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Six compositions utilizing extended harmonies and improvisational techniques. [Original compositions]

Foglia, Stephen Phillip, M.A.
San Jose State University, 1993



SIX COMPOSITIONS

Utilizing extended harmonies and improvisational techniques

Presented to

The Faculty of the Department of Music

San Jose State University

In Partial Fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree
Master of Arts

By Stephen Foglia August, 1993 APPROVED FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF MUSIC

Professor Dwight Cannon

Professor Hafez Modirzadeh

Dr. Daniel Hoggatt

APPROVED FOR THE UNIVERSITY

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ABSTRACT

SIX COMPOSITIONS

by Stephen Foglia

These six pieces address the topic of jazz composition through the utilization of extended harmonies, and the written melodic and improvisational concepts applicable to them. Two of the compositions are fully scored for the modern jazz orchestra with short improvisational sections. The other four are in lead sheet and small combo forms.

The factors that bind each piece together are the extended harmonies and the harmonic progressions themselves. Every composition is unique, in that each one is written in a different jazz style. "A Fools Wish" is a ballad reminiscent of the Stan Kenton-Bill Russo style; "Those That Get Away, Get Away" is a hard-bop big band chart reminiscent of the Woody Herman Orchestra; "Electric Bullets" is a contemporary jazz-rock or fusion piece composed in the style of the Brecker Brothers; "Black Eyed Funk" is a very free rhythm and blues piece with a melodic Line that is based on chromatic fourths; "Living On the Western Side" is a combination of fusion and funk; This last piece has two melodic lines that are to be played at the same time, both based on extensions of the harmonies. The last piece "An April State of Mind," is a straight ahead jazz waltz composed in the style of Bill Evans.

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Introduction

The six compositions contained in this work are original. This music has been written in a variety of jazz styles. The chord progressions, melodic lines, and some cases forms have been developed by the composer.

The music contained in this thesis has been designed for large ensembles and small groups. The pieces that were written in lead sheet form include the structure of the melody and chord progressions as well as an outline for improvisational solos. The performer should have a background in jazz improvisation and theory as well as traditional theory to interpret this music. Most of the chord structures are based on extensions (ninths, elevenths, and thirteenths). Some of the harmonic progressions have been influenced by the compositions of Bill Russo, Donald Fagan, Walter Becker, Michael and Randy Brecker, John Coltrane, Miles Davis, Bill Evans, Stephen Kupka, Emilio Castillo, and Bill Holman. The performer or performers of the compositions should be familiar with the styles of these and other noted jazz artists.

This thesis gives musicians six new compositions to include in their repertoires. The experienced performer will know when to improvise and when to play what is written, as each solo and ensemble section has been clearly defined in the orchestral pieces. The music written in lead sheet form can be interpreted with the same performance practice issues taken when using a fake book.

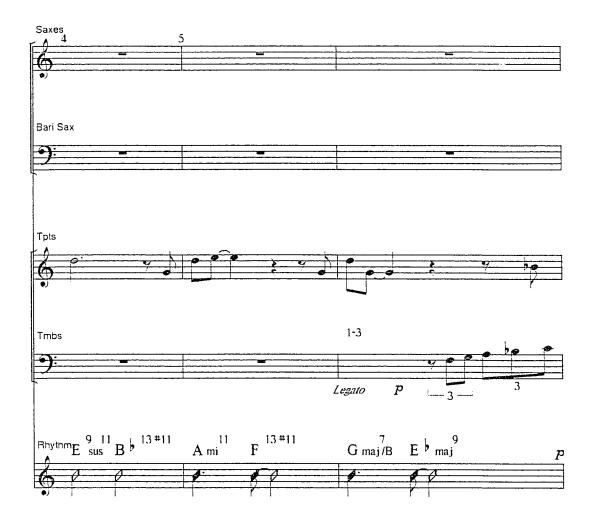
A FOOLS WISH

This is a ballad composed in the style of Bill Russo, an arranger-composer from the Stan Kenton Orchestra of the early fifties. The harmonic progression of the A sections is based on the typical I, VI, II, V with chord alterations and substitutions. The B sections modulate to the IV and descend in whole steps to the flat III and Neapolitan of G major with variance as an F minor ninth chord is substituted for the Ab major. The turn around at the end of the bridge is a variation on the typical "round robin" cadence. (flat III, flat VI, Neapolitan.) There is a short 16 bar piano solo over the chords of the A section, followed by a trumpet solo in double time through the bridge, followed by a soprano solo through the A section.

The melody is traded from section to section of the orchestra, starting off with solo trumpet and piano pyramiding into a duet with soprano in the second A section. This section is embellished with divisi backgrounds by the trombones and saxophones. The melody of the first bridge is played in unison by the trombones and shifted to the trumpets with divisi backgrounds from each section. The third A is a continued duet between trumpet and soprano with contrapuntal lines played by the trombones developing into a huge climax played by the whole band to set up the contrasting piano solo.

The last bridge and final A section is very climactic and scored for the whole orchestra, this is very typical of Bill Russo as evident in his compositions "A Theme of Four Valves" and "My Lady."

A FOOIS WISH Saxes Bari Sax Tpts Tmbs Rhythm Keyboard only G maj F 7 (#9#5) A mi D 13 (69#11) G maj F maj



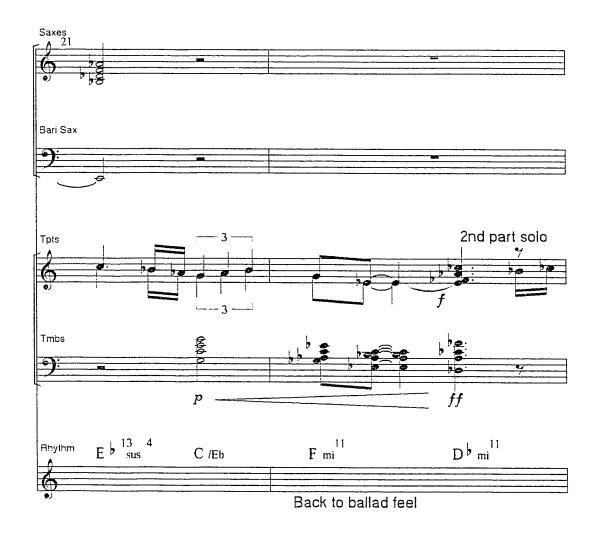


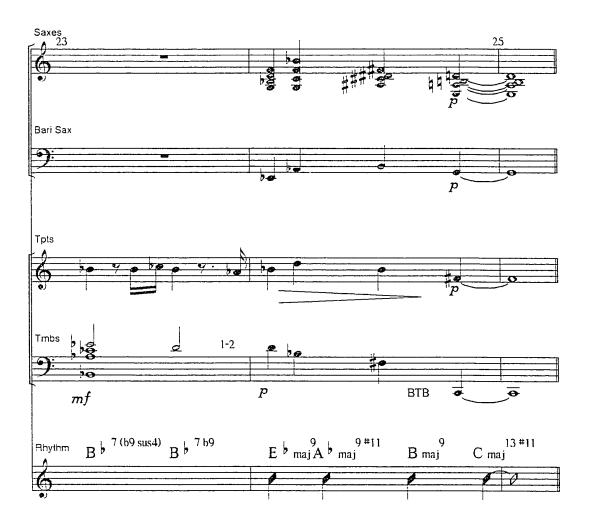




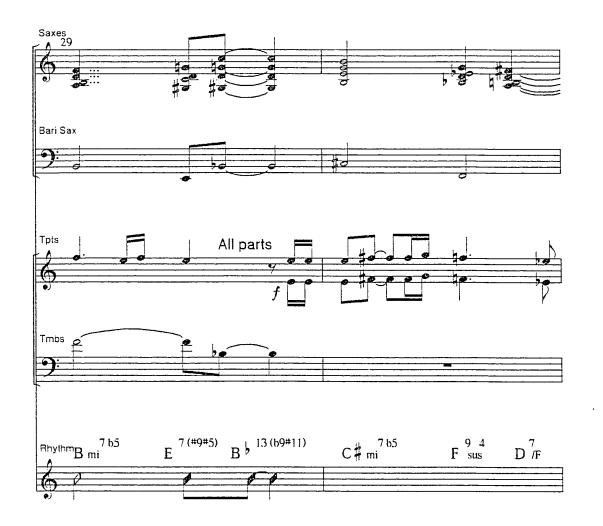






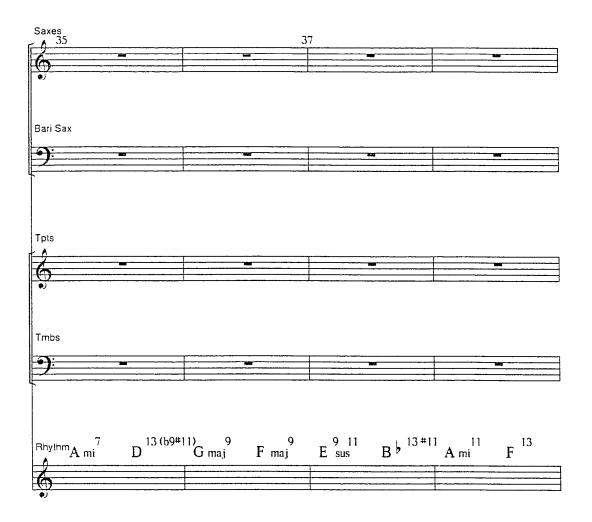


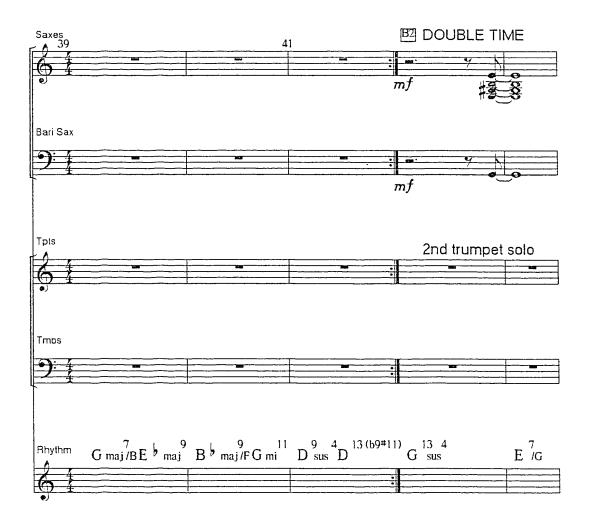






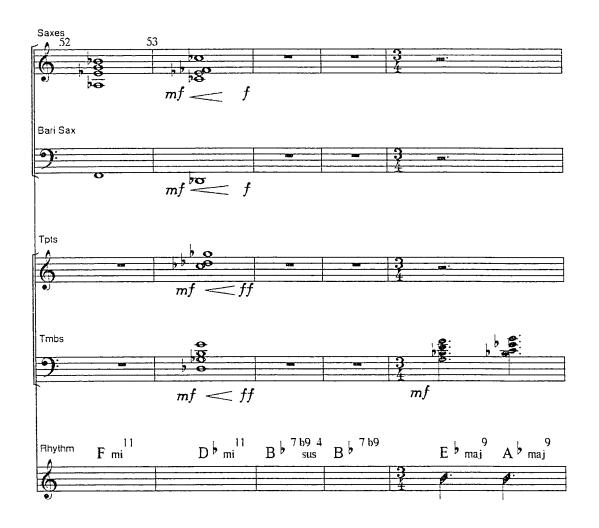




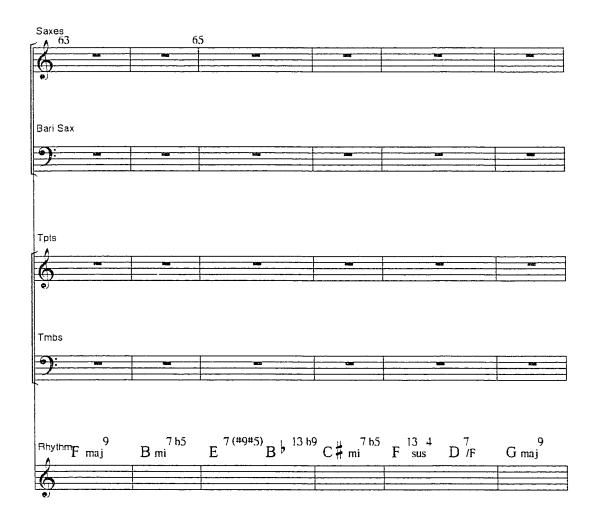






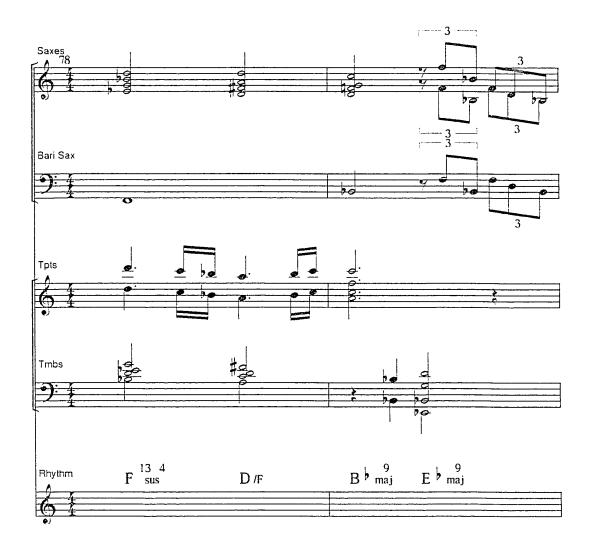






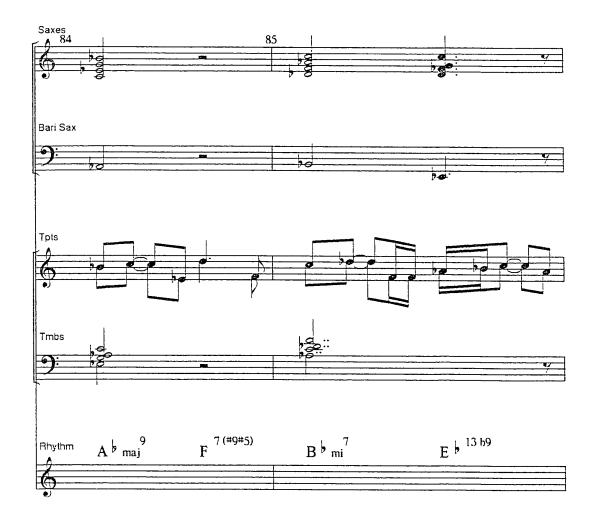






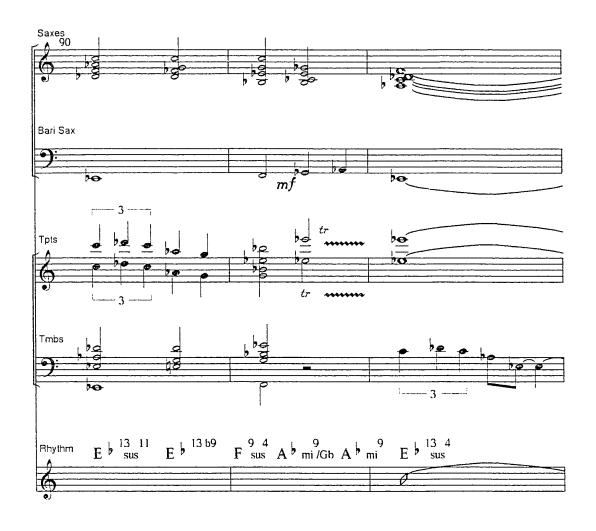




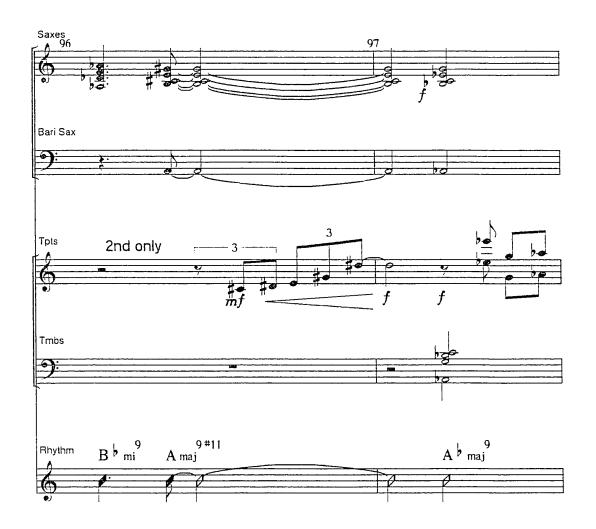
















THOSE THAT GET AWAY, GET AWAY

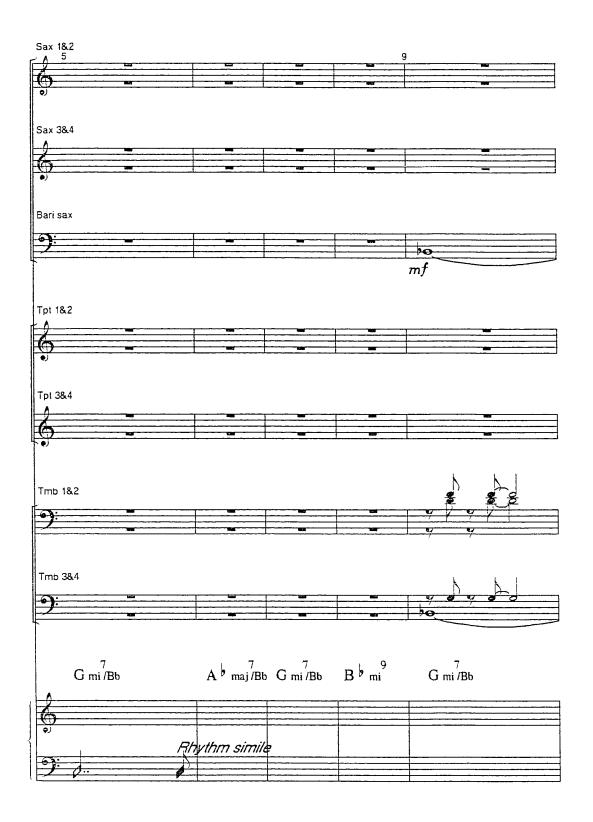
This is a hard-bop composition scored for big band in the tradition of the Woody Herman Orchestra also known as The Herd. Hard-bop as defined in the New Grove Dictionary of American Music is, "A term frequently applied to an intense, hard driving style of jazz of the fifties and sixties, as represented by Horace Silver, Art Blakey, Connonball Adderly, John Coltrane and Miles Davis, among others."

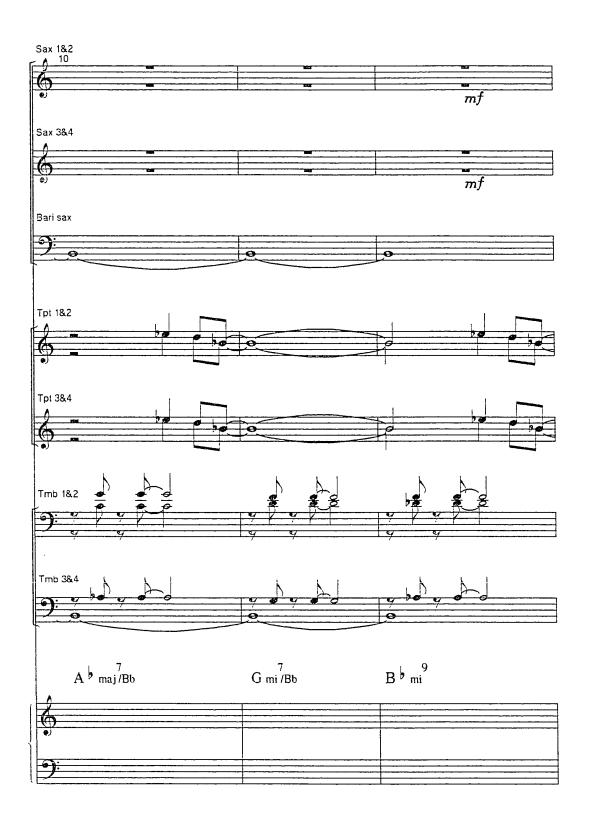
1 The introduction is based on a B flat pedal with chords superimposed over the top, reminiscent of John Coltrane's "Naima" and "Moments Notice." The form of the piece is A1, A2, A3, A1 with variation, ending on the pedal section set-up by the introduction. The harmonic progression of the first A section is in E flat major, modulating to C major for the second A, modulating to E flat minor for the third A, and coming back to the key of Eb major in the recapitulation of the first A section. All the chords are extended with ninths, elevenths, and thirteenths. The shape of the melodic lines match the extensions of the chords, respectively. This is very typical of the hard-bop and be-bop styles. However the modulatory devices used in this piece are rather unique in that the style and feel is from the fifties, yet the progressions lend themselves to techniques found in the eighties and nineties by composers like Chick Corea, Donald Fagan, Mike Stem, and McCoy Tyner, among others.

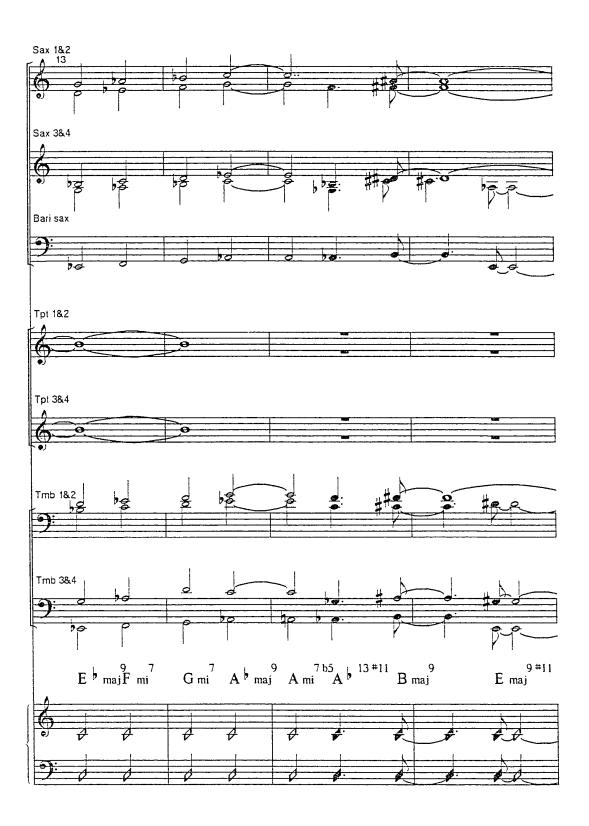
¹Gridley, Mark C. "Jazz-Rock, (Fusion)," *The New Grove Dictionary Of American Music*. Vol. II, Editors, Hitchcock and Sadie. London: Macmillan Press L.T.D., 1986.

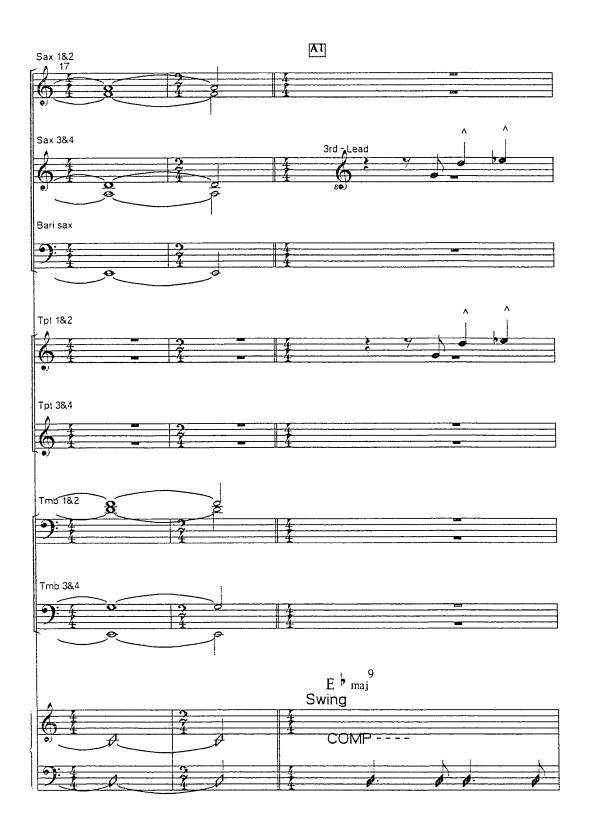
Those That Get Away, Get Away



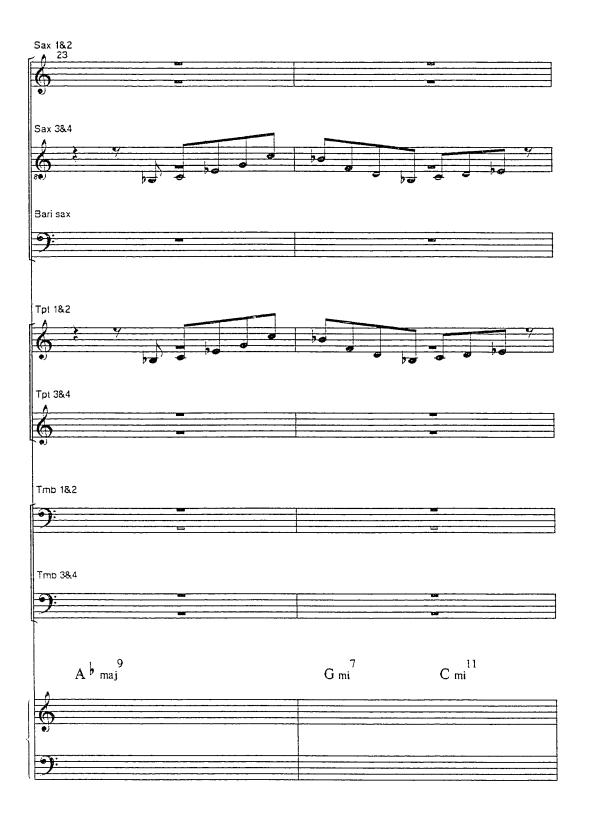






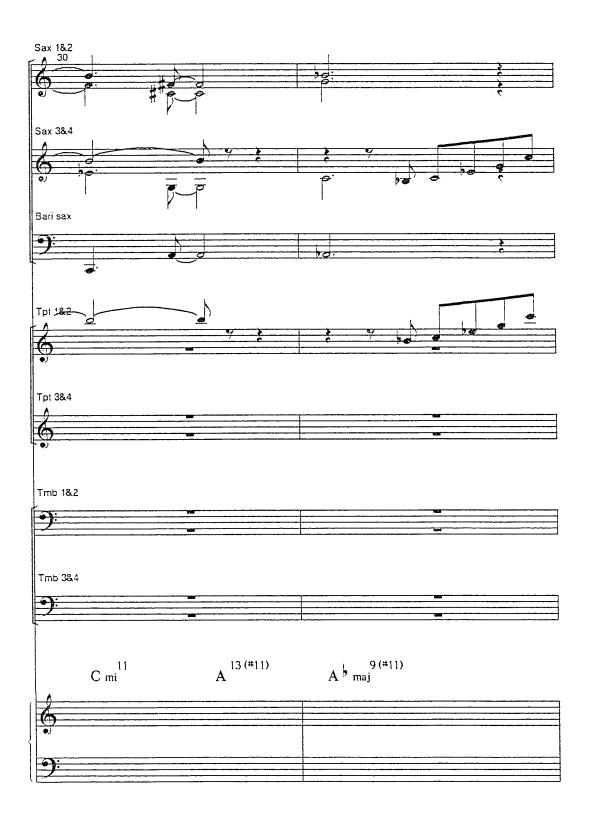


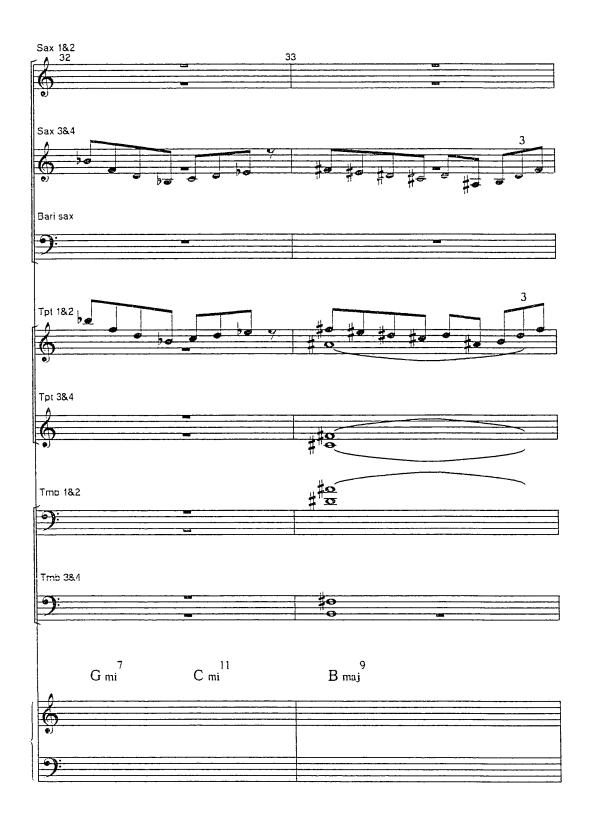




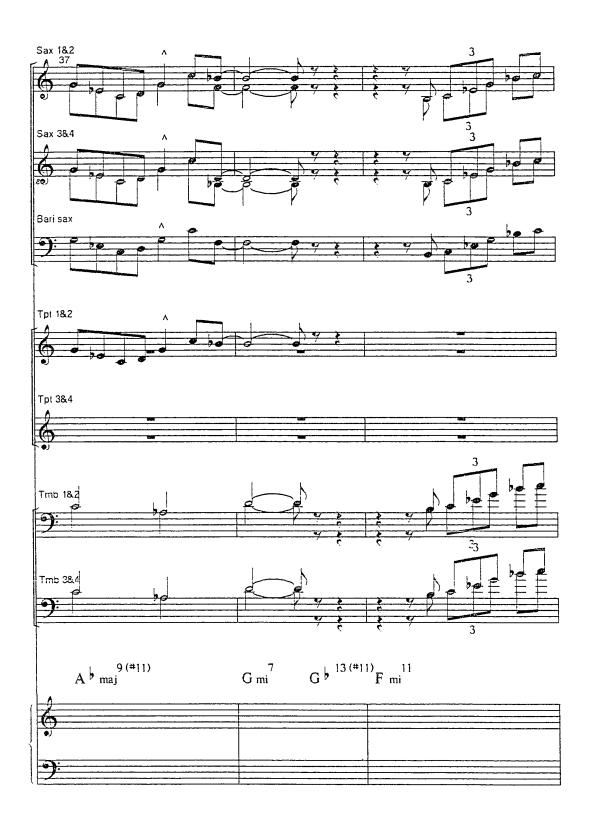


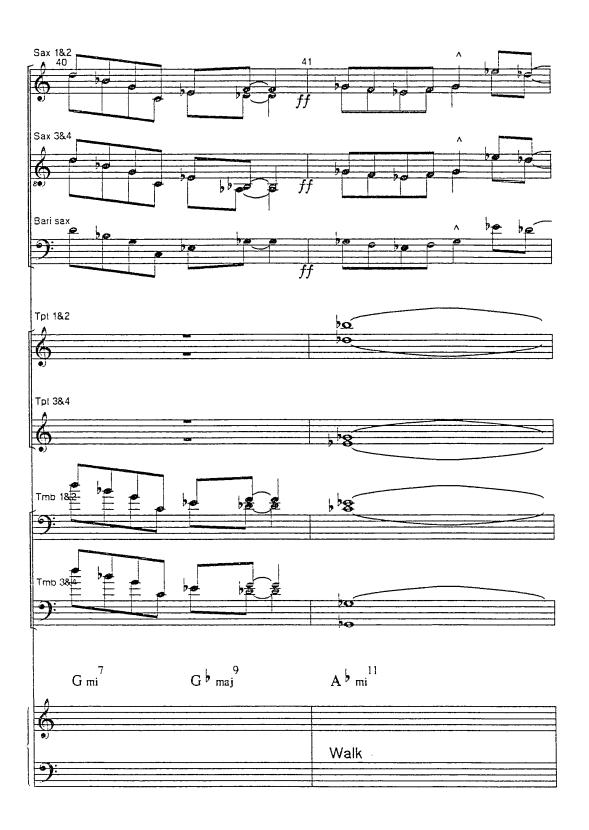


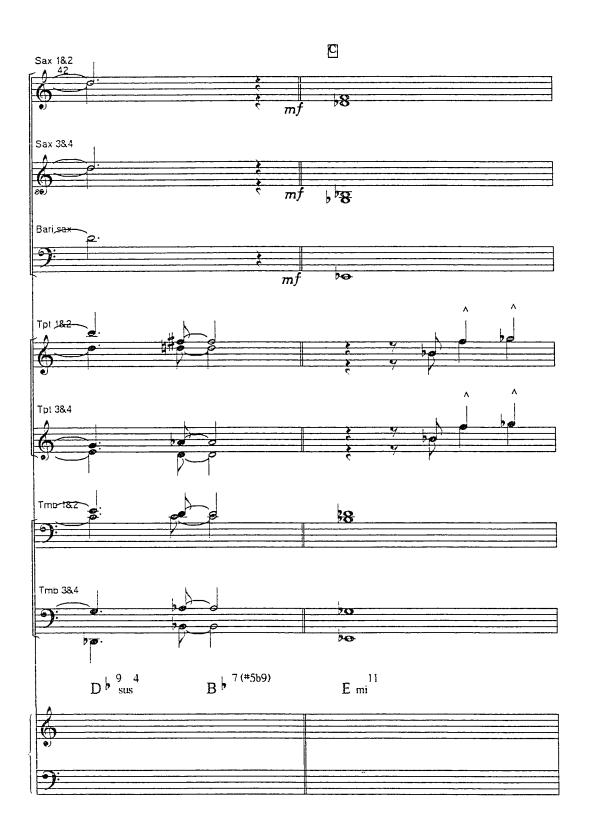




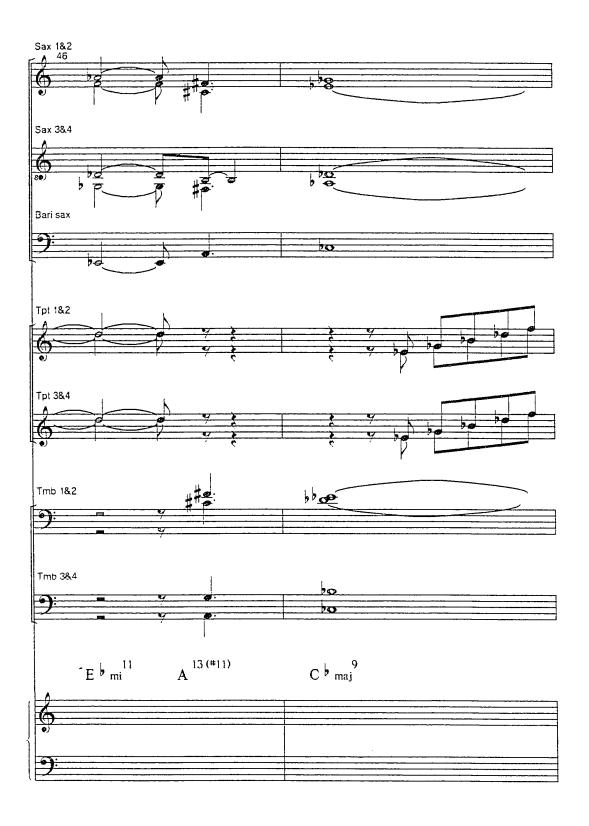


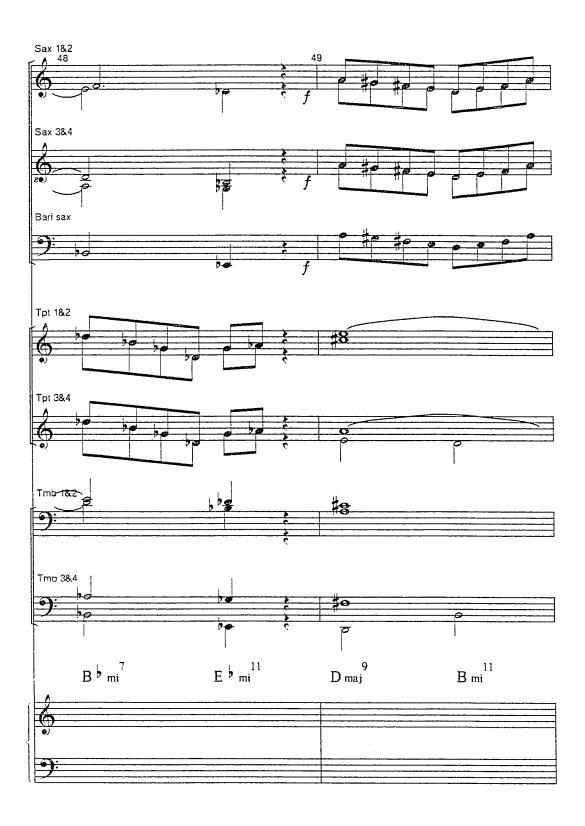


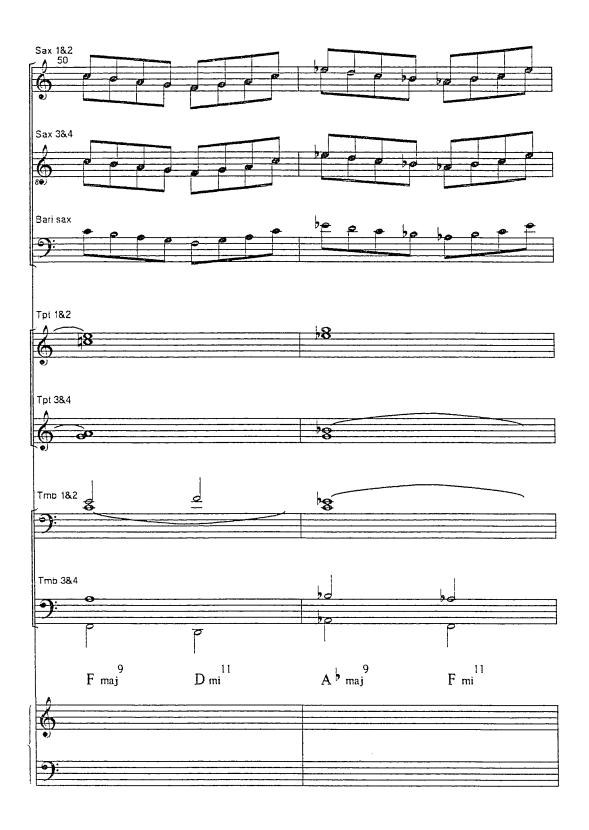






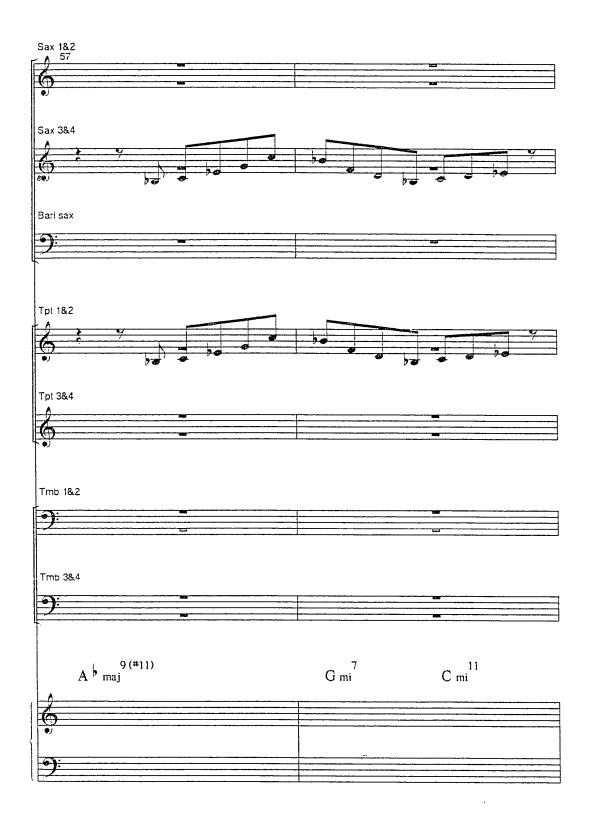








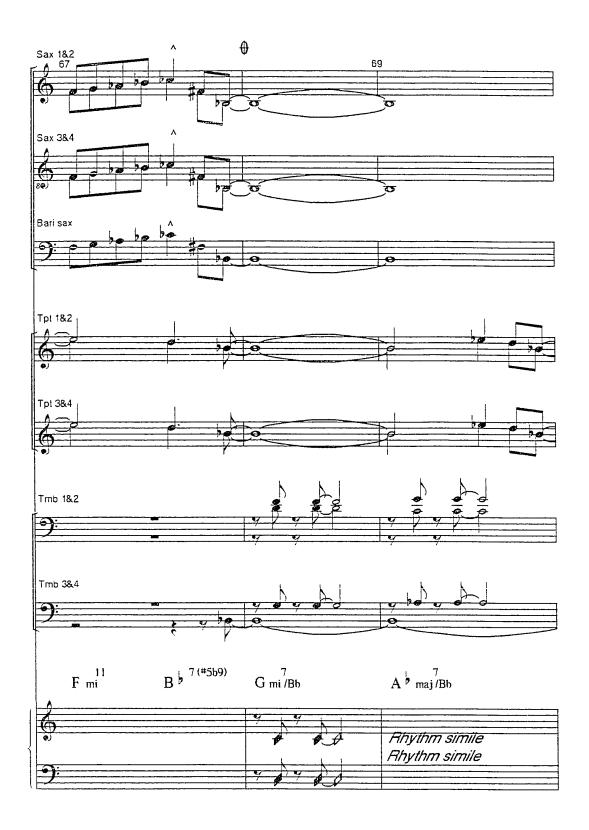


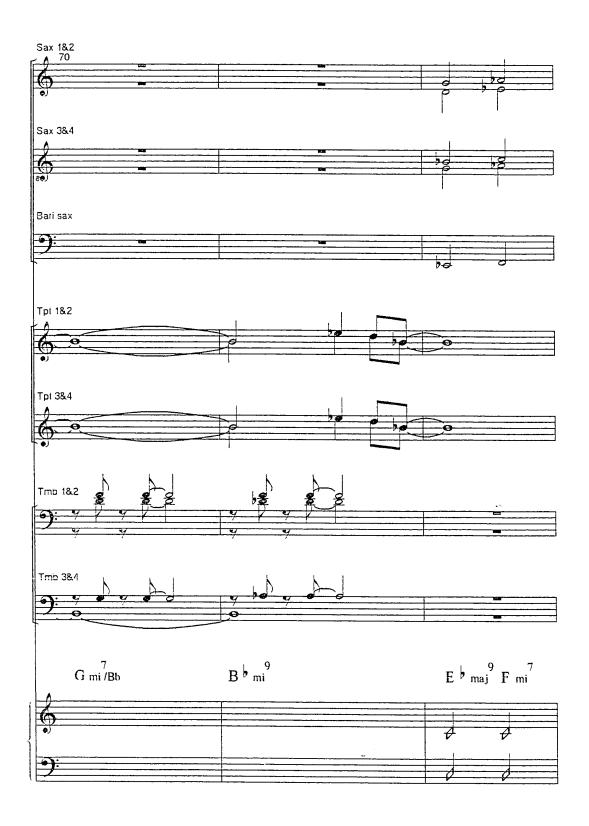


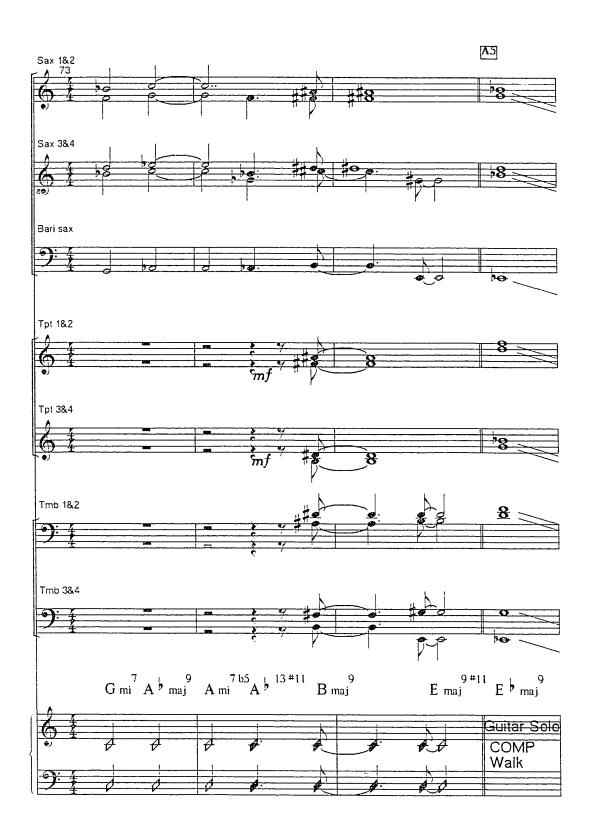


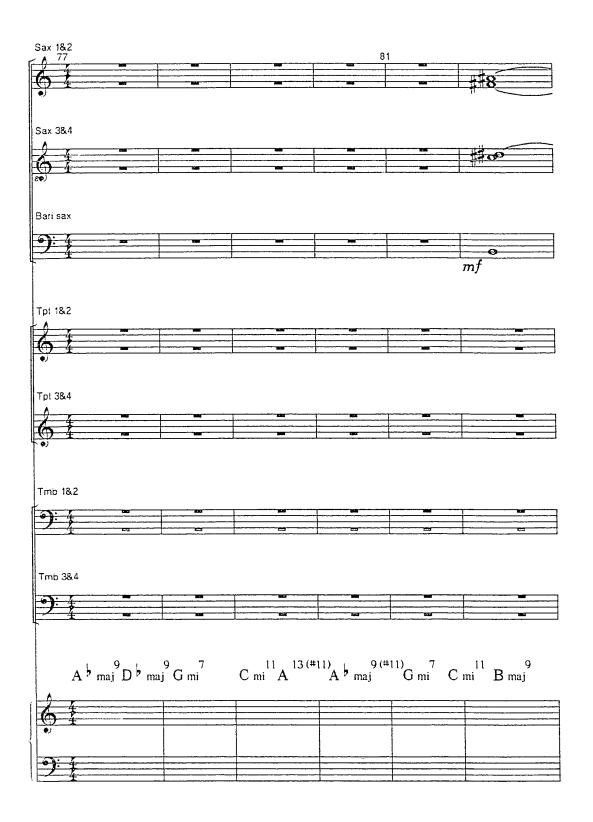




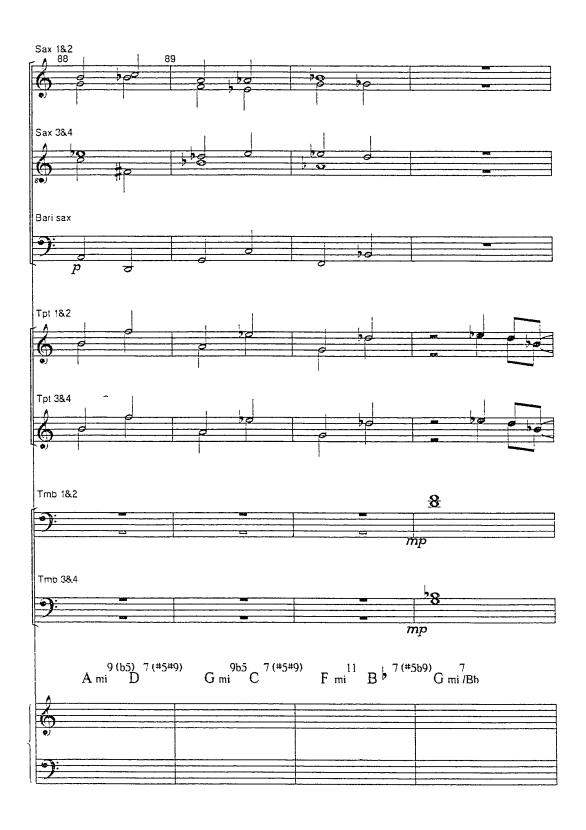






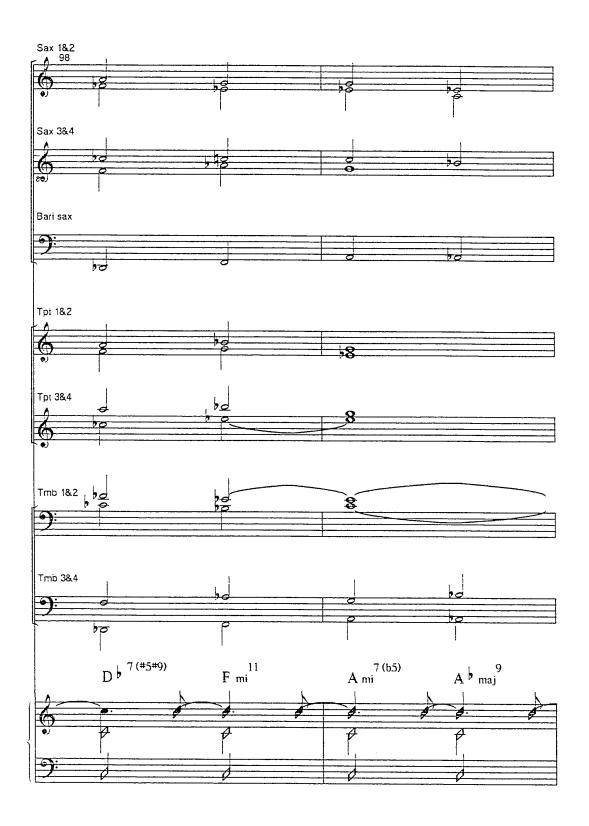




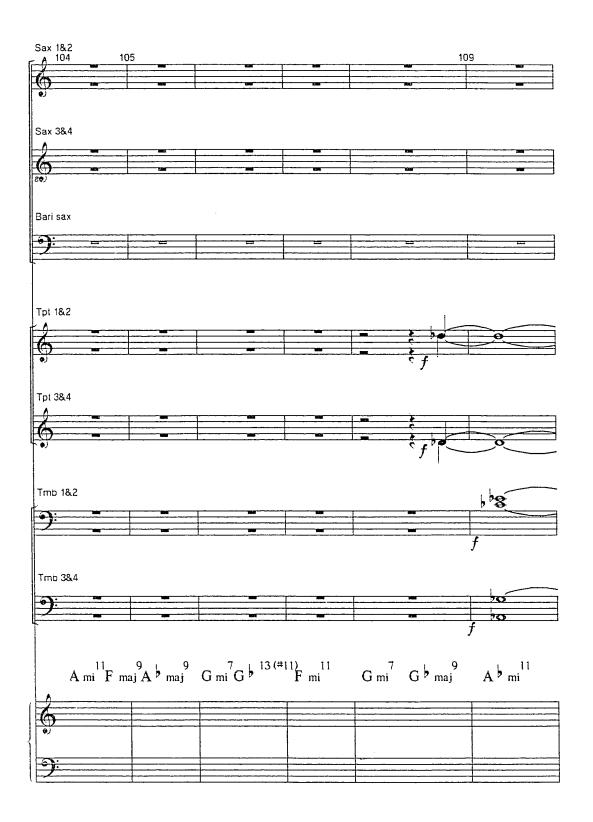




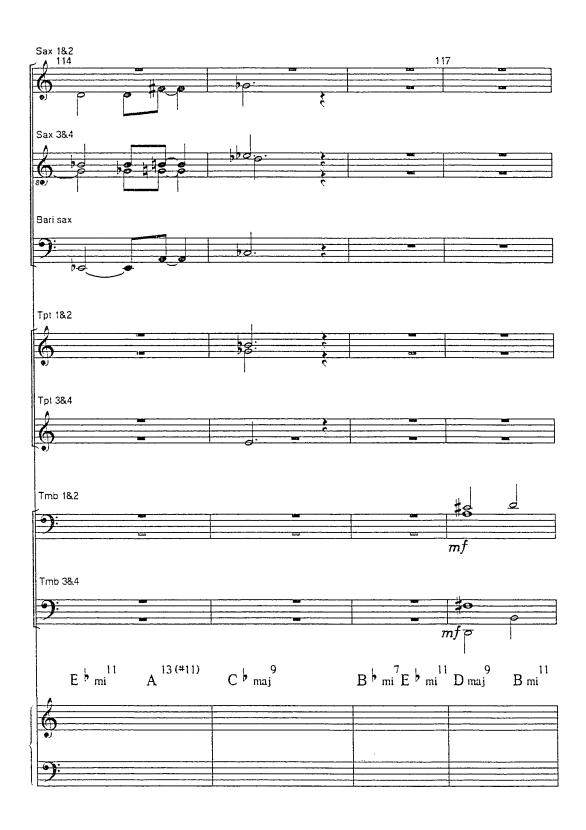




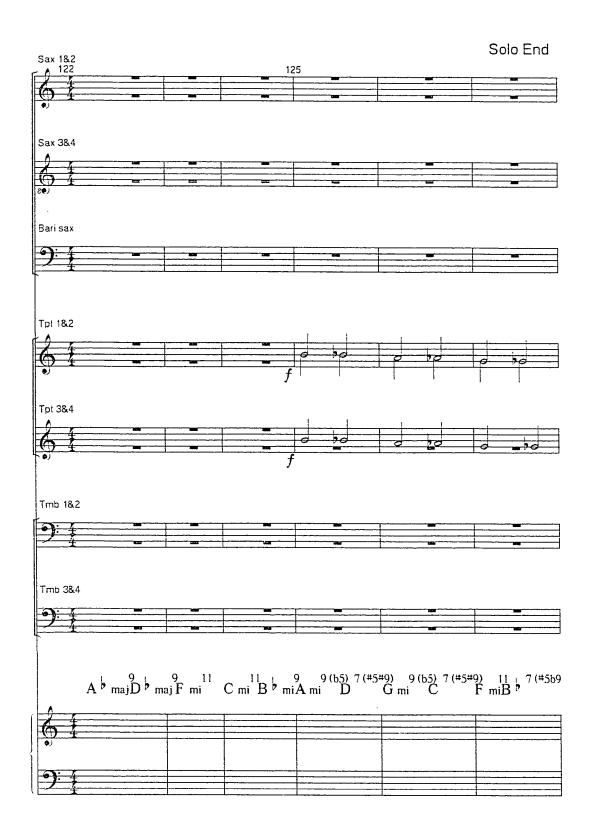






























ELECTRIC BULLETS

This is a fusion composition reminiscent of the styles utilized by the Brecker Brothers, Jeff Lorber, and the group Steely Dan. Fusion as defined the New Grove Dictionary of American Music is, "A style of popular music, developed in the late 1960's and early 1970's, which combined the techniques of modern jazz improvisation with the instrumentation and approach to the rhythmic accompaniment of soul and rock music of the 1960's." The melody of this piece is based on pentatonic scales. The tonality can be considered B major or B harmonic minor, thus it is bi-tonal. The chord structures have many suspensions and alterations in the A sections. The B sections are based on poly chords. The C and D sections are improvisational with time signature changes.

¹Gridley, Mark C. "Jazz-Rock, (Fusion)," The New Grove Dictionary Of American Music. Vol. II, Editors, Hitchcock and Sadie. London: Macmillan Press L.T.D., 1986.

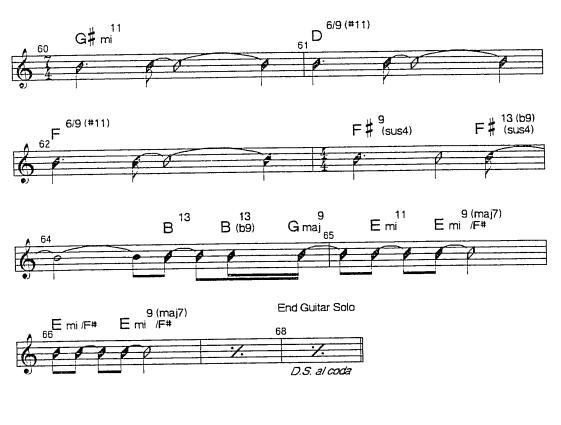
Electric Bullets

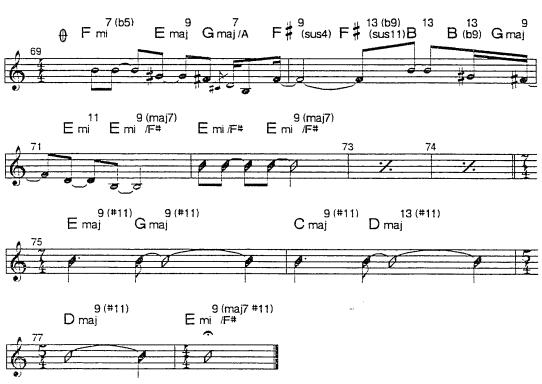
S. Foglia











BLACK EYED FUNK

This piece was composed in the funk tradition of the groups,
Tower of Power and the Brecker Brothers. Funk as defined in the New
Grove Dictionary of American Music is, "A style of black popular music. It
evolved from the complex polyrhythms of African music and the call-andresponse of gospel, and is characterized by extended vamping over one or
two chords and by heavy syncopation."

The melody of this composition is based on the G blues scale and chromatic fourths. The use of chromatic fourths in the melody gives the piece a very modern "outside" flavor typical of the improvisational character of Michael Brecker and Freddie Hubbard. The harmonic structure of the piece is based on a twelve bar blues modulating to the flat III in bar five of the melody as opposed to the typical IV chord.

¹Sigerson, Davitt. "Funk," The New Grove Dictionary Of American Music. Vol. II, Editors, Hitchcock and Sadie. London: Macmillan Press L.T.D., 1986

Black Eyed Funk

S. Foglia



LIVING ON THE WESTERN SIDE

This composition is a fusion-funk piece reminiscent of the styles used by the groups Steely Dan, Fishbone, The Brecker Brothers and Tower of Power. There are two melodic lines in the A sections. One based on fourths and triads of the upper extensions of the chords, the other based on the top note that is voiced on the chord progression itself. The B sections are improvisitory vamps based on altered dominant seventh chords. The C section is just a 6 bar quote of the A section to break up the tension created by the vamps.

Living on the Western Side













AN APRIL STATE OF MIND

This piece is a jazz-waltz based on a diatonic progression in B major and Ab major with chord substitutions. This composition is reminiscent of the music composed by the late pianist Bill Evans and is in standard song form (A B A).

An April State of Mind

S. Foglia







CONCLUSION

The contemporary jazz musician must be proficient in many areas to survive in today's competitive music industry. The jazz player must know how to improvise, sight read, arrange, compose, and also have a repertoire of standards both well known and obscure. The six compositions included in this thesis address many of those areas, and were written to shed some light on the problem areas that the modern jazz player encounters. Most jazz pieces being performed today are composed in one of these six styles. Some of the music in this thesis can Limit the amount of freedom taken in interpretation and improvisation, such as "A Fools Wish" and "Those That Get Away, Get Away." These two pieces have most of the parts written out note for note and short improvisational sections. "An April State of Mind" and "Black Eyed Funk" give the performers lots of freedom, as they are written in lead sheet form, such as what can be found in any fake book. "Living On the Western Side" and Electric Bullets" have "head" section and improvisational sections. These are designed to be played by small groups such as rhythm sections with two horns or other melodic instruments playing the melody.