

MUSIC FOR A SAXOPHONE CONCERTO

By

JACQUELINE LEGGATT

B.Mus., Queen's University, 1985

M.Mus., University of British Columbia, 1990

A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF  
THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF  
DOCTOR OF MUSICAL ARTS (COMPOSITION)

in

THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES

(School of Music)

We accept this thesis as conforming

to the required standard

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

April 1996

© Jacqueline Leggatt, 1996

In presenting this thesis in partial fulfilment of the requirements for an advanced degree at the University of British Columbia, I agree that the Library shall make it freely available for reference and study. I further agree that permission for extensive copying of this thesis for scholarly purposes may be granted by the head of my department or by his or her representatives. It is understood that copying or publication of this thesis for financial gain shall not be allowed without my written permission.

Department of MUSIC

The University of British Columbia  
Vancouver, Canada

Date APRIL 26 / 96

## Abstract

*Music for a Saxophone Concerto* is a nineteen minute work for solo B<sup>b</sup> soprano saxophone, string orchestra and percussion. It contains three movements with an Interlude between the first and second movements and is performed without breaks between movements.

The discussion of *Music for a Saxophone Concerto* begins with a detailed analysis of the piece. Each movement is examined for its large and small-scale form, its pitch structure, and its links with other movements or sections in the piece. Next, the title is discussed since it is not traditional and serves to distance the listener from traditional concerti and make them question their assumptions when they sit down to listen to a saxophone concerto. For this reason, it is important to discuss briefly the Baroque, Romantic, and twentieth-century concerto to determine in which ways my piece would frustrate or compliment a modern listener's expectations.

The concept of partnership is most obvious in the Baroque concerto and in neo-Classical works of the twentieth century (like Stravinsky's *Violin Concerto*). The idea of opposing forces is more common in the Romantic period and twentieth century as exemplified by Beethoven's *Piano Concerto #5* and Schoenberg's *Violin Concerto*. While *Music for a Saxophone Concerto* utilizes a Baroque dance in the first movement, it is neither a real partnership nor a relationship between conflicting characters, but rather seeks to use the concept of the soloist as 'individual' and the orchestra as 'society' in a way that demonstrates their complete integration. For this reason, contrasting textures, instrumentation, orchestration, and forms have been chosen which all, in different ways, experiment with idea of the soloist and orchestra as mutually inclusive. The use of saxophone with strings is a continuation of a rich saxophone concerto tradition but the choice of soprano saxophone is less traditional and thus, with the title and many of the formal details, leads the listener to an appreciation of the possibilities inherent in an anti-concerto.

## Table of Contents

Abstract	ii
Table of Contents	iii
List of Figures	iv
Instrumentation	v
Score of <i>Music for a Saxophone Concerto</i>	1
First Movement	1
Interlude	19
Second Movement	26
Third Movement	60
Discussion of <i>Music for a Saxophone Concerto</i>	80
Introduction	80
Analysis of <i>Music for a Saxophone Concerto</i>	81
Overview	81
First Movement and Interlude	84
Second Movement	88
Third Movement	93
<i>Music for a Saxophone Concerto</i> as Anti-Concerto	96
Conclusion	101
Bibliography	102

## List of Figures

Figure 1	Form of <i>Music for a Saxophone Concerto</i>	83
Figure 2	Chord Progression A	83
Figure 3	Chord Progression B	85
Figure 4	Form of the First Movement	85
Figure 5	Viola Colour in Section A	89
Figure 6	Viola Talea in Section A	89
Figure 7	Viola Colour, bars 131-132	89
Figure 8	Viola Colour, bars 132-134	90
Figure 9	Viola Colour, bars 138-141	90
Figure 10	Viola Colour, bars 141-144	90
Figure 11	Saxophone Talea in Section A	90
Figure 12	Saxophone and Solo Violin Talea in Section B	91
Figure 13	Violin I and II Talea in Section B	91
Figure 14	'Cello and Bass Talea in Section B	91
Figure 15	Reduction of Bars 242-243	92
Figure 16	Form of Third Movement	93

## Instrumentation

Solo B<sup>b</sup> Soprano Saxophone\*

2 percussionists:

Vibraphone

Marimba

Timpani

Woodblock

Violins I

Violins II

Violas

Violoncelli

Contrabasses

\* The saxophone part is transposed in the score of *Music for a Saxophone Concerto*. In the discussion of the piece, reference to saxophone notes will always be made in concert pitch.

# Music for a Saxophone Concerto

Jacqueline Leggatt

1 

Bb Soprano Sax

Percussion I  
vibes      perc I & II on one vibe  
motor off/pedal down  
vibes      bowed vibes throughout

Percussion II

Violin I  
*con sordino*  
*mp*

Violin II  
*con sordino*  
*mp*

Viola  
*con sordino*  
*mp*

Cello  
*con sordino*  
*mp*

Contrabass  
*mp*

6

sax

perc I

perc II

vln I

vln II

vla

vcl

bass

The musical score consists of seven staves. The saxophone staff (sax) has a treble clef and contains six measures of sustained notes. The first percussion staff (perc I) has a treble clef and contains six measures of sustained notes, with a dynamic change from piano (*p*) to forte (*f*) in measure 11. The second percussion staff (perc II) has a treble clef and contains six measures of sustained notes. The violin I staff (vln I) has a treble clef and contains six measures of rhythmic patterns. The violin II staff (vln II) has a treble clef and contains six measures of rhythmic patterns. The viola staff (vla) has a 12/8 time signature and contains six measures of rhythmic patterns. The violoncello staff (vcl) has a bass clef and contains six measures of rhythmic patterns. The double bass staff (bass) has a bass clef and contains six measures of rhythmic patterns.



12

sax

perc I

perc II

vln I

vln II

vla

vle

bass

*mf sempre*

18

sax

perc I

perc II

vln I

vln II

vla

vcl

bass

The musical score for measures 18 through 23 is as follows:

Measure	sax	perc I	perc II	vln I	vln II	vla	vcl	bass
18	A4 quarter, B4 quarter, C5 quarter, D5 quarter, E5 quarter, F5 quarter	X	X	F#4 quarter	G4 quarter	F4 quarter	F#4 quarter	Bb3 quarter
19	G5 quarter, A5 quarter, B5 quarter, C6 quarter, D6 quarter, E6 quarter	X	X	A4 quarter	A4 quarter	G4 quarter	G4 quarter	Bb3 quarter
20	F6 quarter, G6 quarter, A6 quarter, B6 quarter, C7 quarter, D7 quarter	X	X	B4 quarter	B4 quarter	A4 quarter	A4 quarter	Bb3 quarter
21	E7 quarter, F7 quarter, G7 quarter, A7 quarter, B7 quarter, C8 quarter	X	X	D5 quarter	D5 quarter	B4 quarter	B4 quarter	Bb3 quarter
22	D8 quarter, E8 quarter, F8 quarter, G8 quarter, A8 quarter, B8 quarter	X	X	F5 quarter	F5 quarter	D5 quarter	D5 quarter	Bb3 quarter
23	C9 quarter, D9 quarter, E9 quarter, F9 quarter, G9 quarter, A9 quarter	X	X	A5 quarter	A5 quarter	F5 quarter	F5 quarter	Bb3 quarter

24

sax

perc I

perc II

*f*

vln I

vln II

vla

vcl

bass

Measure 24: Saxophone (A4), Percussion I (rest), Percussion II (G#4), Violin I (Bb3), Violin II (Bb3), Viola (Bb3), Violoncello (Bb3), Bass (Bb1).

Measure 25: Saxophone (A4), Percussion I (rest), Percussion II (rest), Violin I (A4), Violin II (A4), Viola (A4), Violoncello (A4), Bass (Bb1).

Measure 26: Saxophone (A4), Percussion I (rest), Percussion II (rest), Violin I (A4), Violin II (A4), Viola (A4), Violoncello (A4), Bass (Bb1).

Measure 27: Saxophone (A4), Percussion I (rest), Percussion II (rest), Violin I (A4), Violin II (A4), Viola (A4), Violoncello (A4), Bass (Bb1).

Measure 28: Saxophone (A4), Percussion I (rest), Percussion II (rest), Violin I (A4), Violin II (A4), Viola (A4), Violoncello (A4), Bass (Bb1).

Measure 29: Saxophone (A4), Percussion I (rest), Percussion II (rest), Violin I (A4), Violin II (A4), Viola (A4), Violoncello (A4), Bass (Bb1).

30

sax

perc I

perc II

vln I

vln II

vla

vcl

bass

The musical score for measures 30-35 is as follows:

Measure	sax	perc I	perc II	vln I	vln II	vla	vcl	bass
30	A4, quarter note	snare, quarter note	snare, quarter note	G4, quarter note	F#4, quarter note	F#4, quarter note	F#4, quarter note	F#4, quarter note
31	A4, quarter note	snare, quarter note	snare, quarter note	A4, quarter note	G4, quarter note	G4, quarter note	G4, quarter note	G4, quarter note
32	A4, quarter note	snare, quarter note	snare, quarter note	B4, quarter note	A4, quarter note	A4, quarter note	A4, quarter note	A4, quarter note
33	A4, quarter note	snare, quarter note	snare, quarter note	C5, quarter note	B4, quarter note	B4, quarter note	B4, quarter note	B4, quarter note
34	A4, quarter note	snare, quarter note	snare, quarter note	D5, quarter note	C5, quarter note	C5, quarter note	C5, quarter note	C5, quarter note
35	A4, quarter note	snare, quarter note	snare, quarter note	E5, quarter note	D5, quarter note	D5, quarter note	D5, quarter note	D5, quarter note

36

sax

perc I

perc II

*f*

vln I

vln II

vla

vle

bass

The musical score for measures 36-41 features the following parts:

- sax:** Melodic line with slurs across measures 36-41.
- perc I:** Rests in all measures.
- perc II:** Rests in measures 36, 37, 39, 40, and 41. A single note (F#4) is played in measure 38, marked with a forte (*f*) dynamic.
- vln I:** Eighth notes: Bb4, Bb4, A4, Bb4, Bb4, A4.
- vln II:** Eighth notes: Bb4, A4, G#4, A4, G#4, F#4.
- vla:** Eighth notes: Bb4, A4, G#4, A4, G#4, F#4.
- vle:** Eighth notes: Bb4, A4, G#4, A4, G#4, F#4.
- bass:** Eighth notes: Bb4, A4, G#4, A4, G#4, F#4.

42

sax

perc I

perc II

*f*

vln I

vln II

vla

vle

bass

The musical score for measures 42-47 is as follows:

- sax:** Melodic line with slurs across measures 42-47.
- perc I:** Rests in all measures.
- perc II:** Rests in measures 42, 43, 45, 46, and 47. A half note with a sharp sign is played in measure 44. A forte (*f*) dynamic marking is present.
- vln I:** Eighth notes in measures 42-43, followed by quarter notes in measures 44-47.
- vln II:** Eighth notes in measures 42-43, followed by quarter notes in measures 44-47.
- vla:** Eighth notes in measures 42-43, followed by quarter notes in measures 44-47.
- vle:** Eighth notes in measures 42-43, followed by quarter notes in measures 44-47.
- bass:** Eighth notes in measures 42-43, followed by quarter notes in measures 44-47.

48

sax

perc I

perc II

vln I

vln II

vla

vlc

bass

The musical score for measures 48-53 is as follows:

- sax:** Measures 48-53: A melodic line consisting of eighth notes: G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4.
- perc I:** Measures 48-53: Rests in measures 48, 49, and 51. In measure 50, there is a note with a forte (*f*) accent.
- perc II:** Measures 48-53: Rests in all measures.
- vln I:** Measures 48-53: Eighth notes with accidentals: Bb4, C5, D5, Eb5, C5, Bb4.
- vln II:** Measures 48-53: Eighth notes with accidentals: Bb4, C5, D5, Eb5, F#5, G#5.
- vla:** Measures 48-53: Eighth notes with accidentals: Bb4, C5, D5, Eb5, Bb4, Bb4.
- vlc:** Measures 48-53: Eighth notes with accidentals: Bb4, C5, D5, Eb5, Bb4, Bb4.
- bass:** Measures 48-53: Eighth notes with accidentals: Bb4, C5, D5, Eb5, Bb4, Bb4.

54

sax

perc I

perc II

*f*

vln I

vln II

vla

vlc

bass



60

sax

perc I

perc II

vln I

vln II

vla

vlc

bass

*f*

The musical score for measures 60-65 is as follows:

- sax:** Treble clef, key of D major. Measures 60-65: D4 (half), E4 (half), F#4 (half), G4 (half), A4 (half), B4 (half). Slur over measures 60-65.
- perc I:** Treble clef. Measures 60-65: Rest. Measure 64: D5 (half), marked *f*.
- perc II:** Treble clef, key of D major. Measures 60-65: D4 (half), E4 (half), F#4 (half), G4 (half), A4 (half), B4 (half). Slur over measures 60-65. Measure 60: D4 (half), marked *f*.
- vln I:** Treble clef, key of D major. Measures 60-65: D4 (quarter), E4 (quarter), F#4 (quarter), G4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), B4 (quarter). Slur over measures 60-65.
- vln II:** Treble clef, key of D major. Measures 60-65: D4 (quarter), E4 (quarter), F#4 (quarter), G4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), B4 (quarter). Slur over measures 60-65.
- vla:** Bass clef, key of D major. Measures 60-65: D4 (quarter), E4 (quarter), F#4 (quarter), G4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), B4 (quarter). Slur over measures 60-65.
- vlc:** Bass clef, key of D major. Measures 60-65: D4 (quarter), E4 (quarter), F#4 (quarter), G4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), B4 (quarter). Slur over measures 60-65.
- bass:** Bass clef, key of D major. Measures 60-65: D4 (quarter), E4 (quarter), F#4 (quarter), G4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), B4 (quarter). Slur over measures 60-65.

66

sax

perc I

perc II

vln I

vln II

vla

vcl

bass

The musical score for measures 66-71 features the following details:

- Saxophone:** A melodic line in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#). It consists of six measures, each containing a half note with a slur over it. The notes are G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, and A4.
- Percussion I:** Treble clef. Measures 66-70 contain whole rests. In measure 71, it plays a half note G4, marked with a forte (*f*) dynamic.
- Percussion II:** Treble clef. It plays a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes: G4 (half note), A4 (quarter note), B4 (quarter note), C5 (half note), B4 (quarter note), and A4 (quarter note). Measures 66, 68, and 70 have a forte (*f*) dynamic marking.
- Violin I:** Treble clef. It plays a sequence of half notes: G4, F#4, E4, D4, C4, and B3. The notes G4 and E4 are marked with a flat (*b*).
- Violin II:** Treble clef. It plays a sequence of half notes: G4, F#4, E4, D4, C4, and B3. The notes F#4 and D4 are marked with a sharp (#).
- Viola:** Alto clef. It plays a sequence of half notes: G4, F#4, E4, D4, C4, and B3. The notes F#4 and D4 are marked with a sharp (#).
- Violoncello:** Bass clef. It plays a sequence of half notes: G4, F#4, E4, D4, C4, and B3. The notes G4 and E4 are marked with a flat (*b*).
- Bass:** Bass clef. It plays a sequence of half notes: G4, F#4, E4, D4, C4, and B3. The notes G4 and E4 are marked with a flat (*b*).

72

sax

perc I

perc II

*f*

vln I

vln II

vla

vcl

bass

The musical score for measures 72-77 is as follows:

Measure	sax	perc I	perc II	vln I	vln II	vla	vcl	bass
72	A4, quarter, slur	8th, eighth rest	C2, half, <i>f</i>	G#4, quarter rest	F#4, quarter rest	F#4, quarter rest	F#4, quarter rest	F#4, quarter rest
73	A4, quarter, slur	8th, eighth rest	C2, half, <i>f</i>	A4, quarter rest	G4, quarter rest	G4, quarter rest	G4, quarter rest	G4, quarter rest
74	A4, quarter, slur	8th, eighth rest	C2, half, <i>f</i>	A4, quarter rest	G4, quarter rest	G4, quarter rest	G4, quarter rest	G4, quarter rest
75	A4, quarter, slur	8th, eighth rest	C2, half, <i>f</i>	A4, quarter rest	G4, quarter rest	G4, quarter rest	G4, quarter rest	G4, quarter rest
76	A4, quarter, slur	8th, eighth rest	C2, half, <i>f</i>	A4, quarter rest	G4, quarter rest	G4, quarter rest	G4, quarter rest	G4, quarter rest
77	A4, quarter, slur	8th, eighth rest	C2, half, <i>f</i>	A4, quarter rest	G4, quarter rest	G4, quarter rest	G4, quarter rest	G4, quarter rest

78

sax

perc I

perc II

vln I

vln II

vla

vcl

bass

The musical score for measures 78-83 is as follows:

- Measure 78:** Key signature change to one flat (Bb). Common time signature. Saxophone enters with a melodic line. Percussion I and II have rests. Violin I, Violin II, Viola, Violoncello, and Double Bass enter with a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes.
- Measure 79:** Saxophone continues its melodic line. Percussion I and II have rests. Violoncello has a forte (f) accent. The string section continues its rhythmic pattern.
- Measures 80-83:** The saxophone and string section continue their respective parts. Percussion I and II remain silent.

84

Sax

perc I

perc II

vln I

vln II

vla

vle

bass

The musical score for measures 84-89 is as follows:

- Sax:** Measures 84-89: A melodic line starting on G4, moving up stepwise to D5, with a slur and a fermata over the final measure.
- perc I:** Measures 84-89: A single note on G4 in measure 85, marked *f*, with a slur and a fermata over the final measure.
- perc II:** Measures 84-89: A single note on G4 in measure 85, with a slur and a fermata over the final measure.
- vln I:** Measures 84-89: A rhythmic pattern of eighth notes and quarter notes, starting on G4 and moving up stepwise to D5.
- vln II:** Measures 84-89: A rhythmic pattern of eighth notes and quarter notes, starting on G4 and moving up stepwise to D5.
- vla:** Measures 84-89: A rhythmic pattern of eighth notes and quarter notes, starting on G4 and moving up stepwise to D5.
- vle:** Measures 84-89: A rhythmic pattern of eighth notes and quarter notes, starting on G4 and moving up stepwise to D5.
- bass:** Measures 84-89: A rhythmic pattern of eighth notes and quarter notes, starting on G4 and moving up stepwise to D5.

90

sax

perc I

perc II

*f*

vln I

vln II

vla

vcl

bass

96

Sax

perc I

perc II

vln I

vln II

vla

vle

bass

102

Sax

perc I

perc II

vln I

vln II

vla

vle

bass

to marimba

*f*

to timpani

*senza sordino*

*senza sordino*

*senza sordino*

*senza sordino*

*senza sordino*



108

• = 60 *expressively*

sax

perc I

perc II

vln I

vln II

vla

vlc

bass

timpani

*fff*

solo

*f*

*mf*

The musical score for measures 108-111 is as follows:

- Measure 108:** Saxophone plays a half note G4, a half note A4, and a whole note B4. Timpani plays a roll marked *fff*. Percussion I and II play whole notes G2 and A2 respectively. Violins I and II play whole notes G4 and A4. Viola and Violoncello play whole notes G2 and A2. Bass plays a whole note G1.
- Measure 109:** Saxophone plays a half note C5, a half note D5, and a whole note E5. Timpani plays a roll marked *fff*. Percussion I and II play whole notes G2 and A2. Violins I and II play whole notes G4 and A4. Viola and Violoncello play whole notes G2 and A2. Bass plays a whole note G1.
- Measure 110:** Saxophone plays a half note F5, a half note G5, and a whole note A5. Timpani plays a roll marked *fff*. Percussion I and II play whole notes G2 and A2. Violins I and II play whole notes G4 and A4. Viola and Violoncello play whole notes G2 and A2. Bass plays a whole note G1.
- Measure 111:** Saxophone plays a half note B5, a half note C6, and a whole note D6. Timpani plays a roll marked *fff*. Percussion I and II play whole notes G2 and A2. Violins I and II play whole notes G4 and A4. Viola and Violoncello play whole notes G2 and A2. Bass plays a whole note G1.

113

sax

perc I

perc II

vln I

vln II

vla

vle

bass

to woodblock

*p*

3

The musical score for measures 113-115 is as follows:

- Measure 113:** All instruments are in 5/4 time. The saxophone, percussion I, percussion II, violin I, violin II, viola, and violoncello have whole rests. The bass part begins with a quarter note G2, followed by an eighth note F2, and a half note E2.
- Measure 114:** The time signature changes to 3/4. The saxophone, percussion I, percussion II, violin I, violin II, viola, and violoncello have whole rests. The bass part has a quarter note G2, followed by an eighth note F2, and a half note E2.
- Measure 115:** The time signature changes to 5/4. The saxophone, percussion I, percussion II, violin I, violin II, viola, and violoncello have whole rests. The bass part has a triplet of eighth notes (G2, F2, E2) followed by a half note D2.

116

Sax

perc I

perc II

vln I

vln II

vla

vle

bass

*f*

*mf*

3

6

119

sax

perc I

woodblock

mp

perc II

marimba

mp

vln I

vln II

vla

vle

bass

*p*

*mf*

3

Detailed description: This is a page of a musical score, page 22, showing measures 119 through 122. The score is for a large ensemble. The instruments and their parts are as follows:

- sax**: Treble clef, common time. Measures 119-121 are whole rests. Measure 122 is a whole rest.
- perc I**: Bass clef, common time. Measure 119 is a whole rest. Measure 120 has a woodblock part marked *mp* (mezzo-piano) consisting of a dotted quarter note followed by an eighth rest.
- perc II**: Bass clef, common time. Measures 119-120 are whole rests. Measure 121 has a marimba part marked *mp* consisting of a quarter note followed by a dotted quarter note.
- vln I**: Treble clef, common time. Measures 119-121 are whole rests. Measure 122 is a whole rest.
- vln II**: Treble clef, common time. Measures 119-121 are whole rests. Measure 122 is a whole rest.
- vla**: Alto clef, common time. Measures 119-121 are whole rests. Measure 122 is a whole rest.
- vle**: Bass clef, common time. Measures 119-121 are whole rests. Measure 122 is a whole rest.
- bass**: Bass clef, common time. Measure 119 starts with an accent and a *p* (piano) dynamic. Measure 120 has a *mf* (mezzo-forte) dynamic. Measure 121 has a half note. Measure 122 has a triplet of eighth notes.

The time signature changes from common time (C) to 2/4 at the end of measure 121.

123

Sax

perc I

perc II

vln I

vln II

vla

vcl

bass

*cresc.*

*mf*

*f*

*ff*

125

sax

perc I

perc II

vln I

vln II

vla

vle

bass

3

*f*

3

128

sax

perc I

perc II

timpani

*mp* *ppp* *fff*

vln I

vln II

vla

vle

bass

*mf* *attacca*

# II

♩ = 112

131

sax

vln I

vln II

vla

vcl

bass

*mp*

*pp*

*pp* pizz.

*mp*

1/2 section

1/3 section

134

sax

vln I

vln II

vla

vcl

bass

*div. pp*



138 *espressivo*

sax *mp*

vln I

vln II *pp* 2/3 section

vla

vlc

bass

142

sax *mp*

vln I

vln II

vla

vlc

bass

146

sax

vln I

vln II

vla

vle

bass

Measures 146-149. The saxophone part begins with a melodic line in measure 146, featuring slurs and ties. Violin I and II have sustained notes. Viola and Violoncello have sustained notes. Bass has a rhythmic pattern.

150

sax

vln I

vln II

vla

vle

bass

Measures 150-153. The saxophone part continues with a melodic line. Violin I and II have sustained notes. Viola and Violoncello have sustained notes. Bass has a rhythmic pattern.

153

sax

*mp*

*pp*

8va  
1:2 section

vln I

vln II

vla

vle

bass

157

sax

(8va)

vln I

vln II

vla

vle

bass

160

sax

(8va) *mp*

vln I

vln II

vla

vle

bass

163

sax

(8va)

vln I

vln II

vla

vle

bass

166

sax

*cresc*

(8<sup>va</sup>)

vln I

vln II

vln II

vla

*cresc*

vle

bass

The musical score for measures 166-168 features the following details:

- Saxophone:** Treble clef, key of F#. Measure 166 starts with a half note F#4, followed by a quarter note G4, a half note A4, and a quarter note Bb4. Measure 167 has a half note C5, a quarter note Bb4, a half note A4, and a quarter note G4. Measure 168 has a half note F#4, a quarter note E4, a half note D4, and a quarter note C4. A *cresc* marking is present below the staff.
- Violin I & II:** Treble clef. All three staves (labeled vln I, vln II, and vln II) play sustained whole notes: F#4 in measure 166, G4 in measure 167, and A4 in measure 168. A dashed line labeled (8<sup>va</sup>) indicates the notes are to be played an octave higher.
- Viola:** Treble clef, key of F#. Measure 166 has a half note F#4, a quarter note G4, a half note A4, and a quarter note Bb4. Measure 167 has a half note C5, a quarter note Bb4, a half note A4, and a quarter note G4. Measure 168 has a half note F#4, a quarter note E4, a half note D4, and a quarter note C4. A *cresc* marking is present below the staff.
- Violoncello:** Bass clef. All three staves play sustained whole notes: F#3 in measure 166, G3 in measure 167, and A3 in measure 168.
- Bass:** Bass clef. Measure 166 has a quarter rest, an eighth note F#3, a quarter rest, and an eighth note G3. Measure 167 has a quarter rest, a half note A3, a quarter rest, and an eighth note Bb3. Measure 168 has a quarter rest, a half note C4, a quarter rest, and an eighth note Bb3. A 'z' (zaccato) marking is present above the staff in measure 167.

169

sax

(8va) -

vln I

vln II

vln II

1/3 section

*pp*

vla

vlc

bass

172

sax

*cresc*

(8va)

vln I

vln II

vln II

vla

*cresc*

vlc

bass

The musical score for measures 172 and 173 features the following parts:

- sax**: Treble clef, melodic line with a crescendo (*cresc*) across the two measures.
- (8va)**: A dashed line indicating an octave transposition for the violin parts.
- vln I**: Treble clef, sustained notes.
- vln II**: Treble clef, sustained notes.
- vln II**: Treble clef, sustained notes.
- vla**: Treble clef, melodic line with a crescendo (*cresc*) across the two measures.
- vlc**: Bass clef, sustained notes.
- bass**: Bass clef, simple rhythmic pattern.

174

sax

(8va)

*f*

vln I

vln II

vln II

vla

vlc

bass

The musical score for measures 174-176 is as follows:

- Saxophone (8va):** Measures 174-176. Melodic line with slurs, marked *f*.
- Violin I:** Measures 174-176. Sustained notes.
- Violin II:** Measures 174-176. Sustained notes.
- Violin II:** Measures 174-176. Sustained notes.
- Viola:** Measures 174-176. Melodic line.
- Cello:** Measures 174-176. Sustained notes.
- Bass:** Measures 174-176. Rhythmic line.



177

sax

(8va)

vln I

vln II

vln II

vla

vle

bass

*f*

The musical score for measures 177-179 features the following details:

- Saxophone:** Measures 177-179. Melodic line with a slur. Dynamic marking: (8va).
- Violin I:** Measures 177-179. Sustained notes.
- Violin II (two staves):** Measures 177-179. Sustained notes.
- Viola:** Measures 177-179. Melodic line with a dynamic marking of *f*.
- Violoncello:** Measures 177-179. Sustained notes.
- Bass:** Measures 177-179. Rhythmic pattern with eighth notes and rests.

180

sax

(8va)

vln I

vln II

vln II

vla

vle

bass

The musical score is written for measures 180 and 181. The saxophone part (sax) is in treble clef and plays a melodic line in measure 180, which continues into measure 181 with a trill. The violin I (vln I) part is in treble clef and has a sustained note in measure 180, with a dashed line labeled (8va) indicating an octave transposition in measure 181. The violin II (vln II) parts are in treble clef and have sustained notes in measure 180, entering in measure 181. The viola (vla) part is in treble clef and plays a melodic line in measure 180, which continues into measure 181. The violoncello (vle) part is in bass clef and has a sustained note in measure 180, entering in measure 181. The bass part is in bass clef and has a sustained note in measure 180, entering in measure 181.

182

sax

(8va)

vln I

vln II

vln II

vla

vcl

bass



186

sax

(8va)

vln I

vln II

vln II

vla

vle

bass

The musical score for measures 186 and 187 features the following parts:

- sax**: Melodic line in treble clef with slurs and ties. An octave transposition line labeled *(8va)* is shown below the staff.
- vln I**: Sustained notes in treble clef.
- vln II**: Sustained notes in treble clef.
- vln II**: Sustained notes in treble clef.
- vla**: Moving line in treble clef.
- vle**: Moving line in bass clef.
- bass**: Simple accompaniment in bass clef.

188

sax

(8va)

vln I

vln II

vln II

vla

vlc

bass

This musical score page contains measures 188 and 189 for a string quartet and saxophone. The saxophone part (sax) is in treble clef and features a melodic line with eighth and sixteenth notes, including a trill in measure 189. A dashed line labeled (8va) indicates an octave transposition. The string parts include Violin I (vln I), Violin II (vln II), Viola (vln II), Violoncello (vlc), and Bass (bass). The strings provide harmonic support with sustained notes and moving lines. The key signature has one flat (B-flat), and the time signature is 4/4.

190

sax

(gva)

vln I

vln II

vln II

vla

vlc

bass

This musical score page contains measures 190 and 191. The instruments are saxophone, violin I, violin II (two staves), viola, violoncello, and bass. Measure 190 features a saxophone melody with eighth and quarter notes, some beamed together. The strings provide harmonic support with various note values and rests. Measure 191 continues the saxophone melody and string accompaniment. A dashed line labeled '(gva)' is positioned between the saxophone and violin I staves.

192

sax

(8va)

*mf* 5

5

vln I

vln II

vln II

vla

*mf*

vlc

bass



194

sax

(8va)

5

cresc

vln I

vln II

vln II

vla

vlc

bass

Detailed description: This is a page of a musical score, measures 194 and 195. The saxophone part (8va) begins with a rest, followed by a melodic line with a crescendo. The violin I and II parts have sustained notes. The viola and cello parts have moving lines. The bass part has a rhythmic pattern.

196

sax

(8va)

vln I

*cresc*

vln II

*cresc*

vln II

*cresc*

vla

*cresc*

vle

*cresc*

bass

198

sax

*f* *mf* 5 5

(8va)

vln I

vln II

vln II

vla

vlc

bass

200

sax

*cresc* 5 *f* 5

(S<sup>va</sup>)

vln I

*mf*

vln II

*mf*

vln II

*mf*

vla

*mf*

vlc

*mf*

bass

202

sax

*cresc*

(8va)

vln I

vln II

*cresc*

vln II

*cresc*

vla

*cresc*

vle

*cresc*

bass

204

sax

*cresc* 5

(8va) -

vln I

vln II

vln II

vla

vcl

bass

206

sax

(8va) *ff*

vln I *f*

vln II *f*

vln II *f*

vla *f*

vle *f*

bass

208

sax

(8va)

vln I

vln II

vln II

vla

vle

bass

*cresc*

*cresc*

*cresc*

*cresc*

*cresc*

*cresc*

The musical score is written for a chamber ensemble. It consists of six staves. The top staff is for saxophone (sax), followed by violin I (vln I), violin II (vln II), a second violin II (vln II), viola (vla), violoncello (vle), and bass. The key signature has one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 3/4. Measure 208 starts with a saxophone entry. A dashed line with '(8va)' indicates an octave transposition for the violin I part. Dynamic markings of 'cresc' (crescendo) are placed below several staves in measures 209 and 210. The score ends with a double bar line at the end of measure 210.



210

$\bullet = 66$

sax

*fff* *pp*

s. vln

*pp*

(8va)

vln I

*fff* *pp*

vln II

*fff* *pp* tutti

vln II

*fff*

vla

vle

*fff*

bass

214

sax

s. vln

(8va)

vln I

vln II



218

sax

s. vln

(8va)

vln I

vln II

222

sax

*mf*

s. vln

(8<sup>va</sup>)

vln I

*mf*

vln II

*mf*

vle

*mf*

arco

bass

*mf*

225

sax

s. vln

(8<sup>va</sup>)

vln I

vln II

vle

bass

227

sax

s. vln

(8va)

vln I

vln II

vle

bass

229

sax

s. vln

(8va)

vln I

vln II

vle

bass

231

sax

s. vln

(8va)

vln I

vln II

vlc

bass

233

sax

s. vln

(8va)

vln I

vln II

vlc

bass

235

sax

s. vln

(8<sup>va</sup>)

vln I

vln II

vcl

bass

237

sax

s. vln

(8<sup>va</sup>)

vln I

vln II

vcl

bass

239

sax

s. vln

(8<sup>va</sup>)

vln I

vln II

vle

bass

241

sax

$\bullet = 112$

*p*

s. vln

(8<sup>va</sup>)

*p*

vln I

vln II

vle

bass

243

sax

s. vln

245

sax

s. vln

248

sax

s. vln

251

sax

s. vln

254

sax

s. vln



257

sax

s. vln

259

260

sax

s. vln

262

263

sax

s. vln

*no ritard or diminuendo*

*attacca*

# III

267  = 72

sax 

perc I 

perc II 

vln. 1 *solo*  
*ppp*  *ff*  *pp*  *ff*  *pp*

vln. 2 

vln. 3 

vln. 4 

vln. 5 

vln. 6 

vla. 1 *solo*  
*pp*  *ff*  *pp*  *ff*

vla. 2 

vcl. 1  *solo*  
 *pp*

vcl. 2 

bass 1 

bass 2 

272

vln. 1 *ff* *pp* *ff* *pp* *ff*

vln. 4 *solo* *pp* *ff*

vla. 1 *pp* *ff* *pp*

vlc. 1 *ff* *pp* *ff*

vlc. 2 *pp* *ff*

bass 1 *solo* *pp* *ff* *pp* *ff*

≡

277

vln. 1 *pp* *ff* *pp* *ff*

vln. 4 *pp* *ff*

vla. 1 *ff* *pp* *ff*

vlc. 1 *pp* *ff* *pp* *ff*

vlc. 2 *pp* *ff* *pp*

bass 1 *pp* *ff*

bass 2 *pp*

♩ = 78

musical score for page 282, featuring multiple staves for various instruments and dynamics.

**Staves and Instruments:**

- sax
- perc I
- perc II
- vln. 1
- vln. 2
- vln. 3
- vln. 4
- vln. 5
- vln. 6
- vla. 1
- vla. 2
- vlc. 1
- vlc. 2
- bass I
- bass 2

**Dynamics and Performance Markings:**

- pp* (pianissimo) is marked at the beginning of the lower strings (vln. 4-6, vla. 1-2, vlc. 1-2, bass I-2).
- ff* (fortissimo) is marked at the end of the lower strings.
- Accents and slurs are present on various notes in the lower strings.

musical score for percussion and strings, measures 286-290.

**percussion:**

- sax: Treble clef, 3/4 time signature.
- perc I: Treble clef, 3/4 time signature. Includes lyrics: *vibes*, *no motor*, *no pedal*. Features triplet markings (3).
- perc II: Treble clef, 3/4 time signature. Includes lyrics: *marimba*. Features triplet markings (3).

**strings:**

- vln. 1, vln. 2, vln. 3: Treble clef, 3/4 time signature. Marked *tutti* and *f* (forte).
- vln. 4, vln. 5, vln. 6: Treble clef, 3/4 time signature. Marked *f* (forte).
- vla. 1, vla. 2: Bass clef, 3/4 time signature. Marked *f* (forte).
- vlc. 1, vlc. 2: Bass clef, 3/4 time signature. Marked *f* (forte).
- bass 1, bass 2: Bass clef, 3/4 time signature.

289

sax

*pp* *mf* *accel.*

perc I

perc II

vln. 1

*solo* *mf* *solo*

vln. 2

*mf*

vln. 3

vln. 4

*ppp*

vln. 5

vln. 6

vla. 1

vla. 2

vcl. 1

vcl. 2

bass 1

bass 2

294

5

5

5

5

5

♩ = 66

sax

vln. 1

vln. 2

vln. 3

vln. 4

vln. 5

vla. 1

vla. 2

vcl. 1

vcl. 2

bass 1

bass 2

*tutti*

*mf*

*tutti*

*mf*

*mf*

3







303 

sax 

perc I 

perc II 

vln. 1 

vln. 2 

vln. 3 

vln. 4 

vln. 5 

vln. 6 

vla. 1 

vla. 2 

vlc. 1 

vlc. 2 

bass 1 

bass 2 

\* play as fast a possible, repeat as often as needed, all staccatto. *mf*

sax *cresc.* *ff*  
 perc I *vibes* *no pedal no motor* *ff*  
 perc II *marimba* *ff*  
 vln. 1 *cresc.* *ff*  
 vln. 2 *cresc.* *ff*  
 vln. 3 *cresc.* *ff*  
 vln. 4 *cresc.* *ff*  
 vln. 5 *cresc.* *ff*  
 vln. 6 *cresc.* *ff*  
 vla. 1 *mf* *ff*  
 vla. 2 *mf* *ff*  
 vlc. 1 *mf* *ff*  
 vlc. 2 *mf* *ff*  
 bass I *mf* *ff*  
 bass II *mf* *ff*

310

sax

perc I

perc II

vln. 1

vln. 2

vln. 3

vln. 4

vln. 5

vln. 6

vla. 1

vla. 2

vlc. 1

vlc. 2

bass 1

bass 2

This musical score page contains measures 310 and 311 for a large ensemble. The instruments are arranged in the following order from top to bottom: Saxophone (sax), Percussion I (perc I), Percussion II (perc II), Violins I (vln. 1), Violins II (vln. 2), Violins III (vln. 3), Violins IV (vln. 4), Violins V (vln. 5), Violins VI (vln. 6), Violas I (vla. 1), Violas II (vla. 2), Violoncellos I (vlc. 1), Violoncellos II (vlc. 2), Basses I (bass 1), and Basses II (bass 2). Measure 310 features a dense texture with many sixteenth-note passages. Measure 311 shows a continuation of this texture with some melodic fragments emerging. Fingerings (e.g., 5, 6) and breath marks are indicated throughout. A first ending bracket labeled '8va' spans measures 310 and 311 for the first three violins and the first two violas.

M2

sax

perc I

perc II

vln. 1

vln. 2

vln. 3

vln. 4

vln. 5

vln. 6

vla. 1

vla. 2

vcl. 1

vcl. 2

bass 1

bass 2

*p*

*pp*

315

perc I

*mf*

318

perc I

perc II

*mf*

vln. 6

vcl. 2

*p*

321

perc I

perc II

vln. 1

vln. 6

vla. 1

vcl. 2

*pizz*

*f*

*pp*

*f*

*p*

324

perc I

perc II

vln. I

vln. 6

vla. I

vlc. 2

327

sax

perc I

perc II

vln. I

vln. 6

vla. I

vlc. 2

330

sax

perc I

perc II

vl. 1

vl. 2

vl. 3

vl. 4

vl. 5

vl. 6

vla. 1

vla. 2

vlc. 1

vlc. 2

bass 1

bass 2









342

sax

*mf*

347

sax

352

sax

357

sax

*p*

marimba

perc II

vln. 1

*solo*

362

perc I

vibes

5

*lv.*

pedal down

perc II

vln. 1

vla. 1

*solo*

vcl. 2

*solo*

3

367

$\bullet = 50$

3

sax

vln. 1

vla. 1

372

3

bowed

pedal down

sax

perc 1

vln. 1

vla. 1

vla. 2

Dur: 19 minutes

# Discussion of *Music for a Saxophone Concerto*

## Introduction

The discussion of *Music for a Saxophone Concerto* begins with a detailed analysis of the piece. Each movement is examined for its large and small-scale form, its pitch structure, and its links with other movements or sections in the piece. Next, the title is discussed since it is not traditional and serves to distance the listeners from the traditional concerto, prompting them to question their assumptions when they sit down to listen to a saxophone concerto. For this reason, it is important to discuss briefly the Baroque, Romantic, and twentieth-century concerto to determine in which ways my piece would frustrate or compliment a modern listener's expectations.

The concept of partnership is most obvious in the Baroque concerto and in neo-Classical works of the twentieth century (like Stravinsky's *Violin Concerto*). The idea of opposing forces is more common in the Romantic period and twentieth century as exemplified by Beethoven's *Piano Concerto #5* and Schoenberg's *Violin Concerto*. While *Music for a Saxophone Concerto* utilizes a Baroque dance in the first movement, it displays neither a real partnership nor a relationship between conflicting characters, but rather seeks to use the concept of the soloist as 'individual' and the orchestra as 'society' in a way that demonstrates their complete integration. For this reason, contrasting textures, instrumentation, orchestration, and forms have been chosen which all, in different ways, experiment with idea of the soloist and orchestra as mutually inclusive. The use of saxophone with strings is a continuation of a rich saxophone concerto tradition but the choice of soprano saxophone is less traditional and thus, with the title and many of the formal details, leads the listener to an appreciation of the possibilities inherent in an anti-concerto.

# Analysis of *Music for a Saxophone Concerto*

## Overview

*Music for a Saxophone Concerto* is a three-movement work with an Interlude between the first two movements and is scored for solo B<sup>b</sup> soprano saxophone, string orchestra and two percussionists. The first movement consists of bars 1-109, the Interlude bars 110-130, the second movement bars 131-266, and the third movement bars 267-377. There are no breaks between the movements and the total duration is nineteen minutes. Because of the divisions in the second and third movements, a string orchestra comprising at least six first violins, six second violins, four violas, four celli, and two basses is needed although an ideal size would be 12-12-8-8-4. The percussion instruments are vibraphone, marimba, timpani and woodblock.

The percussion writing in this piece is typical of my percussion style in general. Many composers use a large variety of different instruments when they write for percussion but I have always preferred a small number. In this way, each instrument is used extensively, and the combination of instruments is chosen to give a particular sound without a large contrast in timbre within a movement. For example, in the first movement, both percussionists bow a single vibraphone and stand on either side of the instrument so that the 'white keys' are bowed by percussion 1 and the 'black keys' by percussion 2. This sound complements the string chords and the held C of the saxophone so that the whole first movement is made up of long, sustained sounds. In the Interlude, the percussionists move to timpani, woodblock, and marimba so the contrast is achieved by moving from a bowed metal sound with a long decay (in the first movement), to a brittle (mainly) wood sound in the Interlude. The second movement has no percussion and the third movement is scored for struck vibraphone and marimba. In this movement, the metal and wood sounds are combined but they play a very

similar texture and the vibraphone plays without pedal or motor which reduces the perception of timbral difference (see bars 318-341).

The string writing in the first movement is legato, *con sordino*, and the tessitura is always within four octaves. In the second movement, the mutes are removed, the tessitura is expanded, and a detached texture predominates until bar 242 when solo violin and saxophone play staccato. In the third movement, the string writing becomes less traditional, the tessitura is expanded to the furthest possible limits, and many contrasting textures are used. For example, long held notes that move from *pp* to *ff* (bars 267-279), rhythmic unison (bars 287-289, 308-312, 336-340)), complex counterpoint (bars 290-302), high-pitched staccato lines played very quickly (bar 305), and long legato lines (bars 360-375).

Similarly, the saxophone writing moves from being very simple to being gradually more complex and contrasting. In the first movement, the held C requires the performer to circular breathe on a single pitch at *mf* for almost six minutes. The second movement contains lyrical saxophone writing throughout and the third movement includes the saxophone within many different textures; rhythmic unison with the strings (bars 287-288), staccato with vibraphone and marimba (bars 328-340), and lyrical solo passages (bars 341-360). The saxophone is used primarily in its middle and high registers; the low register was avoided for reasons of balance.

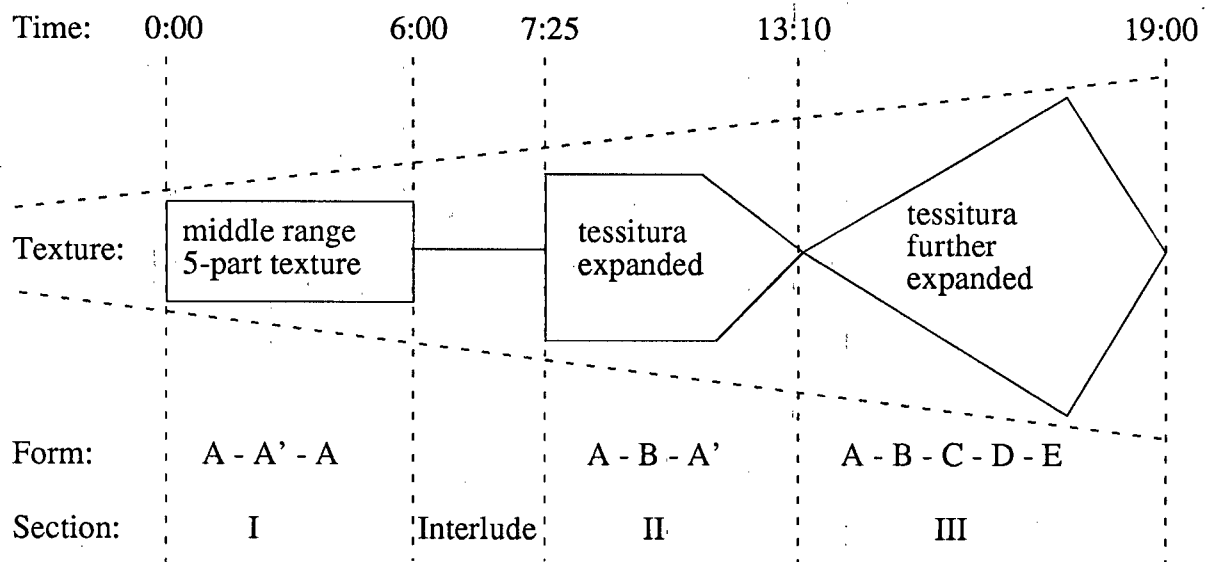
The form of the whole piece is best described as a gradual crescendo and the effect is one of moving by degrees from a very static texture in the first movement with chordal strings and the held C in the saxophone, to a more busy texture in the third movement where contrasts are sudden and textures are varied. Besides texture, the tessitura, dynamic range, rhythmic and pitch complexity, and smaller-scale formal organization also articulate this gradual crescendo. Pitch and form will be discussed in detail later but it is important to note that the piece moves from a generally consonant pitch organization (in the first movement) to one that is extremely dissonant (in the third) and that the form of each movement is sectionalized into increasingly smaller sections as the piece progresses which helps give the impression of increased activity.



Likewise, dynamics move from a constant state in the first movement to the use of a steady crescendo in the second movement to the use of large contrasts in the third movement.

There are several passages for solo string instruments in this piece: the Interlude is for solo double bass with percussion accompaniment; in the second movement, solo violin and saxophone play a duet (bars 242-266); and in the third movement (bars 267-377), solo violin, viola, 'cello and bass dominate the opening and, with the saxophone, closing measures. However, the most predominant use of a single voice texture occurs in the Interlude and in the opening measures of the third movement (bars 267-270) when solo violin and viola play overlapping statements of a held B. Thus, the gradual crescendo is not constant, but is broken up by sections of less activity and/or intensity. How all these elements work together is best viewed in a diagram:

Figure 1 Form of *Music for a Saxophone Concerto*

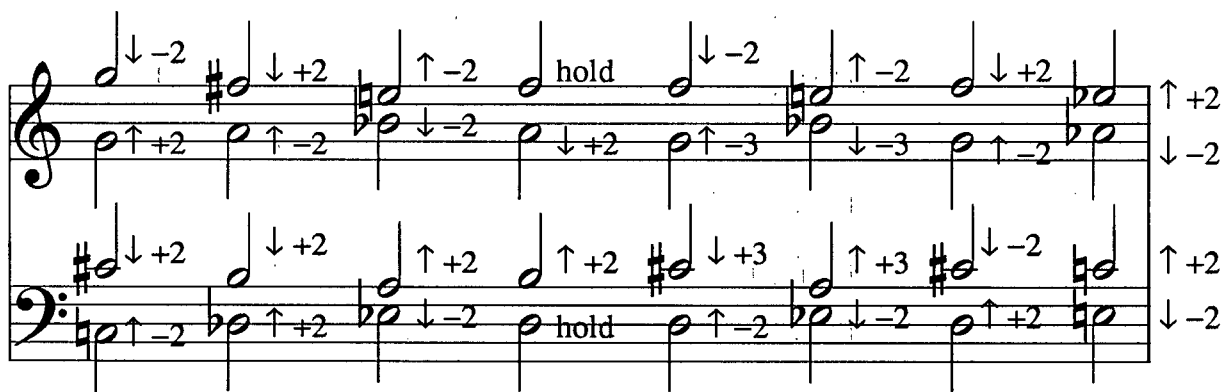


## First Movement and Interlude

The first movement (bars 1-109) is based on two Baroque forms; the chaconne and the sarabande. Consequently it is slow, in triple time, with the emphasis on the second beat of the bar, and it contains a repeating bass melody and chord progression. The string texture is basically 4 parts (soprano, alto, tenor, bass); the first violins play the soprano part, the second violins play the alto part, the violas play the tenor part and the 'celli and basses play the bass part. Each voice in the 4-part texture has a repeating interval pattern that is different from the other voices (see Figure 2).

Figure 2

Chord Progression A



Thus, chord progression B will begin with D in the bass, D in the tenor, F# in the alto, and F in the soprano and then the ensuing chords will be generated according to the interval pattern outlined above (see Figure 3).

By using this pattern, motivic unity is maintained in each part while the type of chord is constantly changing; the first chord in progression A is a C major chord with added sharp-1 while the first chord in progression B is a D major chord with added natural-3 and the 5th omitted.

Figure 3

Chord Progression B



The entire first movement can be divided into 8-bar phrases. The first statement of chord progression A occurs in bars 1-8 and is then repeated in bars 9-16 and 17-24. Chord progression B occurs in bars 25-32, and then in bars 33-40 the upper strings repeat progression B while the basses return to A material. In bars 41-48 the second section begins by stating progression A. The next generation of the progression (C) occurs in bars 49-56, progression D occurs in bars 57-64 and then in bars 65-72 we hear progression C in the upper strings while the basses return to B material. Bars 73-105 contain the return of the opening material although this time it is shortened. Bars 73-80 have progression A, bars 81-88 have progression B, bars 89-96 have progression B in the upper strings and A in the basses, and bars 97-104 have the last statement of progression A. The first movement is therefore a clear three-part form which can be symbolized by the letters A - A' - A.

Figure 4

Form of the First Movement

section A	A'					A							
location	bars 1-40					bars 41-72				bars 73-105			
chord progressions	A	A	A	B	BA	A	C	D	CB	A	B	BA	A

The middle section is not heard as contrasting (hence A') because the texture, dynamics, rhythm, and pitch organization has remained the same; only the type of chords change.

There are numerous tonal implications in this movement. In progression A, the first and second violin parts are basically in G minor, the viola part is in A major, the 'celli and bass are in C minor, and the vibraphone plays a descending B major scale. Although this may sound cacophonous on paper, the saxophone's held C against the C minor in the bass make this the most prominent tonal area although in subsequent chord generations, this held C becomes more dissonant in relation to the string parts. For example, in bars 65-72, the held C is against D minor in the bass, B major in the 'celli, C minor in the violas, E major/minor in the second violins, and F minor in the first violins. Again, this is much less dissonant than it looks on paper because the repeating interval patterns and steady rhythm create a feeling of unity.

Probably the most striking thing about this movement is the saxophone's held C which would require the soloist to circular breath while trying to maintain the smoothest possible sound for almost six minutes. Because of the difficulty of achieving this, I chose the C, an octave above middle C, as a mid-range note which would reduce the difficulty of circular breathing. I shall discuss this static part in more detail later, but for now it is important to note the effect this held note has on the listener in relation to the changing chord progressions mentioned above. An interesting aspect of this held C is that it is coloured by the chord progressions around it as it, in turn, colours the chords and brings out different tonal areas (or emphasizes a C tonal area as it moves between voices). So this held C is sometimes consonant, sometimes dissonant, and while it is steady and unchanging, at the same time subtle changes do take place in our perception of the C as the chord progressions are constantly shifting around it. Another interesting aspect of this held C is that sometimes it *ceases to be perceived as being there*. This might change in live performance with the difficulties inherent in circular breathing and with the visually very present soloist in the centre of the stage, but in

sequenced versions, this C seems to melt into the background at some times and appear more prominent at others.

The Interlude (bars 110-130) that follows the first movement is scored for solo double bass, timpani, marimba, and wood block. This interlude creates an effective bridge between the first and second movements in several ways. Most importantly, it breaks the static texture of the first movement with a melody that, in its limited tessitura (octave plus perfect 4th) prepares for the viola melody in movement two. Secondly, the timpani, marimba, and wood block provide an effective contrast with the bowed vibes and legato strings heard previously; thirdly, it creates the effect of movement within a single-voice texture that is perceived as acceleration after the repetitive first movement, and fourthly, the low, solo double bass sound is a welcome contrast to the saxophone's held C.

The Interlude both begins and ends with *fff* timpani. Within this frame the double bass plays a melody that alternates between stepwise motion and leaps based on the interval of a perfect 4th/5th. This melody reaches a highpoint at bar 124 with the bass's F<sup>#</sup> and the percussion accompaniment, and then a short denouement follows.

## Second Movement

The second movement (bars 131-266) already exists in a version for B<sup>b</sup> soprano saxophone and piano entitled *Girls In Their Married Bliss* which is dedicated to Julia Nolan who gave it its premiere performance with Cheryl Pauls on March 3, 1994. It was also performed in its present version for B<sup>b</sup> soprano saxophone and strings on March 10, 1994 with Julia Nolan and the UBC Chamber Strings under the direction of Eric Wilson. It is in ternary form (A = bars 131-211, B = bars 212-241, A' = bars 242-266), the tempo (quarter note = 112) is faster than the first movement and Interlude, and the mood is quite light and humorous.

The first A section (bars 131-211) consists primarily of a 2-voice texture in the saxophone and violas. The upper strings play long held notes which enter in a staggered fashion and slowly accumulate until a 7-part chord is present (bar 170). Consequently, the strings are divided; there are 2 first violin parts, 3 second violin parts, and 2 'cello parts. The basses pizzicato throughout this first section; their pizzicato notes are taken from the viola's melody and, in turn, introduce the notes that are held by the upper strings. For example, in bar 131 the bass's C introduces the held C of the 'celli, in bar 133 the bass's A<sup>b</sup> introduces the held A<sup>b</sup> of the second violins, in bar 135 the bass's B<sup>b</sup> introduces the held B<sup>b</sup> of the 'celli, etc. This pattern is generally adhered to, but not rigidly so; once all seven notes of the upper string's chord have been introduced, their lines move according to voice-leading principles and are not always introduced by the pizzicato basses.

The opening A section's viola part is organized isorhythmically with a colour and talea as illustrated in Figures 5 and 6.

Figure 5

Viola Colour in A Section



Figure 6

Viola Talea in A Section



The talea is maintained throughout the opening section but the colour is arranged accumulatively in palindromic structures so that the entire colour is not stated until bars 141-144. For example, in bars 131-132 only the first three notes of the colour are used (see Figure 7). In bars 132-134, the first five notes are used (see Figure 8) and, as in bars 131-132, the notes are stated palindromically. In bars 138-141, all notes except the final C are introduced (see Figure 9), and finally, in bars 141-144, the entire colour is stated for the first time (see Figure 10).

Figure 7

Viola Colour, bars 131-132



Figure 8

Viola Colour, bars 132-134



Figure 9

Viola Colour, bars 138-141



Figure 10

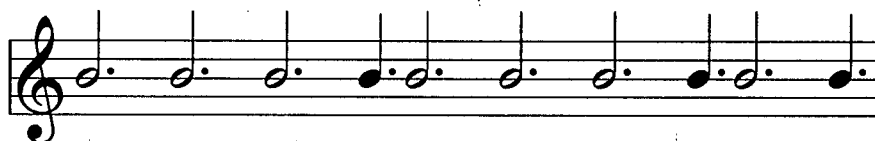
Viola Colour, bars 141-144



The saxophone part is arranged isorhythmically in its talea only:

Figure 11

Saxophone Talea in A Section



The talea of the saxophone is, obviously, the same as that of the violas except that it is multiplied by three and moves at a different speed so that the viola is playing quarter = 112 and the saxophone is playing dotted half = 37.3. The saxophone melody is freely composed and based on the common intervals of the viola's colour.

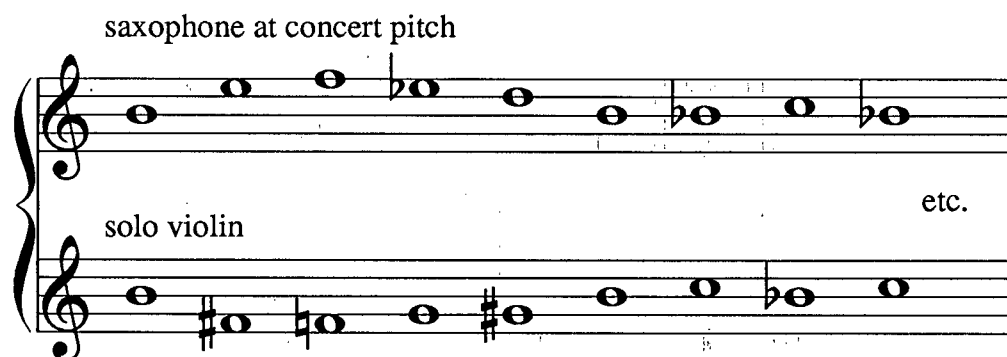


The B section (bars 212-241) begins abruptly at *pp* and the texture becomes 3 voices; saxophone and solo violin play in unison, violin I and II play a seventh apart, and cello and bass play a seventh apart (starting at bar 222). Each voice in the 3-voice texture plays the same pitch material transposed at  $T_1$  and the same talea, again at different speeds:

The effect is of three different speeds: saxophone and solo violin have quarter = 66; violin I and II have dotted quarter = 49.5; and 'cello and bass have quarter note tied to a thirtysecond = 58. There is a constantly repeated melody and talea so that the section seems slow, static and non-dramatic.

The final A' section (bars 242-266) is a canon at the eighth note in inversion (see Figure 15) for solo saxophone and solo violin.

Figure 15                      Reduction of Bars 242-243



The texture has been reduced to two voices and the dramatic tension created by the canon slowly unwinds by the insertion of rests in the saxophone part which is eventually subsumed into the violin melody. The melodic and rhythmic material is based on that of the A section, though without its systematic treatment. The movement ends with a single B in the violin and three beats rest.

In the second movement the sections are quite long and the contrast between them extreme in terms of texture, dynamics, and rhythm. A few beats silence is all that distinguishes one section from another and the second movement from the third. Thus, the whole piece is accumulating activity as these contrasts and sectionalizations become the primary feature of the third movement.

## Third Movement

The third movement is in five large sections (A B C D E) which proceed largely without development but through contrast of material, texture, dynamics, instrumentation and orchestration. The saxophone does not have the prominent part it enjoyed in the second movement; it is used here, as are most of the instruments, in a chamber style. Thus, it is integrated into a large variety of textures but does not have an outstanding separate role. The divisi strings in the second movement are further divided in the third movement into six violin parts, two viola parts, two 'cello parts and two bass parts. The vibraphone and marimba are featured in the third movement; their extremely difficult duet which precedes sections B and C becomes the main material of section D and is echoed and accompanied by the saxophone and strings. Therefore, this movement contains elements of rondo structure:

Figure 16

### Form of Third Movement

sections	A	d	B	d	C	D	E
begins at bar	267	286	287	303	305	316	341

The A section takes the last note of movement two and uses it in long, overlapping statements (see bars 266-276) in the upper strings. This overlapping B is reminiscent of the held C from the first movement. The solo strings expand the B outwards by semitone to form a small cluster (C - B - B<sup>b</sup>) at bar 279. As I will demonstrate, the pitch organization of this entire movement can be described as the accumulation of gradually larger semitone clusters. At bar 279, the lower strings create a slightly varied texture and expand outwards from F to the cluster F<sup>#</sup> - F - E (in bar 285).

At bar 286, vibraphone and marimba interrupt briefly with material that will be developed in section D. It consists of a contrapuntal cluster of D - D<sup>b</sup> - C.

At the opening of Section B, a rhythmic unison melody (bars 287-290) gives way to a lyrical, contrapuntal trio for saxophone and two violins (bars 290-296). Although this rhythmic unison melody seems like a large contrast, it is based on the semitone cluster F<sup>#</sup> - F - E heard earlier (bar 285). The texture in the B section builds with the addition of contrapuntal lines in the other strings which ascend in range and become rhythmically more active in bars 296-302. Some instruments in this section accompany and sustain others' lines; for example in bars 297-302, the saxophone is doubling and sustaining the important notes from the viola 1 part, violin 1 doubles and sustains violin 3, violin 2 doubles and sustains 'cello 1, bass 2 doubles bass 1 pizzicato, etc. The dynamics increase to *f* at bar 302 and then a slightly longer version of bar 286 occurs in bars 303-304 in the vibraphone and marimba.

Section C (bars 303-315) is the shortest section in the third movement and contains a cluster that accumulates to all the notes except E<sup>b</sup> - G<sup>b</sup> - B<sup>b</sup> by bar 309. In bars 309-312, a tutti, rhythmic unison, quintuplet figure appears in all instruments which the vibes and marimba maintain (throughout bars 309-315) while the strings and saxophone descend and decrescendo to silence.

In section D (bars 316-341), the vibraphone and marimba can finally develop the material they foreshadowed in bars 286 and 303-304. Of central importance here is the pitch C which was so prominent in the first movement. The vibraphone reiterates this pitch over four octaves while the marimba creates a contrapuntal cluster around this C by adding first a B (bar 318), then a D<sup>b</sup> (bar 319), then a B<sup>b</sup> (bar 320), then a D (bar 320), etc. In other words, semitones are added to the cluster in a symmetrical fashion around C.

At bar 328, the saxophone joins the percussion with staccato figures that are also clustered around C while the strings form into two groups with clusters that punctuate the texture in bars 332-341; violins 2-4 play a D<sup>b</sup> - C - B cluster, and 'cello 1 and basses play a F<sup>#</sup> - F - E cluster. High strings join the first group and low strings join the second group until they all collide on the down beat of bar 341 with the loudest, most dissonant cluster of the piece (all the notes except E - F - G).

At this point all instruments stop except the saxophone which begins the E section. The saxophone holds a C<sup>#</sup> for 16.5 beats which recalls its held C of the first movement and then begins a lyrical solo melody that begins to dissipate the accumulated tension. In fact, the entire E section can be seen as a denouement to the movement and the whole piece as the lyrical solo writing outlines ever smaller intervals and the piece ends on a single pitch (G). For example, the saxophone melody (bars 345-359) is based on the interval of a major third as is the violin 1 melody (bars 360-363) and the 'cello melody (bars 364-366). The saxophone melody (bars 369-376) outlines a minor third, the violin 1 melody (bars 369-375) outlines a major second, and the last note (G in viola 2 and bowed vibraphone) is a minor second above the violin's last note (F<sup>#</sup>).

Earlier, I stated that the whole piece represents a crescendo in terms of texture, tessitura, dynamic range, rhythmic and pitch complexity, and smaller-scale formal organization. Formally, it represents a gradual build-up because the first movement (though in three sections) is based on a single idea, the second is in ternary form and the third movement is a five-part form. Therefore the music is broken up into gradually smaller blocks of material which is perceived by the listener as an increase in activity.

There is also a large-scale pitch organization; the saxophone's held C of the first movement is surrounded by its own semitone cluster in that the notes of primary importance that follow the C are the B from the end of the second movement and beginning of the third movement (see bars 266-276) and the C<sup>#</sup> from the opening of section E, third movement (see bars 341-345).

## *Music for a Saxophone Concerto as Anti-concerto*

The first thing one notices about this piece is its title. *Music for a Saxophone Concerto* is not merely a 'Saxophone Concerto': the use of the words 'Music for' distances the piece from a traditional concerto and in this way, forces the reader/listener to ask herself why it is not a 'Saxophone Concerto'. This is a very important act of distancing for me because this piece both is and is not a concerto. Rather, it could be said to be an 'anti-concerto' and the title's job is to hint at the possibility of 'anti-concerto' while it is the piece's job to verify this concept and to challenge the listener's expectations of a 'concerto'. But first, we should look at just what are a listener's expectations and where this piece satisfies or frustrates them.

The derivation of the term 'concerto' is unclear. The term is possibly from the Latin *consortio*, meaning 'a fellowship or partnership', and possibly derived from *concertare*, 'to strive or contend'.<sup>1</sup> Both of these ideas are meaningful today. The Baroque concerto with its ritornello forms, use of contrasting textures and uniformity of material could be seen as a 'fellowship or partnership' between the soloist (or small ensemble) and the large ensemble. This idea obviously influenced Stravinsky in his *Violin Concerto in D major*; it has four movements which are all based on Baroque dances, and uses textures, gestures, terraced dynamics, and a chamber-like orchestral sound which are reminiscent of Baroque music. Likewise *Music for a Saxophone Concerto*, in the first movement, uses two Baroque forms; the sarabande and the chaconne, but the textures, gestures and certainly the saxophone's held C does not make one think of Baroque music. Rather, the repetitive and static nature of the first movement is meditative in quality although the amalgamation of the saxophone with the string is a type of 'partnership'.

The other meaning of the term 'concerto' (to strive or contend) is most prevalent today and, indeed, has been so since Mozart's time when sonata form principles and the ritornello

---

<sup>1</sup> Henry Raynor, *A Social History of Music From the Middle Ages to Beethoven* (London: Barrie & Jenkins, 1972), 187.

form were combined to create a new and dramatic relationship between the soloist and the orchestra.

"The most important fact about concerto form is that the audience waits for the soloist to enter, and when he stops playing they wait for him to begin again. In so far as the concerto may be said to have a form after 1775, that is the basis of it....essentially what the classical period did was to dramatize the concerto, and this in the most literally scenic way-the soloist was seen to be different."<sup>2</sup>

In the late Classical period, the soloist became like a character in a drama who interacts with the orchestra. This, combined with the rise of the virtuoso performer in the Romantic period, led to the composition of many concerti where technical acrobatics are featured (as in Liszt and Paganini) and the soloist is distinguishable as a striking individual against the orchestral mass of sound. And even in the concerti that were not written by superstars for the display of their technical prowess (as in Brahms' and Mendelssohn's *Violin Concerti*), the soloist retains her individuality and technical display remains an important feature.

Concerto writing occupied a huge number of composers and performers in the Romantic period, most of whom are now forgotten and in the twentieth century, although its popularity diminished somewhat, it remained one of the forms that continued to generate interest amongst stylistically disparate composers. For some of these composers the concerto is largely unchanged from the Romantic period and was written for a particular performer or for themselves as a vehicle for virtuosic display (as in Prokofiev's *Sinfonia concertante* and Rachmaninov's *Piano Concerti*). Others were more experimental in their use of form, structure and musical material however the use of technical acrobatics has remained an integral part of the concerto and has even been extended in the twentieth century to include highly difficult writing in the ensemble music and not just in the soloist's part. This is made obvious by the almost ubiquitous use of the cadenza (an exception being, as one would expect, Stravinsky's *Violin Concerto*) and regardless of where the cadenza is placed in the concerto, it

---

<sup>2</sup> Charles Rosen, *The Classical Style* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1972), 196.

is almost always an opportunity for virtuosic display. An important feature of *Music for a Saxophone Concerto* is that it contains no cadenza and this is because I was trying to eschew the concept of the soloist as an individual acting against the orchestra and was thus avoiding the use of technical display for its own sake.

The concept of the soloist and orchestra as embodying a contentious relationship has remained common up to the present time. The soloist and ensemble are often viewed as adversaries and the drama of the concerto consists in the battle between them. Malcolm Forsyth, for example, described his *Piano Concerto* as "a duel and definitely not a duet".<sup>3</sup> In Elliott Carter's *Concerto for Oboe*, the small ensemble "accompanies", the orchestra "opposes" and, with the soloist, the three groups are "associated with contrasting and conflicting characters".<sup>4</sup> The soloist is often seen not as *an* individual but as *the archetypal individual* who must battle forces stronger than him/herself. A common concept about the ensemble/orchestra is that it represents 'society' but that 'society' is external to the individual and works to oppress if not the entire individual, than at least that individual's voice.

This concept of the concerto as dialectic, as the working out of conflicting forces, is precisely what I was trying to avoid in *Music for a Saxophone Concerto*. In my piece, although the soloist is still associated with 'the individual' and the orchestra with 'society', I have attempted to posit them as mutually inclusive. Thus, in the first movement, the saxophone's held C and the strings' chords work together to create a texture where the C is constantly coloured by the chord progressions and the chord progressions are, in turn, modified by the held C (certain tonal areas take on different functions depending on their proximity to C). In the second movement, section A (bars 131-211), the two-part texture between saxophone and violas is analogous to a conversation between two people where they are both really saying the same things (their music is based on the same pitch material) but are

---

<sup>3</sup> Malcolm Forsyth as quoted in brochure for *Jane Coop and Calgary Philharmonic* (CBC Records SMCD 5124)

<sup>4</sup> Eliot Carter, notes for Carter's *Concerto for Oboe*, brochure for *Carter Concerto pour hautbois* (Eraro 2292-45364-2 CD)



not really listening to each other (as exemplified by their different tempi). As the section progresses, the increase in activity and dynamic range is like each person in the conversation compensating for not being heard by talking louder. In the final A' section (bars 242-266) however, they seem to come to an agreement as the saxophone's melody is subsumed into the solo violin's melody within their canon. In the third movement, there are many small sections where an increase in activity is achieved through the repetition of blocks of music. For example, in bars 335-340, the vibraphone and marimba's music repeats every measure, the saxophone's music repeats every measure from bars 332-340, and the clusters in high and low strings repeat every measure from bars 337-340. This is an accumulation of energy, but it is a motor-energy and not organic or developmental in nature. In this way, I have attempted to demonstrate an accumulation and dispersion of energy throughout the third movement, rather than the development of conflict and release. The soloist is fully integrated into the texture and becomes an integral part of the third movement but not an opposing voice. Even when the saxophone has solo material (bars 341-360) it is not a cadenza, but rather the beginning of the denouement section of the piece that introduces solo writing in many instruments.

The idea of music as non dialectic is not new to my music although it is rare in a concerto. John Cage was interested in writing music that was not primarily conflict and release and his *Concerto for Prepared Piano and Orchestra* in its use of aleatoric practices to generate pitch material comes closest to mine with its feeling of non static-staticness. The majority of twentieth century concerti however, are more akin to Forsyth and Carter; the soloist's role is very dramatic, very strong, and the interaction between soloist and orchestra is oppositional in character.

After stating that *Music for a Saxophone Concerto* is an 'anti-concerto', it is important to note the ways in which it conforms to traditional concerto style. First, it is in three movements which has been common in concerti since the Classical period, and secondly, the soloist stands at the front of the stage beside the conductor which is the standard stage set-up and serves to clearly differentiate, both aurally and visually, the soloist from the orchestra.

The choice of soprano saxophone as the solo instrument was made for both practical and philosophical reasons. There are many wonderful saxophonists in Vancouver who are interested in new music which is, in itself, the most important reason for me to write a piece. The choice of soprano saxophone also contributes to the idea of anti-concerto because the soprano saxophone is not a common concerto instrument and therefore contributes to the distancing of *Music for a Saxophone Concerto* from traditional concerti. In Londeix's *125 Years of Music for Saxophone*, there is not a single example of a work for soprano saxophone and full orchestra or string orchestra although there are 182 pieces listed for alto saxophone and full orchestra or string orchestra. *125 Years of Music for Saxophone* is not an up-to-date bibliography of saxophone music (it was published in 1971) but it does represent the non-use of soprano saxophone as a solo instrument with orchestra from the inception of the instrument to the late twentieth century. As well, it clearly demonstrates the preference for the alto saxophone as a concerto instrument. In the latest edition (1994) of *125 Years of Music for Saxophone*, approximately 60 pieces are listed for solo soprano saxophone with orchestra or band which reflects the huge popularity that this instrument has enjoyed in the last twenty years.

Among concerti for alto saxophone, several composers have used string orchestra instead of full orchestra as I have done. Notable examples include Pierre Max Dubois' *Concerto for Alto Saxophone and String Orchestra*, Glazunov's *Concerto in Eb*, and Larsson's *Concerto for Saxophone and String Orchestra*. Obviously, I am not the first to notice that the sound of saxophone is particularly suited to string orchestra and thus my concerto continues a tradition of merging saxophone with string orchestra while its choice of soprano saxophone is less traditional.

## Conclusion

In conclusion, I would reiterate the dual meanings of the term 'concerto' as either a partnership or opposing forces. While *Music for a Saxophone Concerto* utilizes a Baroque dance in the first movement, it is neither a real partnership nor a relationship between conflicting characters, but rather seeks to use the concept of the soloist as individual and the orchestra as society in a way that demonstrates their complete integration. For this reason, contrasting textures have been chosen which all, in different ways, experiment with idea of the soloist and orchestra as mutually inclusive. The use of saxophone with strings is a continuation of a rich saxophone concerto tradition but the choice of soprano saxophone is less traditional and thus, with the title and many of the formal details, leads the listener to an appreciation of the possibilities inherent in an anti-concerto.

There exists performance difficulties with this work since many soloists would prefer a concerto that displays their technical abilities as a soloist instead of as an integrated member of the ensemble. There have been other concerti however that have maintained their position in the repertoire despite their integrated character (like Berlioz's *Harold in Italy*) and, it could be argued, that the held C of the saxophone in the first movement is the height of virtuosity and the piece will therefore appeal to many musicians.

## Bibliography

Carter, Elliott. notes for Carter's *Concerto for Oboe*, brochure for *Carter Concerto pour hautbois*. (Erato 2292-45364-2 CD)

Fubini, Enrico. *The History of Music Aesthetics*. London: Macmillan Press, 1990.

Grout, D.J. and Palisca, Claude. *A History of Western Music*. New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 1988.

Londeix, Jean-Marie. *125 Years of Music for Saxophone*. Paris: Editions Musicales, 1971.

Plantinga, Leon. *Romantic Music*. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1984.

Raynor, Henry. *A Social History of Music From the Middle Ages to Beethoven*. London: Barrie & Jenkins, 1972.

Roeder, Michael. *A History of the Concerto*. Portland: Amadeus Press, 1994.

Rosen, Charles. *The Classical Style*. New York: W.W. Norton, 1972.

Sadie, Stanley, ed. 'Concerto' from *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, Vol. 4 London: Macmillan, 1980.

Sadie, Stanley, ed. 'Saxophone' from *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, Vol. 16 London: Macmillan, 1980.

Watkins, Glen. *Soundings: Music in the Twentieth Century*. New York: Schirmer, 1988.

author unlisted, notes for Malcolm Forsyth's *Piano Concerto*, brochure for *Jane Coop and the Calgary Philharmonic Orchestra* (CBC Records SMCD 5124)