

JOHN MACKEY'S CONCERTO FOR SOPRANO SAX AND WIND ENSEMBLE (2007): AN
ANALYSIS AND CONDUCTOR'S GUIDE TO PERFORMANCE

by

JACOB EDWARD WALLACE

(Under the Direction of John P. Lynch)

ABSTRACT

John Mackey is an important young American composer. A student of Pulitzer Prize-winning American composer John Corigliano, Mackey has written works for groups ranging from small chamber ensembles to symphony orchestra. He has become, recently, an important figure in composing new works for wind band. Of these, one of his most significant works is his 2007 composition Concerto for Soprano Sax and Wind Ensemble.

This document serves as a comprehensive guide to the conductor for this work. It contains a historical background about John Mackey and the piece itself, an original and comprehensive musical analysis, and pedagogical advice for performing the work from the perspective of a conductor. Its intent is to provide conductors with the necessary tools to perform the work. These include an understanding of its genesis and commissioning and perception of difficulties presented to the ensemble in performance of the work. A comprehensive analysis of the work allows the reader to see the importance of shared motives and quotations from Corigliano's Clarinet Concerto as well as understand the modern tonal language used regularly by Mackey. Appendices detail conversations between the author of the

document and Mackey, extended techniques for the soloist, the composer's notes on the piece, and a catalogue of the composer's works for wind band.

INDEX WORDS: John Mackey, Concerto for Soprano Sax and Wind Ensemble, concertos, soprano saxophone, wind ensemble, American composers, John Corigliano

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JACOB EDWARD WALLACE

B.A., The University of Nebraska, 2004

M.M., Baylor University, 2006

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JACOB EDWARD WALLACE

Major Professor:	John Lynch
Committee:	Mark Cedel Allen Crowell Adrian Childs Dorothea Link

Electronic Version Approved:

Maureen Grasso
Dean of the Graduate School
The University of Georgia
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DEDICATION

For my parents.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

Introduction

Purpose of Study

At the outset of the twenty-first century, the wind band medium has been championed by a new group of young and enthusiastic composers who have served as its standard bearers. One of the most prolific of these composers, both in terms of output and demand, is John Mackey (born 1973). In just five years of composing works for wind band, Mr. Mackey has delivered ten compositions (with another three forthcoming in 2009), all of which are programmed and performed frequently. Mackey's 2008–2009 season involves no fewer than sixty-two performances of wind band, orchestra, and chamber music in the United States and Europe, and his popularity is increasing as more audiences are exposed to his works.¹

Arguably the most ambitious of his works for wind ensemble is his Concerto for Soprano Sax and Wind Ensemble. Composed in 2007, its genesis, length, and difficulty identify it as a watershed work within his catalogue.² The goal of this document is to examine John Mackey and his Concerto for Soprano Sax and Wind Ensemble from inception to performance. A thorough analysis of the work identifies characteristic features of Mackey's compositional language, from his innovative tonal harmony to use of intricate rhythms and ostinatos and

¹ "Upcoming Performances." Available from Osti Music Web Site. http://www.ostimusic.com/performance_cal.php. Accessed 3 November 2008.

² Having a twenty-five minute duration, it is at least twice as long as any of his other works for wind ensemble.

reliance on motivic cohesion. Viewed from the perspective of the conductor, this document serves as a useful resource for understanding both the construction of the piece and the various challenges it presents in rehearsal and performance.

Need for Study

Due partially to Mackey's youth, there is no research on any of his compositions. Since he has emerged as an eminent composer within his generation, an analysis and performance guide to the Concerto for Soprano Sax and Wind Ensemble provides a useful resource not just to those performing this piece, but to those preparing any of his pieces. This alone justifies an examination of his works.

Beyond this, however, is Mackey's connection to his primary composition teacher, John Corigliano (b. 1938). Corigliano is a Pulitzer Prize-winning composer who is viewed by many to be among the most important and well-respected composers alive today. Mackey makes a special note within the score of the piece's reliance on Corigliano's tutelage. He goes so far as to pay homage to his teacher in the work's final movement by quoting Corigliano's Concerto for Clarinet and Orchestra. Though the techniques of the two composers are undoubtedly linked, there is also a regrettable lack of scholarship on the works of Corigliano.³ Analysis of Mackey's compositional style, thus, might yield helpful revelations about Corigliano's style as well, and by extension to a host of other composers writing music in the new tonal tradition at the turn of the twenty-first century.

³ There are no scholarly articles that are concerned with the music of John Corigliano and only a handful of dissertations that focus on his works.

Methodology

Much of the material concerning the Concerto for Soprano Sax and Wind Ensemble's genesis and its performance history has been collected from interviews with the composer. Chapter 1 deals with biographical information about the composer, reflections on his style and how it has been influenced, and a background on his immersion within the wind band world leading up to the composition of the Concerto for Soprano Sax and Wind Ensemble. This information is useful in illuminating the genesis of the piece – particularly the collaboration between Mackey and conductor Jerry Junkin, Director of Bands at the University of Texas, who organized the large consortium of twenty-eight institutions that funded its commission. Chapter 3 addresses issues of performance for the conductor, including difficulties presented by the techniques and orchestration that are prevalent in the piece. Mr. Mackey's insights into a host of rehearsals and performances at which he has been present have been invaluable in this respect. Some of the listed implications for the conductor have also been influenced by live rehearsals and performances of the work observed by the author of this document.

The material in Chapter 2 is the result of a comprehensive original analysis of the score. As part of this analysis, a particular emphasis is placed on the importance of referential collections to the tonal language of the work. As such, a brief primer on these techniques as used to view the Concerto for Soprano Sax and Wind Ensemble is included, preceding the full analysis.

Review of Related Literature

There is no written scholarship concerning John Mackey or his works. There are, however, a handful of dissertations concerning the music of John Corigliano that have proven

useful as a point of reference. These include several dissertations specifically related to Corigliano's Concerto for Clarinet and Orchestra on which the Concerto for Soprano Sax and Wind Ensemble is modeled.

Reference to tonality and scalarity also plays a major role in Mackey's Concerto for Soprano Sax and Wind Ensemble, and use of referential collections that gather pitches together into identifiable scalar groups are pertinent. Several journal articles – particularly those written by Richard Bass and Dmitri Tymoczko – deal with the implication of scalar collections serving as harmonic structures. Also discussed within these articles is the concept of superimposition; that is, layering scalar collections together, either in equal balance or with hierarchical importance.

Lastly, several D.M.A. dissertations written by conductors have served as models for the study. These dissertations exhibit a common structure and replicate the methodology presented on a single work. These documents serve as a structural guide for this document.

Delimitations

The primary focus of this document is examining the Concerto for Soprano Sax and Wind Ensemble from the perspective of the conductor. Only cursory references to other Mackey works are included, and only for purposes of either:

- a) illustrating a particular shared concept between another of Mackey's works and the Concerto for Soprano Sax and Wind Ensemble; or
- b) providing a chronological context for his compositional output.

An appendix cataloguing extended techniques required of the saxophone soloist follows the document, but a thorough investigation of the performance practices and complications presented explicitly to the soloist falls outside the scope of this document's investigation.

Definition of Terms

Within the analytical sections of this document, several conventions of post-tonal theory are used, including elements of set theory. The following terms and notations are used:⁴

- a) Pitch-class set (pc set): an unordered collection of pitch classes. All pc sets in this document will be listed in an ascending pitch order in curved brackets, e.g. {D, F#, A}.

 - i) member: a pitch that is included within a pc set.
 - ii) outlier: a pitch, present in context, that is not a member of the relevant pc set.

- b) Prime form: an abstract ordered series of numbers that defines the intervallic relationship between pitch classes within a pc set. It is independent of specific pitch-classes and relates similar sonorities or collections that are related by transposition or inversion. All prime forms will be labeled within square brackets, e.g. [0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 t e] (where 't' and 'e' represent '10' and '11' respectively).

Example:

A C-major triad could be labeled within the document as "C-major triad," or as the pc set {C, E, G}, or as the prime form [0 3 7].

⁴ For explanations of these concepts in great detail, see Joseph N. Straus, *Introduction to Post-Tonal Theory*, 3d ed. (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Prentice Hall, 2005).

Biography of John Mackey

John Mackey was born on 1 October 1973 in New Philadelphia, Ohio.⁵ He was born into an exceptionally musical family. His father held trumpet positions in several Navy bands in the Western United States and continues to perform as an amateur saxophonist. Likewise, his mother is an amateur flautist. His maternal grandfather played clarinet and flute and also owned a music store. The preponderance of musical talent among his relatives led Mackey's parents to believe they should incorporate music lessons in raising their children.⁶

This plan, however, did not follow as expected with Mackey's older sister, who disliked both her clarinet and piano lessons. Thus, when John was born, his parents decided not to pursue formalized musical training for him. John did experiment informally, at a young age, with piano, guitar, percussion, and violin, but he did not keep up with any of them for particularly long.

After the divorce of his parents, John and his sister lived with their mother. At age nine, John's maternal grandfather introduced him to a computer program called Music Construction Set, an edutainment program developed by Will Harvey and Electronic Arts originally for the Apple II computer. With this program and the instruction of his grandfather, John learned the basics of music notation and began to write his own music and arrange works. It was the latter of these activities that took up the most of Mackey's time, as he checked out scores of standard repertoire from the Ohio State University Music Library using his mother's staff identification card and arranged them in three voices (the number of separate sounds permitted by the program) on the computer:

⁵ "Bio." Available from Osti Music Web Site. <http://www.ostimusic.com/Bio.html>. Accessed 12 March 2009.

⁶ John Mackey, telephone interview with author, tape recording, Athens, Georgia, 11 March 2009. N.B.: All subsequent biographical information and background detail of the Concerto come from this interview unless otherwise noted.

I have *Air on the G String*, all the Bach Brandenburg Concerti, Bernstein *Chichester Psalms*, the Barber Violin Concerto... One of the first things I put in was the last movement of the Dvorak Cello Concerto, just because we had a recording of it at our house, and I liked it, so I put in the last movement [...] I put in a bunch of Chopin etudes, and a bunch of Bach *Well-Tempered Clavier* things, especially three-voice fugues. I put in some Debussy too, but always a lot of Bach, because it works really well no matter what instrument combination you arrange it for.

Mackey began creating fully-fledged compositions midway through his high school education and decided he was interested in pursuing composition study in college. Knowing his limitations as a performing musician, he chose to apply to two programs that didn't require a performance audition: Otterbein College and the Cleveland Institute of Music. He eventually decided on the latter of these, where he studied with composer Donald Erb. Mackey appreciated the freedom in composition that Erb permitted him:

[Donald Erb] wrote the ugliest music but didn't teach his students to do that. The music I wrote during my undergrad sounded basically like Barber mixed with Shostakovich and that was totally fine for him. He just wanted to teach me how to do that better if that was what I was going to do. That's unusual in a teacher – that they don't try to make you just a clone. Not just for composition either. Anywhere in the arts, it's hard to find a teacher who doesn't just want to make you a miniature version of them.

While attending the Cleveland Institute, Mackey worked as an usher for the Cleveland Orchestra. In seeing rehearsals and performances of that group as well as participating in composition seminars at CIM, he had the opportunity to interact with guest composers visiting for performances with the orchestra. It was in this context that he met John Corigliano in 1994, who had travelled to Cleveland to be present for rehearsals and performances of his Clarinet Concerto. It was this interaction that inspired Mackey to apply for and attend the Juilliard School for his graduate work.

Mackey's first year at Juilliard was notable for a dearth in productivity, partially due to culture shock. He relates his fear of being accepted creatively:

I'd grown up in the suburbs of Columbus, Ohio, and then went to Cleveland, so moving to New York City without having really been there except for my audition was a big, big change. I studied with Corigliano, who was intimidating. It felt like I had to be really good. What ended up happening was that the first year I was there, I basically didn't write any new music because I spent all the time thinking anything I would write couldn't be good enough. Somehow they would figure out that I sucked and didn't belong there. I only wrote one piece, I think, in that first year I was there and I don't think it's particularly successful.

Nevertheless, Mackey made strides in his composition studying with Corigliano, and began fruitful collaborations with choreography students within the dance division at the school. The connections he forged with these students led to a host of commissions from dance companies over the course of the next eight years. In particular, he forged a working partnership with choreographer Robert Battle that would last through the duration of Mackey's time living in New York. This relationship generated the chamber works *Breakdown Tango*, *Strange Humors*, and *Juba*, among others.

In the years after his graduation from the Juilliard School, Mackey produced a number of works and garnered a host of awards and accolades, including awards from ASCAP, the American Music Center, and the Mary Flagler Cary Charitable Trust. He also was selected twice as an American Symphony Orchestra League "Music Alive!" Composer-in-Residence, first with the Greater Twin Cities Youth Symphony in 2002–2003, and later with the Seattle Youth Symphony Orchestra from 2004 to 2005.⁷ While serving a residency for the former in 2003, he had the opportunity to attend a national conference of the College Band Directors National Association and there met Scott Stewart, Director of Bands at Emory University, and Scott Weiss, then Director of Bands at Lamar University. These two conductors organized consortia

⁷ "Bio." Available from Osti Music Web Site. <http://www.ostimusic.com/Bio.html>. Accessed 12 March 2009.

to commission Mackey's first two wind works: *Redline Tango* (a transcription of his orchestral work of the same name) and *Sasparilla*.

Since then, Mackey's works have been performed with great frequency, particularly by high school and collegiate wind bands. In September of 2005, he moved to Los Angeles, California, with his future wife, Abby Everett Jaques.⁸ From 2005 to 2008, he produced several works for wind band, including *Strange Humors* (arranged from his dance piece for string quartet and djembe), *Turbine, Turning, Kingfishers Catch Fire* (arranged from movements of the earlier work *Annals*), the Concerto for Soprano Sax and Wind Ensemble, *Clocking* (arranged in part from movements of *Voices and Echoes* and *Annals*), and *Undertow*.

In the summer of 2008, Mackey moved to Austin, Texas, in part to be closer geographically to many of the bands that were performing his works.⁹ His most recent work, *Asphalt Cocktail*, received its premiere in March of 2009. At the time of this document's writing, he is scheduled to compose four works for wind band by the end of 2009, including a Trombone Concerto for Joseph Alessi, principal trombonist of the New York Philharmonic. He is also scheduled to write a work for concert band, commissioned by Kappa Kappa Psi National Honorary Band Fraternity, in 2013.¹⁰

⁸ "Pack 'Em Up." Available from Osti Music Web Site. <http://ostimusic.com/blog/pack-em-up/>. Accessed 12 March 2009.

⁹ "Austin 78704." Available from Osti Music Web Site. <http://ostimusic.com/blog/austin-78704/>. Accessed 12 March 2009.

¹⁰ "Works in Progress." Available from Osti Music Web Site. <http://ostimusic.com/InProgress.html>. Accessed 12 March 2009.

The Commissioning and Composition of Concerto for Soprano Sax and Wind Ensemble

The collaboration that led to the composition of the Concerto for Soprano Sax and Wind Ensemble began in March 2006. The convention of the American Bandmasters Association met early that month in Dallas, Texas. John Mackey was present that year both for the premiere of his band arrangement of *Strange Humors* and to accept the 2005 Ostwald Award for *Redline Tango*. As part of receiving the award, the piece was performed by the Dallas Wind Symphony, one of the ensembles invited to perform at the convention.

The principal saxophonist of the Dallas Wind Symphony – Donald Fabian, to whom the Concerto is dedicated – suggested to Mackey after a rehearsal of *Redline Tango* that he should write a concerto for soprano saxophone. Mackey was unsure of the idea at first, but Fabian was persistent:

The performance [...] went really well, and Don played great, and afterward at the bar in the hotel he came up to me again and said again that he really wanted a saxophone concerto and that he had talked to Jerry Junkin, who is director of the Dallas Wind Symphony, about commissioning a soprano saxophone concerto and that I should be the one to write it. I thought that sounded great, and I ended up talking to Jerry Junkin that night, and it sounded like it might actually happen.

The proposal for a consortium was sent to the membership of CBDNA on September 19, 2006.¹¹ The intent was to garner the support of ten participating institutions at \$2,000 apiece. Interest, however, was much more significant than initially expected, and twenty-two performing ensembles had committed in principle within one day of the posting. Another six groups committed soon after, bringing the total membership of the consortium to twenty-eight. The fees for each group were reduced significantly in deference to the sheer number of participating organizations and to bring the total financial commitment closer to matching the original total expected contribution.

¹¹ Jerry Junkin, email to CBDNA listserv, 19 September 2006.

Work on the Concerto began the following summer, after the completion of *Turning* and *Kingfishers Catch Fire*. Mackey – following the method Corigliano had taught him – set to planning structure first in order to effectively organize the lengthy work. After Mackey considered other premises for the work, including a concerto based on cycling, it was his wife Abby who suggested the idea that would generate the entire piece:

She said, “Imagine if aliens visited Earth, and they found a saxophone – a soprano saxophone. They take the soprano saxophone back to their planet or ship or whatever, and try to reverse engineer their own saxophone. What makes this crazy instrument do the things it does?” and she suggested I should write a piece that imagines that. It doesn’t actually sound like aliens discovering a sax, but it does have the effect that if you’ve never seen, heard, or experienced a soprano saxophone, here’s what it can do.

This idea was developed further by Mackey, who decided to name several of the movements after materials that are used in the construction of a saxophone. The interior movements are named *Felt*, *Metal*, and *Wood*, respectively. In each of these movements, the choices of instrumentation are defined by the title – instruments that have felt as part of their construction in *Felt*, metallic instruments in *Metal*, and instruments built from wood in *Wood*. The saxophone choir – sharing all the characteristics of the soprano saxophone – plays important material in every movement. The exterior movements – *Prelude* and *Finale* – are written for the entire ensemble, and quote motivic material from each of the interior movements.

The first written material of the concerto was the ending of the *Finale*, specifically the material that followed what would eventually become the cadenza. The interior movements followed, written mostly simultaneously. Mackey notes a particular struggle he had in writing *Metal*, which took longer than *Felt* or *Wood*. He said of the movement, “I was always working on *Metal* somewhat, trying to figure out a bar a day to make it not sound cheesy.” The remainder of the *Finale* followed and lastly, he composed the *Prelude*. These two were saved

until the end to accommodate the incorporation of motives from *Felt*, *Metal*, and *Wood* within them.

The development of the soprano saxophone solo came in multiple parts as each movement was composed. The assistance of two saxophonists, in addition to Donald Fabian, in particular aided the facility of the solo part. Erik Steighner – who was then a graduate student in saxophone performance at the University of Texas, and, as of this document’s writing, serves on the faculty of Pacific Lutheran University – was the first to contribute significantly.¹² Mackey had written a piece for Steighner’s father when he was an undergraduate student at the Cleveland Institute and so Erik had a level of personal connection with Mackey.

I sent him a solo part and the midi. He listened to the whole thing and played through the whole piece. He spent hours on the piece and then sent me this huge email describing what it was like to play the piece and things he thought should be changed, tremolos he thought weren’t working, octave placements that were difficult based on how they were approached. These were things that he wasn’t necessarily suggesting I change, but he was letting me know that from a player’s standpoint, they were tough. He was by far the most helpful when I was writing the piece, just from that one email alone. It was amazing to have, since all I had were my sax books, and that’s not the same.

Timothy Roberts assisted in a similar way, but later in the compositional process, closer to the date of the actual premiere. Much of his commentary on the part had a similar effect to that of Steighner’s: to elucidate difficulties and impossibilities that might have otherwise gone unnoticed outside of the input of a trained classical saxophonist.

Mackey finished the score on 7 September 2007 in Los Angeles, California. The premiere occurred subsequently on 23 October 2007 at Meyerson Symphony Center with the Dallas Wind Symphony. Donald Fabian was the soprano saxophone soloist and Jerry Junkin

¹² “Erik Steighner.” Available from “Erik Steighner – Saxophone” web site. <http://www.eriksteighner.com/biography.html>. Accessed 12 March 2009.

conducted the performance.¹³ Since that initial performance, the work has been widely well received and performed many times, with thirteen performances scheduled for the 2008–2009 season.¹⁴

¹³ “Concerto for Soprano Sax and Wind Ensemble.” Available from Osti Music Web Site. <http://ostimusic.com/SaxConcerto.html>. Accessed 12 March 2009.

¹⁴ “Upcoming Performances.” Available from Osti Music Web Site. http://www.ostimusic.com/performance_cal.php. Accessed 12 March 2009.

CHAPTER 2

ANALYSIS OF CONCERTO FOR SOPRANO SAX AND WIND ENSEMBLE

Primer on Referential Collections

Reference is a term used in conjunction with music in which relevant pc sets are related somehow to common natural or synthetic scales.¹⁵ The most common scales used in this fashion are diatonic, octatonic, acoustic, and whole-tone, with less common iterations including various pentatonic scales (all of which can generally be described as a subset of some larger diatonic collection) and the hexatonic scale (which bears a similarity to the octatonic in its alternation of half-steps and minor thirds). The following are descriptions of the four most common types of scalar collections, with examples of each.¹⁶

Diatonic

The diatonic collection is the series of seven pitches that constitutes the major scale as well as its modal variations (lydian, mixolydian, dorian, aeolian, phrygian, and locrian). All such collections can be described with the prime form [0 1 3 5 6 8 t]. These collections are labeled DIA, and are followed by a numeric modifier to describe which specific diatonic collection is being described. The number identifies the quantity of included accidentals, with the number

¹⁵ For a thorough explanation of referential collections, see Adrian P. Childs, “Notes on Scalar Referential Collections,” unpublished manuscript, Athens, GA: 2008; also see Adrian P. Childs, “Notes on Symmetric Referential Collections,” unpublished manuscript, Athens, GA: 2008.

¹⁶ Each pc set example contains specific pitch names. By definition, however, any pitch class has enharmonic equivalence. As such, all enharmonic spellings should be assumed within any pc set presented.

being positive or negative depending if the accidentals are sharps or flats, respectively. For example, the A-flat major scale produces the pc set $\{A_b, B_b, C, D_b, E_b, F, G\}$. This collection receives the label DIA₋₄.

Octatonic

The octatonic collection is an eight-pitch scale developed from a series of pitches that alternates half- and whole-steps. This collection is described with the prime form $[0\ 1\ 3\ 4\ 6\ 7\ 9\ t]$. Due to transpositional symmetry, there are only three distinct pc sets that constitute the octatonic collection. They are:

- 0) $\{C, C\#, D\#, E, F\#, G, A, A\#\}$,
- 1) $\{C\#, D, E, F, G, G\#, A\#, B\}$, and
- 2) $\{C, D, D\#, F, F\#, G\#, A, B\}$.

These collections are labeled OCT_n, where ‘n’ is the numeric identifier associated with the pc sets listed above. Thus, $\{C, C\#, D\#, E, F\#, G, A, A\#\}$ can also be described as OCT₀.

Acoustic

The acoustic collection is a scale derived from collecting the first seven distinct pitches of the natural harmonic series. This collection is described by the prime form $[0\ 1\ 3\ 4\ 6\ 8\ t]$ and, because of shared pitch and interval content with both, frequently resembles either the diatonic or octatonic collection. The labeling conventions for the acoustic collection are similar to those of the diatonic collection (the primary label for acoustic being AC). The numeric modifier refers to the net sum of “positive” and “negative” accidentals (sharps and flats, respectively). For all acoustic collections with a numeric modifier between 1 and 7 (positive or negative), this

produces the same result as an analogous diatonic collection (i.e., the numeric modifier counts the number of sharps or flats in the scale). AC_0 differs from the others, as it contains both a sharp and a flat that “cancel” each other out: $\{C, D, E, F\sharp, G, A, B\flat\}$.

Whole-Tone

The whole-tone collection is a six-pitch collection that cycles through the octave in whole-step motion. This produces the prime form $[0\ 2\ 4\ 6\ 8\ t]$. Because of the symmetric nature of this collection, there are only two distinct whole-tone pc sets:

- 0) $\{C, D, E, F\sharp, G\sharp, A\sharp\}$, and
- 1) $\{C\sharp, D\sharp, F, G, A, B\}$.

The label for a whole tone collection is WT_n , where ‘n’ is the numeric identifier associated with the pc sets listed above. Thus, $\{C, D, E, F\sharp, G\sharp, A\sharp\}$ can be described as WT_0 .

It should be noted that all four of these referential collections share pitch characteristics with the others. Dmitri Tymoczko notes in his article “Stravinsky and the Octatonic: A Reconsideration” that the octatonic and whole-tone collections are “locally diatonic” in that any three adjacent pitches of these collections can be mapped as a subset onto the diatonic collection via transposition.¹⁷ Though he fails to mention the acoustic collection specifically, this grouping also has the quality of being “locally diatonic” in the manner he describes.¹⁸ This permits the possibility of collections interacting with each other in relatively seamless ways (e.g.,

¹⁷ Dmitri Tymoczko, “Stravinsky and the Octatonic: A Reconsideration,” *Music Theory Spectrum* 24, no. 1 (Spring 2002): 69.

¹⁸ In fact, Tymoczko also identifies the ascending melodic minor scale as having the “locally diatonic” quality. This scale is one of the modal mappings of the acoustic collection (In AC_0 , it is the scale that begins on the pitch G). The only minor scale that is not accounted for either by a diatonic or acoustic collection is the harmonic minor scale, which we will consider as being related to the diatonic collection with a single chromatic outlier.

polyscalarity, modulation, or superimposition), provided the composer matches similar segments of the different collections.

Reference

Reference, in a very broad application, implies some importance of one or more of the above collections within a piece of music, either on a localized or global scale. The labels identify specific pitch content without presenting a tonal or functional implication. For example, a tonal work that is entirely in C major could be labeled with the collection DIA_0 . In this case, the label is accurate, but not necessarily maximally appropriate, as the functional tonal terminologies are more likely to provide salient descriptions of the relationships in play. Consider then, a piece in which conventional tonal relationships are avoided, but the pitch content maps the pc set $\{A, B, C, D, E, F, G\}$ without outliers. In this case, the DIA_0 label would be both accurate and appropriate, as the content defies conventional tonal labels, but still exists entirely within a diatonic framework.

Superimposition

Superimposition, as its name suggests, involves layering of referential collections one atop another, within either a localized or more global application. A simple and familiar example within traditional tonal music is the secondary dominant or tonicization. In both of these cases, the harmonic implication is a brief interjection of a different key other than the established tonic without full modulation. Generally (but not always) in post-tonal superimpositions, the superimposed referential collection will interject while the underlying established referential collection continues simultaneously. This is in opposition to the

“secondary dominant” example, in which actual function within the original key momentarily ceases. The extreme case of superimposition is polytonality, in which two independent key or scalar areas act simultaneously with equal importance. All examples of superimposition within the Concerto for Soprano Sax and Wind Ensemble, however, are hierarchic, where a brief interjection (almost always melodic) implies a collection outside the remaining pitch material (almost always accompanimental).

Important Features of the Concerto

Many salient characteristics of the Concerto for Soprano Sax and Wind Ensemble as a whole are revealed in the program note to the piece, as written by the composer.¹⁹ Mackey talks about using limited instrumentation in each movement based upon the construction material implied by the title:

I had an instrument made of three materials: felt (the pads of the keys), metal (the body), and wood (the reed). In fact, every instrument in the band can be placed into one (or more) of those “categories.” The brass section is made of metal, the harp is made of metal and wood, the wind section has keys, and so on. This realization gave me the central idea for the piece: a multi-movement work with the inner movements called *Felt*, *Metal*, and *Wood*, and with instrumentation chosen to essentially match those materials for each movement. The outer movements would be scored for the entire ensemble.

He also notes that both the *Prelude* and *Finale* feature motivic quotations from the three interior movements. As such, there are a number of themes and motives that carry significant relevance throughout the piece, six of which appear with enough frequency to justify special labels. In turn, these motivic elements also strongly influence the harmonic content of their surroundings. The motive labeled *Metal*-1, for instance, contains pitch content that, as a whole, constitutes a full diatonic pc set. This motive’s prevalence in *Prelude*, *Metal*, and *Finale* leads to

¹⁹ For the full text of the program note, see Appendix C.

an increased reliance on diatonic referential collections in all three of these movements. The motive *Felt*-1, on the other hand, is presented as a [0 1 6] sonority (or a sonority that contains a prominent [0 1 6] subset). This same trichord will become the de facto “tonic” harmony of *Felt*.

Formally, the entire work presents arch-like structures. Though the movements are not designed to be absolutely symmetric in timing or strict motivic placement, there are several characteristics that, when traced across all movements, exhibit this shape. The first of these is instrumentation. The piece is at its thickest, orchestrationally, in the first and last movements. *Felt* and *Wood* are both written for what essentially amounts to a woodwind ensemble with percussion.²⁰ *Metal*’s instrumentation is larger in total than *Felt* or *Wood*, but features at its beginning and conclusion some of the thinnest orchestration of the entire piece. In all, the instrumentation of the Concerto diminishes continuously toward the midpoint, where a sudden climax brings in most of the ensemble. The aftermath of this climactic moment is a return to an extremely small orchestration that builds continuously until the work’s conclusion.

Likewise, the pacing of tempos has an arch-like pattern. The quarter-note tempos of *Prelude* and *Finale* are the fastest seen in the work – so brisk, in fact, that they are likely to be conducted at the half-note level. *Felt*, at 160 beats per minute, is 48 bpm slower than *Prelude*, while *Wood*’s metronome marking of 120 bpm is 60 bpm slower than the *Finale*. *Metal* is the slowest of the five movements, marked at 90 bpm for the quarter note pulse. The effect is a gradual slowing followed by an acceleration to the ending. The ratio of these tempi in relationship to each other by movement is approximately 2.31 : 1.78 : 1 : 1.33 : 2.

²⁰ *Felt* has two oboes, a second bassoon, E♭ clarinet, a fourth clarinet, second bass clarinet, horns, timpani and xylophone in addition to *Wood*’s instrumentation, while missing *Wood*’s English horn and double bass.

Each movement has its own unique harmonic context and focal pitches derived, as mentioned above, from the pitch content of its primary motives. There is, as such, a great sense of variety in timbre and style from movement to movement. When examining the progression of these focal pitches, a dualistic descending structure from F to D emerges, as seen in Example 2-1.



Example 2-1. Focal pitches in Concerto for Soprano Sax and Wind Ensemble, by movement.

The diatonic collection permeates every movement of the Concerto. Several pc sets that have motivic importance are derived from this collection, including:

- a) $[0\ 1\ 6]$ – important in *Prelude*, *Felt*, *Metal*, and *Finale*;
- b) $[0\ 1\ 3\ 7]$ – a superset of $[0\ 1\ 6]$, important in *Prelude* and *Metal*;
- c) $[0\ 2\ 3\ 7]$ – present in *Prelude*, important in *Metal* and *Wood*, usually seen as an F minor triad with added major ninth;
- d) $[0\ 1\ 5\ 6]$ – superset of $[0\ 1\ 6]$, chord of dissonance in *Metal*;
- e) $[0\ 2\ 4\ 7]$ – chord of resolution in *Metal*; and
- f) $[0\ 1\ 3\ 5\ 7]$ – a superset of $[0\ 1\ 6]$ and $[0\ 1\ 3\ 7]$, seen in *Prelude*, *Metal*, and *Finale*; usually seen as simultaneous sounding of the first five pitches of a Lydian scale.

Some larger collections that emerge within the work are superset expansions of these five pc sets. In particular, Mackey uses two tetrachords that are generated by mapping the $[0\ 1\ 6]$ trichord onto itself via inversion. These are $[0\ 1\ 5\ 6]$ – mentioned above – and $[0\ 1\ 6\ 7]$ – most prominent in *Felt*. The only significant set not related to these appears in the *Finale*: $[0\ 3\ 4\ 7]$.

Though this tetrachord is not a subset of a diatonic collection, its configuration as a D split-third chord gives it the simultaneous impression of D major and D minor. This is an ambiguity of which Mackey takes great advantage during the movement.

These features, along with other details specific to each movement, are described in detail in the subsequent comprehensive analysis. The above should be considered at the most prominent structural level, pervading the entire Concerto. Any deviations from these harmonic and motivic principles are temporary and designed to add contrast on a local, momentary scale. These six shared motives and eight significant pc sets form the sonic framework around which the work is built as a whole.

Prelude

Prelude is the opening movement of the Concerto for Soprano Sax and Wind Ensemble. It consists of sixty-nine measures, and, based on the tempos and meters designated by the composer, it should take just under two minutes to perform (including accounting for the fermata in the movement's final measure). The instrumentation for the movement is seen in Table 2-1.

The movement is in a modified rounded binary structure (ABA') with a brief three-measure introduction and a fairly lengthy sixteen-measure coda (mm. 54-69). Table 2-2 demonstrates the important architectural and harmonic events within the movement. The movement is short in terms of number of measures, but the breadth of the time signatures (most of the movement is in 3/2) allow enough time to establish the salient characteristics of each section.

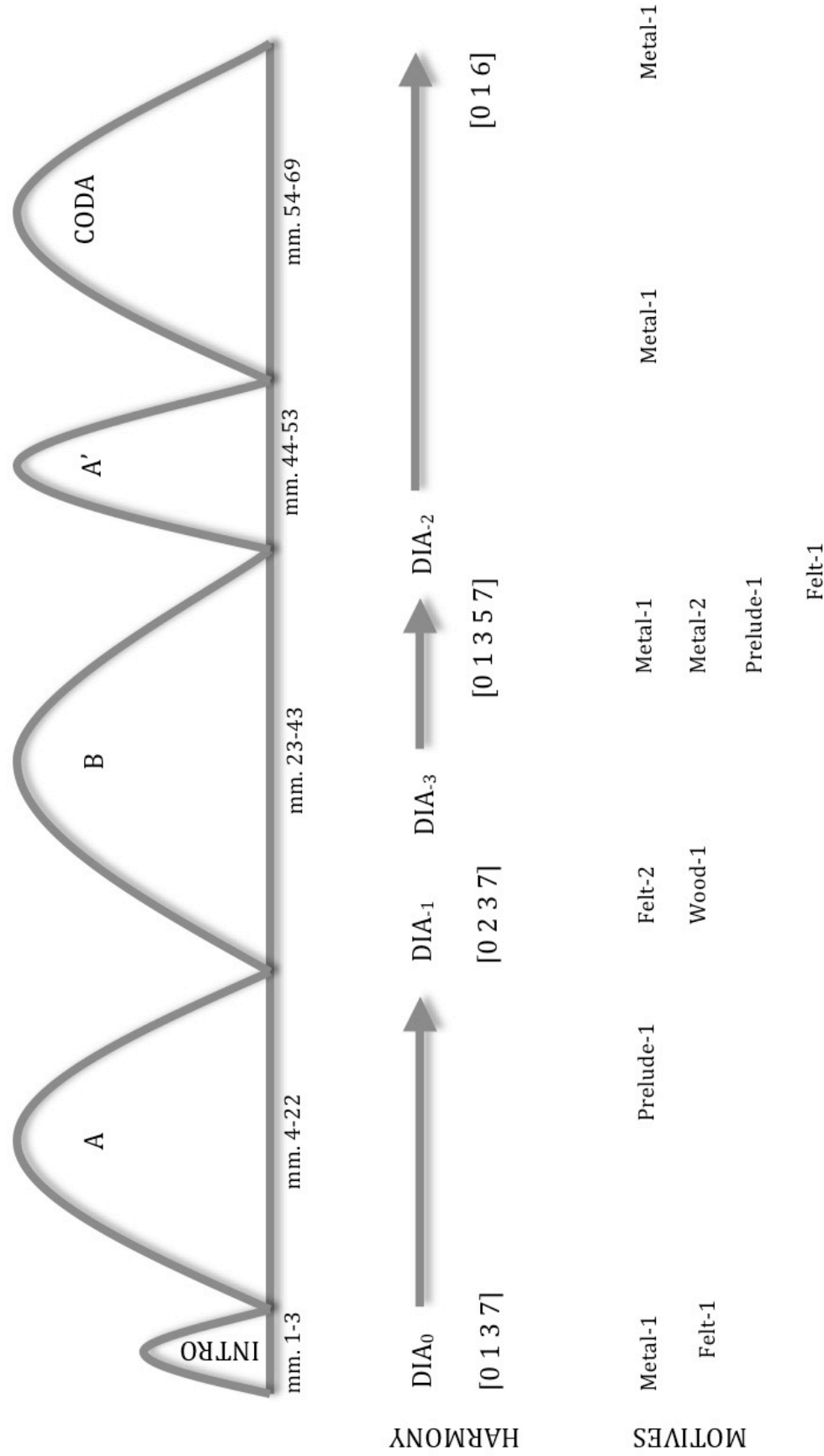
Table 2-1. Instrumentation of *Prelude*.

Woodwinds	Brass	Percussion and Auxiliary
Flutes: 4 + piccolo	Trumpets: 4	Double Bass: 1
Oboes: 2	Horns: 4	Piano: 1
Bassoons: 2 + contrabassoon	Trombones: 3 + bass	Harp: 1
Clarinets: 4 B \flat + E \flat + 2 bass + B \flat contrabass	Euphoniums: 1	Percussion: Whip, Crotales, Glockenspiel, Marimba, Suspended Cymbals, Bass Drum
Saxophones: Solo soprano + 2 alto + tenor + baritone	Tubas: 1	

Even the shortest of these sections – the introduction – manages to present several important harmonic and motivic elements. All of the pitch content in this section falls into the DIA₀ collection, which quickly establishes itself as the primary referential collection for the opening segments of the movement. Functional tonality here is vague, as swirling woodwind lines lace around in various cross rhythms. None of these individual ostinati emphasize a traditional tonal relationship, and the groupings of eighth-note sextuplets and sixteenth notes as seen in Example 2-2 help to create an ambiguous harmonic mass.

Two important related sonorities feature in these three measures: the marimba's initial figure creates a [016] trichord, and harmon-muted trumpets produce the collection [0137] in

Table 2-2. Formal, Harmonic, and Motivic Elements in *Prelude*.



measures 2–3 (Example 2-3). In both of these cases, the realization of this sonority is with the outline of an F-major triad with an added B \flat .²¹ The trumpet motive reappears in various rhythmic configurations throughout the movement and will become prominent in the second movement. Subsequent occurrences of this motive will be called *Felt*-1. A similar naming convention will be used for other shared motives.

The musical score for Example 2-2, measures 1-4, features the following parts and patterns:

- Piccolo:** Plays a series of quarter notes: F#4, A4, B4, C5, D5, E5, F#5, G5, A5, B5, C6, D6, E6, F#6, G6, A6, B6, C7, D7, E7, F#7, G7, A7, B7, C8, D8, E8, F#8, G8, A8, B8, C9, D9, E9, F#9, G9, A9, B9, C10, D10, E10, F#10, G10, A10, B10, C11, D11, E11, F#11, G11, A11, B11, C12, D12, E12, F#12, G12, A12, B12, C13, D13, E13, F#13, G13, A13, B13, C14, D14, E14, F#14, G14, A14, B14, C15, D15, E15, F#15, G15, A15, B15, C16, D16, E16, F#16, G16, A16, B16, C17, D17, E17, F#17, G17, A17, B17, C18, D18, E18, F#18, G18, A18, B18, C19, D19, E19, F#19, G19, A19, B19, C20, D20, E20, F#20, G20, A20, B20, C21, D21, E21, F#21, G21, A21, B21, C22, D22, E22, F#22, G22, A22, B22, C23, D23, E23, F#23, G23, A23, B23, C24, D24, E24, F#24, G24, A24, B24, C25, D25, E25, F#25, G25, A25, B25, C26, D26, E26, F#26, G26, A26, B26, C27, D27, E27, F#27, G27, A27, B27, C28, D28, E28, F#28, G28, A28, B28, C29, D29, E29, F#29, G29, A29, B29, C30, D30, E30, F#30, G30, A30, B30, C31, D31, E31, F#31, G31, A31, B31, C32, D32, E32, F#32, G32, A32, B32, C33, D33, E33, F#33, G33, A33, B33, C34, D34, E34, F#34, G34, A34, B34, C35, D35, E35, F#35, G35, A35, B35, C36, D36, E36, F#36, G36, A36, B36, C37, D37, E37, F#37, G37, A37, B37, C38, D38, E38, F#38, G38, A38, B38, C39, D39, E39, F#39, G39, A39, B39, C40, D40, E40, F#40, G40, A40, B40, C41, D41, E41, F#41, G41, A41, B41, C42, D42, E42, F#42, G42, A42, B42, C43, D43, E43, F#43, G43, A43, B43, C44, D44, E44, F#44, G44, A44, B44, C45, D45, E45, F#45, G45, A45, B45, C46, D46, E46, F#46, G46, A46, B46, C47, D47, E47, F#47, G47, A47, B47, C48, D48, E48, F#48, G48, A48, B48, C49, D49, E49, F#49, G49, A49, B49, C50, D50, E50, F#50, G50, A50, B50, C51, D51, E51, F#51, G51, A51, B51, C52, D52, E52, F#52, G52, A52, B52, C53, D53, E53, F#53, G53, A53, B53, C54, D54, E54, F#54, G54, A54, B54, C55, D55, E55, F#55, G55, A55, B55, C56, D56, E56, F#56, G56, A56, B56, C57, D57, E57, F#57, G57, A57, B57, C58, D58, E58, F#58, G58, A58, B58, C59, D59, E59, F#59, G59, A59, B59, C60, D60, E60, F#60, G60, A60, B60, C61, D61, E61, F#61, G61, A61, B61, C62, D62, E62, F#62, G62, A62, B62, C63, D63, E63, F#63, G63, A63, B63, C64, D64, E64, F#64, G64, A64, B64, C65, D65, E65, F#65, G65, A65, B65, C66, D66, E66, F#66, G66, A66, B66, C67, D67, E67, F#67, G67, A67, B67, C68, D68, E68, F#68, G68, A68, B68, C69, D69, E69, F#69, G69, A69, B69, C70, D70, E70, F#70, G70, A70, B70, C71, D71, E71, F#71, G71, A71, B71, C72, D72, E72, F#72, G72, A72, B72, C73, D73, E73, F#73, G73, A73, B73, C74, D74, E74, F#74, G74, A74, B74, C75, D75, E75, F#75, G75, A75, B75, C76, D76, E76, F#76, G76, A76, B76, C77, D77, E77, F#77, G77, A77, B77, C78, D78, E78, F#78, G78, A78, B78, C79, D79, E79, F#79, G79, A79, B79, C80, D80, E80, F#80, G80, A80, B80, C81, D81, E81, F#81, G81, A81, B81, C82, D82, E82, F#82, G82, A82, B82, C83, D83, E83, F#83, G83, A83, B83, C84, D84, E84, F#84, G84, A84, B84, C85, D85, E85, F#85, G85, A85, B85, C86, D86, E86, F#86, G86, A86, B86, C87, D87, E87, F#87, G87, A87, B87, C88, D88, E88, F#88, G88, A88, B88, C89, D89, E89, F#89, G89, A89, B89, C90, D90, E90, F#90, G90, A90, B90, C91, D91, E91, F#91, G91, A91, B91, C92, D92, E92, F#92, G92, A92, B92, C93, D93, E93, F#93, G93, A93, B93, C94, D94, E94, F#94, G94, A94, B94, C95, D95, E95, F#95, G95, A95, B95, C96, D96, E96, F#96, G96, A96, B96, C97, D97, E97, F#97, G97, A97, B97, C98, D98, E98, F#98, G98, A98, B98, C99, D99, E99, F#99, G99, A99, B99, C100, D100, E100, F#100, G100, A100, B100, C101, D101, E101, F#101, G101, A101, B101, C102, D102, E102, F#102, G102, A102, B102, C103, D103, E103, F#103, G103, A103, B103, C104, D104, E104, F#104, G104, A104, B104, C105, D105, E105, F#105, G105, A105, B105, C106, D106, E106, F#106, G106, A106, B106, C107, D107, E107, F#107, G107, A107, B107, C108, D108, E108, F#108, G108, A108, B108, C109, D109, E109, F#109, G109, A109, B109, C110, D110, E110, F#110, G110, A110, B110, C111, D111, E111, F#111, G111, A111, B111, C112, D112, E112, F#112, G112, A112, B112, C113, D113, E113, F#113, G113, A113, B113, C114, D114, E114, F#114, G114, A114, B114, C115, D115, E115, F#115, G115, A115, B115, C116, D116, E116, F#116, G116, A116, B116, C117, D117, E117, F#117, G117, A117, B117, C118, D118, E118, F#118, G118, A118, B118, C119, D119, E119, F#119, G119, A119, B119, C120, D120, E120, F#120, G120, A120, B120, C121, D121, E121, F#121, G121, A121, B121, C122, D122, E122, F#122, G122, A122, B122, C123, D123, E123, F#123, G123, A123, B123, C124, D124, E124, F#124, G124, A124, B124, C125, D125, E125, F#125, G125, A125, B125, C126, D126, E126, F#126, G126, A126, B126, C127, D127, E127, F#127, G127, A127, B127, C128, D128, E128, F#128, G128, A128, B128, C129, D129, E129, F#129, G129, A129, B129, C130, D130, E130, F#130, G130, A130, B130, C131, D131, E131, F#131, G131, A131, B131, C132, D132, E132, F#132, G132, A132, B132, C133, D133, E133, F#133, G133, A133, B133, C134, D134, E134, F#134, G134, A134, B134, C135, D135, E135, F#135, G135, A135, B135, C136, D136, E136, F#136, G136, A136, B136, C137, D137, E137, F#137, G137, A137, B137, C138, D138, E138, F#138, G138, A138, B138, C139, D139, E139, F#139, G139, A139, B139, C140, D140, E140, F#140, G140, A140, B140, C141, D141, E141, F#141, G141, A141, B141, C142, D142, E142, F#142, G142, A142, B142, C143, D143, E143, F#143, G143, A143, B143, C144, D144, E144, F#144, G144, A144, B144, C145, D145, E145, F#145, G145, A145, B145, C146, D146, E146, F#146, G146, A146, B146, C147, D147, E147, F#147, G147, A147, B147, C148, D148, E148, F#148, G148, A148, B148, C149, D149, E149, F#149, G149, A149, B149, C150, D150, E150, F#150, G150, A150, B150, C151, D151, E151, F#151, G151, A151, B151, C152, D152, E152, F#152, G152, A152, B152, C153, D153, E153, F#153, G153, A153, B153, C154, D154, E154, F#154, G154, A154, B154, C155, D155, E155, F#155, G155, A155, B155, C156, D156, E156, F#156, G156, A156, B156, C157, D157, E157, F#157, G157, A157, B157, C158, D158, E158, F#158, G158, A158, B158, C159, D159, E159, 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G182, A182, B182, C183, D183, E183, F#183, G183, A183, B183, C184, D184, E184, F#184, G184, A184, B184, C185, D185, E185, F#185, G185, A185, B185, C186, D186, E186, F#186, G186, A186, B186, C187, D187, E187, F#187, G187, A187, B187, C188, D188, E188, F#188, G188, A188, B188, C189, D189, E189, F#189, G189, A189, B189, C190, D190, E190, F#190, G190, A190, B190, C191, D191, E191, F#191, G191, A191, B191, C192, D192, E192, F#192, G192, A192, B192, C193, D193, E193, F#193, G193, A193, B193, C194, D194, E194, F#194, G194, A194, B194, C195, D195, E195, F#195, G195, A195, B195, C196, D196, E196, F#196, G196, A196, B196, C197, D197, E197, F#197, G197, A197, B197, C198, D198, E198, F#198, G198, A198, B198, C199, D199, E199, F#199, G199, A199, B199, C200, D200, E200, F#200, G200, A200, B200, C201, D201, E201, F#201, G201, A201, B201, C202, D202, E202, F#202, G202, A202, B202, C203, D203, E203, F#203, G203, A203, B203, C204, D204, E204, F#204, G204, A204, B204, C205, D205, E205, F#205, G205, A205, B205, C206, D206, E206, F#206, G206, A206, B206, C207, D207, E207, F#207, G207, A207, B207, C208, D208, E208, F#208, G208, A208, B208, C209, D209, E209, F#209, G209, A209, B209, C210, D210, E210, F#210, G210, A210, B210, C211, D211, E211, F#211, G211, A211, B211, C212, D212, E212, F#212, G212, A212, B212, C213, D213, E213, F#213, G213, A213, B213, C214, D214, E214, F#214, G214, A214, B214, C215, D215, E215, F#215, G215, A215, B215, C216, D216, E216, F#216, G216, A216, B216, C217, D217, E217, F#217, G217, A217, B217, C218, D218, E218, F#218, G218, A218, B218, C219, D219, E219, F#219, G219, A219, B219, C220, D220, E220, F#220, G220, A220, B220, C221, D221, E221, F#221, G221, A221, B221, C222, D222, E222, F#222, G222, A222, B222, C223, D223, E223, F#223, G223, A223, B223, C224, D224, E224, F#224, G224, A224, B224, C225, D225, E225, F#225, G225, A225, B225, C226, D226, E226, F#226, G226, A226, B226, C227, D227, E227, F#227, G227, A227, B227, C228, D228, E228, F#228, G228, A228, B228, C229, D229, E229, F#229, G229, A229, B229, C230, D230, E230, F#230, G230, A230, B230, C231, D231, E231, F#231, G231, A231, B231, C232, D232, E232, F#232, G232, A232, B232, C233, D233, E233, F#233, G233, A233, B233, C234, D234, E234, F#234, G234, A234, B234, C235, D235, E235, F#235, G235, A235, B235, C236, D236, E236, F#236, G236, A236, B236, C237, D237, E237, F#237, G237, A237, B237, C238, D238, E238, F#238, G238, A238, B238, C239, D239, E239, F#239, G239, A239, B239, C240, D240, E240, F#240, G240, A240, B240, C241, D241, E241, F#241, G241, A241, B241, C242, D242, E242, F#242, G242, A242, B242, C243, D243, E243, F#243, G243, A243, B243, C244, D244, E244, F#244, G244, A244, B244, C245, D245, E245, F#245, G245, A245, B245, C246, D246, E246, F#246, G246, A246, B246, C247, D247, E247, F#247, G247, A247, B247, C248, D248, E248, F#248, G248, A248, B248, C249, D249, E249, F#249, G249, A249, B249, C250, D250, E250, F#250, G250, A250, B250, C251, D251, E251, F#251, G251, A251, B251, C252, D252, E252, 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G275, A275, B275, C276, D276, E276, F#276, G276, A276, B276, C277, D277, E277, F#277, G277, A277, B277, C278, D278, E278, F#278, G278, A278, B278, C279, D279, E279, F#279, G279, A279, B279, C280, D280, E280, F#280, G280, A280, B280, C281, D281, E281, F#281, G281, A281, B281, C282, D282, E282, F#282, G282, A282, B282, C283, D283, E283, F#283, G283, A283, B283, C284, D284, E284, F#284, G284, A284, B284, C285, D285, E285, F#285, G285, A285, B285, C286, D286, E286, F#286, G286, A286, B286, C287, D287, E287, F#287, G287, A287, B287, C288, D288, E288, F#288, G288, A288, B288, C289, D289, E289, F#289, G289, A289, B289, C290, D290, E290, F#290, G290, A290, B290, C291, D291, E291, F#291, G291, A291, B291, C292, D292, E292, F#292, G292, A292, B292, C293, D293, E293, F#293, G293, A293, B293, C294, D294, E294, F#294, G294, A294, B294, C295, D295, E295, F#295, G295, A295, B295, C296, D296, E296, F#296, G296, A296, B296, C297, D297, E297, F#297, G297, A297, B297, C298, D298, E298, F#298, G298, A298, 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F#345, G345, A345, B345, C346, D346, E346, F#346, G346, A346, B346, C347, D347, E347, F#347, G347, A347, B347, C348, D348, E348, F#348, G348, A348, B348, C349, D349, E349, F#349, G349, A349, B349, C350, D350, E350, F#350, G350, A350, B350, C351, D351, E351, F#351, G351, A351, B351, C352, D352, E352, F#352, G352, A352, B352, C353, D353, E353, F#353, G353, A353, B353, C354, D354, E354, F#354, G354, A354, B354, C355, D355, E355, F#355, G355, A355, B355, C356, D356, E356, F#356, G356, A356, B356, C357, D357

Trumpet 1-2

con sord. - harmon. stem out

ff *fff*

Example 2-3. *Prelude*, mm. 2–3: *Felt*-1 motive (trumpet I-II).

The other important motive that emerges in these measures occurs immediately on the downbeat of measure 1 in the piano, harp, crotales and glockenspiel. This figure – seen in Example 2-4 – has a nonspecific rhythm, with each player instructed to play the figure quickly, but out of time, and subsequently to allow all the pitches sounded to ring through the entire measure. This sparking effect creates a wash of bright diatonic sound, emphatically iterating scalar material, but without a tonal focus. This particular motive – derived from the third movement – is referred to as *Metal-1*.

* Play each figure once, fairly quickly (but not too fast), varying speed somewhat, out of sync with other players Let ring.

The musical score is arranged in five staves. The Piano and Harp staves are grand staves with treble and bass clefs. The Whip staff uses a single line with a square clef. The Crotales and Glockenspiel staves use a single line with a treble clef. All staves are in 4/2 time. The Piano, Harp, Crotales, and Glockenspiel parts play a sequence of eighth notes (G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4) marked with an asterisk and fortissimo (fff). The Whip part plays a single eighth note (G4) marked with an asterisk and fortissimo (fff). The score includes performance instructions: 'Play each figure once, fairly quickly (but not too fast), varying speed somewhat, out of sync with other players Let ring.' and a tempo marking 'Allegretto'.

Example 2-4. *Prelude*, m. 1: *Metal-1* motive (piano, harp and percussion).

The A section of *Prelude* begins in earnest at m. 4, with a rearticulation of *Metal*-1 and the introduction of the soprano saxophone soloist. The first two phrases of the soloist (mm. 4–7 and 8–12) introduce the concept of superimposition, as in each case the soloist begins with pitch content belonging to DIA_0 , but cadences with a downward flourish through octatonic material (OCT_0 and OCT_2 for each phrase, respectively) and eventually a fully chromatic scale. The soloist's last measure imitates *Felt*-1 while also presenting a three-note descending motive that develops into its own fully-fledged motive as the movement progresses.

In addition to the continuation of the woodwind soundscreen (which carries on until the final measure of the movement, shifting through harmonic areas as noted) and the trumpet motive, a brass chorale is added, providing the first vestiges of harmonic progression. In each of the soloist's first two phrases, a three-chord progression is present in support (Example 2-5), both of which cadence to F-major triadic sonorities with added tones.²³ This finally presents the true “key” of the movement's opening – not C major as we might expect from the lack of accidentals, but rather F Lydian.

Example 2-5. *Prelude*, mm. 6–8: Three-chord motive (horns, trombones, and euphonium).

²³ At measure 8, the arrival is on $\{F, A, C, E\}$, producing a $[0\ 1\ 5\ 8]$ collection; measure 11 is the aforementioned trumpet sonority $[0\ 1\ 3\ 7]$ (from $\{F, A, B^b, C\}$).

Dmitri Tymoczko makes reference to a class of sonorities he calls “triadic tetrachords,” which arise from the addition of any one pitch to a major or minor triad.²⁴ He refers to them in the works of Stravinsky, particularly for their versatility in shifting between diatonic and octatonic collections and for superimposition of these groups. Mackey also makes heavy use of these sonorities – as evidenced by the prominent placement even in these first twelve measures of [0 1 3 7] (of which [0 1 6] is an important subset) and [0 1 5 8]. Mackey also uses [0 2 3 7], [0 2 4 7] and [0 3 4 7] and expansions thereof in subsequent movements.²⁵ Of these sonorities, all but [0 2 4 7] sound a major or minor triad with a half-step dissonance inserted next to one of the triadic pitches. [0 2 4 7] has a whole-step dissonance, and its relatively stable construction (when juxtaposed against any of the other collections) creates a more consonant vertical sound.²⁶

The third soloist phrase is found in mm. 13–18, and contains two references in the solo part to other movements: first, the resonance fingering alternation in m. 14 that is indicative of *Felt* and second, the upward “ripping arpeggiations” in m. 15, which are duplicated almost verbatim in the climactic pre-cadenza moments of *Finale (Prelude-1; Example 2-6)*. The brass chorale continues, and begins to feature the three-note downward motion (A → G → F) that had been hinted at in the soprano saxophone in m. 12. The fourth and final phrase of the A section introduces no new motives, but the increasingly chromatic nature of the soprano saxophone muddies the water for the first major textural and architectural shift at measure 22.

²⁴ Dmitri Tymoczko, “Stravinsky and the Octatonic: A Reconsideration,” *Music Theory Spectrum* 42, no. 1 (Spring 2002): 90.

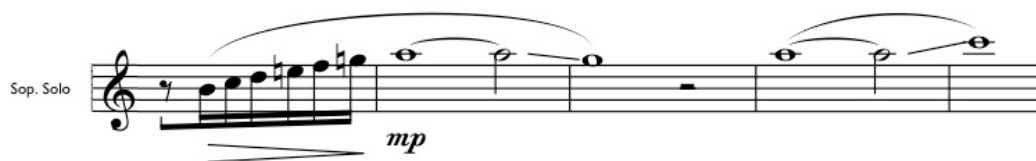
²⁵ There are also two significant tetrachords that are not “triadic” that Mackey uses in both the first and in later movements. These are [0 1 5 6] and [0 1 6 7], both of which are superset expansions of the trichord [0 1 6].

²⁶ Mackey uses this relationship to great effect in “Metal.”



Example 2-6. *Prelude*, m. 15: *Prelude-1* motive (soprano saxophone).

The B section of *Prelude* begins at m. 22 with a unison [0 2 3 7] verticality. This particular sonority is configured as a Gm^9 chord – a harmonic motive from *Wood* – while the shifting woodwind soundscreen establishes itself in DIA_1 with the newly added Bb . A brief flourish in OCT_0 and DIA_2 in the soprano saxophone precedes the introduction of the motive *Felt-2* at m. 24 (Example 2-7). Against this, a countermelody in the low woodwinds and string bass makes reference to the basic accompanimental figure from *Wood* (*Wood-1*; Example 2-8).



Example 2-7. *Prelude*, mm. 23-27: *Felt-2* motive (soprano saxophone).

Alto saxophones and flutes provide octatonic superimpositions in mm. 25-28, blurring a transition within the underlying harmonic area. Nevertheless, between measures 27 and 28, the harmonic content of the accompaniment shifts from DIA_1 to DIA_3 , most audible in the return of the brass section at the downbeat of m. 28, where horn and euphonium sound Ab . Measures 29–34 feature a textural building, both in terms of adding instruments and intensifying dynamics. The harmonic content remains mostly in DIA_3 during this section, although chromatic outliers

Example 2-8. *Prelude*, mm. 24-27: *Wood-1* motive (low woodwinds).

This musical score shows the first four staves of woodwinds for measures 24-27 of the *Prelude*. The staves are labeled: Bsn., C. Bn., Bb. Cl., and B. Sax. The notation is as follows:

- Bsn. (Bassoon):** Measures 24-25 have a half note G4 (marked *mf*). Measures 26-27 have a half note F#4 (marked *f*).
- C. Bn. (Clarinet):** Measures 24-25 have a half note G4 (marked *mf*). Measures 26-27 have a half note F#4 (marked *f*).
- Bb. Cl. (Clarinet):** Measures 24-25 have a half note G4 (marked *mf*). Measures 26-27 have a half note F#4 (marked *f*).
- B. Sax. (Saxophone):** Measures 24-25 have a half note G4 (marked *mf*). Measures 26-27 have a half note F#4 (marked *f*).

Example 2-8. *Prelude*, mm. 24-27: *Wood-1* motive (low woodwinds).

Example 2-9. *Prelude*, mm. 34-36: Main melodic motive from *Finale* (soprano saxophone).

This musical score shows the Soprano Saxophone part for measures 34-36 of the *Prelude*. The staff is labeled "Sop. Solo". The notation is as follows:

- Measure 34:** A half note G4 (marked *cresc.*).
- Measure 35:** A half note A4 (marked *cresc.*).
- Measure 36:** A half note B4 (marked *cresc.*).

Example 2-9. *Prelude*, mm. 34-36: Main melodic motive from *Finale* (soprano saxophone).

appear in the form of several brass, harp, and marimba notes. Measure 34, functioning as anacrusis to the climactic moments of the movement, contains an interjection of the opening DIA_0 collection in the soprano saxophone, as the soloist presents a modified version of the main melodic motive of *Finale* (See Example 2-9).

The section of the movement surrounding rehearsal letter B (mm. 35–43) is the climax, and features an amalgamation of motives. The only new motive of these is the fully developed brass progression ($Cm \rightarrow EbMM \frac{4}{3} \rightarrow Ab$; See Example 2-10) that features the three-note downward gesture both in its upper and lower tessitura. In this configuration (with the added effect of a double suspension on the downbeat of the cadence at measures 37 and 39), one can hear the connection between this motive and the primary progression of *Metal*. We will call this motive *Metal-2*. The arrival at m. 37 also coincides with presentations of *Metal-1* (crotales and glockenspiel) and *Prelude-1* (piano and harp). The soprano saxophone joins the woodwind soundscreen, and elaborates upon it through measure 40. The Ab sonority in m. 40 acts as a dominant to Eb at m. 41, establishing Eb Lydian (DIA_2) as the primary harmonic area for the remainder of the movement. Measures 41–43 are a transition analogous to the three-measure introduction, with the addition of an elided phrase ending shared with soprano saxophone and brass.

Measures 44–53 are the section labeled A' in Table 1, and reflect a nearly verbatim restatement of mm. 4–13 transposed from DIA_0 to DIA_2 . Measures 54–69 form the coda, which features a thinning texture that permits a soft ending. This section is bookended by articulations of *Metal-1*. The woodwind soundscreen continues, although it thins in texture and, after m. 55, no longer includes sixteenth notes. The soprano saxophone performs an altered version of the third phrase of A, with its alternate fingerings. This technique combines both the earlier

Tpt. 1-2
 Tpt. 3-4
 Horn 1-2
 Horn 3-4
 Tbn. 1-2
 Tbn. 3-4
 Euph.
 Tuba

Tpt. 1-2
 Tpt. 3-4
 Horn 1-2
 Horn 3-4
 Tbn. 1-2
 Tbn. 3-4
 Euph.
 Tuba

Example 2-10. *Prelude*, mm. 36-41: *Metal-2* motive (brass voices only).

statement and a foreshadowing of the effect's importance in *Felt*. As the movement recedes into silence, the sonority on the downbeat of m. 69 (articulated at the beginning of the *Metal-1* motive) is the pc set {D, E \flat , A} – a [0 1 6] collection just like the one prominent at the movement's outset (Example 2-11). The movement connects *attaca*, after some dissipation of the metallic percussion, to the explosive timpani solo that opens *Felt*.

Example 2-11. *Prelude*, m. 69: [0 1 6] trichord/*Metal-1*

Example 2-11. *Prelude*, m. 69: [0 1 6] trichord/*Metal-1*

Felt

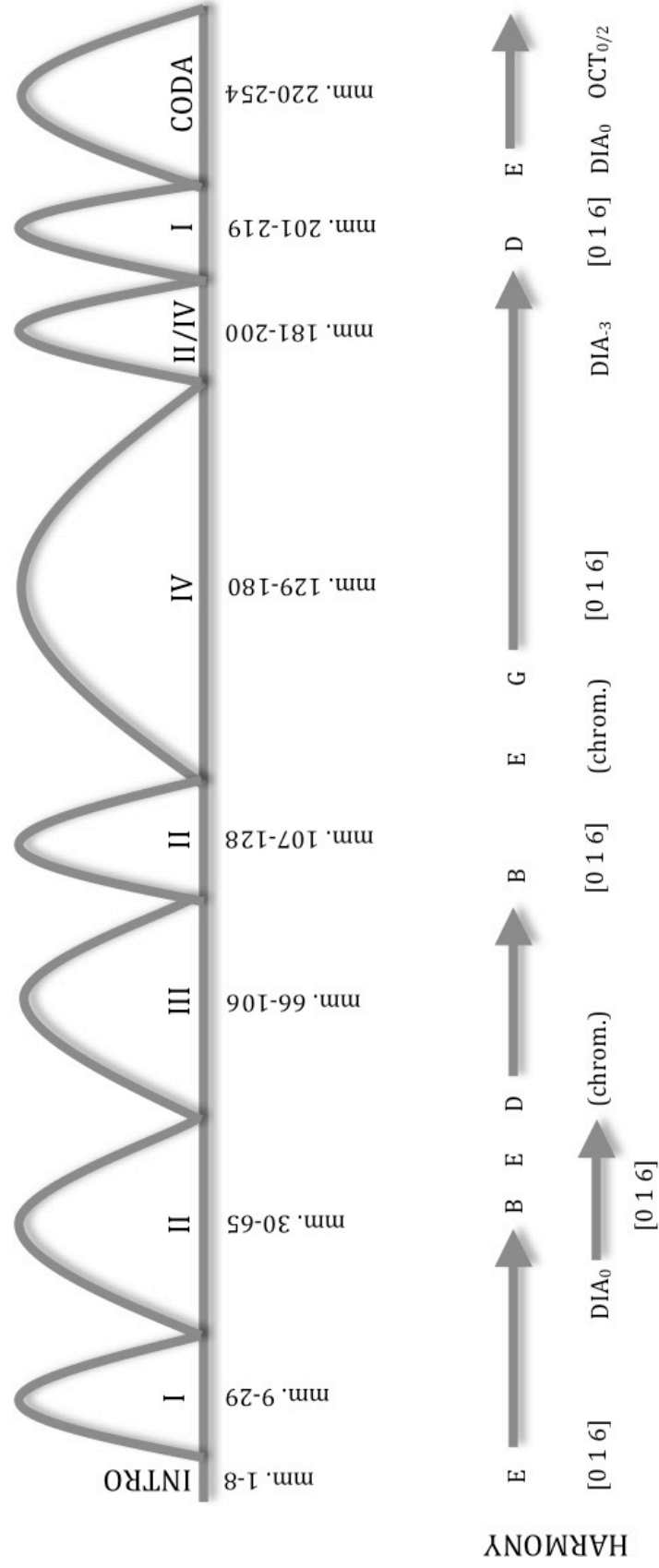
Felt, the second movement, consists of 254 measures. Based on the tempos and meters designated by the composer, it should take approximately five minutes and thirty seconds to perform. The instrumentation for the movement is predicated upon instruments that have felt in their construction; such as the pads of the woodwinds, valve stems for the horns and mallet heads for percussion. The complete instrumentation is seen in Table 2-3.

Table 2-3. Instrumentation of *Felt*.

Woodwinds	Brass	Percussion and Auxiliary
Flutes: 4 + piccolo	Trumpets: none	Double Bass: none
Oboes: 2	Horns: 4	Piano: 1
Bassoons: 2 + contrabassoon	Trombones: none	Harp: 1
Clarinets: 4 B \flat + E \flat + 2 bass + B \flat contrabass	Euphoniums: none	Percussion: Timpani, Marimba and Xylophone
Saxophones: Solo soprano + 2 alto + tenor + baritone	Tubas: none	

The form of *Felt* avoids a traditional label, with four thematic sections arranged in a recurring manner. A very loose interpretation could identify the first thirty measures as introductory with the remainder of the movement built as a five-part rondo. It seems likely, however, given the prominence of the soprano saxophone theme at m. 9 and its return toward the

Table 2-4. Formal and Harmonic Elements in *Felt*.



movement's conclusion, that the material from mm. 9-29 merits its own structural designation. Table 2-4 diagrams the form of the movement outside of a traditional model, and instead, deals with the interaction of the four thematic sections as structural equals.²⁷

The movement opens with a significant two-measure timpani solo (Example 2-12). The pitches of this solo form the collection [0 1 6 7], from which can be derived four overlapping [0 1 6] trichords. Emphasizing the importance of this collection, a *tutti* sonority on the downbeat of m. 3 is {E, A#, B}, another [0 1 6]. This harmony is extremely prevalent throughout the movement, essentially functioning as a “tonic” chord, and appearing frequently at sectional divisions and in linear melodic figures. The remainder of the introduction (mm. 3–8) presents the “running” motive (Example 2-13), a sequence of repetitive unison sixteenth notes that will frame the third thematic section of the movement.



Example 2-12. *Felt*, mm. 1–3: Timpani solo on [0 1 6 7] tetrachord.



Example 2-13. *Felt*, mm. 3–4: “Running” motive (flutes/oboes only).

²⁷ An alternative reading that combines the two hypotheses about form might suggest a rounded binary structure, with the B section (mm. 30–200) constituting its own smaller rondino form, but even this seems proportionally out of balance.

The soprano saxophone makes its first appearance in m. 9, with a theme that focuses on repeated notes using alternating fingerings (as in the third phrase of A in *Prelude*; see Example 2-14). This repeated E is also the “root” of the prevailing [0 1 6] trichord that has been repeated several times in the introduction and sounds again at measure 9. When the soloist finally moves away from the concert E, the first three sounded pitches form the pc set {G, G#, C#} – another [0 1 6] trichord. Multifold other instances of the [0 1 6] trichord appear in this first thematic section, including – among others – vertical articulations at the downbeats of measures 13, 15 (another [0 1 6 7]), 17, 21, 23, and beat 2 of measure 24 ([0 1 6 7]), and linear presentations in soprano saxophone at m. 20, in upper and lower horn voices at m. 24 (Example 2-15), and in the final soprano saxophone triplet figuration at m. 29.



Example 2-14. *Felt*, mm. 9–12: Alternate fingering theme/linear [0 1 6].



Example 2-15. *Felt*, mm. 24: Linear [0 1 6] collections, offset by semitone.

Measures 30–39 serve as an introduction to the second major thematic section (mm. 30–65). While the opening twenty-nine measures feature a great deal of mixed meters, the time signatures at m. 30 become much more stable – a two-measure pattern of 4/4 and 3/4. The harmonic context changes here, focusing less on the [0 1 6] sonority and more on brief semitone clusters and wide melodic leaps. The texture for these measures is thin, with jagged motivic fragments appearing in sporadic collections of instruments: the “running” motive is present in the flutes in m. 32, followed by clarinets in m. 33; while the contour that will form the fourth major thematic group of the movement is hinted at by saxophones and bass clarinet in mm. 32–36. The cadence of this section, from mm. 37–39, features the only really recognizable instance of the [0 1 6] collection, in upper woodwinds and horns, as they play the first audible occurrence of *Felt*-1 within the movement (Example 2-16), followed by another repetition of the “running” motive.

The image displays a musical score for measures 38 of the piece *Felt*. It features five staves, each representing a different woodwind instrument: Flute 1 (Fl. 1), Flute 2 (Fl. 2), Flute 3 (Fl. 3), Flute 4 (Fl. 4), and Oboe (Ob.). The time signature is 4/4. The key signature has one sharp (F#). The music is written in treble clef. The notation shows a series of eighth and sixteenth notes, with some measures containing rests. A dynamic marking of *f* (forte) is present at the beginning of each staff. Above the first four staves, there are markings for '8va' (octave up) and '8va' (octave down), indicating that the notes are to be played an octave higher or lower than written. The overall texture is thin, with each instrument playing a distinct, jagged melodic line.

Example 2-16. *Felt*, m. 38: *Felt*-1 reappearance (flutes/oboes).

The soprano saxophone melody through the second thematic section occurs in three iterations: mm. 40–47, mm. 48–55, and mm. 60–65. This melody, with the exception of a few outliers, demonstrates the DIA_0 collection (Example 2-17). The outlying pitches include a raucous $A\flat$ at m. 46, a chromatic run at m. 55, and an athletic run of sixteenth notes at m. 65 that strings together several linear presentations of the $[0\ 1\ 6]$ collection ($\{E, B, B\flat\}$, $\{G\flat, C, B\}$, $\{C, B, F\}$, and $\{B, F, E\}$). The modal implication of this referential collection, when considered with the insistent repetition of the pitch E on the downbeat of each two-measure grouping, is that of E Phrygian. The melody, however, avoids this pitch almost entirely, focusing much more on concert B (mm. 40, 42, 48, 50, 52–53, 60–62, and 64–65) and F (mm. 50–51, 54–55, and 62–63), creating the effect of tonal ambiguity rather than a clear harmonic progression. It should be noted, however, that the repetitive E's combined with the two aforementioned focal pitches for the saxophone create another $[0\ 1\ 6]$ collection.



Example 2-17. *Felt*, mm. 40–46: Section II melody (soprano saxophone).

The accompaniment in mm. 40–65 continues much as it had in the previous ten measures, with the exception of a brief interlude in mm. 56–59. The interlude – which returns later and features a “wailing” woodwind flourish – is also rife with $[0\ 1\ 6]$ sonorities²⁸, from vertical occurrences at the downbeats of measures 56, 57, and 58 to linear presentations, in both the “wailing” contour and the accompanying oboe and saxophone voices. These pitches themselves

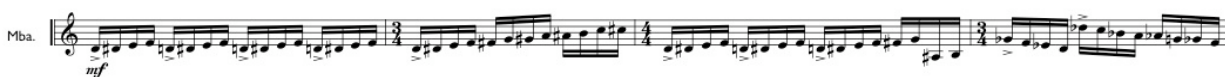
²⁸ This results from another appearance of the saturated $[0\ 1\ 6\ 7]$ collection $\{B, C, F, F\sharp\}$.

represent a T_7 transposition – a shift of a perfect fifth – of the original [0 1 6 7] collection from the movement’s opening timpani solo. In that sense, the prevailing harmony in these measures can be seen as having a “dominant” relationship to the “tonic” pc set {E, F, A \sharp , B}. Thus, the perceived harmonic progression of the second theme group’s four phrases is: I–I–V–I. The final phrase (mm. 60–65) of the group is like the first phrase, with a cadence that duplicates *Felt*-1 and the “running” motive of mm. 38–39, closing on an open fifth {E, B} at m. 66.

Example 2-18. *Felt*, mm. 56–57: “Wailing” motive.

The third thematic group begins at measure 66 with a continuous statement of the “running” motive in marimba (See Example 2-19). This motive moves through the ensemble for nearly the entire duration of the section (mm. 66–106). The group breaks down into five subsections: four melodic phrases and a closing segment. The soloist’s gestures correspond to the “running” motive, joining parts of the marimba line with occasional interjections in an upper tessitura. Attention, however, is drawn from the soloist to clarinet I, which presents the *Felt*-2

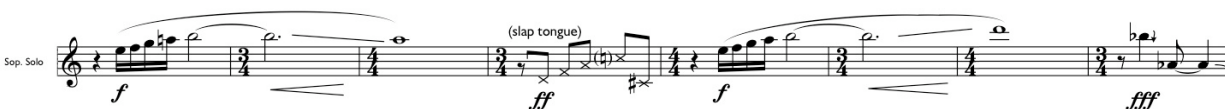
motive (Example 2-20). The second phrase (mm. 78–85) doubles this motive in clarinets I-II, placing it in octaves.



Example 2-19. *Felt*, mm. 66–69: Section III continuous “running” motive.



Example 2-20. *Felt*, mm. 70–76: *Felt*-2 motive (clarinet I).



Example 2-21. *Felt*, mm. 86–93: *Felt*-2, embellished (soprano saxophone).

The saxophone soloist takes over *Felt*-2 in mm. 86–101, embellishing it more and more as the line develops (Example 2-21). The increase in activity corresponds to the increasing intensity and thickness of the texture. The accompaniment for this entire section is developed from a two-note timpani interjection in mm. 66–67. The emphasis of the pitch D in this figure (and later expanded to motion from A to D) implies a localized pitch center of D, although there is no other strong functional implication within the section. This tiny two-note motive is emulated by bassoons, bass clarinet, and piano at mm. 73–74 and it is later embellished by flutes, oboes and horns in mm. 77–78 before becoming a continuous pattern at m. 86. The three combined layers (*Felt*-2, “running” motive, and additive eighth-note accompaniment) build

toward a state of cacophony for the closing material in mm. 102–106. To project properly, the saxophonist is given high-range portamento effects with the instruction to play “like a siren” as the ensemble drops from piano and crescendos to *fortississimo* between m. 104 and m. 106 (Example 2-22).



Example 2-22. *Felt*, mm. 104–107: “Siren” portamento (soprano saxophone).

The downbeat of m. 107 features a vertical occurrence of the pc set {B, F, F#} and a recurrence of the “wailing” interlude of mm. 56–59. The primary differences between that instance and this one are length (the version in mm. 107–114 is twice as long) and function, as this segment’s previously established “dominant” function serves as a sort of retransition to earlier material from the tonal ambiguity of the third thematic section. Measures 115–128 are a brief return of section II, with the soloist presenting modified versions of only the first and third phrases of the section.²⁹

The fourth – and final – distinct thematic section begins at m. 129 and continues until m. 180. This section, in some ways, is a reimagining of section III with the individual motives developed in different ways. Instead of a continuous “running” motive appearing throughout the section, it emerges as an interjection, frequently at phrase cadences. The motor for this section is a previously unheard oscillation of eighth notes started in the piano (with the pitch E on beats,

²⁹ The second phrase is omitted, ostensibly, to maintain the pitch center of E and to withhold another occurrence of the “wailing” section, which had immediately preceded the return.

and various clusters on off-beats; see Example 2-23) and accentuated by a bass clarinet duet at m. 139 (transposed at this point to focus on the pitch G; Example 2-24) with horn offbeats.



Example 2-23. *Felt*, mm. 129–130: Section IV piano ostinato (first two measures).



Example 2-24. *Felt*, mm. 139–42: Section IV ostinato (bass clarinet duet variation).

The saxophone melody takes on two disparate elements from section III, which alternate by measure. The first of these is the jagged eighth-note accompaniment first presented by flutes and oboes in m. 77 and mm. 80–81. An added level of aggression is apparent in the slap-tongue articulation (Example 2-25). The second element is a diminuted fragment of *Felt-2*: a smeared rising minor third. These are grouped into an eight-measure phrase, with each element appearing four times. The upper note of the *Felt-2* fragment is a concert G, which serves to assist the quasi-modulation to the G pitch center at m. 139. The soprano saxophone reenters at m. 145, with an embellished version of the *Felt-1* fragment, now stretched out to its original length with a cadence in mm. 161–162.



Example 2-25. *Felt*, mm. 131–132: Section IV melodic cell.

One of the few distinctly audible instances of the [0 1 6] trichord in this section occurs in the soprano saxophone at m. 167, spaced widely with pitch bends after each note (Example 2-27). The closing of this section follows much as it had started, with a six-measure version of the twofold motivic melody in the soprano saxophone. This segment, however, is still centered around G, rather than the expected E, and though it leads to a restatement of section II material, does not modulate back to the expected “tonic” {E, A#, B} trichord. Measures 181–193 constitute a two-phrase restatement of the section II melody, now transposed (T_3) up a minor tenth into a new diatonic collection: DIA₃ (Example 2-27). Measures 194–200 are reminiscent of section IV with a return of the slap-tongue solo and the motoric eighth-note rhythm now presented in marimba.



Example 2-26. *Felt*, m. 167: Linear [0 1 6] with pitch bends.



Example 2-27. *Felt*, mm. 181–186: Section II melody transposed.

Section I material returns at measure 201, now with a tonal center of D instead of the initial E. Along with the recurrence of melodic material comes the highly prevalent tonic [0 1 6] sonority seen here in the T_{10} transposition {D, G#, A}. The accompaniment figures are otherwise mostly unchanged – with the exception of slightly thicker instrumentation – until measure 216. At m. 216, the soloist continues through the measures analogous to mm. 29–30, the remainder of the ensemble jumps forward to the figures from mm. 37–39 (essentially skipping through the section II introduction that would logically follow).

The remainder of the movement (mm. 220–254) functions as a coda and interlaces thematic material from sections II, III, and IV. The soprano saxophone presents fragments of the section II melody (though none are full statements) in mm. 220–235, taking over the “running” motive of section III from measure 236 until the end. The section II material has returned to its original key area, emphasizing DIA_0 with E as the focal pitch. Although superimposition doesn’t play a major role in much of the movement, scales and referential collections become increasingly important here in the coda. The soprano saxophone, in particular, presents a great deal of octatonic material: OCT_2 appears in m. 231, and the soloist’s “running” motive in mm. 236–253 is entirely within OCT_0 . By measure 236, the accompaniment performs only the “slap-tongue” motive of section IV, and the texture thins by measure 246 to include only the saxophone soloist, alto and tenor saxophones, and marimba. The pitch E is emphasized on the downbeat of each measure by soprano saxophone and marimba up until the final measure 254. The resulting octatonic tetrachords [0 2 3 5] have the effect of reducing the prevalence of [0 1 6] for the listener, setting up the new tonal language of *Metal* in much the same way *Felt* was foreshadowed at the conclusion of *Prelude*.

Though Mackey could close the movement in this way, he makes one final gesture of tonal ambiguity in the final measure, in which several referential collections are superimposed (Example 2-28). The soprano saxophone shifts to OCT₂ for this measure and plays mostly sixteenth-note quintuplets, while the piano plays OCT₁ in the left hand and WT₀ in the right, all in sixteenth notes. Blurring the distinction even further, the remaining instruments that play in this measure (piccolo, flute I-II, alto saxophone I, and tenor saxophone) all play ascending chromatic scales in sixteenth notes. This last measure provides one final comic moment in the bizarre harmonic world of *Felt* – the mechanistic clarity and color of mm. 236–253 smudged at its termination into a thumbprint of gray.

The musical score for Example 2-28, m. 254, illustrates scalar superimpositions. The score is written for seven instruments: Piccolo (Picc.), Flute I (Fl. I), Flute 2 (Fl. 2), Alto Saxophone I (A. Sx. I), Tenor Saxophone (T. Sx.), Soprano Solo (Sop. Solo), and Piano (Pno.). The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 4/4. The Picc., Fl. I, Fl. 2, A. Sx. I, and T. Sx. parts play ascending chromatic scales in sixteenth notes, marked *pp*. The Sop. Solo part plays a descending chromatic scale in sixteenth notes, marked *p*, with quintuplet markings (*s*) over the first and last groups. The Pno. part plays ascending chromatic scales in sixteenth notes, marked *pp*, with the right hand playing WT₀ and the left hand playing OCT₁.

Example 2-28. *Felt*, m. 254: Scalar superimpositions.

Metal

The third movement – *Metal* – consists of eighty-eight measures. The tempo for the movement is marked *Rubato*, and as such, performance length may vary based on interpretation. A plausible range, however, would likely be between six and seven minutes, depending upon how significantly the conductor and soloist alter the tempo to reflect this *rubato*. To facilitate balance, particularly in the louder sections of the movement, Mackey specifically requests one player per part on the first page of the score to *Metal*. The instrumentation for the movement is seen in Table 2-5.

Table 2-5. Instrumentation of *Metal*.

Woodwinds	Brass	Percussion and Auxiliary
Flutes: 4 (no piccolo)	Trumpets: 4 flugelhorns ³⁰	Double Bass: 1
Oboes: 2	Horns: 4	Piano: 1
Bassoons: 2 + contrabassoon	Trombones: 3 + bass	Harp: 1
Clarinets: 4 B♭ + 1 bass + B♭ contrabass (No E♭, bass II)	Euphoniums: 1	Percussion: Crotales, Glockenspiel, Vibraphone, Chimes, Suspended Cymbals, Bass Drum
Saxophones: Solo soprano + 2 alto + tenor + baritone	Tubas: 1	

³⁰ Mackey makes a specific note concerning the use of flugelhorns in the movement: “If 4 flugelhorns are not available, use 1 flugelhorn (on part 1), and 3 cornets. If no flugelhorns are available, 4 cornets are preferred over 4 trumpets.

The form for *Metal* is driven mainly by the interaction of two soprano saxophone melodic contours as seen in Table 2-6. The first melody, labeled “a,” begins with a prominent scalar ascent, whereas the “b” melody (which is the basis for *Metal*-2) is predicated on two *seufzer*-like stepwise descents that repeat. Each “a” segment is followed (once with an intervening transition) by a “b,” giving descending melodic closure to each upward gesture. The segment marked “c” is really based upon the earlier transition sections, but is lengthier and marks the only time the soprano saxophone soloist plays during transitional material, thus giving it enough weight to be considered its own unique melodic section.

Harmonically, *Metal* bridges the gap between *Prelude*, which heavily emphasizes triadic sonorities, and *Felt*, which creates an unconventional tonal environment based on the non-triadic sonority [0 1 6]. *Metal* features both dissonant pitch collections (sometimes based on triads, and at other times more abstract groupings) and diatonic referential collections creating a harmonic synergy between the two concepts. The primary diatonic collection for the movement is DIA_{+2} , although the pitch material initially suggests DIA_{+1} instead, with prominent $\text{C}\sharp$ s in each of the first four measures.

These four measures also demonstrate one of the primary harmonic relationships in the movement: the alternation between [0 1 5 6] and [0 2 4 7]. Though in the presented configuration the chords share two pitches ($\{\text{B}, \text{C}, \text{F}\sharp, \text{G}\} \rightarrow \{\text{C}, \text{D}, \text{E}, \text{G}\}$), the voice leading of these brass harmonies is not maximally parsimonious (Example 2-29). Only the Gs hold constant between measures; the Cs in measures 1 and 3 move upward to D, and the Bs in the bass, which one might suspect would move upward by semitone motion to C, instead fall a major seventh to achieve the same pitch class. As a collection, [0 1 5 6] represents a sensation of tension, with twofold semitone dissonances. Though not as saturated with [0 1 6] as the second movement’s

[0 1 6 7] sonority, [0 1 5 6] still contains two instances of the [0 1 6] trichord (the superset results from the trichord's reflection at I_6). In contrast, the [0 2 4 7] collection seems relatively consonant, despite its major seconds, because of a lack of half-steps and its close relationship to a C-major triad.

Example 2-29. Metal, mm. 1–6: [0 1 5 6]/[0 2 4 7] alternation.

The arrival at m. 5 is on the diatonic pentachord {G, A, B, C#, D}. The motion from the C chord in m. 4 to the harmony in m. 5 (related to G major, with additional pitches) projects a plagal motion that is important both in this movement and, as we have seen, in *Prelude* at mm. 40–42 ($A^b \rightarrow E^b$). This [0 1 3 5 7] sonority shares a prime form with the climactic cadences of *Prelude* in measures 37 and 39, differing only in pitch content (the chord at m. 5 of *Metal* represents a T_{11} transposition of the *Prelude* chord). The C#’s in this chord, along with the appearance of *Metal*-1 with two sharps (Example 2-30), indicates the arrival of DIA_{+2} .

Example 2-30. Metal, mm. 5–7: Metal-1 reappearance (piano/harp/percussion).

Example 2-31. Metal, mm. 7-12: “a” melody (ascending contour).

The first “a” segment begins at m. 7 with the entrance of the soprano saxophone, which ascends through all seven pitches of the DIA_{+2} collection (Example 2-31). Tension mounts in the ensemble accompaniment in mm. 7–10, with sustaining members of the DIA_{+2} collection eventually expanding to include the outlying pitches $\text{G}\sharp$, $\text{E}\flat$, and $\text{B}\flat$. The harmonic instability of this sonority leads to a wavering in the next four measures: the arrival in m. 11 suggests DIA_{+3} , but this collection recedes quickly to an implication of DIA_{+1} at m. 14 with Cs in the solo voice, as well as in contrabassoon, bass clarinet, horn IV, and euphonium (Example 2-32). The second phrase of the first “a” segment begins with a [0 1 3] trichord {C, D, $\text{E}\flat$ } to a tetrachord [0 1 3 7] ({ $\text{A}\flat$, C, D, $\text{E}\flat$ }) that mimics the same Lydian sonority found in multiple occurrences

rit. a tempo

The musical score is organized into systems. The first system includes Flutes (Fl. 1-2, Fl. 3-4), Bassoon (Bsn.), and Contrabassoon (C. Bn.). The second system includes Clarinets (Cl. 1-2, Cl. 3-4), Bass Clarinet (Bs. Cl.), and Contrabass Clarinet (Cb. Cl.). The third system includes Saxophones (A. Sx. 1, A. Sx. 2, T. Sx., B. Sx.). The fourth system includes Soprano Solo (Sop. Solo). The fifth system includes Horns (Horn 1-2, Horn 3-4), Trombones (Tbn. 1-2, Tbn. 3-4), and Euphonium (Euph.).

Key musical features include:

- Tempo Markings:** *rit.* (ritardando) and *a tempo* (return to original tempo).
- Dynamics:** *ppp* (pianississimo), *pp* (pianissimo), *mp* (mezzo-piano), and *p* (piano).
- Articulations:** *con sord.* (con sordina) for muffled sound.
- Phrasing:** Long, sustained notes with slurs, indicating a slow, atmospheric transition.

Example 2-32. *Metal*, mm. 9–14: Transition through dissonance from DIA_{+3} to DIA_{+1} .

during *Prelude*. This phrase elides seamlessly into the first transition at m. 20, with a shared G between soprano saxophone and clarinet I.

The transitions all feature variations of the basic harmonic motion from mm. 1–4. In the case of measures 20–24, the progression moves from a denser [0 1 2 6] to the WT-influenced [0 2 4 6]. Though the chords are noticeably different, the aesthetic result is similar – motion from a compact tetrachord with multiple semitones to a comparably less tense sonority that suggests release (Example 2-33). The brief clarinet fragments, reminiscent again of DIA₊₂, elide back into the soprano saxophone at m. 24 with a shared E.

The musical score for Example 2-33, measures 20–25 of *Metal*, features five staves and a Soprano Solo part. The staves are labeled: Fl. I-2, Bsn., Cl. I-2, Bs. Cl., and T. Sx. The Soprano Solo part is also shown. The score illustrates a transition with elided melody between measures 20 and 24. Dynamics include *p*, *ppp*, and *pp*. The score shows the following notes and dynamics:

- Fl. I-2:** Measure 20: *p* (G4, A4, B4, C5). Measure 21: (G4, A4, B4, C5). Measure 22: (G4, A4, B4, C5). Measure 23: (G4, A4, B4, C5). Measure 24: (G4, A4, B4, C5). Measure 25: (G4, A4, B4, C5).
- Bsn.:** Measure 20: *p* (G3, A3, B3, C4). Measure 21: (G3, A3, B3, C4). Measure 22: (G3, A3, B3, C4). Measure 23: (G3, A3, B3, C4). Measure 24: (G3, A3, B3, C4). Measure 25: (G3, A3, B3, C4).
- Cl. I-2:** Measure 20: *ppp* (G4, A4, B4, C5). Measure 21: *p* (G4, A4, B4, C5). Measure 22: (G4, A4, B4, C5). Measure 23: (G4, A4, B4, C5). Measure 24: (G4, A4, B4, C5). Measure 25: (G4, A4, B4, C5).
- Bs. Cl.:** Measure 20: (G4, A4, B4, C5). Measure 21: (G4, A4, B4, C5). Measure 22: (G4, A4, B4, C5). Measure 23: (G4, A4, B4, C5). Measure 24: (G4, A4, B4, C5). Measure 25: (G4, A4, B4, C5).
- T. Sx.:** Measure 20: *p* (G4, A4, B4, C5). Measure 21: (G4, A4, B4, C5). Measure 22: (G4, A4, B4, C5). Measure 23: (G4, A4, B4, C5). Measure 24: (G4, A4, B4, C5). Measure 25: (G4, A4, B4, C5).
- Sop. Solo:** Measure 20: (G4, A4, B4, C5). Measure 21: (G4, A4, B4, C5). Measure 22: (G4, A4, B4, C5). Measure 23: (G4, A4, B4, C5). Measure 24: (G4, A4, B4, C5). Measure 25: (G4, A4, B4, C5).

Example 2-33. *Metal*, mm. 20–25: Transition with elided melody.

The “b” segment begins at measure 25 with a downward scale for soprano saxophone (in the collection DIA_{+2}) spanning a fourth from D to A (Example 2-34). The chord that accompanies this descent in mm. 25–26 as well as m. 28 is the $[0\ 1\ 3\ 5\ 7]$ pentachord from m. 5, produced again from the first five pitches of the G Lydian scale. This is the beginning of the emergence of *Metal-2*, though this first occurrence of the motive within the movement is nowhere near as emphatic as its appearances in *Prelude* or later in the movement. Though the two melodic ideas have different contours, they share a similar harmonic underpinning. For instance, the first melody reaches its apex at its midpoint on the soprano saxophone’s concert A, with a supporting $[0\ 1\ 3\ 5\ 7\ 8]$ harmony. This is similar to the $[0\ 1\ 3\ 7\ 8]$ sonority that underlies the midpoint of the “b” melody when the solo reaches its lowest point, also on an A.³¹ The end of this melodic phrase rises to an F# where, like the “a” section, it elides into another instrument – in this case, flugelhorn I. The second transition (mm. 31-36), like the first, contains four measures based on mm. 1-4. In this case, the harmonic oscillation alternates the original $[0\ 1\ 5\ 6]$ sonority and the $[0\ 1\ 3\ 5\ 7]$ pentachord $\{C, D, E, F\#, G\}$. A two-measure extension closes the transition (emphasizing a $[0\ 2\ 3\ 7]$ tetrachord) and leads to the next statement of the “a” melody, this time without elision.³²



Example 2-34. *Metal*, mm. 25–31: “b” melody (*Metal-2*)

³¹ It is worth noting that both of these sonorities are large subsets of the diatonic collection, emphasizing strongly the importance of scalar collections even within these larger, more dissonant sets.

³² The last pitch of the flugelhorn melody does match the first pitch of the next soprano saxophone entrance, though the two are separated by a measure.

The next statement of the “a” melody begins much as the first does, exploring the same DIA_{+2} collection. The measure prior to the melody’s apex, like its analogue measure 10, expands beyond this scalar collection to include dissonant outliers (in this case, $E\flat$ and $B\flat$). The arrival and subsequent release of tension at m. 40 occurs on a full vertical presentation of the DIA_{+2} collection. Measures 41–42 feature the reentry of the conical brass, settling on the same $[0\ 2\ 3\ 7]$ pc set $\{F, G, A\flat, C\}$ as the one in m. 35. *Metal*-1 reappears in mm. 43–45 on the downbeat of each measure as the melody builds to its climax and the surrounding harmony becomes increasingly complex.

The “b” segment that follows (mm. 46–57) builds quickly to a similar high point that had just occurred with the “a” melody in mm. 43–45. Two measures of the *Metal*-2 melodic motive begin the section, with a sparse accompaniment of flutes, clarinet I-II, horn I-II, harp and suspended cymbal. The sonority of the downbeat at m. 47 is yet another occurrence of the $[0\ 1\ 3\ 5\ 7]$ pentachord, which blossoms outward to the localized climax: three *tutti* measures, each of which features a six-pitch subset of DIA_{+2} collection, articulated on each downbeat with iterations of the *Metal*-1 motive. The soprano saxophone carries over in the aftermath of this sonic mass, with woodwinds joining in mm. 49–50 with the familiar $[0\ 1\ 3\ 7]$ tetrachord. A $[0\ 1\ 5\ 6]$ sonority appears at mm. 51 and 53, but resolves unexpectedly to a semitone-laden $[0\ 1\ 3\ 4\ 5\ 8]$ in each subsequent measure (Example 2-35).³³ Although this is an expanded version of the sonority, it is reminiscent of a split-third chord: a simultaneous presentation of major and minor triads with the same root (in this case, C major and C minor at the same time). This harmony also influences the tonal language of *Finale*.

³³ The collection would be $\{C, D, E, G, B\}$ ($[0\ 1\ 3\ 5\ 8]$) – a superset to the $[0\ 2\ 4\ 7]$ collection and subset of DIA_0 with relatively little inherent dissonance – but the prominent $E\flat$ in bass clarinet, tenor saxophone, and euphonium creates a dense semitone clash with both the D in flugelhorn II and the $E\sharp$ in oboe I and flugelhorn I.

Ob. *p*

Bsn. *p*

Bs. Cl. *p*

Cb. Cl. *p*

T. Sx. *p*

B. Sx. *p*

Sop. Solo *p* *mp* *p*

Flg. 1-2 *p*

Tbn. 1-2 *p* con sord.

Euph. *p*

DB *pizz.* *mp*

Example 2-35. *Metal*, mm. 51–54: Resolution to [0 1 3 4 5 8] sonority

Measures 58–61 introduce the final “a” melodic section, and are analogous to mm. 7–10 and 37–40, this time with a substantially larger instrumentation. The implication at m. 58 is a continuation of the DIA_0 collection suggested in mm. 51–54. A shift back toward DIA_{+2} occurs at m. 60 with the inclusion of $C\sharp$ and $F\sharp$ (also with the expected addition of $B\flat$ and $E\flat$). The apex of the melody occurs, as expected, on the concert A in the soprano saxophone. Instead of turning back down to close out the melody, however, the saxophonist ascends even further into

the final cathartic statement of “b.” The material in mm. 61–68 falls strictly within the collection DIA_{+2} , emphasized by the recurrence of *Metal*-1 in measures 62, 63, 65 (beat 2), and 66 (Example 2-36). The defining plagal motion of the movement is accentuated by the titanic pedal notes D and G in the low brass, string bass, and the piano. The expected pentachord {G, A, B, C#, D} occurs, as well, on the downbeats of mm. 62, 63, 65, and 66, rounding out the climax with the sonority that has been prevalent since m. 5.

As in m. 30, the linking element between “b” and the next transition is a shared F#. Measures 69–74 contain identical pitch content to the transition in mm. 31–36, but this time stated without brass (as opposed to the previous statement, which was almost entirely in the brass choir). This coloristic change allows two presentations of the material, each distinct and aurally interesting, without using the full mass of the ensemble, keeping the texture thin enough for the melody to easily project. Clarinet I assumes the flugelhorn I melody from m. 31, while flute I takes over the horn I melody from mm. 35–36. The oscillation occurs, as in the earlier transition, between [0 1 5 6] and [0 1 3 5 7]. This relationship settles in m. 73 with the Fm^9 sonority that maps the collection [0 2 3 7].

The “c” melody is constructed from several elements of earlier transitions, formed into one cogent structure (Example 2-37). The first six measures (mm. 75–80) are a version of the first clarinet transition from mm. 20–24, expanded by one measure and slightly revoiced for octave placement. The last two measures (mm. 81–82), meanwhile, emulates the horn melody from mm. 35–36. The four-chord oscillation occurs between [0 1 3 5 6] and [0 2 4 7], again, like the initial four measures, implying DIA_{+1} . C#s imply DIA_{+2} in mm. 79–80, but referential collection quickly shifts again to the surprisingly distant DIA_{-3} for mm. 81–82 (settling again on [0 2 3 7], as in m. 73).

Ob.

Bsn.

C. Bn.

Bs. Cl.

Clb. Cl.

A. Sx. 1

A. Sx. 2

T. Sx.

B. Sx.

Sop. Solo

Flg. 1-2

Flg. 3-4

Horn 1-2

Horn 3-4

Tbn. 1-2

Tbn. 3-4

Euph.

Tuba

DB

Pno.

Hp.

Crot.

Glock.

Vibes

Chimes

Cymb.

B.D.

ff *mp* *f* *p*

Example 2-36. *Metal*, mm. 64–66: *Metal-1/Metal-2* climax.

Sop. Solo

Fig. 1-2
con sord.
pp mf

Fig. 3-4
con sord.
pp mf

Horn 1-2
con sord.
pp mf

Horn 3-4
con sord.
pp mf

Tbn. 1-2
con sord.
pp mf

Tbn. 3-4
con sord.
pp mf

Euph.
con sord.
pp

Tuba
con sord.
pp

DB
p

Example 2-37. *Metal*, mm. 75–82: “c” melody, with accompaniment.

A codetta follows, occupying the final six measures (mm. 83–88). These measures are like the opening four in terms of tension and release. Measures 83, 85, and 87 each feature a non-diatonic sonority that includes at least one group of three adjacent pitches separated by semitones. The release measures – 84, 86, and 88 – are all diatonic subsets, each, sequentially, containing more sharps. Measure 84 is a DIA_{+1} sonority, while m. 86 features a subset of DIA_{+2} , and the final measure implies DIA_{+3} . The final measure resolves to the long-implied tonic D major.³⁴ The unexpected dissonance of G# in tenor saxophone in this last measure alters the final chord to create the Lydian sonority [0 1 3 7], a prevalent tetrachord from *Prelude* (Example 2-38). The effect is one of incompleteness – though the cadence of the entire work is on a D chord, this occurrence is an imperfect cadence, leaving dramatic territory for final two movements.

Example 2-38. *Metal*, m. 88: Cadential [0 1 3 7] tetrachord.

³⁴ The DIA_{+2} collection can commonly suggest D major, and the long-term plagal motion $C \rightarrow G \rightarrow D$ provides the architecture for the movement.

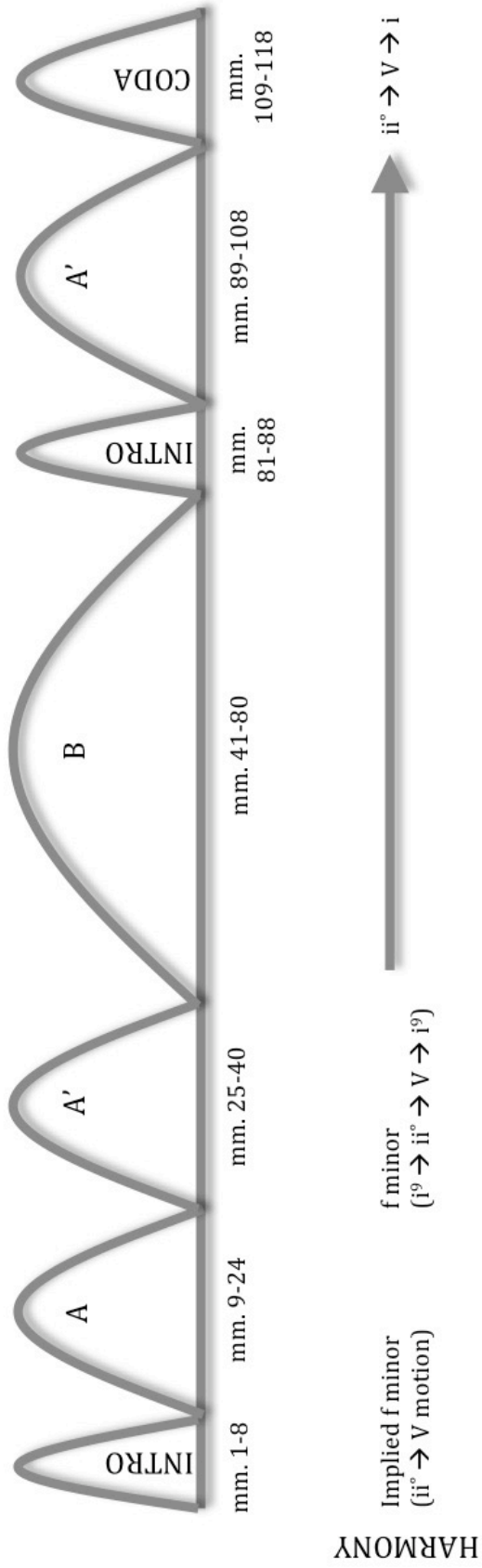
Wood

Wood, the fourth movement, consists of one hundred eighteen measures. Based on the tempo and meter designated by the composer, it should take just under four minutes to perform. The instrumentation is designed to include instruments for which wood is a significant construction element. The inclusion of flutes is a point of note – Mackey includes them to complete the woodwind family and because of their historical construction from wood (despite that the majority of modern flutes are entirely metallic). The instrumentation for the movement is seen in Table 2-7.

Table 2-7. Instrumentation of *Wood*.

Woodwinds	Brass	Percussion and Auxiliary
Flutes: 4 + piccolo	Trumpets: 0	Double Bass: 1
Oboes: English horn only	Horns: 0	Piano: 1
Bassoons: 1 + contrabassoon (no bassoon II)	Trombones: 0	Harp: 1
Clarinets: 3 B \flat + 1 bass + B \flat contrabass (No E \flat , B \flat IV, bass cl. II)	Euphoniums: 0	Percussion: Marimba
Saxophones: Solo soprano + 2 alto + tenor + baritone	Tubas: 0	

Table 2-8. Formal and Harmonic Elements in *Wood*.



In many ways, *Wood* is the simplest of the five movements. This is even acknowledged by Mackey, who says in the program note that “*Wood* is really just [...] a simple song.”³⁵ It is a traditionally tonal movement and its phrase structure falls almost exclusively into an eight-measure phrase structure (with a few extensions in the B section and during the coda). The movement is entirely in the key of F minor (DIA₄) even carrying a key signature (unlike any other movement in the work), and the basic chord choices are mostly limited to tonic, supertonic, and dominant. The form is demonstrated in Table 2-8.

Though the movement is purportedly simple, it is important to realize that it does not exist in total isolation within the entirety of the work. The movement is cut from the same fabric that defines the other four movements, and Mackey takes care to lace *Wood*’s motives and harmonic structure into other movements. The frequent instances of [0 2 3 7] in the second half of *Metal* – almost all of which have F as their root – are premonitions of the tonic sonority of *Wood*: an Fm⁹ chord. Likewise, the continuous accompaniment of *Wood* (*Wood*-1; see Example 2-39) is invoked in mm. 24–29 of *Prelude*.

The initial twenty-four measures are by far the most tonally ambiguous of the movement, mostly because Mackey makes great strides to avoid the pitch F. In fact, with the initial focus on the supertonic G in measure 1, the harp articulation of octave F’s in m. 3 sounds almost alien. The harmonic content for the introductory eight measures as well as the first eight measures of A is a repeating sequence of three measures of supertonic (ii°) followed by a measure of dominant (V). The dominant harmony, maintaining a modal flavor and connection to the scalar collection, generally avoids the expected leading tone E♯ throughout the movement, and is instead presented as a lone pitch (particularly in the sparser textures), or as an open fifth (with the occasional

³⁵ John Mackey, “Program Note,” in *Concerto for Soprano Sax and Wind Ensemble* (Austin, TX: Osti Music, 2007).

seventh or ninth added). A bit of harmonic spice occurs in mm. 17–19 with two measures of $G\flat$ major followed by one of $C\flat$ major. The former of these sounds like a Neapolitan harmony, but doesn't resolve directly to the expected C major dominant chord. Instead, it acts locally as a secondary dominant to the $C\flat$ harmony. This second chord doesn't have a traditional function (it would be labeled as $\flat V$), but practically serves as a leading-tone chord (enharmonically spelled, and major instead of diminished) to the dominant C in m. 20.

Double Bass

Piano

Harp

Marimba

Example 2-39. *Wood*, mm. 1–4: *Wood-1* accompaniment motive.

The melody, like the accompaniment, avoids any strong reference to the tonic pitch F as seen in Example 2-40. Instead, the pitches that provide melodic stasis are, mostly, G and C (outlining the $ii^\circ \rightarrow V$ motion). The soloist stays mainly within the scalar collection, although there are a few chromatic embellishments. Each phrase and subphrase of the soloist's A melody begins with a characteristic anacrusis figuration that features an initial upward motion of a step, followed by a large leap (fifth, sixth, or seventh), and a step downward to close the gesture. The fourth phrase of each A section (mm. 21–24 and similar later sections) embellishes this anacrusis figure with additional eighth-note motion. The accompaniment for this last phrase, in the first A

section, begins with the first real cadential occurrence of the tonic pitch F, preceded by the dominant C, in the bassoon, contrabassoon, bass clarinet, contrabass clarinet, and the piano. A chromatic eighth-note motive is introduced in measure 23 (Example 2-41), preparing the buildup in dynamic and instrumentation that differentiates A from A'.



Example 2-40. *Wood*, mm. 8–16: First half of A section melody.

Example 2-41. *Wood*, mm. 23–24: Chromatic eighth-note buildup to A.

The section marked A', though featuring a dramatic textural change from the section's initial presentation, has almost a literal transposition of the original melody up an octave for the soloist (doubled at m. 25 by English horn, clarinet I-II, and tenor saxophone; later doubled by flute I at mm. 32-35). The differences are a few minor surface changes in the embellishing figures, a drop of a minor seventh to concert C on the first offbeat of m. 36, the transposition of mm. 38-39 up yet another octave, and finally, the lack of the anacrusis figure in m. 40.

The musical score for Example 2-42, titled "Wood, mm. 25-26: Layers of accompaniment in A'". The score is written for a large ensemble, including woodwinds, brass, strings, and piano. The key signature is three flats (B-flat, E-flat, A-flat) and the time signature is 4/4. The score shows a dense texture with multiple layers of accompaniment, including a soloist line (A. Sax. 1) and various woodwind and string parts. The piano part (Pno.) features a prominent bass line with a (8va) marking. The harp (Hp.) and mba. parts provide additional harmonic support.

Example 2-42. *Wood*, mm. 25-26: Layers of accompaniment in A'.

The accompaniment is remarkably more complex starting at measure 25, as seen in Example 2-42. There are three distinct layers to the accompanimental texture at the beginning of this section: first, a continuation of the bass-line accompaniment from the initial A (presented by contrabassoon, contrabass clarinet, and string bass); second, a variation on that bass line, with a flowing eighth-note figure in every other measure (bassoon, clarinet III, bass clarinet, baritone saxophone, and left-hand piano); and third, a syncopated figure (alto saxophones, right-hand piano, harp, marimba, and joined by flutes in mm 26-27). A' features a high level of harmonic stability, with strong vertical occurrences of the Fm⁹ chord in measures 25, 27, 29, 31, 37, and 39. The supertonic-dominant motion is compressed into a one-measure unit that follows each of these “tonic” measures. Measures 33-36, like mm. 17–20, are spanned by two measures of G♭ major, one measure of C♭ major, and one measure of C as a dominant function.

The accompaniment in the B section is a continuation of the initial sparse accompaniment of mm. 1–24 (Example 2-43). While that version of the bass line seems quirky and improvisatory, however, the version in mm. 40–80 is static. The rhythm, presented in the string bass, left-hand piano, harp, and marimba, forms a two-measure cell that – with the exception of an eighth-note that is sometimes presented and sometimes withheld on the offbeat of 2 in the second measure – remains completely unchanged for its twenty occurrences. The harmony for this pattern is also unchanged for all but four of these iterations: one measure of F-minor tonic, two beats of supertonic (ii°) and two beats of dominant (V). The four exceptions happen in mm. 67-70 and mm. 77-80. In both of these cases, the variation is two measures of submediant D♭ harmony (VI), followed by two full measures of the dominant C. These are used primarily to indicate phrase cadence by providing a very audible change from the existing pattern.

The musical score for Example 2-43 consists of four staves: DB (Double Bass), Pno. (Piano), Hp. (Harp), and Mba. (Maracas). The key signature is three flats (B-flat, E-flat, A-flat). The DB staff starts with a piano (*p*) dynamic and a rhythmic pattern. The Pno. staff has a mezzo-piano (*mp*) dynamic and a melodic line. The Hp. staff has a mezzo-piano (*mp*) dynamic and a melodic line with a 'mute each note at end of specified duration' instruction. The Mba. staff starts with a piano (*p*) dynamic and a rhythmic pattern. The score is for measures 40-41.

Example 2-43. *Wood*, mm. 40–41: Two-measure B accompaniment cell.

The melody enters after four measures introducing the rhythmic ostinato at m. 45. The melodic phrase lengths are in a greater state of flux during the B section, with some phrases having the expected length of eight measures, while others are contracted or extended based on the contour of the motives. The resulting substructure of this section is a1-a2-b-a3 with a continuous stream of melodic content. The primary melody of this section, though it has a more abstract and improvisatory nature than the A section's tune, shares one major characteristic with it: namely, avoidance of the tonic pitch F. Like A's melody, it reaches points of stasis on G and C, as well as B \flat . The first phrase (a1) is eight measures in length (mm. 45–52), terminating on the concert C in mm. 51–52. The second phrase (a2), in contrast, is only six measures long, essentially eliminating the first two measures of the melody. The difference between these two is mm. 53–54, which are varied from mm. 47–48. The remaining four measures are an exact replication of the material from the first phrase.

The contrasting melodic segment (b) of the B section features melodic interplay between clarinet I and the saxophone soloist (Example 2-44). This duet begins at m. 59 in the clarinet part, with an imitation of the beginning of the second phrase of the primary melody that is offset by two beats. After this brief imitation, however, the material is altogether new. The saxophone response, in mm. 63–64, imitates in turn the rhythm of the clarinet while making a subtle reference to the A section's melody (motion upward by step, upward leap of a fifth, downward motion by step). The segment concludes with another two-measure fragment in the clarinet and an augmentation of the accompanimental figure from mm. 1–4 in the English horn as seen in Example 2-45. The last ten measures of the B section (mm. 71–80) present one final version of the “a” melody with a two-measure lead-in (mm. 71–72), a direct restatement of the last six measures of a1 and a two-measure extension to transition back to the A material.

As the saxophone fades away in mm. 81–82, the introductory material of mm. 1–8 resurfaces underneath to reintroduce A. The material is remarkably similar for six measures and then, contracting the form to reach the climactic moments sooner, the material from mm. 23–24 is overlaid. Measures 89–96 differ from their analogous presentation (mm. 25–32) only in a few surface dynamics – some of the dynamics are softer at m. 89 than earlier – and in left-hand piano rhythms, which now match those of the harp's bass clef staff. The dynamic diminishes significantly, and the texture thins to just a few instruments at m. 97, fading away until the conclusion of the movement. The remainder of the final A section is more akin to mm. 17–24 than mm. 33–40. A four-measure extension while the saxophone sustains a concert C allows the accompaniment pattern to run its course and disappear.

The ten-measure codetta in mm. 109–118 mimics the introduction of the movement, but without the piano and harp interjections. The last four notes of the saxophone solo, presented

Cl. I

Sop.

mp

p

Example 2-44. *Wood*, mm. 59–67: Duet interplay between clarinet I and soprano saxophone.

Eng. Hrn.

p

Example 2-45. *Wood*, mm. 66–71: English horn augmentation of *Wood*-1.

with a slap-tongue articulation and in a low register with soft dynamic, finally present a coherent cadence, with the anacrusis motive terminating on a tonic F. The last two measures are given to string bass and marimba, who echo the saxophone's statement and close with a $V \rightarrow I$ cadence (Example 2-46). This brings tonal closure to a movement whose motion is perpetuated by a distinct but playful avoidance of tonic harmony.

(slap tongue, like pizzicato)

Sop. *p*

DB *pp*

Mba. *pp*

Example 2-46. *Wood*, mm. 116–118: Final cadence on F.

Finale

The last movement – *Finale* – consists of one hundred seventeen measures. Performance length will vary depending on the soloist's tempos during the lengthy cadenza near the movement's conclusion. An approximate plausible range of performance lengths is between four minutes thirty seconds and six minutes, rendering the total length of the concerto between twenty-one and twenty-four minutes, not including time between movements. The instrumentation for the movement is seen in Table 2-9.

The *Finale*, like the *Prelude*, is based upon an idea of total coherence, presenting elements of the entirety of the work within one movement. As such, the form of the movement (Table 2-10) is predicated upon balancing these established elements. The introduction to *Finale* has, however, neither been heard previously in the work nor is an original motive written by the

composer. Mackey here makes reference to a work by his mentor and teacher: “I’m quoting the Corigliano [Clarinet Concerto], which was, in these 6 bars, quoting a work by 16th-century composer Giovanni Gabrieli, ‘Sonata Pian e Forte.’” The motive occurs three times in both the Corigliano and Mackey Concerti. Each subsequent statement in Corigliano’s finale, however, builds in dynamic and instrumentation to the final climactic statement, while Mackey’s presentation is similar for all three iterations.³⁶

Table 2-9. Instrumentation of *Finale*.

Woodwinds	Brass	Percussion and Auxiliary
Flutes: 4 + piccolo	Trumpets: 4	Double Bass: 1
Oboes: 2	Horns: 4	Piano: 1
Bassoons: 2 + contrabassoon	Trombones: 4 + bass	Harp: 1
Clarinets: 4 B \flat + E \flat + 2 bass + B \flat contrabass	Euphoniums: 1	Percussion: Timpani (5 drums), 2 bell plates (mounted on brake drums), glockenspiel, marimba, crotales, suspended cymbals, bass drum
Saxophones: Solo soprano + 2 alto + tenor + baritone	Tubas: 1	

³⁶ Mackey also imitates Corigliano’s instrumentation, nearly matching the orchestration of Corigliano’s final presentation with double reeds and full brass choir, while also adding contrabass clarinet and saxophones.

The quotation is harmonically literal, matching exactly the chords Corigliano uses (Example 2-47). All of the chords in the progression are triadic (some with seventh extensions), with the exception of the last, and most have a minor quality (only the downbeat of m. 5, an A \flat -major triad, is not). The homophonic chordal texture is unlike anything else in the work and certainly helps it achieve its shocking effect. The final chord (pc set {E \flat , B, D}) has prime form [0 1 4]. This is a trichord that has not been exploited to this point. Mackey makes clever use of it, generating his main vertical sonority for the movement – the split-third chord [0 3 4 7] – from it. This sonority, which combines both a major and minor triad with the same root (in the case of *Finale*, these are D chords), results from two overlapping [0 1 4] trichords.

Unlike the prominent pc sets from previous movements, this [0 3 4 7] collection is not a subset of the diatonic collection.³⁷ Despite this, however, the presentation of this sonority has tonal implication with its dual modality, prompting the listener to wonder whether the music is in a major or minor mode. This tetrachord always appears as {D, F, F \sharp , A}, and frequently is preceded by Corigliano's last trichord, creating a sense of cadence (particularly with the E \flat leading to the D in bass voices). This {E \flat , B, D} \rightarrow {D, F, F \sharp , A} resolution acts as a replacement to a traditional authentic cadence.

Several important motivic references occur in the first nine measures in addition to the Gabrieli quotation. An over-the-top timpani solo in m. 4 is reminiscent of the opening timpani solo from *Felt* (Example 2-48). The continuation of this timpani solo in m. 6 shows what eventually will become the basic rhythm of the soprano saxophone melody throughout the movement. Measure 7 contains two overlaid eighth-note rhythms. One of these has the

³⁷ [0 3 4 7] is a subset of the octatonic collection, but Mackey doesn't emphasize the connection, as the split-third chord generally appears as a vertical entity, while the octatonic superimpositions are always linear.

2 Oboes *ff*

Bassoons *ff*

Contrabassoon *ff*

Contrabass Clarinet *ff*

2 Alto Saxes *ff*

Tenor Sax *ff*

Baritone Sax *ff*

Trumpet 1-2 *ff*

Trumpet 3-4 *ff*

Horn 1-2 *ff*

Horn 3-4 *ff*

Trombone 1-2 *ff*

Tbn. 3, Bass Tbn. *ff*

Euphonium *ff*

Tuba *ff*

Double Bass *ff* *arco*

Example 2-47. *Finale*, mm. 1–5: Gabrieli quotation (first occurrence).

rhythmic contour of *Felt*-1, which has a collected prime form [0 1 2 7] (with two [0 1 6] subsets; Example 2-49). The other can be reduced to the prime form sonority [0 1 5 6], reminiscent of *Metal*'s harmonic language (Example 2-50). The last three measures of the introduction also contain material for soprano saxophone, including two references to octatonic collections (OCT₂ in m. 7; OCT₀ in m. 9), much in the same way this collection is seen in *Prelude*.



Example 2-48. *Finale*, mm. 4–7: Timpani solo (*Felt*/*Finale* melody).

Piccolo

Flute 1-2

Flute 3-4

2 Oboes

Clarinet in E \flat

f f f f f f f

Example 2-49. *Finale*, m. 7: [0 1 2 7] tetrachord as *Felt*-1.



Example 2-50. *Finale*, m. 7: [0 1 5 6] tetrachord in the piano.

The A section begins outright at m. 10, with the rhythmically active and chromatically saturated soprano saxophone melody. The accompaniment, a jazzily syncopated and percussive background, has vestiges of the accompanimental figures from *Wood*. The mixed meter alternation in mm. 12-15, on the other hand, is akin to similar complex metric progressions in *Felt*. Neither of these is intended literally, but rather reminiscently of the earlier sounds.

The first instance of the D [0 3 4 7] tetrachord occurs on the downbeat of m. 10 to begin this section. Isolating the scalar elements of D major and D minor projected by this tetrachord, a dichotomy can be established between DIA₊₂ (the prominent collection from *Metal*) and DIA₋₁. The latter of these emerges during the mixed meter portion of the melody in mm. 12–15 and likewise in mm. 18–21 (see Example 2-51). Measures 16–21 are a reiteration of mm. 10–15, simply embellished with greater rhythmic and orchestrational density, but maintaining a similar contour and pitch content.

The second section of the main *Finale* melody, in contrast, falls mostly into the collection DIA₊₂, as seen in Example 2-52. The soprano saxophone emphasizes this collection exclusively in mm. 22–25. The accompaniment begins in this collection as well, but begins shifting to a denser chromatic set in m. 24. The accentuation of offbeats for the first four measures of this six-measure segment is certainly evocative of the B section of *Wood*, and the figures in

Sop. Solo

f

Sop. Solo

mf

Example 2-51. *Finale*, mm. 10–15: Primary melody in soprano saxophone (DIA₋₁).

Sop. Solo

mf

Sop. Solo

fff

Example 2-52. *Finale*, mm. 22–27: Second unique part of primary melody (DIA₊₂)

mm. 26-27 for flutes, oboes, and clarinets are similar to those in *Wood's* A section transition (IV, mm. 23-24). The melodic figuration in soprano saxophone at m. 26 has not been seen before, but becomes an important fragment within the cadenza later in the movement.

Measures 28–39 are a fairly straightforward restatement of mm. 10–21, with *tutti* winds accompanying the soloist. This section does not transition into the mm. 22–27 material, but rather into the second statement of the Gabrieli motive. The pitch content is identical to the initial presentation, although in this iteration the oboes, bassoons, and saxophones do not participate. Set against this is the m. 4 timpani solo and an iteration of *Prelude-1* that begins in DIA_{+2} , but quickly becomes chromatic (Example 2-53). Measures 43–44 are analogous to mm. 6–7, with the timpani emphatically outlining a [0 1 6] sonority (see Example 2-54). One last statement of the main *Finale* melody occurs to close the section in mm. 45–50. This statement is not significantly different from mm. 28–33, only adding a few timpani pitches and removing two chords from the piano part in m. 45.



Example 2-53. *Finale*, m. 40: Return of *Prelude-1*.



Example 2-54. *Finale*, m. 43: Repetitive [0 1 6] trichords in timpani.



Example 2-55. *Finale*, mm. 51-52: B section saxophone ostinato on [0 1 6].

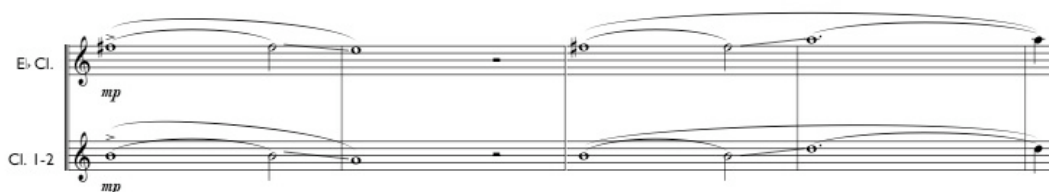
The B section (mm. 51–62) begins with a simple *tutti* statement of the [0 1 6] trichord {D, G#, A} lifted directly from the later moments of *Felt*. The solo saxophone takes up this collection's inversion (I_{10}) with an athletic ostinato of wide leaps that spans until the downbeat of m. 62 (Example 2-55). The accompaniment for this segment is twofold: first, a crashing series of large vertical sonorities which contain as many as six chromatically adjacent pitches (see Example 2-56); and second, the recurrence of *Felt*-2 in E \flat clarinet and B \flat clarinets I-II in mm. 55–58 (Example 2-57). The material that follows in those latter voices is a restatement of *Prelude*, mm. 28–33. A two-measure transition (mm. 61–62) permits the marimba to take over the saxophone ostinato and the presentation of *Metal*'s [0 1 5 6] tetrachord. The material in mm. 63–72 is an embellished restatement (B') of the immediately preceding material with two new interjecting elements: ascending sixteenth-note scales outlining chromatic and octatonic collections, and ostinato fragments, both of which are presented in upper woodwind voices. The *Felt*-2 melody is in soprano saxophone and euphonium duet for the duration of this segment.

Though the textural and dynamic buildup to the climactic *Prelude/Metal* quotation begins around m. 69, the transition to this cathartic explosion starts in earnest at m. 72 as the soloist shifts back to octatonic and chromatic scalar material. The brass choir begins to establish DIA₃, the collection from the analogous section in *Prelude*. The transitional material from mm. 26-27 appears again in upper woodwinds in mm. 73–74, followed by a superimposition of two

The image displays a page from a musical score, specifically measures 51-53 of the *Finale*. The score is for a large orchestra and includes parts for the following instruments: Picc., Fl. 1-2, Fl. 3-4, Ob., Bsn., C. Bn., E. Cl., Cl. 1-2, Cl. 3-4, Bb. Cl., Cb. Cl., A. Sx., T. Sx., B. Sx., Tpt. 1-2, Tpt. 3-4, Horn 1-2, Horn 3-4, Tbn. 1-2, Tbn. 3-4, Euph., Tuba, DB, and Pno. The music is written in 3/4 time. The key signature is one sharp (F#). The score shows a series of 'Crashing' chords, which are large chromatic collections, occurring in measures 51, 52, and 53. The dynamics are marked *fff* (fortissimo) throughout. The piano part (Pno.) is written in both treble and bass staves. The woodwinds and brass parts are written in their respective staves, with some instruments having multiple parts (e.g., Fl. 1-2, Fl. 3-4, Cl. 1-2, Cl. 3-4, Tbn. 1-2, Tbn. 3-4). The strings (DB) are written in a single staff. The score is a page from a larger work, as indicated by the page number 80 in the top right corner.

Example 2-56. *Finale*, mm. 51-53: “Crashing” chords (large chromatic collections).

octatonic collections (Example 2-58) at m. 75 in piccolo, flute, clarinet, tenor saxophone, and xylophone (OCT₀), as well as the piano (OCT₁). The heroic *Prelude/Metal* section spans measures 76–90 and layers *Metal-1*, *Metal-2*, and the *Prelude* arpeggios.



Example 2-57. *Finale*, mm. 55–59: Reappearance of *Felt-2*.

Example 2-58. *Finale*, mm. 75: OCT₁ interjection in woodwinds.

The material is mostly within DIA₃, with the exception of some scalar passages in the solo voice that are filled out with chromatic pitches, and the woodwind/percussion transitional material of mm. 82–83 that precedes the second half of the quote. In the *Prelude*, the final A \flat -major chord cadences via plagal motion to E \flat major, ushering in DIA₂ to conclude that movement. The A \flat chord in m. 87 also cadences to an E \flat sonority, but this time, it is Corigliano's trichord, which builds on offbeats to a nine-pitch chromatic collection at m. 91 that signals the beginning of the cadenza.

The cadenza is strung together from motives that have all been heard earlier in the movement, save for one subtle harmonic reference in m. 94. Measure 92 begins with the B section's ostinato (outlining [0 1 6]), and eventually morphs by way of a DIA₃ interjection into the A section's melody, terminating with the *Prelude* arpeggios. Measure 93 is articulated by a dense piccolo, brass, and percussion collection [0 1 2 3 6 7 8] and consists of a brief reference to the melodic contour of section A and a chromatic scale. Measure 94 repeats the same large collection on the downbeat, and then quotes the saxophone material from m. 26, comes to rest on a loud concert A \flat ,³⁸ and continues with the A melody and chromatic scales. Measure 94 begins with a screeching semitone clash between soprano saxophone and E \flat clarinet ({D, E \flat }) that mimics the same pitches in m. 15 of *Metal* (in that case, between the solo part and bowed vibraphone).³⁹ A flourish of chromatics in the solo voice leads to the beginning of the last Gabrieli quotation.

³⁸ This could be seen as a reference to the raucous A \flat in m. 46 of *Felt*, but it is not approached the same way and any connection is probably specious at best.

³⁹ On a much larger scale, the clash here could act as a microcosmic representation of the relationship between E \flat and D throughout the movement as seen in Corigliano's trichord and Mackey's split-third chord. In this case, the similar event in *Metal* could be a foreshadowing of this conflict.

The final Gabrieli quotation begins at m. 95, with two measures of saxophone double tonguing before the progression begins. Beyond this saxophone effect, which carries on above the Gabrieli motive, there are only three differences between this presentation and the introduction to the movement: an offbeat expansion of the Corigliano trichord taken up by woodwinds in m. 103 and imitated by brass and percussion a measure later, a trombone glissando effect in m. 104, and a syncopated saxophone choir figure in m. 104.

The coda of the movement begins at m. 105, based upon material from the A section. The mixed-meter passages are omitted in this version, and by extension so is its associated implication of the DIA₁ collection. This continued persistence of the [0 3 4 7] tetrachord permits a greater degree of tonal ambiguity in the closing moments of the work. *Felt*-1 appears at m. 110, and in mm. 111–114 a dominating ascending brass line leads to an explosive [0 1 6 7] harmony on beat 2 of m. 115. The jagged and dissonant figure shared by the oboe, trumpet, the piano, and keyboard percussion at the end of m. 115 is a sly reference to the embellished anacrusis figure from *Wood*, landing on a [0 1 6] trichord in the penultimate measure (Example 2-59). After another chromatic saxophone flourish, the final [0 3 4 7] tetrachord provides dramatic (if not tonal) closure.

The Concerto for Soprano Sax and Wind Ensemble, as can be seen, is balanced as a whole on the notion of motivic cohesion. John Mackey possesses the ability to create multiple motives with enough dramatic weight to stand on their own or in conjunction with each other, and be recognizable across movements that may be separated by fifteen minutes or more. In this respect, the widely varied harmonic method that is employed might be seen as even more valuable. Each movement exists within its own tonal environment, and the individual motives are products of their surroundings, maintaining identity in other movements through their

CHAPTER 3

IMPLICATIONS FOR PERFORMANCE

Challenges for Conductor and Ensemble

There are practical issues to be considered by the conductor prior to programming, rehearsing, and subsequently performing John Mackey's Concerto for Soprano Sax and Wind Ensemble. The work is extremely difficult for both soloist and ensemble, with virtuosity required of all performers. Mackey made this choice deliberately:

I didn't want the concerto to have an accompaniment that was just an accompaniment. I didn't want it to be like one of those classical period violin concertos. If the band was going to play a piece this long, I wanted them to have something to do. Often they won't have a soloist for the whole time, but I didn't want them to just put it together and then add the sax. Their parts are wicked hard too. Everyone has something hard somewhere in the piece. I didn't want it to be a boring accompaniment for twenty-five minutes.⁴⁰

Technical facility, thus, is one great concern throughout the work. The other major issue that becomes pertinent throughout the entire piece is balance between soloist and ensemble. With the exception of one moment in the *Finale*, as noted below, it is imperative that the soprano saxophonist is heard whenever playing. This can prove to be quite difficult depending upon the orchestration and ensemble dynamic at any given point. The instrumentation of the entire work, listed in Chapter 2 by movement, has the potential to significantly hamper the soloist. To this end, as a general suggestion, the ensemble conductor should try to match the listed instrumentation with one performer per part. Select doublings are permitted, at the discretion of

⁴⁰ All quotations in this chapter are from John Mackey, telephone interview with author, tape recording, Athens, Georgia, 11 March 2009.

the conductor, in all movements except *Metal*.⁴¹ Enumeration of concerns experienced both by the composer and the author follow, by movement.

Prelude

The primary difficulties of *Prelude* are related to balance between soloist and ensemble. *Prelude* is one of only two movements that features *tutti* instrumentation (the other being *Finale*). Likewise, for much of the movement, the ensemble is instructed to play at a dynamic level of *mezzo-forte* or higher.⁴² Mackey's dynamics, however, do not necessarily imply an absolute volume:

I think a lot of the time, people play [my dynamics] louder than where they're marked to begin with. [...] Often my dynamics refer to energy level rather than volume. It doesn't necessarily mean it has to be really loud. This is a problem with all my dynamics – I think about energy than specific volume. There's not a good way to say "I want a really strong sound" without putting a loud dynamic marking on it.

With this in mind, Mackey does advocate the alteration of printed dynamics to permit clarity in the solo part. The main caveat is that the piece needs to maintain the same energy and intensity while being scaled back proportionally. All loud dynamics in the movement should probably be scaled back to an extent. The greatest balance difficulty in the movement occurs in mm. 36-41, where the entire ensemble is marked at least at *fortissimo*, and the full brass choir, reinforced by low woodwinds and string bass, presents sustained chords at that dynamic. If the ensemble plays the dynamics as marked, it will obliterate the soloist almost entirely. Care should be exercised in the crescendo in mm. 34–36. If this intensification is paced to reach the

⁴¹ As noted in Chapter 2, the first page of score to *Metal* suggests "one player per part is preferred for this movement."

⁴² Dynamics softer than this appear only in measures 24–30 and 56–69.

climax at m. 37 at a softer dynamic, the soloist stands a better chance of projection. It is also important that the ensemble pays close attention to the much-softer dynamics that occur at m. 24. Though the soloist should not have difficulty projecting at this moment with the thinner ensemble texture, the listener should be able to hear the presentation of *Wood-1* in the low woodwinds and string bass as clearly as the soloist's presentation of *Felt-2*.

Because *Prelude* is the shortest of the movements, it presents few extreme technical difficulties to the ensemble, as much of the texture is repetitive. The meters may provide some initial discomfort to the ensemble, as the half note receives the pulse throughout the movement. The intent is both to create temporal space (as the composer references below for *Metal*) and to simplify notation for the woodwind soundscreen (avoiding thirty-second notes). The only potential rhythmic complexity presented by this notation is the proper execution of *Felt-1*, however this should come quickly if the performers maintain a consistent subdivision. The beaming of the notes in this figure aids the performers in ascertaining the placement of their syncopations within the meter.

The soundscreen itself is a concern of texture. Generally, this presentation should sound like a continuous stream of woodwind sound whose constituent parts are not individually identifiable. The soundscreen element should sound equally balanced through all parts of each measure, which becomes difficult based on tessitura and scoring. This will likely take some work, either as a section within a rehearsal, or in an outside sectional for flutes, clarinets, alto saxophones and tenor saxophone. The greatest difficulty in achieving this effect occurs between measure 54 and the end of the movement, as the texture thins and the dynamic level decreases.

Felt

From the perspective of technical challenges presented to the ensemble, *Felt* is almost certainly the most difficult movement (rivalled only, perhaps, by *Finale*). The rhythmic figures and syncopations are difficult, and a preponderance of mixed meters complicates matters for the individual players. The “running” motive, with its dense unison chromatics, presents difficulties both with fingerings that don’t necessarily lie well and ensemble precision, which needs to sound mechanistic. Section III’s presentation of this motive in marimba is extremely difficult, as recognized by Mackey:

If this were 100 years from now and this had been an orchestra piece, I think that [*Felt’s*] marimba part would be an excerpt for auditions. It’s ridiculous! Almost nobody can do that part. When The University of Texas did the piece, the guy who played the marimba part was amazing, but he couldn’t look up. He had great time, fortunately, so it worked out. He basically looked up to get the cue from [Jerry] Junkin and then just played it, because he couldn’t look up from the bars. Always exciting, but scary. Terrifyingly scary.

The mixed meters, as stated, provide an extra layer of difficulty, particularly when asymmetric meters are used. In each instance that Mackey uses an asymmetric meter (5/8 or 7/8), the triple subdivision is the last pulse in the measure. This adds some level of predictability for ensemble subdivision. If the conductor’s ensemble is not extremely familiar and comfortable with repertoire that alternates meters in this way, it is highly recommended that they develop pedagogical activities to assist their ensemble in learning how to move through these patterns with ease. When developing such an exercise, the conductor should consider combining elements of different perception methods: visual (e.g., a printed pattern of meters or a conducting pattern), aural (e.g., singing melodies/rhythms, counting meters or subdivisions), and kinesthetic (e.g., moving body parts; tapping, clapping, or snapping beats). Any combination of these should be used in conjunction with a consistent subdivision provided by a metronome to

eliminate chance for human error in timekeeping. It goes without saying that the conductor should be completely facile with all of these metric shifts as well, and should be able to execute easily any exercise presented to their ensemble.

Balance issues are relatively few in *Felt*. *Fortissimo* dynamics in the ensemble generally are reserved for sections in which the soloist does not play, and the reduced instrumentation serves a leaner sound through which the soloist can more easily project. In moments of fuller texture at louder dynamic, the soloist is placed generally in a high tessitura, above the remainder of the ensemble. The only places that should generate concern are moments near cadences when the full ensemble is instructed to crescendo while the soloist performs continuously. These include mm. 64–65, 104–106, 127–128, 154–156, 159–162, 208, and 218–219.

Felt has a number of important coloristic elements within the ensemble, many of which are informed by the analytic content of chapter 2. Certainly the interjecting timpani solos have a particular prominence and should be audible and clearly articulated (although care should be issued not to batter the drums so forcefully that the soloist is covered). Likewise, the bass clarinet ostinato that begins at m. 139 has importance to Mackey:

There's a very Danny Elfman thing in the movement – the bass clarinets – that stuff just needs to honk. I want beautiful sounds in *Metal*, but *Felt* is *not* about pretty sounds. It's about high clarinet trills and low honking bass clarinet and contrabass clarinet and contrabassoon. [...] *Felt* is basically for soloist, timpani, piano, and bass clarinets, at least as I think of it.

The technical difficulty of *Felt* makes it imposing to ensembles. Certainly there is precedent, as Mackey notes, to omit *Felt* from performances. Nevertheless, with proper planning and adequate rehearsal time, it is possible to perform at a professional level. Mackey notes that this movement is the closest to sounding like the original idea of “aliens discovering a soprano

saxophone.” If the ensemble is capable of performing it well, it is an incredibly worthwhile element of the Concerto, if for nothing else than its distinctly unique sonic world.

Metal

Metal is the only movement of the Concerto that could be called “slow.” Its tempo designation indicates both a quarter-note pulse (90 beats per minute) and dotted-half-note pulse (30 beats per minute). The implication of this is that, for practical purpose, the quarter note is to be generally conducted. This is particularly the case in sections when the *rubato* instruction of the tempo marking is being observed. Nevertheless, Mackey wants the glacial pace of longer pulses to drive the motion of melodic and harmonic gestures. Ensembles should attempt to emphasize these longer note values in their inflection. The amount of *rubato* used will affect the expressive aesthetic of the movement. Greater fluctuation of time will create a warmer and more emotive context, while subtler variations would present a steelier (metallic) mood.

Despite the fullest instrumentation outside the *Prelude* and *Finale*, *Metal* suffers little in the way of balance concerns. The only potentially treacherous areas are in mm. 48–50 and later at the climactic moments in mm. 61–66. Even in these moments, however, the high range of the soprano saxophone stays clear of most of the loudest instruments, scored far lower. In measure 50, some small alterations may be necessary in the upper woodwinds to permit projection of the apex of the saxophone’s ascent.

The most pressing difficulties of *Metal* are related to intonation. Of these, the most apparent certainly will be melodic transitions between soprano saxophone and other instruments – notably clarinet I and flugelhorn I. In the moments where melodies elide, the pitch must match exactly between saxophone and the new melodic instrument. Likewise, intonation becomes an

issue when triadic harmonies are in play. This is not always the case, as seen in sonorities such as the [0 1 5 6] tetrachord. The triad-based harmonies – [0 2 4 7] in particular – need to have a feeling of stasis following the dissonances that precede them. It would be advisable to consider just intonation for any occurrence of these sonorities that is not accompanied by equal-tempered instruments. In particular, this would involve the pitch D in the C-major influenced [0 2 4 7] and the pitch G in the [0 2 3 7] tetrachord with F as the root. As major ninths above the root, each of these pitches should be four cents sharper than their equal-tempered placement. The presence of bowed metallic percussion from mm. 69–72 and harp in mm. 73–74 makes just intonation inadvisable for these occurrences of the sonorities. Though it is possible to tune the Lydian pentachord [0 1 3 5 7] within a justly tuned G scale, this sonority always appears with pitched percussion (*Metal-1*), and should thus be tuned relative to equal temperament.

Metal features meters that change frequently. The slow tempo of *Metal*, however, makes these measures much easier to conduct physically than the shifting meters of *Felt*. One confusing element of the metric structure is Mackey's use of both 3/2 and 6/4 as meters, using both frequently, and sometimes changing from one to the other in adjacent measures. Mackey notes that this distinction is mainly to emphasize either the half note or dotted half note as the pertinent compound pulse:

It's a grouping thing – I'm thinking of it as a slow version of 3/4 and 6/8. There are times when if you conducted a 3/2 bar in 6, it might be weird. I'm really feeling those in 3/2. What I don't ever want to see – and this is why I put *Turning* in weird meters – is every beat. That's not a piece where I want to see every pulse, and this movement is the same. It should be fluid – I want time to stretch. The whole movement should be *rubato*, and whatever the conductor needs to do to make that happen, I'm fine with it.

Wood

Wood, like *Metal* and *Felt*, has few significant balance problems. Only the melodic segments in mm. 24–40 and its analogous presentation in mm. 88–96 exhibit any real possibility of the soloist being covered by the ensemble. In both these cases, however, instruments within the ensemble amplify the soloist through doublings of the melody, so this content should be audible even with accompanimental voices. Consideration should be given, however, to reducing the dynamic level of the three strains of accompaniment in both of these sections to make it easier on the soloist.

Where *Wood* has its most frequent problems is in presentation of style. The syncopations off rests with long stretches between articulations (particularly at the beginning and end of the movement) can lead to tentativeness in the ensemble players. Also, though the movement is notated entirely in 4/4, the gestures rarely reflect a truly “common time” style. The rhythms, in fact, more closely imitate the Brazilian *bossa nova* rhythm.⁴³ This is an important stylistic realization, as the movement is designed to be a tango.⁴⁴ Conductors should, at a minimum, observe the pattern of alternation between the *bossa nova* metric groupings to inform measure-by-measure inflection, and perhaps even consider altering their pattern to reflect these groupings. Mackey makes reference to the stylistic problems he has experienced in live rehearsals and performances:

I’ve heard more bad performances of *Wood* than any of the other movements and I don’t get it. [...] It should *not* be hard, but it needs to have a groove to it, and it

⁴³ An alternation of a 3+3+2 grouping and a 2+3+3 grouping, forming two consecutive measures in 4/4.

⁴⁴ Mackey’s program note (see Appendix C) calls the movement a tango. This is in part due to the success of his dance work *Breakdown Tango*, which has since been arranged both for orchestra and band with great accolades as *Redline Tango*. As a performance of *Redline Tango* led directly to the commission for the Concerto, this movement is a reflection of that piece.

almost never does. It shouldn't be swung, but I don't want it to be square either, and it almost always is. A lot of times distance is a factor between the marimba, bass, and piano. At least one performance, though, they moved the bassist to be closer to the piano and marimba for the whole concerto, and it helped a lot. I think that's a good idea in general, if only for that movement. I don't know what makes it sound square or not square, but the feel is often not right. Because there's so much silence and things happen on offbeats – people don't know where it should go, and they think too much. It's not always the case, but it does happen.

Finale

The *Finale's* assimilation of characteristics is, to some extent, a double-edged sword. Though the cohesion created by absorbing motives and themes from previous movements is aesthetically pleasing and musically convincing, a side effect of this borrowing is that many of the most substantial problems from the earlier movements are carried over as well. The movement features *Prelude's* balance issues, technical facility problems that rival anything in *Felt*, identical color and metric ambiguity difficulties as those seen in *Metal*, and syncopated styles akin to those in *Wood*. Beyond this, the conductor and ensemble must be able to change abruptly from one movement's character to another. The optimistic viewpoint of performing the movement, however, is that similar problems have similar solutions. Indeed, many of the suggested alterations or exercises that can be applied to earlier movements will have the same benefits in the *Finale*.

The most pressing issue, certainly, between the soloist and the ensemble is balance. Balance is more difficult in this movement than any other, with its *tutti* instrumentation and cadre of percussion equipment. Alteration of dynamics is a must through much of the movement. It should be noted, however, that there is one significant portion of the movement where the ensemble dynamics must not be adjusted. Measures 76–80 and 84–87 feature a

soprano saxophone part in brackets with the designation “part between brackets is optional (if played, will likely be inaudible).” These are the climactic moments of the movement, leading up to the cadenza, and Mackey’s focus is on the *Metal-1/Metal-2* presentation rather than the woodwind arpeggiations. He says the following of this moment:

There’s a part that’s bracketed and it’s optional. There’s a reason why I had them playing, but I *never* want to hear the saxophone there. It’s the big arrival of that movement where it’s quoting *Metal* and it brings back the chorale with the crotals from *Metal*, and I wanted it to be this big, bright chord passage and I don’t want this big arrival to happen and have the soloist just standing there. Donald Erb used to say in my undergrad, “If you have a harp player in an orchestra piece, and you have this big climax to the piece, you don’t have the harpist just sit there.” They’re at the front of the orchestra, you don’t want them sitting there – there’s a visual thing. Even if you can’t hear it, you see it and you think something good is happening. That’s what I was thinking with it: that I would have them play, just to have them feel as though they’re a part of this thing, rather than just standing there while the moment happens. The problem is you can’t hear it and half the time, the bands don’t realize that I don’t *want* to hear it and they bring the levels down so you can *hear* the soprano sax arpeggios and it ruins the climax completely. If you can hear the soloist there, it’s wrong. It needs to be a big climax; not *mezzo-forte*. It actually helps the soloist, though, to *not* play there. The cadenza is coming up, and it’s nice to just stand there and rest for a minute before they just go all crazy with the cadenza. [...]

I think I’m now more on the side of “don’t bother playing it.” I think there’s enough going on and they’ve been doing enough before that. It shouldn’t feel like a big letdown there if the soloist isn’t playing. That was what I was worried about – that people would think, “Why isn’t the soloist playing that part?” It was strictly an audience consideration and I really don’t think they should play it. I should take it out entirely to avoid confusion in the future, and the break before the cadenza is useful. At that point, it’s been about twenty-three minutes of nonstop playing – it’s okay to sit for a few measures.

Mackey’s dynamics, as mentioned earlier, are dynamics of intensity rather than sheer volume. Though there are certainly a large number of “loud” dynamics in the movement, the perception of this massive force can be achieved through means other than simply playing extremely loud. The increased size of ensemble for the movement alone boosts the thickness of texture and the perception of weightiness. In this context, almost all of the dynamics (except for

the aforementioned excerpt) can be reduced proportionally to carry the same frenetic intensity without an encroaching decibel level. Crescendos should never flare to maximum volume at their conclusion. Also, at points where the accompaniment is jagged and fragmented, players should realize that the intent of the accompaniment is to present a composite of all players, rather than a layered series of individual fragments. If the players think that the accompaniment is a composite of equally important parts, their tendency will be to strive to project their material, naturally playing louder. Instead, if the focus is on listening actively across the ensemble to balance their part of the accompanimental line to the other voices that complete it, it is likely that they will play softer and closer to the intensity profile that Mackey's reduced dynamics suggest. One such section is between measure 22 and measure 27, where Mackey makes the following comment:

The *Finale*, when I hear rehearsals of it without the soloist, I really like it. The problem is once you add the soloist, all you can hear is the ensemble. Even with the soloist. I do like how things are passed from one player to another in the *Finale*. You have stopped horn stuff and muted trumpet things. [...] That's my favorite scoring, without the soprano sax. Even here the soloist gets covered up. Looking at it, that shouldn't happen! There's not that much going on here, but it's never as light as it needs to be.

One potential solution to the balance problems of the *Finale* is discrete amplification of the soloist. Several performances to date have used amplification and Mackey does encourage its use, particularly in this movement, provided the output is directional from on-stage rather than from an in-hall public address system. The simplest execution of this would involve a stand microphone running via cable (XLR) directly into an amplifier onstage somewhere behind the soloist, oriented in such a way to present the illusion that the sound is coming from the soloist while avoiding feedback. A more elegant – and vastly more expensive – option would be to use a wireless microphone system attached directly to the soprano saxophone. This option avoids

having to set up microphone stands and cables near the soloist and also permits the soloist to move freely without changing how the instrument is amplified. It is, however, potentially cumbersome for the soloist, and likely would need to be attached to the instrument for the duration of the performance, being activated when necessary.⁴⁵ Amplification is not recommended during the cadenza, and as such, any amplification option should be turned down during this part of the movement. It should also go without saying that any amplification chosen should be tested extensively in the performance space to determine appropriate levels.

The technical demands presented to the ensemble – particularly those stemming from mixed meter alternation – are significant. The material, however, is greatly repetitive and establishing continuity within single sections can yield benefits across the movement. The same exercises used in *Felt* to assist in developing subdivision in complex meters can be used with similar benefit in *Finale*. There are several difficult octatonic/chromatic scalar passages for woodwinds in the B section. These interjections are important and need to be performed confidently. It likely will take some time, however, to build enough familiarity with the passage that the intended flourishing color becomes apparent. Mackey, as he does in *Metal*, alternates 3/2 and 6/4. The intent here is identical. Any 3/2 meter is designed to be considered as a measure of three half-note pulses, while 6/4 indicates two dotted-half-note pulses. Both of these can (and in many cases should) be conducted with six beats – the designation is for perception of larger note groupings. The conductor certainly should consider subdividing larger beat

⁴⁵ If this option is chosen, one suggested configuration is the Applied Music Technology AMT TA2W double condenser microphone, attached via interface to a Shure SLX Instrument Wireless System. As this option is expensive it is only recommended if having instrumental amplification on-hand would be considered useful for many performances over time. An additional benefit of this configuration is a mute function on the wireless transmitter that would permit the soloist to activate and deactivate the amplification function at their choosing.

structures to assist the ensemble, particularly in metric transitions that “skip” a subdivision level, such as 3/2 to 7/8, in adjacent measures.

Conclusions

John Mackey’s Concerto for Soprano Sax and Wind Ensemble is a highly significant work for a multitude of reasons. It is a contribution to a repertoire that is lacking: soprano saxophone concerti. It also belongs to the surprisingly small subset of concerti originally written with a wind band accompaniment. Its merits, however, extend beyond merely filling gaps in repertoire.

It is a bright and colorful work that makes full use of the available instrumental palette. It is a structurally sound work, with carefully planned and well-executed architecture. It is a work that demonstrates masterful and stunning virtuosity for the soloist and, at the same time, it enables the ensemble to shine. In addition to the craft of the work, the piece has been performed dozens of times and has been very well received by its audiences – a testament to its affable spirit.

It is a work that is drawn together by a unified compositional language, from motives that occur throughout the movements to a repertoire of triadic tetrachords that provide tonal stability with a shifting brand of colorful dissonance. Yet it is a work that has a refreshing sense of variety with quirkily abrupt turns that leave the listener in suspense. The palette of emotional colors provides a scintillating contour that engages the listener throughout. It has a fascinating dramatic arc, developed from a remarkably simple notion – the dissection and subsequent reconstruction of the instrument itself.

For these reasons alone, the Concerto for Soprano Sax and Wind Ensemble stands as a work of high quality within the repertoire. Beyond this, however, it is part of a catalogue from John Mackey that continues to present a lively sense of humor, bright and brilliant color, well-developed craft, and virtuosic technique. Mackey has written and continues to write great compositions for the medium. It is important that people continue to study his works in detail and ascertain more features and techniques of his compositional language. Further examination of his works using the tools of referential collections will elucidate common trends not just of his style, but also those of other composers who write music influenced by tonality in the twenty-first century.

It is the author's hope that this document will provide a comprehensive guide for performing the Concerto for Soprano Sax and Wind Ensemble from the conductor's perspective. The discoveries made in dissecting the score from analytical and practical viewpoints should inform future performers, and perhaps even encourage more performances of a work that is a substantial contribution to the wind band repertoire. Lastly, this document will serve to promote a work by a composer with a unique voice. The Concerto for Soprano Sax and Wind Ensemble is a sterling example of the style and aesthetic of this talented visionary. John Mackey's continued contributions to the wind band medium should prove vital in its continued development in the generations to come.

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APPENDIX A

TRANSCRIPT OF INTERVIEW WITH JOHN MACKEY

The following is a transcript of an interview the author of the document conducted with composer John Mackey via telephone on 11 March 2009.

Jacob Wallace: John, thank you for agreeing to be a part of this project. I have a series of questions for you, and feel free to be as detailed as you choose. First, could you please describe your musical background and training – how you got involved with music and interested in music, particularly composition, and then subsequently how that blossomed into you becoming a composition student?

John Mackey: I never had any formal music training really until my senior year of high school. The reason was that my parents were both musicians: my mother was a flutist, and my father played trumpet in a couple of the Navy bands out on the West coast, and he still plays saxophone – not professionally – in Ohio. My grandfather on my mother's side owned a music store in Ohio and played clarinet and flute. There was a major musical background that I was around, but I wasn't given any formal lessons.

I have an older sister by eight years, who when she was young, my parents thought, "Oh, it would be really cool if we had a little musician in the family." So she took clarinet lessons and she hated the clarinet, and she took piano lessons and she hated the piano and eventually came to not like music at all – probably because they were pressuring her into it. She ended up disliking music in general; at least, being on the performance side of it.

So, when I was born, they did not do that. They were worried that they would make the same mistake, basically. If I saw a piano, I would try to play it, but it wouldn't sound like a record of Chopin etudes, so I would cry. My dad got me a guitar, but it was a real guitar with six strings and I was four and didn't have any idea of how to play. I would strum the thing, and it wouldn't sound right (and it was probably out of tune), so I would cry. I had a drum set that I really *liked* playing, and I would play along to "Monster Mash" but I wasn't *really* playing – again, because I was four – and then my parents got divorced and I went with my mom and my sister, but the drum set didn't come with us, so there was no drumming anymore. My experience with drums was short-lived, but at least I don't think it made me cry. I had Suzuki violin for just a couple of months when I was six. I don't remember exactly why I stopped taking lessons, but taking a few lessons when you're six doesn't do much. All I remember is that I had stickers on the fingerboard and I could play "Twinkle Twinkle Little Star" variations or something like that, but that was nothing.

When I was nine or so, my grandfather showed me how to read music using a program called Music Construction Set on an Apple IIe. The way the program worked is that there was a piano staff on the screen and you used a joystick and grabbed a rhythmic value from the bottom of the screen and put it on this piano staff. You would enter music one note at a time: take your joystick and grab an eighth note and put it on middle C, and then grab a quarter note, put it on some other pitch. That's how you'd put music in. You couldn't change meter with the program. You could only do 2/4, 4/4, 3/4, and 6/8. And it all sounded terrible, but it was fun! So he showed me one afternoon how 4/4 worked; how different rhythmic combinations add up to four beats, and then you go on to the next measure. I thought it was really fun, and I started to write my own music on it, and eventually I got a Commodore 64 with the program on it. That's what I used initially to write. I didn't *write* that much stuff, though. What I would do is borrow my mother's staff ID – she worked at Ohio State University – and I would go to the music library there and take out scores of standard literature and I would take them home and put them into the computer.

I still have .mp3 audio files of everything that I put in to that computer. None of them are any *good*. The *Adagio for Strings* – let me tell you – arranged for Commodore 64 *does not* have the same emotional impact. I have *Air on the G String*, all the Bach Brandenburg Concerti, Bernstein *Chichester Psalms*, the Barber Violin Concerto... One of the first things I put in was the last movement of the Dvorak Cello Concerto, just because we had a recording of it at our house, and I liked it, so I put in the last movement; ten and a half minutes of Dvorak arranged by some twelve-year-old kid for a Commodore 64 program that can only play three notes at a time. The program would only let you do three voices at once, so that was your maximum polyphony, and I had to reduce everything down to three parts. I had to decide what are the three most important parts, or three most important notes of the chord. I also had to teach myself how to transpose if it was a transposed score. Unlike now, where the programs know a horn part is in F, you had to put in the actual sounding pitch.

JW: And you taught yourself all of this – transposition and arranging?

JM: Somebody probably told me why things weren't sounding right – maybe my mother – but I don't know that she remembered what *keys* each instrument were in. I remember one of the first pieces I wrote – it must have been right around the time when *Amadeus* came out, because it was called *Lacrimosa* – for clarinet, viola, cello and double bass. It was in E-flat minor, because that seemed very sad. I think I transposed the clarinet the wrong way in that piece and wrote the clarinet part in D. I guess if you're Turkish, you might have a clarinet in D.

I put in a bunch of Chopin etudes, and a bunch of Bach Well-Tempered Clavier things, especially three voice fugues. I put in some Debussy too, but always a lot of Bach, because it works really well no matter what instrument combination you arrange it for. It suffers a bit I guess, but not like if you tried to arrange some Corigliano piece for trombone quartet that wasn't supposed to be for trombone quartet. The notes are really the most important thing in Bach; not necessarily who plays them. That's why it works well on cello or guitar or piano or harpsichord or organ. That all worked well.

I arranged the Poulenc *Gloria* as well – just a bunch of stuff. The result was that I started learning, without really trying to learn, how counterpoint worked – even though none of my music would really sound like those things now because my music basically has no counterpoint. I think I’m terrible at counterpoint, but that may be because when I was learning to write fugues, they all sounded terrible.

I was putting all these things in, and I eventually got another Commodore 64 so I could do six voices and run them through different stereo channels and start them at the same time. I did Mussorgsky’s *Pictures at an Exhibition* for two Commodore 64’s, which (laughing) if you’d like to hear some time, just let me know.

I was writing some pieces – a couple of them were fine but nothing great. It wasn’t until my junior year in high that I started to write music that sounded okay. There’s actually a piece on my website that I wrote when I was fifteen called *Elegy and Fantasy* for violin and piano. The “Fantasy” part of that I wrote when I was fifteen, and the *Elegy* I wrote during orientation week at the Cleveland Institute. I was listening a lot to the last movement of the Barber Piano Concerto when I wrote that Fantasy piece and that’s probably the first piece that I wrote that has an ostinato in it – total ostinato for the left hand of the piano – because that’s basically what the last movement of the Piano Concerto does, except that Barber’s is in 5/8, and I didn’t really know how 5/8 worked, so mine’s in 6/8. It’s totally derivative of the Barber. I wrote a choral piece for my choir when I was in high school. I wasn’t in choir, but I knew a lot of the students in choir, so I wrote that. I submitted that for undergraduate application, and the “Fantasy” piece, which came from a set of three pieces of which it was the last movement. The other two pieces weren’t very good.

In my junior year of high school the composer Russell Peck came to my high school. I guess he was in town doing something with the Columbus Symphony. I said to him, “I think I want to be a composer, but I don’t play any instruments. Is that going to be a problem?” He said “Yes, you can’t get into music school if you don’t play an instrument.” So, starting in the summer before my senior year of high school I started taking piano lessons with my German teacher’s wife and I was terrible and hated it and didn’t ever practice. I took lessons for about six months, from summer through that fall of my senior year and then I realized I wouldn’t get good enough to get into school on my playing abilities. So I started looking at schools that would take me without any instrumental ability, which is not the case with all composition departments.

I ended up applying to colleges that would just look at the music I had written. I applied at Otterbein College in Westerville where I grew up, and Cleveland Institute of Music, since it was in Ohio and seemed convenient and didn’t require a performance audition.

JW: Did you consider any other schools?

JM: I considered Oberlin, but I called up the chair of the composition department and he was really rude to me over the phone, so I didn’t even apply. He was really dismissive and didn’t seem to want to take five minutes to answer some questions, so I eliminated that option. It was an easy choice.

JW: What was the experience at Cleveland Institute like?

JM: It was great! It was a tiny, tiny school at the time. I haven't really kept up on it since I left, but it used to be about 300 students total at the school and there are schools where there are nearly that many *composition* majors, so 300 students in the whole conservatory is pretty small. It's on the campus of Case Western Reserve University which is how you get an accredited degree, since you take courses from Case Western, which is a really good science school.

There wasn't a band there. Well, actually, Case Western had a band that was mostly students there, and then the instruments that they didn't have people who could play – CIM students came in to cover. I guess they were probably music ed majors, but then the oboe section were these students of John Mack, who for years and years was the oboist with the Cleveland Orchestra and I who I think was the *greatest* American oboist. You have these *crazy* great oboes, and then, frankly, a terrible band. So I didn't pay attention to band at all.

I ushered for the Cleveland Orchestra for every concert all four years I was at CIM, which was great. I heard every concert they gave for four years. That was such an amazing experience, and one that I appreciated while I was there. I'm glad I made such a point to be there every Thursday for those concerts. They didn't do a ton of new music, but I got to hear great performances of all the standard repertoire: Beethoven symphonies, Brahms, etc.

When there were living composers whose music the Cleveland Orchestra played, they would have those composers in on campus at CIM to do a seminar. I met some composers that way. That's how I first met Corigliano. The orchestra was playing his Clarinet Concerto, and I love that piece, so I sort of stalked him while he was on campus. Eventually that was how I was able to study with him, by meeting him then in, I think, 1994.

The players at CIM were really great. My teacher was Donald Erb, who died last August, and wrote the ugliest music but didn't teach his students to do that. The music I wrote during my undergrad sounded basically like Barber mixed with Shostakovich and that was totally fine for him. He just wanted to teach me how to do that better if that was what I was going to do. That's unusual in a teacher – that they don't try to make you just a clone. Not just for composition either. Anywhere in the arts, it's hard to find a teacher who doesn't just want to make you a miniature version of them.

JW: How was Juilliard different?

JM: It was much more intimidating for sure. I'd grown up in the suburbs of Columbus, Ohio and then went to Cleveland, so moving to New York City without having really been there except for my audition was a big, big change. I studied with Corigliano, who was intimidating. It felt like I had to be really good. What ended up happening was that the first year I was there, I basically didn't write any new music because I spent all the time thinking anything I would write couldn't be good enough. Somehow they would figure out that I sucked and didn't belong there. I only wrote one piece, I think, in that first year I was there and I don't think it's particularly successful. It's a thing for drumset and amplified piano called Moodindigo – I think there's an Ellington tune with that title as well – but that title came from a choreographer who was putting together a dance piece and that was the music, so it became the title.

The one good thing I did during my first year at Juilliard was that I took a class called Composer's/Choreographer's Workshop. The class had six composers and six student choreographers and you would get paired up and put together a five or six minute piece that would get put on at Alice Tully Hall in Lincoln Center at the end of the semester. I was terrible the first time, but you could repeat the class for credit, and in the second year I was much more comfortable and did a better piece. I also spent time doing a project – there was a thing there where senior dance majors put on this big show that was choreographed by students. I started writing pieces for those, and they were bigger pieces, maybe fifteen minutes of ballet in front of a five-minute piece. I really enjoyed doing that, and it turned out that became my outlet for writing at all over the next eight years or so. I wrote for dance companies for people who I met at Juilliard, or people I knew through people at Juilliard. The people I knew would go to other companies and say to their music directors, "Oh, you should listen to John Mackey's music. It works really well for dance." That's all I was writing then.

JW: Do you still stay involved in writing for dance?

JM: No. Not since I moved from New York. I guess the last thing I did was a piece called *Juba* for electric string quartet and percussion. It was commissioned by the Alvin Ailey Dance Company and it was a collaboration with a guy named Robert Battle whom I work with a lot. He's the one who I work with the best. We really hit it off – it doesn't happen too often I think where you get involved with a collaboration with someone who knows exactly what you do and you know what they do. Things just go great together. The music I would write for him would work, and he would choreograph with the score in hand and count it the same way I was writing it. *Juba* has meters like 11/16 going into 5/4 and he's counting it exactly the way the ensemble is. If he sees 11/16, he's subdividing and paying attention to how each beat works and he's teaching the dancers to count the same way, so that they're moving with the pulse changes. Getting dancers to move in 11/16 is crazy, but he would get them to do that. I really miss working with him, but once I moved away, it just wasn't possible anymore. If he were to ask for a piece now, I wouldn't know who to get to record it because I've been removed from that scene for five years now and my corps of musicians – they're all in other places now. One plays in the London Philharmonic, and another one's here, etc. I don't know how I would get together that caliber of player. I would have to start all over again. I do miss working with him – I think that a lot of my best work came while working with him. I did *Breakdown Tango* for him, and that's the piece that became *Redline Tango*. *Juba*, *Damn* for clarinet and percussion, *Strange Humors* there's a video of on YouTube that you can see what he choreographed and *Mass* – a piece for percussion ensemble commissioned by Juilliard for him to make with the whole senior class at Juilliard. He's awesome. I wish he would move to Texas.

JW: Did you work with anyone aside from Corigliano in the composition department?

JM: No. No, in fact, David Del Tredici was on faculty when I was there, and I never met him. He skipped the day of my audition and then somehow managed to not be there for either of my juries. Even on faculty, there were only about five people... I never met him. It wasn't the kind of thing where you could take lessons with other people on the faculty.

There *were* people – I found out later – who would take lessons from Corigliano *in secret*. They would study with someone else, but on the side would also take a lesson from Corigliano. It's wild that that would happen, but I never took a lesson from Milton Babbitt, for example. So you would see the faculty every year at your jury and they would look at what you did and they were generally very nice. That was really your only interaction with the other faculty.

JW: How was your relationship with Corigliano?

JW: Great! It was great. Initially, it was a little weird because I was completely in awe with him, so to have lessons with him... I was starstruck, and to get something out of a lesson you need to be a bit more relaxed, I think. Eventually he said, "You have to get over this. I'm just some guy," and I said "Okay," and things were fine. Every once in a while – like when I heard the premiere of [Corigliano's] *Circus Maximus* – I go back to that mentality of "Oh my God, I am so unworthy to even know who he is." I definitely have those moments where I feel like that with him, but generally now we're just friends and I'm on his email forwarding list.

JW: What is the process you undergo when you write a piece of music?

JM: It varies from piece to piece. Sometimes it's very thoroughly planned before you write even a single note, which is Corigliano's technique. He insists that the notes are the last thing you should ever do. If you're going to build a building, you don't start by picking out the curtains. You start by determining what the purpose of the building will be, then figure out how big the building needs to be to support that purpose, and then what you need to construct it from to support that size. This is how he teaches composition as well. That was hard for me, since my approach up until then had been that I would come up with an idea for a tune or something and then I would just keep writing until I ran out of ideas, and that would be the piece. That's not how you're supposed to do that. Going from his approach where you determine structure first was such a departure from what I was doing that it also didn't help me to write anything that first year at Juilliard. Now when I write a big piece, I do his approach. It's a way to intelligently put together a big work. If I do a short piece, I don't necessarily worry about it quite that much. It doesn't mean I don't think about structure at all, but I'm not quite as meticulous. It might be that I come up with a tune or an ending, and that helps – particularly endings – me know where a piece is going to go. I think the first thing I wrote of the Sax Concerto was the last fifteen bars or so. It's good to know where the whole thing is going to end up. With a large piece... The Sax Concerto is probably structurally my best work, because I planned out everything that was going to happen before I wrote any notes down.

Dance stuff is different because each choreographer had what they wanted in mind. With *Juba*, Robert Battle wanted the first movement to have a *Rite of Spring* feel, like the part where the horns have all the accents, but they're in different places. He wanted one section that was really hard to count, because he likes crazy meters. So the first section became these rock power chords, which very recently made their way into *Asphalt Cocktail* – there's a lot of *Juba* there. *Asphalt Cocktail* isn't a transcription of *Juba* – I've done transcriptions of works before – but there are chords taken from *Juba*. He would give an idea for what a section would do, or maybe another choreographer would have an idea of a programmatic piece where "men go off to war and there's this fight dance and the women are at home and they do the sad dance that's two

minutes and ten seconds long.” That’s a different thing, where the structure is being determined by the choreographer largely.

If it’s a big piece, though, it’s up to me and I generally have to set out the structure or concept first. I can’t just come up with a tune. I need to have a title first or what I want to do. I decide before I start what I want to do big picture with it. Then, scoring-wise, it’s scored out first on computer for piano sounds, trombone sounds, and percussion sounds. I know from the beginning what the percussion is doing. Just because something is patched with trombone sound doesn’t mean that it will end up being trombone – it just means that in my brass patches, my trombone ones are the best ones that I have, and I have low C below the staff up to high C in the trombones, and I can put a brass chord in just that patch and it will always sound good. The problem is that I get used to the massive sound that those patches put out and then when I actually score it for real people I have a hard time matching that balance – adding in horns and trumpets. I wish I could just write for trombone choir and percussion ensemble all the time. My dream ensemble would be sixteen trombones, percussion ensemble, and four amplified pianos, because that’s basically what I’m writing everything for when I first write it. Then I have to decipher that into whatever band piece or orchestra piece it will actually be.

JW: You mentioned the importance of having a title in place. In how many of your pieces does the title come before the music?

JM: You know, actually that’s pretty rare to happen first. The Sax Concerto is that kind of thing, since I had the titles of the movements before I started writing anything. The structure is based on the title of the movements. Then there’s *Asphalt Cocktail*. But usually that doesn’t happen. I generally will write the piece, like the one I’m writing now for a high school in Virginia that’s a very sparkly and happy thing. I don’t know what it’s called yet. In this case, I’ll have my wife listen to it a bunch of times until she figures out what it’s called. She generally will come up with the titles. Titles are hard, and you generally get them later.

JW: Speaking of the movement titles for the Sax Concerto, I had heard that Corigliano has now written a Percussion Concerto that does a similar thing...

JM: Yeah. I had told him what I was doing with the Sax Concerto – I had just finished and I was very excited and we had dinner and I told him about it. I wanted him to hear it because structurally it was good and I wanted him to see that it had been put together like this and that I’d thought about materials and with each movement based on that specific material. He told me that he was about to write a Percussion Concerto and that he wasn’t sure what he was going to do – and now he writes a concerto and the movements are titled *Felt*, *Skin*, and *Metal* or something like that. It’s completely the same idea.

JW: How did you first become involved in writing pieces for band?

JM: I was composer in residence for a youth orchestra in Minneapolis – The Greater Twin Cities Youth Symphony – this was done through the American Symphony Orchestra League Meet the Composer program that they do where an orchestra applies with a composer in mind and residencies are funded for 2-4 weeks over the course of a concert season. They can have the

composer out for four one-week sessions, or two two-week sessions – however they want. They work it out with the composer. So we got the funding, and I knew the conductor of that orchestra from my undergrad – a conductor named Paul Zdunek. He was a student at the Cleveland Institute of Music and when I was commissioned by the Cleveland Orchestra Youth Orchestra to write my first orchestra piece when I was 19. There was a competition at CIM that was only for undergrads there, and Donald Erb picked five of us to submit pieces to the music director of the youth orchestra, and then the music director actually picked me to write a piece. I wrote this piece called *Do Not Go Gentle Into That Good Night*. I finished it, but they weren't doing it until May. In the fall, CIM's orchestra was doing reading sessions with student composers and so I submitted my piece to be read by the orchestra because I'd never written an orchestra piece before and I wanted to hear what it would sound like or if it worked at all. There was this guy Paul Zdunek and he was assigned as a conducting student to conduct the reading. He said he really liked the piece and if he ever had his own orchestra, he would do it. And he did – he conducted a youth orchestra in Maryland for a couple of years and he did that piece. Then he got a job in Minneapolis with the Greater Twin Cities Youth Symphony and he did the piece again. He was a good friend and a good champion of that piece.

So he did the piece with that ensemble and that was the year that the CBDNA convention was in Minneapolis and it was going to be held the weekend prior to when I was going to go to Minneapolis for the last week of my residency. I was scheduled to go out there on Monday and CBDNA ran Wednesday to Saturday right before that. I had gone to school with guys like Eric Whitacre and Jonathan Newman and Steve Bryant, and they had all been writing band music for a while and Eric was *particularly* successful with it at that point and they had all said, "You should write band music." I didn't know what that meant because I had never really heard band music. I did hear Schwanter's *and the mountains rising nowhere* when I was at CIM, and I had no idea that band music could sound like that – I loved it – but there was no connection with that that made me think, "Oh, I need to write a band piece." Aside from that piece, the programs I had heard all sounded very "band-y," and I wasn't big on that, so I sort of forgot about it until Jonathan and Steve and Eric were writing all this band stuff.

I arranged for my flight to be a couple days earlier and went to CBDNA and attended several concerts. I heard Indiana University, and the premiere of the [Lauridsen] O Magnum Mysterium that Bob Reynolds had done, and a new Michael Torke piece – I knew Michael Torke fairly well – that Indiana did. One morning I went to a business meeting with a large group of people from CBDNA in this conference room. I was sitting with Frances Richard who is Director of Concert Music for ASCAP and Fran knew me somewhat then – she knows me better now – and she stood up and said, "Sitting next to me is a young composer named John Mackey who studied with John Corigliano and he is friends with Eric Whitacre. He's a good composer and he's never written a band piece. You all should talk to him." Then she sat down. I thought, "Boy, that was very nice," but didn't necessarily think anything would come from it. Then the meeting ended and several people came up to me and introduced themselves and I gave them CDs of my music. Two of those people were Scott Weiss and Scott Stewart. Scott Weiss was at Lamar University at the time, and Scott Stewart was at Emory.

I gave them the CDs and went home to New York and received a call within a week from Scott Stewart. He had listened to the CD, which had the original orchestral version of *Redline Tango*

on it that the Brooklyn Philharmonic had premiered a year before. He said that he really liked it and that he thought it should be a band piece. I told him that I actually thought that a piece I had written called *Annuals* for the Parsons Dance Company should be a band piece. That piece is now *Kingfishers Catch Fire* – but he didn’t want that piece; he wanted *Redline Tango*. The piece is really hard, and the impression that I had received from several composers who had written for band – without naming them – was that you should *not* write difficult music for band. Rather, if you want to take advantage of the market, you write easier music. If I had to pick the piece of mine at the time that would be the hardest, no one would play it and it would defeat the purpose of writing a band piece – so I thought. I said, “I don’t think that’s what I should do, and besides, the middle of the piece is a massive violin solo. What do you do with that?” Scott Stewart said, “It’s a soprano sax solo.” I had never written a sax part, much less a soprano sax part. The fee was the same fee I’d received to write the original orchestral version, so it seemed like a good fee. At least I would get one performance, so I agreed to do it. It premiered at the South Regional convention of CBDNA in 2004. I couldn’t tell immediately how it went – the performance was fine but I didn’t know if anything would come of it.

At the reception after the concert I was told that Frank Wickes wanted to meet me. I didn’t know who he was, but the person who I was with told me, “You want to meet him.” Frank Wickes is the director of bands at Louisiana State University, and he was really nice and complementary and told me that he wanted to perform *Redline Tango* with his ensemble. I told him that there was an exclusivity period for the commissioning groups, but he wanted to perform it yet that May. He said that he would pay the consortium fee to perform the piece that year. So even though the piece was already funded by the consortium, I just got a check from one more consortium member so that he could play it early. Gary Hill, director of bands at Arizona State University, ended up doing the same thing in the fall of that year.

This was just *crazy* to me – the idea that as a composer I would get paid to write music. Dance music was fun, but paid terribly. This was a nice change and people were enthusiastic – jumping through hoops to play things *early*? They didn’t want to wait! It was amazing... It’s still amazing to have that happen, and that’s why it’s fun to write for band.

Frank Wickes sent his recording to a bunch of other conductors, and then they started calling me. I got a phone call from Bob Reynolds who had heard *Redline Tango* and wanted to do it. I didn’t know who Bob Reynolds was, except that he had written that transcription that I’d heard. I didn’t know them or their reputations, which was probably good when I would get these calls... Bob Reynolds was judging something for ASCAP out in New York City and invited me to breakfast and if I’d known I should be scared, I probably would have been at the magnitude of who he is. At the time, I just thought it was a nice breakfast rather than “Oh my God, this is Bob Reynolds.” I realized that after breakfast.

JW: Between *Redline Tango* and the Concerto, what were some of the highlights of your wind band writing?

JM: After *Redline Tango* came *Sasparilla*, which the idea for that was just not to write “Redline Tango 2.” I went a completely different direction and wrote a funny piece. The attitude, at least in America, is that funny music for band is not really embraced by top level ensembles, since

there's so much struggle to legitimize the medium. This was a funny piece, and so it's not a piece that's played often by top level groups. It gets played by high school bands a bit. It's played a lot in other countries, because it just seems very American to them – it's cowboy music. The mistake I made was making it very technically difficult. To get a great performance of it, you need a great band, but the great bands would say, "This is silly. Why would I play it?" I think I needed to write it, though, just to do something entirely different from *Redline Tango* so that I wouldn't immediately pigeonhole myself into being a composer who only did one thing. Eric Whitacre did the same thing: his second piece – I think it's withdrawn – was something like a twelve-tone piece that he wrote after *Ghost Train* for soprano and wind ensemble. No one does it. You can't even find it. I like *Sasparilla*. I think it's fun. But *nobody* plays it.

I think after that was *Strange Humors*, although that was a transcription of a dance piece. Then there was *Turbine*, which is a programmatic piece about my fear of flying and it's very percussion heavy. That piece, actually, sounds the most like my "dream ensemble" sound – there were a lot of runs that had shown up in the piano parts of the score, percussion was the same, and the trombone stuff basically stayed the same. Technically, it's maybe my hardest piece – partially because I scored it badly. There are so many balance issues in the score that the conductor has to deal with to make it work and get it to sound like what I think it should sound like. It takes a lot of work. I put about four or six *f*'s on everything, and I have these wind runs over really loud sustained brass chords. I want to hear them, though, because I wrote them. It's a monster to make work. I think I've heard two performances of it where I said, "Oh, that's totally *Turbine*." Usually, though, it ends up just being really loud, which isn't what it's about. It's about being really loud, and then really quiet, and arching. If it's loud all the time, that just spoils it. A lot of that is my fault for scoring. There are pieces of mine that are scored well – like *Kingfishers Catch Fire*, which I think is scored well and reads well. It sounds good if you just play the right notes. There's no moment of "I need a little less trombone 2 here, because the part is out of the good range of the instrument." That's the stuff that *Turbine* deals with in every bar that doesn't happen in *Kingfishers* or *Redline Tango*. It's my most awkwardly scored piece.

Turning is kind of close. It really wants to be an orchestral piece for me. Unless you have a really big band, it suffers. It was great when the Texas All-State Band did it, because there were something like fifteen trombone players, and that's what it feels like it needs: a mass of brass balancing with extremely high and quiet wind playing. It's impossible to play that high and quiet, and the only way to achieve the contrast is to have the brass play really loud. All of that high writing should really be for strings, like violins, and it would sound spectacular, since they don't have to breathe, and can play high at any dynamic. That's the problem with the piece. I really like it a lot, but it gets done almost never. I enjoyed writing it, and it was nice to write something slow that doesn't depend on rhythmic pulse. There are some technical problems with it, primarily in the trombone rip stuff that I need to find another solution for. The first bar is a crapshoot with every performance. There must be another solution to get a sound that is like a scream in the trombone but making it not as scary to play. That comes from a Bright Sheng piece – *L'ai* (Love Song) – which gave me the idea for a screaming trombone, and the LOST soundtrack.

JW: How did the Concerto for Soprano Sax and Wind Ensemble project come into existence?

JM: The commission came about from *Redline Tango* winning the Ostwald Award and part of the prize was that *Redline Tango* would be performed at the American Bandmaster's Association conference in Dallas. One of the bands playing there that year was the Dallas Wind Symphony, who were essentially assigned to play that piece. The principal saxophonist in that band is a man named Donald Fabian and he played the big soprano sax solo in *Redline Tango* and after the dress rehearsal he came up to me and told me he was looking for a concerto. A lot of people tell me they want a piece and that never necessarily means that they'll get one, so I didn't think much of it. The performance the next night went really well, and Don played great, and afterward at the bar in the hotel he came up to me again and said again that he really wanted a saxophone concerto and that he had talked to Jerry Junkin, who is director of the Dallas Wind Symphony, about commissioning a soprano saxophone concerto and that I should be the one to write it. I thought that sounded great, and I ended up talking to Jerry Junkin that night, and it sounded like it might actually happen.

Jerry said he was into the idea, and sometime soon after that, he sent a message to the CBDNA email listserv saying that I had just won the ABA Ostwald Award and he wants to write a Soprano Sax Concerto and to email him if they were interested in being a part of the consortium. At the time, we needed ten schools to be a part of the consortium. Within 24 hours, he already had twenty-two schools and had raised essentially more than double the money we needed, and even more came in later that day. We made this compromise where we let a lot more people into the consortium and everybody paid less than they would have. My fee went up, but everyone's payment went down considerably, which evened things out. On paper, he had raised something like \$70,000 based on the original quoted fee, but I'm not going to write a piece for \$70,000 – that wouldn't be right. I would freak out trying to write that piece; it would have to be the best piece ever written at that cost. I'm all for money – there's only so much, and I intend to get it – but that was pretty extreme. It ended up being about half as much for each school, and everybody was happy.

Then I had to write the piece, and I spent that summer on it. I had to figure out the structure first, because they wanted a twenty-minute piece, and to me that meant multiple movements and I had to figure out how to make that make sense. It was my wife, Abby, who came up with the idea of what that structure should be, she thought. She said, "Imagine if aliens visited Earth, and they found a saxophone – a soprano saxophone. They take the soprano saxophone back to their planet or ship or whatever, and try to reverse engineer their own saxophone. What makes this crazy instrument do the things it does?" and she suggested I should write a piece that imagines that. It doesn't actually sound like aliens discovering a sax, but it does have the effect that if you've never seen, heard or experienced a soprano saxophone, here's what it can do. The concerto is unique, then, to the instrument – it's not something you could transcribe for violin and have it have the same effect. It *has to be* a soprano sax concerto.

That was the initial germ of how to make the piece. The actual original idea – it might have been Don Fabian's – came from me doing a lot of cycling at the time. Don Fabian is also a cycling enthusiast, and I think it was his idea to make a piece that had something to do with that. Like the materials of a bike – carbon, steel, aluminum – and that would have been a very different piece, very specific to him, with each movement having to do with different kind of rides that you could take – mountain climbing on bikes, riding through trees. It wasn't a very good idea.

The actual idea was much better – it must have been a great idea since my teacher stole it! (laughing) That was the way to go with the piece.

Then I needed to figure out what each movement would specifically do, planning them out structurally. I wrote the very end of the piece – the section after the cadenza – first. I didn't work backward. I wrote multiple movements at the same time. I just knew how the whole thing would end before starting it.

JW: What interactions did you have with Jerry Junkin while you were composing?

JM: None, really. There were some emails with Don Fabian, but he didn't really say anything about the piece as to whether it would work, or if it would lay well on the instrument. There was a student at the University of Texas who I knew through his father for whom I had written a piece while I was an undergraduate. His name is Erik Steighner – he's listed in the score. I sent him a solo part and the midi. He listened to the whole thing and played through the whole piece. He spent hours on the piece and then sent me this huge email describing what it was like to play the piece and things he thought should be changed, tremolos he thought weren't working, octave placements that were difficult based on how they were approached. These were things that he wasn't necessarily suggesting I change, but he was letting me know that from a player's standpoint, they were tough. He was by far the most helpful when I was writing the piece, just from that one email alone. It was amazing to have, since all I had were my sax books, and that's not the same.

JW: You also thank Timothy Roberts and Timothy McAllister. What were their contributions during the composition of the piece?

JM: Timothy Roberts was helpful primarily later. Erik was helpful while I was actually writing. Tim saw it when it was closer to being done and gave me his thoughts on what I had done in terms of accessibility. Erik even sent me a recording of him playing different kinds of slap tongue so I could hear different ways to play certain passages. I don't remember exactly what Tim Roberts did that got me to change things. Tim McAllister was primarily thanked not so much for input while I was writing it, but he showed me that it is actually possible to play everything in the piece. He's maybe the only saxophonist I've heard that can play *everything* in it. There is no trick or technique that he can't do. I didn't want to do a big extended techniques piece – there are a few altissimo notes, double tonguing, circular breathing and slap tongue, but no multiphonics. I don't really like multiphonics, and I think they're kind of cheesy. If I wanted multiphonics, he could do them – he can do anything. He's mostly listed because he can do everything. I had heard some good performances before I heard him play, and it would generally be people who could do all but one of the things that happens in the piece, and he's the one guy who can do anything on the soprano sax. The first time I heard him play, I was speechless and I got teary. They were in rehearsal at Arizona, and they played the first movement and stopped when it was done and I was just stunned that I could hear it that way. He's listed just because he's so awesome.

JW: What are the important compositional features of the piece that are critical to putting on a successful performance?

JM: That's somewhat tough to answer, because it feels like I haven't had that many opportunities to work on this piece, so I haven't figured everything out yet that I need to bring attention to. That's the kind of thing I learn after working on the same piece with about twelve different bands. I learn what I need to tell them to make things work because something's not clear in the notation. The piece has major balance issues, not unlike *Turbine*, because things are overscored like crazy because I think I initially thought the soprano sax was as loud as the alto sax. It's not! I have heard performances where it's not an issue – if the conductor gets the band to play “down” without losing the intensity of sound. You still need a soloist with a big sound who can play big without sounding loud and harsh all the time. The soprano sax can be really ugly if it's overplayed, and the piece is dying to be overplayed because of the balance. That's the biggest problem in the piece.

The *Prelude* – particularly the opening – has to be about sparkly stuff. The metal percussion – crotales, glockenspiel, etc. – all of that has to be very sparkly. I don't know if the parts specify that I want metal mallets for crotales and glock, but I do. I want the biggest, brightest, most shiny sound I can get out of *Metal* and *Prelude*.

The *Felt* movement is just crazy sound effects. The band needs to realize that that movement is meant to be fun. If there were a movement that was designed to sound like aliens discovering a soprano sax and trying to figure out what weird sounds the instruments make, that's the movement that does that. That's sort of an amusing idea, and the movement should sound like that. There's a very Danny Elfman thing in the movement – the bass clarinets – that stuff just needs to honk. I want beautiful sounds in *Metal*, but *Felt* is *not* about pretty sounds. It's about high clarinet trills and low honking bass clarinet and contrabass clarinet and contrabassoon. It should be a fun, weird, “Hey that's guy's messed up” kind of movement.

Metal was the hardest one to write. I always have trouble with slow melodic music because I always worry that it's going to cross the line into cheeseball. I was working on *Metal* the whole time I was working on the rest of the piece. I was always working on *Metal* somewhat, trying to figure out a bar a day to make it not sound cheesy. When it gets to the big climax of that movement, it needs to be *really* big and you have to sell that.

The *Wood* movement – the most important thing are the rests. I've heard more bad performances of *Wood* than any of the other movements and I don't get it. It's all in 4/4 and it's in F minor or something. It should *not* be hard, but it needs to have a groove to it, and it almost never does. It shouldn't be swung, but I don't want it to be square either, and it almost always is. A lot of times distance is a factor between the marimba, bass and piano. At least one performance, though, they moved the bassist to be closer to the piano and marimba for the whole concerto, and it helped a lot. I think that's a good idea in general, if only for that movement. I don't know what makes it sound square or not square, but the feel is often not right. Because there's so much silence and things happen on offbeats – people don't know where it should go, and they think too much. It's not always the case, but it does happen. I never expected that this would be the “hard” movement. For some reason, it's not a piece of cake.

The *Finale* – that's not a piece of cake either. It's nearly impossible. In fact, there's one part where it's intentionally impossible. There's a part that's bracketed and it's optional. There's a

reason why I had them playing, but I *never* want to hear the saxophone there. It's the big arrival of that movement where it's quoting *Metal* and it brings back the chorale with the crotales from *Metal*, and I wanted it to be this big, bright chord passage and I don't want this big arrival to happen and have the soloist just standing there. Donald Erb used to say in my undergrad, "If you have a harp player in an orchestra piece, and you have this big climax to the piece, you don't have the harpist just sit there." They're at the front of the orchestra, you don't want them sitting there – there's a visual thing. Even if you can't hear it, you see it and you think something good is happening. That's what I was thinking with it: that I would have them play, just to have them feel as though they're a part of this thing, rather than just standing there while the moment happens. The problem is you can't hear it and half the time, the bands don't realize that I don't *want* to hear it and they bring the levels down so you can *hear* the soprano sax arpeggios and it ruins the climax completely. If you can hear the soloist there, it's wrong. It needs to be a big climax; not *mezzo-forte*. It actually helps the soloist, though, to *not* play there. The cadenza is coming up, and it's nice to just stand there and rest for a minute before they just go all crazy with the cadenza.

JW: If it came down to it, then, would you prefer that they play or not play that part?

JM: I don't really care. I think I'm now more on the side of "don't bother playing it." I think there's enough going on and they've been doing enough before that. It shouldn't feel like a big letdown there if the soloist isn't playing. That was what I was worried about – that people would think, "Why isn't the soloist playing that part?" It was strictly an audience consideration and I really don't think they should play it. I should take it out entirely to avoid confusion in the future, and the break before the cadenza is useful. At that point, it's been about twenty-three minutes of nonstop playing – it's okay to sit for a few measures.

JW: Why the Corigliano quotation?

JM: The program note probably says it better even than what I'll say right now. The Clarinet Concerto is my favorite wind concerto I've ever heard, and the Sax Concerto is another wind concerto. I couldn't write a clarinet concerto because his is not just my favorite wind concerto, but a clarinet concerto. I don't think I can do one. I've loved that piece since I first heard it. That's the piece the Cleveland Orchestra was doing when I met him when I was an undergrad student. I went to those rehearsals and I've heard it live several times and it's probably my favorite piece of his. I don't know where I came up with the idea to quote it. It's scored, I think, almost exactly the same, even the same key. Other than the lack of strings, it's the same. My timpani fill is different. When it does the chords, though, it's exactly him. I think it works well – when I hear it, I think "Oh wow, that sounds great," but it's not even me. When you hear the beginning you think, "Oh, this movement is awesome!" but it's not me.

It was funny because I asked him permission and told him why I wanted to use it, and he said, "Of course, quote away." I did, and then sent him the piece, and he emailed me and said, "I like the piece a lot, I think it's a great piece, but I don't hear the quote from the Clarinet Concerto." I thought, "Man, that's *weird*. Really?" So I wrote back to him explaining where it was and he replied, "I was being sarcastic. Of course I can hear it." It's *so* direct, but I think it works well and I think it's justified.

JW: The quote is relatively brief, but did you have any sort of trouble reconciling it with your own material?

JM: I didn't have any trouble with it at all. Even when it comes back a couple times, there was no problem. It felt like it worked really well. Maybe I'm wrong... Every time I hear it, I initially forget that he wrote it. I think "Oh yeah, I totally scored with that." It doesn't take me out of the piece at all when I hear it come back after the opening. By the second beat of that movement, I say "Oh, right," and chuckle to myself.

JW: What are some of the ensemble difficulties in putting together the piece?

JM: I don't know what to do to make the piece easier by any means. Clearly, in terms of ensemble, *Felt* is the hardest movement. *Finale* is so repetitive that if you can get the ensemble to play cleanly and quietly enough, then it's not that hard. The solo part is ridiculous. I want the audience to hear the solo and think, "How is that possible?" rather than, "Oh, that poor man..." or, "Oh, that poor woman..." I don't want them to think, "Man, that was really hard." I want them to think, "Wow, I can't believe they just did that!" That's been the biggest performance issue. Often the last movement just sounds way too hard. It is, but it needs to sound breathless and not labored. There are only a couple people who have been able to do that. The University of Kansas recording sounds that way.

Felt is the one that's the hardest to put together because there's so much syncopation and so many things happen only on offbeats. To get that to sound really tight and clean has been really tough. A lot of bands have done the piece and done only movements I, III, IV, and V, because they can't get *Felt* to sound the way it really needs to sound. *Prelude* is not that hard as long as it's balanced well – it's really quick. There are some things in the piano part that I think are tough to count. The piano part, actually, is really hard throughout the whole piece. It's unusual to find a pianist in a college band that plays the part really well. Its scored, I think, really well. You can hear the piano almost all the time it plays. There are a few moments in the *Finale*, but *Wood* and *Metal* you can hear the piano. *Felt* is basically for soloist, timpani, piano, and bass clarinets, at least as I think of it. You need a monster pianist for the whole thing. Good percussionists too. The mallet parts in *Felt* are... If this were 100 years from now and this had been an orchestra piece, I think that marimba part would be an excerpt for auditions. It's ridiculous! Almost nobody can do that part. When The University of Texas did the piece, the guy who played the marimba part was amazing, but he couldn't look up. He had great time, fortunately, so it worked out. He basically looked up to get the cue from Junkin and then just played it, because he couldn't look up from the bars. Always exciting, but scary. Terrifyingly scary.

I didn't want the concerto to have an accompaniment that was just an accompaniment. I didn't want it to be like one of those classical period violin concertos. If the band was going to play a piece this long, I wanted them to have something to do. Often they won't have a soloist for the whole time, but I didn't want them to just put it together and then add the sax. Their parts are wicked hard too. Everyone has something hard somewhere in the piece. I didn't want it to be a boring accompaniment for twenty-five minutes.

JW: It seems as though, in respect to balance, the interior movements have less balance trouble because of reduced instrumentation...

JM: For sure. I don't think there are balance problems with the middle movements. You're right – the scoring with this piece... If I wrote it now, I wouldn't focus on making the movements match the scoring, I would just strip down the scoring. I would not write four trombone parts, necessarily, for the whole piece all the time. The *Finale*, when I hear rehearsals of it without the soloist, I really like it. The problem is once you add the soloist, all you can hear is the ensemble. Even with the soloist. I do like how things are passed from one player to another in the *Finale*. You have stopped horn stuff and muted trumpet things. There's even a sort of tone row in the bassoons. It's not a real tone row – I cheated and repeated pitches and left some things out – at rehearsal HH. I used it because I wanted that to be crazy bleepy-bloopy stuff in the bassoons. That's my favorite scoring, without the soprano sax. Even here the soloist gets covered up. Looking at it, that shouldn't happen! There's not that much going on here, but it's never as light as it needs to be. It shouldn't be a big problem, but it is.

JW: You mention quotation of the middle movements in the *Prelude* and the *Finale* – are there any that are really well hidden that are important?

JM: I'm sure you found them all. Generally they're pretty blatant. The hardest thing was trying to get any of the tango movement into the first movement. It's the bass clarinet/bassoon line around A. It's barely there, and you'd never think, "Oh, that's going to be a tango..." That stuff is in there because I did the *Prelude* last, and I needed to fit it in there. It's all the bass clarinet and bassoon stuff there.

JW: In *Metal* and *Finale*, you use 3/2 and 6/4 meters. Should there be a difference between the two?

JM: At letter V, for instance, things are divided into halves, and there's a 9/4 measure. Going from 3/2 to 9/4 would be weird. There are probably places where it could have gone either way and I just picked one arbitrarily. It's a grouping thing – I'm thinking of it as a slow version of 3/4 and 6/8. There are times when if you conducted a 3/2 bar in 6, it might be weird. I'm really feeling those in 3/2. What I don't ever want to see – and this is why I put *Turning* in weird meters – is every beat. That's not a piece where I want to see every pulse, and this movement is the same. It should be fluid – I want time to stretch. The whole movement should be *rubato*, and whatever the conductor needs to do to make that happen, I'm fine with it.

JW: You used flugelhorns in *Metal* rather than trumpets, and there's been speculation about the call for mutes in the part...

JM: By mistake... I didn't know, since this was the first time I'd written for flugelhorn, that you could get a band that all the trumpet players would be able to get flugelhorns. I was worried that I would get performances where half the section used trumpets, and half used flugelhorns. So, my solution was that if the ensemble used trumpets, it would be muted, and I put *con sordino* in the parts. The problem was that during the reading by Dallas Wind Symphony, I wasn't there, and someone in the trumpet section who was playing flugelhorn raised his hand and asked,

“Does he really want mutes in the flugelhorn?” The score says *con sordino*, so Jerry Junkin said, “I guess he does.” One of the trumpet players in the section works at a mute manufacturing company, so they had flugelhorn straight mutes made.

I got there for the rehearsal prior to the dress rehearsal and they played the piece with flugelhorn mutes – which don’t exist; they made them for this. They had them specially made because I messed up and didn’t put in the score, “con sordino (if trumpet)”. It’s still a problem – I haven’t fixed it. Hearing a flugelhorn with a straight mute is an interesting sound. It’s like drum corps when the brass turns away from the audience. It’s this incredibly distant sound and very pretty until you play louder than piano. When it was *mezzo-forte* or louder, it had this weird buzzing noise, and we went without them, even though they had gone to the trouble of making them. It made for a good story, but not a really good sound.

JW: There are several options for flugelhorn use. On the instrumentation page, it suggests that if four flugelhorns won’t work that two flugelhorns and two cornets can substitute. On the cover page to *Metal*, however, it suggests one flugelhorn and three cornets as a substitution. Which is preferable?

JM: Four flugelhorns without mutes is the preferred sound. That’s basically what I’ve gotten at every school I’ve been to that’s done the piece. Everyone has four flugelhorns. It’s important to have a flugelhorn for the solo, so someone needs to be playing it. I really want that sound. If there has to be a blend of something else, so be it. That’s one of my favorite moments, and I’m really proud of that color change there and it wouldn’t be the same with trumpet. Try to stay away from using trumpets, is what I’m trying to say. If you do use trumpets, then they should be muted during the “con sordino” marking at letter Y.

JW: Have any ensembles or soloists performed the Concerto with amplification on the soloist?

JM: Yes, when the Navy Band does it, they use amplification, partially because they use amplification a lot for their big venues. TCU did it last week – just the last movement – and they used amplification. It can work if the speakers are somehow in the ensemble. You shouldn’t use the house system. Even at TCU, I felt as though it worked one night and not the other. The first night, the speakers were basically back in the percussion section because they were being used for this new Ticheli piece that has organ that was being played on a synthesizer, so the speakers were back there. It worked fine, because the hall was pretty live and you couldn’t tell exactly where the sound was coming from, it just sounded like you could hear the sax. The second night they did it in the hall where the speakers were basically out in the wings and the hall had no reverb, so it sounded like the sax was playing from the wings. I have no problem at all with amplification on the piece, as long as it doesn’t seem like it’s amplified. Really, it’s only necessary in the last movement. Tim McAllister can do the *Finale* without amplification and without sounding overly loud and harsh, but that’s a rare ability. It’s so much less to worry about if you don’t have to play quadruple *forte* for the whole movement. The problem with it is that if you use amplification, you probably have to use it for the whole piece, or else it would sound weird. That was one of the benefits of recording the piece, because we could adjust the levels to the needs of each movement to make sure he was always audible.

JW: With the exception of the bracketed solo parts in the *Finale*, you would suggest altering dynamics of the ensemble for balance purposes?

JM: Yes. It's not even entirely that the dynamics need to come down a lot from where they're marked. I think a lot of the time, people play them louder than where they're marked to begin with. At measure 34 of the *Finale* it probably should be okay, for instance, and the brass crescendos to *fortissimo*. If I was going to do that, I probably should have had the trumpets and trombones hit that chord at measure 33 *piano* and then crescendo and it would have been less of an issue covering up the solo part. It's stuff like that. If a conductor did that and didn't tell me it had been done, it would just sound right to me. If they started that thing *piano* and I could still hear the chord... *Mezzo-forte*, what does that mean? It's the most neutral thing in the world and I use it all the time. It should probably be *piano*, or maybe *forte-piano* so I can hear the hit and then get out of the way so you can hear the line continue, with some dynamic shape to get to the arrival, but it doesn't have to be *forte* to *fortissimo*. Often my dynamics refer to energy level rather than volume. It doesn't necessarily mean it has to be really loud. This is a problem with all my dynamics – I think about energy than specific volume. There's not a good way to say "I want a really strong sound" without putting a loud dynamic marking on it.

JW: John, thanks so much for agreeing to be a part of this. I think your insights will provide a great deal of information to anyone looking to perform the piece.

JM: Thanks! I'm excited to see what you do with it.

APPENDIX B

CATALOGUE OF EXTENDED TECHNIQUES FOR SOPRANO SAXOPHONE SOLOIST

Though this document has not focused on identifying challenges explicitly directed facing the soloist, it is important for the conductor and ensemble to be aware of several extended techniques present in the soloist's part. In identifying these by their type and cataloguing their frequency and location within the score, the conductor will be prepared appropriately within rehearsal to know what sounds the composer expects from these special effect moments. Each technique is listed, defined, catalogued for occurrences within the score, and accompanied by an appropriate example of the notation that identifies it.

Alternate (Resonance) Fingering

The soloist is asked to use an unconventional fingering to sound a notated pitch. In all cases within this piece, this notation is used during a sequence in which the soloist plays the same note several times in repetition. The soloist uses the conventional fingering and alternate fingering in alternation. Usually, the conventional fingering is the first in any sequence of repeated notes, although there are a few occurrences where the sequence begins with the alternate fingering. The intent of sonic effect is a color/timbre shift, rather than a pitch alteration. Thus, the soloist should make adjustments where possible to match pitch between the two fingerings as closely as possible, while maximizing the difference in color.



Example B-1. *Felt*, mm. 201-203.

Table B-1. Occurrences of Alternate Fingering by movement.

Movement	Measures
<i>Prelude</i>	14, 57-59, 63-65
<i>Felt</i>	9-11, 13, 17, 22, 41, 48-49, 61, 113, 115-116, 123-124, 188, 190, 201-203, 205, 209-211, 213

Portamento

The soloist is asked to bend pitch between two notes, similar to portamento on a string instrument. It is not always possible to achieve an absolute portamento effect, but the soloist should attempt to match this effect as closely as possible, rather than using a discrete finger glissando.



Example B-2. *Prelude*, mm. 24-27.

Table B-2. Occurrences of Portamento by movement.

Movement	Measures
<i>Prelude</i>	24-27
<i>Felt</i>	87-88, 91-92, 95-96, 104-106, 132, 134, 136, 138-139, 146-147, 186-187
<i>Finale</i>	63-66

Pitch Bend

This is similar to the portamento effect, but without a specified termination pitch. The soloist bends pitch away from a note at its end as much as is feasible in the time allotted. All of these effects are downward within this piece.

Example B-3. *Felt*, m. 77.

Table B-3. Occurrences of Pitch Bend by movement.

Movement	Measures
<i>Felt</i>	30, 77, 85, 93, 101, 107, 148, 166-167, 171

Accelerating Rhythm

The soloist is asked to perform a series of pitches within a specified duration such that they accelerate through the figure. A basic subdivision is provided, with the initial notes of the figure being slightly slower than the notated subdivision, and the final notes being faster than the subdivision.



Example B-4. *Felt*, m. 16.

Table B-4. Occurrences of Accelerating Rhythm by movement.

Movement	Measures
<i>Felt</i>	16, 100, 151
<i>Finale</i>	95

Slap Tongue

A familiar extended technique to many saxophonists, slap tonguing involves an abrasive articulation that produces both the tone of the note fingered and an audible popping noise at the initiation of the tone. This popping noise is created by the release of suction placed on the reed by the tongue.



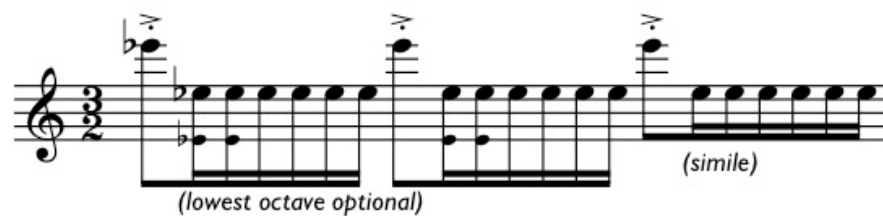
Example B-5. *Felt*, m. 131.

Table B-5. Occurrences of Slap Tongue by movement.

Movement	Measures
<i>Felt</i>	74, 76, 89, 97, 131, 133, 135, 137, 170, 175, 177, 179, 197-199, 248-253
<i>Wood</i>	40, 116-117

Double Tonguing

Extremely fast articulation that requires initiating notes both traditionally (tongue articulating the reed) and using a sharp impulse of air segmented from the back of the tongue using a “k” consonant. The sole occurrence of this technique in the piece also involves rapid octave shifts that increase the difficulty greatly.



Example B-6. *Finale*, m. 96.

Table B-6. Occurrences of Double Tonguing by movement.

Movement	Measures
<i>Finale</i>	96-102

APPENDIX C

COMPOSER'S PROGRAM NOTE TO "CONCERTO FOR SOPRANO SAX AND WIND ENSEMBLE"

To me, the saxophone is a kind of hybrid instrument; it's essentially a brass instrument with a woodwind reed on it. Instead of valves like a brass instrument has, the sax has keys like a woodwind. (Many sax players even switch effortlessly from sax to a woodwind like a clarinet, and back again in the same concert.) So, I had an instrument made of three materials: felt (the pads of the keys), metal (the body), and wood (the reed). In fact, every instrument in the band can be placed into one (or more) of those "categories." The brass section is made of metal, the harp is made of metal and wood, the wind section has keys, and so on. This realization gave me the central idea for the piece: a multi-movement work with the inner movements called Felt, Metal, and Wood, and with instrumentation chosen to essentially match those materials for each movement. The outer movements would be scored for the entire ensemble.

The piece starts with "Prelude," a very brief overture to the concerto, with material that foreshadows each of the movements to come. If you hear something you like in the "Prelude," you'll probably hear it more developed in the following movements. (Conversely, if you hear absolutely nothing you like in the "Prelude," you may be in for a long night.)

Movement two is "Felt." This movement is a study of the keys of the instrument, so it includes lots of runs (requiring quick fingers), lots of pitch bending (to show what different pitches the sax can produce with minimal movement of the fingers), and a bit of alternate fingering. On the saxophone, the player can play the same pitch by using different combinations of keys, and each fingering combination results in a slightly different color. In this movement, you'll hear repeated notes that are accomplished with changing fingerings, so the color will shift from note to note, even as the pitch stays the same.

The other question – besides "what is a sax made of" – that I wanted to consider when writing the concerto was, "what can a sax *do*?" Movement 2, "Felt," answers that question with, "well, the sax can play some weird sounds." With that pitch bending and crazy fingering, it's a peculiar five minutes.

Movement three, "Metal," answers that same question with, "the sax can play high and pretty." This movement, scored primarily for metal percussion and brass, is a calm, lyrical contrast to the weirdness that preceded it.

It seemed silly to write a sax concerto and not deal with the fact that the sax is often heard simply playing a song in an intimate setting – say, at a jazz club. Movement four, "Wood," is really just that: a simple song. The scoring here is, as you'd expect, woodwinds (including flutes, which

aren't technically made of wood anymore), double bass, harp, piano, marimba, and – as in every movement – the sax section.

The piece of mine that led to the commission of this sax concerto was a piece called “Redline Tango,” and specifically, the soprano sax solo that anchors that work. To acknowledge that, “Wood” is a tango.

Finally we reach the “Finale.” First, just a little background. My teacher in college was a composer named John Corigliano. Before I ever studied with him, one of my favorite pieces was his Clarinet Concerto. It's not just a spectacular piece, but it's easily (to me, at least) one of the greatest wind concertos ever written. When I got this commission, Corigliano's concerto cast a pretty intense shadow over me. How could I possibly write a concerto anywhere near the quality of that work?

Well, I couldn't – so I stole his. “Finale” starts with a nearly direct quote of John Corigliano's Clarinet Concerto. In order to make it as meta as possible, my quote is in fact a quote of a quote. I'm quoting the Corigliano, which was, in these 6 bars, quoting a work by 16th century composer Giovanni Gabrieli, “Sonata Pian e Forte.” After my little tribute to my teacher, the solo part takes off for roughly four minutes of non-stop virtuosity. Structurally, this movement, like the first, contains material from the middle movements, “Felt,” “Metal,” and “Wood” – sort of the “assembly” of the saxophone. Here my answer to the question “what can a sax do?” was simply, “well, the sax can play some monster-difficult stuff.”

My sincere thanks to several sax players who worked with me through the process of writing this piece: Timothy Roberts of the US Navy Band, Timothy McAllister of the Prism Quartet, and Erik Steighner of Austin, Texas.

APPENDIX D

CATALOGUE OF WORKS FOR WIND BAND BY JOHN MACKEY

All works published by the composer and available from Osti Music, Inc.

Asphalt Cocktail (2008)

Commissioned by Howard J. Gourwitz as a gift to Dr. Kevin L. Sedatole and the Michigan State University Wind Symphony.

World premiere on March 28, 2009, at the CBDNA National Convention.
Bates Recital Hall at the University of Texas at Austin, conducted by Kevin Sedatole.

Clocking (2007)

Commissioned by the Central Oklahoma Directors Association (CODA).

World premiere on January 9, 2008, with the CODA honor band in Norman, Oklahoma, conducted by Richard Clary.

Concerto for Soprano Sax and Wind Ensemble (2007)

Commissioned by a consortium of twenty-eight university, community and professional wind ensembles.

World premiere on October 23, 2007, The Dallas Wind Symphony, conducted by Jerry Junkin. Don Fabian, soloist. Meyerson Symphony Center, Dallas, Texas.

Kingfishers Catch Fire (2007)

Commissioned by a consortium of seven Japanese school bands organized by Mamoru Nakata.

World premiere on March 17, 2007, JWECC '07 Special Band, conducted by Ichiro Saito. Kurashiki, Japan.

Redline Tango (2004)

Commissioned by a consortium of eight university wind ensembles organized by Scott A. Stewart of Emory University and Scott Weiss of Lamar University.

World premiere on February 26, 2004, by the Emory University Wind Ensemble, Scott Stewart, conductor.

Sasparilla (2005)

Commissioned by a consortium of seven university wind ensembles organized by Scott Weiss of Lamar University.

World premiere on April 17, 2005, by the Lamar University Wind Ensemble, Scott Weiss, conductor.

Strange Humors (2006)

Commissioned by the American Bandmasters Association.

World premiere on March 1, 2006, at the ABA Convention in Richardson, Texas. Performed by the Baylor University Wind Ensemble, conducted by Richard Floyd, to whom the work is dedicated.

Turbine (2006)

Commissioned by the Southeastern Conference Band Directors Association.

World premiere on February 24, 2006, at the Southeast Regional CBDNA Convention at Vanderbilt University in Nashville, Tennessee. Performed by the University of Kentucky Wind Ensemble, conducted by Cody Birdwell.

Turning (2007)

Commissioned by a consortium of nine high school and university wind ensembles organized by Josh Thompson of Lake Zurich High School.

World premiere on February 11, 2007, by the Texas Christian University Wind Symphony, Bobby Francis, conductor.

Undertow (2008)

Commissioned by the Hill Country Middle School Band, Cheryl Floyd and Charles Fischer, conductors

World premiere on May 13, 2008, at Bates Recital Hall at the University of Texas at Austin, conducted by Cheryl Floyd.