began studying jazz piano with Gene Parker and Mark Kieswetter in the Toledo area. While I had some jazz study at Indiana State University, the presentation of the material was not a good fit for the way I learned. With Gene and Mark, the theoretical and stylistic tools presented were so clear and intuitive that it seemed like the world had turned from black and white to color. Chord voicings had finite rules and reasons, and suddenly quartal harmony made sense—the notes are simply stacking a pentatonic scale in 4ths. Amazing discoveries. Also books by David Baker “How To Play Bebop” book 1, and Frank Mantooth’s “Miracle Voicings for Jazz Piano”. These books really helped me.

5. **What elements do you find to be the most important within your musical compositions? Are there any particular motives or thematic ideas that you use throughout the piece?**

Elements of machine-type sounds always appealed to me, especially ostinato patterns in unusual meters, mixing of tertiary and quartal harmony, shimmering dissonances and extended harmony. But at the same time, I like beauty and simplicity. For a time, I did compose some modern sounding chamber pieces, but they are not the real me. Just because something is complicated, or it follows a structure that is clever or intellectual, does not mean it is good. A piece should have lasting value and a shelf-life. I am pleased that I recently got published a piano piece I composed in 1987 while studying with David Ott. (The piece is *Hemiolae*, in a collection titled *Four Piano Pieces from Two Millennia* by Pete Ford, published by Musical Resources.)

6. **Where do you find ideas for the titles of your compositions? Do you usually come up with a title first or the music? Does the title have any special meaning? If so, how would you like that meaning manifested during performance?**

Wow! Although it doesn't apply directly to this project, I am deeply title-driven. I like wordplay, and sometimes I will write a piece to fit a title; other times I will persevere over the title as much as I do the notes. With *Tarkus*, however, it's a word that Keith Emerson thought up describing a comic-book-like story of a mechanical armadillo in some future post-apocalyptic desert scene. I have to admit, such imagery was very appealing to my younger teenage mind. There are plenty of definitions of *Tarkus* (and the movements within the suite) available online, and also I'm sure I described it in my thesis, which is also readily

available online. Knowing the imagery of the album cover artwork and associating it with that title would be indispensable to interpreting the music.

7. How did your compositional career develop into what it is today?

I had adapted another of my undergraduate college compositions for string quartet – *Ulterior Motives* – for Sax 4th Avenue. When they played at one of the state conferences in the early 1990's, I pretentiously talked to a publisher called Great Works (now part of Ludwig Masters), and with a couple revisions, they put it into their catalog. It's on the Class A high school list for many states.

I have always enjoyed being the composer—when the performance happens, my work is done. I can just listen, and the performers can be nervous! Not that I don't tweak things when I can.

For 14 years in Toledo, I taught beginning piano at a little store in Toledo; I'm sad that much of that time from the prime of my life seems wasted there. Through students there, I did start adjunct teaching, eventually at four colleges, and eventually was offered half, then full-time at Adrian College, where I teach music theory. I may be the last person in the world with a full-time tenure-track gig but not have a doctorate. The college is a wonderful place for a composer because I can write things for individual students.

8. Do you take into consideration the qualities of an individual performer when writing for them?

Yes. It makes no sense to me to write something that cannot be performed well. At the same time, if a performer would like to exploit their range or another attribute, I can make that happen. But simplicity and performability are important to me. I am not about making the performer sweat, but I do want their

performance to be exciting enough that their audience likes both them and the composition.

9. How do you want your compositions to contribute to the classical world? Is there a missing area of classical music that you desire your compositions fill?

If a composition does not bring something new or positive to the performer and/or the audience, it is a waste of their time. There are so many great pieces of music out there for performers to choose from; I am hoping pieces I write will be enjoyed in some way, either by the performer or the audience. So many composers write complex works to show that they can, and the pieces will never see the light of day. I'm not saying we need more simple music or insipid music, but the music has to communicate some kind of mood or feeling or impact the listener's emotion, or it might as well be "muzak". I want the listener to say, "That's cool."

10. How does this piece fit into your body of compositional works?

The Tarkus arrangement for sax quartet is, as far as arrangements go, very crude and does not do service to the original composition. That's my assessment now, looking back. I made sure the instruments stayed within playable ranges and largely let the musicians take care of details of articulation, etc. In many ways, the original music of *Tarkus* is important to me, as I studied it for my master's and compositionally, in its own way, it set a high bar for anyone to follow. But that's Emerson's part; my part is just transcribing it into a different medium.

11. Do you have any stylistic concerns or considerations for this piece? What performance suggestions can you provide the musicians when preparing your piece?

There's a harshness to the album cover art. ELP performed this countless times, and different performances each bring different viewpoints of the piece, some stronger, some less so. Emerson's hand problems that started in the 1990's severely affected his performances after that time, and I feel bad for the struggles he must have felt.

To me, Tarkus (the instrumental movements at least) is really a modern classical piece in rock clothing, and in a way it parallels ELP's version of *Pictures at an Exhibition*. Maybe not quite the depth, but still with vivid imagery, virtuosic requirements, and a modernized and mechanized sound.

While Emerson does use some complex jazz voicings, it's still a rock piece, so when a saxophone quartet plays, care should be taken to keep it sounding more mechanical and less romantic.

I deeply respect the opinion of my former jazz piano teacher Mark Kieswetter. While not an avid fan of Emerson, he gave me a very useful and affirming comment regarding rock music. I once sheepishly asked him what he thought of rock music in general, and his answer was surprisingly objective, open, and matter-of-fact (paraphrased here): Rock music simply has an energy with which other styles can never touch or compete. His offhand description justified rock's validity as a style, even as it was not his primary style (although after this time he did some backup keyboard work with rock vocalist/keyboardist Michael McDonald).

Of course, so much of rock and popular music in the last 20 years is simply a manufactured product that it has become inane. Despite this, rock, especially progressive rock, has a justifiable space in the continuum of art music.

12. What are some of the main technical concerns for the performers?

I recall some range issues, some overlapping/doubling of lines as they are handed between instruments, and the ability for the soprano player to improvise convincingly in Emerson's idiomatic way, which is difficult to define.

Emerson understood jazz and bebop – and even utilized many such substantive patterns, scales, and riffs into his improvisations – but somehow could keep them identifying more with rock. Whereas other musicians would settle for blues scales, he was quite the intellect in playing with tension and release, and he had the tools at his fingertips to provide brilliant solutions with every improvisation. I implore performers to find and study the transcription I've seen online of Emerson's original Hammond solo on "The Stones of Years". Some very complex thinking there—getting into a Db scale over C minor? He liked painting himself into a musical corner and then showing how he could cleverly get himself out.

As a contrast, his solo over the same tune in the live 1974 album *Welcome Back My Friends...* takes on a much more soulful approach, with wonderful peaks and valleys of emotion and intensity.

13. Have you ever studied saxophone? If so, in what capacity?

Shannon let me try hers. I can honk out a G major scale.

14. What is your major instrument(s)?

Bass and piano. Since the early 1990's, I got an arthritic left hand index finger so my upright bass playing days stopped then. To this day I still play big

band gigs on electric bass, but don't use my left hand index finger. But as a result of the arthritis, I decided I needed to change something, so I went to study jazz piano with Gene Parker. Had that not happened, I'd still be a so-so bass player and much less of a jazz piano player. All things work out for the best.

- 15. Do you use any particular compositional techniques when writing your music, and if so, do you think they should be brought out by the performers?**

Regarding the arrangement of *Tarkus*, I just wanted to hear it played and played well on different instruments. Had Shannon played a string instrument, I might have transcribed it for string quartet or something.

- 16. Have you ever written for saxophone quartet before? What problems did you run across? What aspects weren't you completely sure about? Did (do) you enjoy writing for saxophone quartet?**

Uterior Motives and *Tarkus* were a couple of my first saxophone quartet arrangements. The first piece I actually composed with saxophone quartet in mind is *The Refinery*, which is on the same Sax 4th Avenue CD as *Tarkus*. To be honest, the greatest part of the software that I used (Music Printer Plus) was that I could copy the part from my original part in C, do whatever procedure was necessary to transpose it to the proper saxophone key, and then check the range. If I'd tried it by hand, I probably would have made several transposition errors. Now I just think "add three sharps for alto and bari, add two sharps for soprano and tenor," and I can usually do it in my head.

Did I enjoy writing this out? The process of scoring, whether arranging or composing, is always difficult to get started on for me, but when it's done, I have a deep sense of satisfaction and accomplishment.

17. **What, if anything, did you learn about writing for saxophone while writing this piece? Anything the performer should keep in mind while performing?**

I was blessed to have constant friendly suggestions and feedback from the members of Sax 4th Avenue. It's been a quarter of a century ago, but I know I learned a great deal from the process, and they were thankfully appreciative of my efforts.

18. **For what instruments are your favorite to compose?**

Currently, saxophone quartet (preparing to publish a series of original jazz-styled fugues with fun titles), but also strings and piano. I also have written some choral music — this was another challenge and learning process.

19. **Are you concerned with audience perception of your music? To what extent do you consider audience reception?**

Yes, I am concerned with and interested in audience perception. Like any human, I seek approval from any audience, but especially from other musicians and those above me whom I respect deeply. They may be better musicians than me (and there are tons of those) or people with deep historical, intellectual, or simply artistically aesthetic understanding. In the big picture, I would like for things that I do to have lasting value; I think we're all that way. I am humbled that both my thesis and this saxophone arrangement of *Tarkus* are still getting attention a quarter century after their completion. There's a saxophone quartet from Japan that has it on YouTube. That blows my mind. You're writing about it — thank you! Again, I am humbled and glad I stumbled across that score so many years ago, and that I had the wherewithal to adapt it for saxophones originally with Sax 4th Avenue and get them to help me make it playable.

Audience perception is important. Without an audience, we only play for ourselves. It's nice to be self-indulgent but it's also nice to see some external support. If performance is only self-indulgent, audiences shrink and there is even less financial support, so we have to balance art with what audiences want. This does not mean we can't still hear Bartok or Schoenberg or Hindemith or Stravinsky. We can, but we also have to make sure not to alienate the audience's ears. By contrast, it's a sad day when something like Disney is the main theme of a concert! (That said, in full disclosure I play keys for an Elvis impersonator — the money is better than most other gigs, and the crowd is appreciative of all the blues scale licks — but it's a different crowd for that material.) We just have to remember who our audience is, try to educate them a little, and let them leave feeling like they've either learned something or feel more culturally enhanced. Then we really win if a young person decides to take up the instrument or if another person decides to be a patron of the arts.

20. What are your general concerns regarding this piece? What do you think performers should know and account for when learning and performing it?

Tarkus is considered by many to be the quintessential progressive rock suite. To me, that's not to be taken lightly. Karn Evil 9 would be second in my opinion, and Yes and King Crimson had several pieces that allude to the same energy of this piece.

Yet I have found that the mention of ELP will often get a response of rolling eyes. In my opinion, this is because of a variety of factors, but primarily that Emerson is viewed through the lens only of the perception of the person asked: to a classical player, he's sloppy and tries to play too fast, and must not be

serious because he plays rock and roll; to a jazz player, you mention Emerson's Hammond playing and they say he's doing it all wrong — it's not traditional to have a bassist playing along with a Hammond organ; to a rock audience, he plays lots of complicated things that don't make them want to dance.

But what sells it to me is that I'm watching how he explores the nooks and crannies of Sus4 chords, Sus2 chords, quartal chords, shimmering dissonances of major chords with an added fourth. He infuses just enough jazz to be beyond most rock players' ability, and he wrote what he was interested in hearing, not what he expected to be a hit pop song. And there's a difficulty to playing his material, as it is so angular and unusual. So I have deep respect for his musical creation.

For the fact that, while not being everything to any one style, he successfully fused styles in a way that no one did prior, an argument can be made that his keyboard playing parallels Charlie Parker's bebop. It's just so different than what was around previously that it has gone misunderstood.

I hope that this recording both enhances peoples' understanding of rock history, but also brings to audiences an appreciation for the versatility of the saxophone quartet in communicating exciting material.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

A native of Pinckney, Michigan, Woody Chenoweth is emerging as an important voice for the saxophone and contemporary music. He maintains a multi-faceted career as performer, educator, and researcher. Woody's performances as a soloist and chamber musician have taken him around the United States and across the globe. He has performed at numerous North American Saxophone Alliance conferences at the regional and national levels, as well as at the 13th World Saxophone Congress in Minneapolis, Minnesota. His experiences on the international stage include performances at World Saxophone Congress XIV in Ljubljana, Slovenia and World Saxophone Congress XV at Mahidol University in Bangkok, Thailand. Most recently, he has performed with his saxophone chamber music duo – Brickmeat – at both the Constella Festival of Music and Fine Art and the Cincinnati-based Chamber Music Network's Chamberpalooza. Committed to the development of new music, Woody has commissioned new works by notable composers, including Marc Mellits and Grammy-nominee, Carter Pann. He has also premiered the works of many of today's top young composers, including Robby McCarthy, Tom Peterson, Randall Cornelison, and Andrew Ardizzioia. Woody has also been a featured performer on Eastern Michigan University's biennial Music Now Fest. A versatile educator, Woody has presented engaging masterclasses on a wide range of topics for numerous events and organizations, including the Red Cedar Festival of Community Bands, the Highland Jazz Festival, Yavapai Community College, and EMU's Wind and Percussion Clinic Day. Woody holds a Bachelor of Music Education degree from Central Michigan University, as well as a Master of Music degree from Arizona State University. He is currently in the final stages of completing his Doctoral studies in Saxophone Performance at Arizona State University, where he served as Teaching Assistant for the ASU Saxophone Studio from 2010-2012. His primary teachers and mentors include John Nichol, Rob Smith, Michael Hester, Timothy McAllister, Michael Kocour, Bryon Ruth, Christopher Creviston, Joshua Gardner, and Ted Solis. Woody has previously held teaching positions at Chandler Gilbert Community College and Paradise Valley Community College. He currently serves as Instructor of Saxophone and Music Lecturer at Eastern Michigan University. In addition to his pedagogical duties for the EMU Saxophone Studio, Woody also teaches several classes, including Appreciating Jazz: America's Music, Music Theory Fundamentals, and an Honors College section of Music Appreciation. Woody lives in Ypsilanti, Michigan and is happy to call EMU his home.