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Classical Saxophone Transcriptions: Role and Reception

Kathryn Diane Etheridge
FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF MUSIC

CLASSICAL SAXOPHONE TRANSCRIPTIONS:
ROLE AND RECEPTION

By
Kathryn Etheridge

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______________________________
Douglass Seaton  
Professor Directing Thesis

______________________________
Denise Von Glahn  
Committee Member

______________________________
Patrick Meighan  
Committee Member

The Office of Graduate Studies has verified and approved the above named committee members.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

List of Tables .......................................................................................................................... v
List of Musical Examples ......................................................................................................... vi
Abstract ..................................................................................................................................... vii

## CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

- Key Definitions ..................................................................................................................... 2
- Sources .................................................................................................................................. 3
- Method and Chapter Overview ........................................................................................... 5

## CHAPTER 2. TRANSCRIPTIONS FOR THE SAXOPHONE

- 1844-1894: the Earliest Saxophone Repertoire ................................................................... 6
- 1890s-1920s: The Saxophone in the United States ................................................................. 11
- Late 1920s-1942: Leeson, Mule, Raschèr .............................................................................. 13
- Saxophone Transcriptions, Mid-Twentieth Century—Today .................................................. 18

## CHAPTER 3. SAXOPHONE RECORDINGS AND REVIEWS

- The Discography: General Statistics ..................................................................................... 23
- Solo Programs featuring One Transcription ........................................................................... 27
- Quartet Programs consisting Entirely of Transcriptions ......................................................... 29
- Programs including “Lighter Fare”: Jazz, Ragtime, Rock and Pop ........................................ 29
- Performance Practice: Advice from Saxophone Publications ................................................. 32
- Reviews of Recordings ........................................................................................................... 34
- Conclusion .............................................................................................................................. 39

## INTRODUCTION TO THE CASE STUDIES

## CHAPTER 4. CASE STUDY I: Lynn Klock & Nadine Shank, *Vintage Flora*

- *Drei Romanzen*: The Original Work ................................................................................ 44
- Reviews .................................................................................................................................. 46
- Comparison: Original, Transcription, Interpretation ............................................................... 47
- Lynn Klock’s Interpretation .................................................................................................... 47
- Conclusion .............................................................................................................................. 51

## CHAPTER 5. CASE STUDY II: Duo Nuova, *Visions*

- Liner Notes ........................................................................................................................... 53
- Ravel: *Vocalise-etude (Pièce) en forme de habanera* ............................................................... 54
- Prokofiev: *Visions Fugitives*, op. 22 .................................................................................. 55
- Platti: Sonata op. 3 no. 2, in G Major ...................................................................................... 56
- Reviews .................................................................................................................................. 57
- The Recording: Duo Nuova’s Interpretation .......................................................................... 59
- Conclusion .............................................................................................................................. 64
Liner Notes..........................................................................................................................66
Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, Quintet for Piano & Winds in E-flat Major, K. 452........66
George Gershwin: *Lullaby*..............................................................................................67
Eubie Blake: *Jassamine Lane; Eubie Dubie*.................................................................68
Reviews............................................................................................................................69
Interpretation of the Mozart Quintet...............................................................................70
Conclusion.........................................................................................................................74

CHAPTER 7. CASE STUDY IV: Aurelia Saxophone Quartet, *Debussy, Ravel, Roussel*.......75
Creation of the Transcriptions.........................................................................................75
Claude Debussy: String Quartet in G Minor op. 10.......................................................76
Maurice Ravel: String Quartet in F Major......................................................................77
Albert Roussel: String Quartet in D major op. 45.........................................................77
Reviews............................................................................................................................78
Aurelia Quartet’s Interpretation of the Ravel...............................................................79
Conclusion.........................................................................................................................85

CHAPTER 8. CONCLUSION................................................................................................86

APPENDIX A. Cecil Leeson’s Debut at Town Hall: Full Program.................................88

APPENDIX B. Saxophone Recordings that Include *Pièce en forme de habanera*........89

BIBLIOGRAPHY................................................................................................................96

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH...............................................................................................105
LIST OF TABLES

Table 3.1. Sample List, Saxophone Discography;
    Twenty Recordings from 1996-2007 ................................................................. 24

Table 3.2. Sample of Saxophone Recordings
    Featuring One Transcription, 1950-2007 ............................................................ 28

Table 3.3. Sample of Saxophone Recordings
    Featuring Jazz, Ragtime, Pop, and/or Rock Music ............................................. 29

Table 4.1. Recordings Featuring Robert Schumann’s Three Romances, Op. 94 .......... 43

Table 5.1. Recordings that Include Platti’s Sonata in G Major, Op. 3, No. 2 ............ 52

Table A.1. Saxophone Recordings that Include Pièce en forme de habanera (Maurice Ravel) .. 89
LIST OF MUSICAL EXAMPLES

Example 4.1: Schumann Romance No. 2—mm. 73-80.................................................................48

Example 4.2: Schumann Romance No. 3—mm. 28-32.................................................................48

Example 4.3: Schumann Romance No. 3 (“Not fast”)—mm. 68-76 ...........................................49

Example 4.4: Grace notes occurring at the beginning, middle, and end of phrases in Three Romances:
   4.4a: Romance No. 1, mm. 1-3: grace note, phrase start......................................................50
   4.4b: Romance No. 3, mm. 1-3: grace note, phrase middle....................................................50
   4.4c: Romance No. 2, mm. 27-29: grace note, end of phrase................................................50

Example 5.1a: Platti, Sonata in G Major, Mvt I (Grave)—mm. 13-15, flute version..............57
Example 5.1b: Platti, Sonata in G Major, Mvt I (Grave)—mm. 13-15, saxophone version ....57

Example 5.2: Vocalise-etude en forme de habanera—m. 13, m. 25: après la voix ..............60

Example 5.3a: Visions fugitives No. 10 (Ridicolosamente)—mm. 27-39 ..................................60
Example 5.3b: Visions fugitives No. 17 (Poetico)—mm. 12-29................................................61
Example 5.3c: Visions fugitives No. 8 (Commodo)—mm. 10-19..............................................61

Example 5.4: Platti Sonata (transcription score), Mvt 4 (Allegro molto)—mm. 72-77..............63

Example 6.1: Mozart Quintet, K. 452, Mvt I—mm. 57-59..........................................................71

Example 6.2: Mozart Quintet, K. 452, Mvt I—mm. 92-94..........................................................72

Example 6.3a: Mozart Quintet, K. 452, Mvt III Cadenza—mm. 163-69....................................73
Example 6.3b: Mozart Quintet, K. 452, Mvt III Cadenza—mm. 177-89....................................73

Example 7.1a: Ravel String Quartet, Mvt IV—mm. 1-4.............................................................80
Example 7.1b: Ravel String Quartet, Mvt IV—mm. 43-44..........................................................80

Example 7.2: Ravel String Quartet, Mvt III—mm. 115-119......................................................81

Example 7.3: Ravel String Quartet, Mvt II—mm. 1-5 .................................................................81

Example 7.4: Ravel String Quartet, Mvt II—mm. 13-17.............................................................82

Example 7.5: Ravel String Quartet, Mvt III—mm. 61-65............................................................83

Example 7.6: Ravel String Quartet, Mvt IV—mm. 222-28..........................................................84

Example 7.7: Ravel String Quartet, Mvt IV—mm. 261-69..........................................................85
ABSTRACT

Transcriptions occupy a fundamental place in Western musical development, having been created used since the Middle Ages Composers, performers, and arrangers are still constantly adapting music in order to learn various musical styles and to bring variety to their programs. Besides the advantages to composers, musicians, and students of music, transcriptions allow audiences to hear repertoire that would be unavailable to them in its original format. Transcriptions may also permit listeners to hear familiar works through fresh interpretations that can illuminate aspects of the music not heard in the original instrumentation.

Classical saxophonists, in particular, use transcriptions for various purposes, including those previously mentioned. This study of saxophone transcriptions raises three overarching points:

- Transcriptions have been and remain an important component of classical saxophone performance and recording.
- Recorded saxophone transcriptions range from high art to popular music, their material borrowed from the last nine centuries or more of Western music history—and these works are reviewed differently in different journals.
- The key to a successful programming of transcriptions lies in historical and performance practice research, and in awareness of one’s audience.

A study of transcriptions within the context of the saxophone’s history, how these pieces are interpreted by the performers and organized on recordings next to—or instead of—original works for the saxophone, and reviews of these recordings were all employed in the present study in order to determine how transcriptions represent the instrument. Analysis of saxophone recordings and reviews, including four case studies that take a closer look at individual saxophone CDs, demonstrates how saxophone transcriptions portray the classical saxophone to various audiences. The study of this repertoire, and of saxophonists performing it, must go hand in hand with a study of the saxophonists themselves and the ways in which they view these works. Most saxophonists are arrangers; many of the pieces they perform and record were created by them, as well. The choice to perform these transcriptions should prompt more decision-making on the part of the saxophonist than does that of completely original works, especially if the performer is also the arranger.

This study shows that, whether practiced by a saxophonist or any other performing musician, creation and performance of transcriptions are multi-faceted activities. Transcriptions remain an important and valuable component of the recorded saxophone repertoire. They offer to audiences the opportunity to hear a stylistically appropriate rendition of music that adds variety and broader appeal to the mostly twentieth-century classical saxophone repertoire, thus opening the way for more listeners to discover and enjoy this sound resource.
CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

In an article titled “Transcriptions, Then and Now” saxophone pedagogue Lee Patrick discusses the saxophone and its ongoing relationship with transcribed works. He recalls the concert debut of the saxophone in 1842, noting that the first publicly performed piece for the instrument was a hymn by Berlioz, arranged by the composer for wind sextet. Since that time saxophonists have continued to play transcriptions alongside original works, despite a substantial and growing repertoire of original compositions. Patrick mentions how nineteenth- and early twentieth-century saxophonists used the multitude of transcriptions that swelled their repertoire at the time to convince composers to write for the saxophone.1 Thus, by the turn of the twenty-first century, the saxophone family had acquired a solid foundation of original works; it was largely due to the early pioneers of this instrument who performed transcriptions that the instrument’s repertoire expanded so greatly.

Transcriptions actually have a much longer history, one that begins as early as the medieval period. Musical arrangements occupy a fundamental place in Western musical development. During the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, a composer’s use of another’s music was seen as a compliment; consider the popularity of the parody Mass, or the proliferation of lute and keyboard intabulations of vocal compositions.2 Composers have transcribed their own works: Bach successfully transcribed many of his pieces from one instrument to another; the Third Lute Suite, for example, is also the Fifth Suite for Unaccompanied Cello. Transcriptions by Handel, Haydn, and Couperin are now accepted standards of the repertoire.3 Transcribing has also served as a pedagogical tool for composers: the young Mozart copied a vast amount of music as a learning experience.4 And this “art of transcription,” as it is called by some authors, has continued into the twentieth and twenty-first centuries: one need only consider various pieces by Schoenberg, Stravinsky, and Copland to see that the practice continues for distinguished composers, while a multitude of performers and other arrangers are constantly adapting the music of other repertoires in order to learn various musical styles and to bring variety to their programs.

Besides the advantages to composers, musicians, and students of music, transcriptions are also beneficial for performers and audiences of classical music. For musicians, the act of arranging or transcribing music helps to bring the performer closer to a particular composition or style; this applies to the student performer, as well, in that performing transcriptions provides access to music and styles that may not be available in their original forms to that student’s particular performing force (instrumental or vocal). A musician should be familiar with all styles of music; limiting studies to one repertoire denies both performer and listener the opportunity to experience music in new, diverse ways.5 For audiences, transcriptions not only help to diversify a program but may allow them to hear music that might otherwise be unavailable to them. And for listeners already familiar with the music, transcriptions and arrangements may provide an

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opportunity for examining any number of different musical characteristics not immediately
evident in the original, but which sound with new and interesting effects in the newer version.\(^6\)

Today “classical” saxophonists perform transcriptions for various reasons. The following
four rank among the most common:

- Transcriptions serve as teaching tools; they are used to learn musical styles outside of the
  saxophone’s mostly twentieth-century repertoire.
- Transcriptions bring variety to both live programs and recordings.
- Transcriptions can attract a wider audience by allowing the saxophone access to music in styles
  beyond those of its own, original repertoire.
- Transcriptions also help to correct the mistaken view of the saxophone as exclusively a “popular”
or jazz instrument, giving it a more “classical” presence.

That saxophonists from various places and ensembles of varying sizes have included
transcribed works on their recordings points to the continuing appeal of these pieces. The
number of transcriptions in the most recent (2003) edition of Jean-Marie Londeix’s
Comprehensive Guide to Saxophone Repertoire also reflects their popularity; the Guide lists
approximately 2,000 such compositions.\(^7\)

Yet as popular as transcriptions may be, performing them presents special problems if the
saxophonist aims to play a transcription in its proper historical style. She or he must research the
origins of the piece and take into consideration the historical context, the original performing
force(s) required, and the features of the work’s historical performance practices.

The exploration of saxophone transcriptions and saxophone recordings offers a number
of issues for investigation. The present study approaches this repertoire through three
complementary questions:

- What role have transcriptions played in the development of the classical saxophone repertoire,
  and are they still performing this role today in the types of transcriptions that saxophonists
  record?
- How do classical saxophonists approach the interpretation of transcriptions, and what have they
  said about performance-practice issues associated with performing transcriptions from various
  historical eras?
- How have performances of transcriptions been received by reviewers?

Key Definitions

In a sense, every performance of a composition is a new arrangement, because not every
performer will interpret and play the music in exactly the same fashion. Some key terms must be
defined here to prevent confusion. In the broadest sense, “transcription” is used in this project to
denote any piece of music that has been translated from one performing medium to another.
Although the majority of works that saxophonists perform in transcription were written prior to
the instrument’s invention, a fair number of transcriptions or arrangements that are often
performed and recorded by saxophonists were created by the composers themselves or were
subsequently approved by the composer after a performer created the transcription.

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The *Grove Dictionary of Music* defines “transcription,” at least in Euro-American classical studies, as the “copying of a musical work, usually with some change in notation or in layout without listening to actual sounds during the writing process … It may also mean an arrangement, especially one involving a change of medium.”\(^8\) The *Oxford Dictionary* explains transcription as an arrangement of a musical composition for a performing medium other than the original, or for the same medium in more elaborate style.\(^9\) Transcription is often treated as synonymous with “arrangement,” the latter being defined by both *Grove* and *Oxford* as the adaptation or reworking of music for a medium different from that for which it was originally composed. A distinction, although necessarily a rough one, can be made between the two terms: transcribing should be seen as the copying of a composition with changes only in the layout or notation (for example, from parts to full score), while arranging involves a more thoroughgoing transformation, one that almost always includes a change of medium. In his article “Transcription or Arrangement,” Howard M. Feldsher states that “music transcribed remains philosophically the composer’s, while music arranged shifts to the arranger.”\(^10\) He explains the difference as one between translator and co-creator: the transcriber helps the composer to communicate with musicians and audiences otherwise denied access to the music, while an arrangement is the exploration of the transcriber’s creative abilities.

Pieces that have been adapted for performances by saxophones run the entire gamut of transcription type: some works originally written for the saxophone have been embellished or translated from one saxophone genre to another (saxophone and orchestra to saxophone and wind ensemble, for example, or saxophone quartet to saxophone orchestra). The Debussy *Rhapsody* for orchestra and saxophone has been performed in a number of different arrangements, even though it was originally written for the saxophone. Others were transposed from a similar performing force—such as oboe and piano to soprano saxophone and piano—and maintained the original accompaniment. A number of these works can hardly be called transcriptions, however: arranging for quite different ensemble types that require significant changes to be made (articulation, phrasing, orchestration, key, etc.) is common in this repertoire. The arrangers—many of them saxophonists themselves—can easily be considered composers or co-creators for these works.

For the present study, “transcription” as an overarching term will always be correct; but as the above indicates, there are many degrees of arranging. For the sake of avoiding the problem of dividing a gray area into black and white, the word “transcription” will be used to denote all works of this type in the saxophone repertoire.

**Sources**

Given the lack of existing research directly relating to this topic, many of the sources for this project provided only general reference information on broad topics or contained only a few specific points of interest each.\(^11\) These sources concern one or more of the following topics: the

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10 Feldsher, 39.
11 For complete bibliographic information on each item, the reader is referred to the Bibliography.
history of the classical saxophone, classical saxophone transcriptions or transcribing in general, saxophonists and their careers, or music criticism or journalism.

Books

General reference resources include Jean-Marie Londeix’s *A Comprehensive Guide to the Saxophone Repertoire*, mentioned previously, and Jay C. Easton’s *Writing for Saxophones: A Guide to the Tonal Palette of the Saxophone Family for Composers, Arrangers and Performers*. Easton includes a general history of the saxophone from its creation to the present and explains changes that have occurred in saxophone construction over the past 150 years. He also lists common errors of writing and arranging for the solo saxophone or saxophone ensemble. For information regarding the saxophone’s history, I have included two biographies in this category: Wally Horwood’s *Adolphe Sax 1814-1894: His Life and Legacy*, and Eugene Rousseau’s *Marcel Mule: His Life and the Saxophone*. Horwood’s text provides a detailed history of the saxophone’s first fifty years. Rousseau’s biography details the life and career of one of the most successful saxophonists of the twentieth century, Marcel Mule, who was also an arranger and prolific transcriber.

I have consulted a number of books whose authors touch upon specific issues related to my thesis topic, none of which, however, is saxophone-related. Mark Grant’s *Maestros of the Pen: a History of Classical Music Criticism in America* falls into this category. Grant discusses the history of classical music criticism in America, writing about the power that classical music journalists have over both laymen and “prestige elites and intellectuals” alike. He provides substantial information regarding music critics for magazines, authors of music appreciation texts, broadcasters, the “professional literati” critics, and the Internet as a new medium for music criticism. Robert Schick’s *Classical Music Criticism* presents a general overview of criticism’s basic functions and issues; it focuses on music criticism appearing in newspapers and popular (non-technical) journals. Schick also provides a substantial chapter on reviewing classical recordings.

Dissertations

Dissertations served as the main source of information regarding the history of the saxophone and the place of transcriptions in that history. No one document, however, provides a significant amount of information on the specific topic of this study. A few of these are informative regarding saxophone history, including David Pituch’s “A Reception History of the Saxophone between 1918 and 1942” and Fred Hemke’s “The Early History of the Saxophone.” Other saxophone-related dissertations concern transcriptions. Dennis Crabb’s “Renaissance and Baroque Compositions Transcribed for Saxophones Solo and Ensemble,” argues the need for saxophone transcriptions and evaluates them, with the bulk of the project consisting of the transcriptions themselves. Steve Konecne’s “A Comprehensive Performance Project in Saxophone Literature and an Essay Consisting of Three Trio Sonatas by C.P.E. Bach, J.P. Schielfelholz, and G.P. Telemann Transcribed, Realized and Edited for Saxophones and Piano” is a similar project but includes a smaller number of transcriptions. Like Crabb, Konecne also addresses the relative lack of suitable recital literature from certain epochs.
Articles

The most important article to my project is Lee Patrick’s “Transcriptions, Then and Now,” already described above. Patrick’s article was one of the main influences in my decision to study saxophone transcriptions.

A handful of brief articles address the transcription of classical music. Most of these articles ask questions related to the validity of transcriptions, or they relate the author’s or interviewee’s experience with such works. This group consists of Carlos Barbosa-Lima’s “The Art of Transcription”; Henry Gulick’s “The Case for Transcriptions”; and Gyorgy Sandor’s “Are Transcriptions Dead?” Added to these are the numerous articles from the two main saxophone publications, *Saxophone Journal* and *Saxophone Symposium*, which provided not only valuable insights into the careers of classical saxophonists, but also offered information about how saxophonists view the performance of transcriptions and how they make use of this repertoire.

Two of the most important resources for this project are recording reviews and the saxophone recordings themselves, the collection of which made up a major portion of this project’s preliminary research. The recordings—collected from a variety of printed and online discographies and catalogs—were compiled into a database that has been transferred to an Internet website, to allow easy access and subsequent updating post-thesis. It was from this discography that most of the project developed.

To be included for consideration, the recordings in the discography had to meet certain criteria. A “classical saxophone recording” is defined in this project as one that includes works from the saxophone’s concert or “classical” repertoire and that prominently features a saxophonist or saxophone ensemble on every track.\(^{12}\)

The reviews were collected from four main publications: *American Record Guide*, *Fanfare* magazine, *Saxophone Journal* and *Saxophone Symposium*.\(^ {13}\) Together, the discography and the collected reviews decided this project’s direction and final shape.

Method and Chapter Overview

A study of transcriptions within the context of the saxophone’s history, how these pieces are interpreted by the performers and organized on recordings next to—or instead of—original works for the saxophone, and reviews of these recordings were all employed in order to determine how transcriptions represent the instrument, as perceived by saxophonists and non-saxophonists alike. A major facet of this project—shown through the preponderance of source material gleaned from saxophone publications—was discovering how saxophonists view themselves and their repertoire in regard to performing and recording transcriptions.

Any concrete conclusions about the role of saxophone transcriptions must be based on a thorough study of both the history of the saxophone and the history of its repertoire. Chapter 2, “Transcriptions for the Saxophone,” provides a brief history of the classical saxophone from the 1840s to the mid-twentieth century, with an emphasis upon performances of transcribed and

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\(^{12}\) This second criterion was put in place to exclude those recordings on which saxophone performances make up only a fraction of the total content. An example would be a CD promoting the works of a particular composer; unless that composer has written solely for saxophone, the CD will probably include pieces played on other instruments alongside any saxophone compositions he or she has written. This type of recording does not generally include transcriptions anyway, except in the case of the featured composer transcribing one of his or her own works—and that particular type of transcription is not the focus of this study.

\(^ {13}\) The reasons for which these four publications were chosen are discussed further in Chapter 3.
arranged works. This overview is employed to assess the changes that the classical saxophone transcription repertoire underwent between the 1840s and the later decades of the twentieth century. The life and career of Adolphe Sax, as well as those of saxophonists who helped to popularize classical saxophone in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, will also be a part of the historical information provided as background. This chapter draws on concert reviews of the mid-nineteenth to mid-twentieth century, as well as book and dissertation histories, which mention and/or critique the use of transcriptions. The final section of Chapter 2 presents a dialogue between those saxophonists who have written about the purpose and use of transcriptions; this section is constructed from excerpts of mid- to later twentieth-century saxophone publications (interviews with performers, arrangers, and saxophone professors; reviews of concerts, etc.).

Chapter 3, “Saxophone Recordings and Reviews,” discusses some of the major statistics and trends of the online discography, and it provides a number of sample lists from the recording database that help to illustrate the variety of transcriptions performed and recorded by saxophonists. Excerpts from saxophone publications that focus upon performance practice issues are also sampled in this chapter, providing a glimpse of what these musicians value most regarding transcription performance. Because the place of historical performance style in transcriptions is a major concern, writings on performance-practice help to answer certain questions that can potentially impact how transcriptions are received by various listeners (Do saxophonists create historically-informed renditions, or should they even try to do so?). The final section of Chapter 3 discusses reviews of saxophone recordings, comparing and contrasting the columns of four different publications.

Chapters 4 through 7 present case studies that help to focus the accumulated material from the discography and reviews. Each of the four studies analyzes one saxophone compact disc; each CD represents one of four popular saxophone recording types that include transcriptions. The data used in the case studies encompasses classical saxophone recordings released within the last twenty years. This allows the case studies to be relevant to the present state of classical saxophone recording. Each chapter includes a general overview of the CD, an examination of the transcription scores (when available) and the originals, and an analysis of the performers’ interpretation of the transcriptions, compared with recordings of the original version. These chapters will also compare any reviews of the recording in question that were acquired from the four publications discussed in Chapter 3.

In analyzing the recordings and reviews, and in creating the case studies, I have compiled information regarding how saxophone transcriptions portray the classical saxophone to saxophonists and to non-saxophonist audiences. Besides providing a broad overview of the recorded saxophone transcription repertoire, this information helps to clarify the appreciation of saxophone transcriptions among saxophonists and a wider public, and the possible uses of transcriptions to reach a broader, non-saxophonist audience.
CHAPTER 2

TRANSCRIPTIONS FOR THE SAXOPHONE

A brief history of classical saxophone transcriptions between the instrument’s invention in the early 1840s and the middle of the twentieth century provides a context for the discussion of specific, representative works. Since the saxophone’s first public performance at Paris’s Salle des Concerts Herz in 1844 transcriptions have played a prominent role in the instrument’s history, the development of its repertoire, and the shaping of the saxophone as a classical instrument. The following discussion includes an abbreviated chronology of saxophonists’ use of transcriptions, gleaned from various histories, biographies, concert reviews, and interviews. This chronology covers key events, soloists, and ensembles, grouped loosely into three periods that are defined by key events in the saxophone’s history: 1844-1894 (the instrument’s first public performance to the death of Adolphe Sax); the turn of the twentieth century and the rise in popularity of the saxophone in the United States; and the late 1920s-1942 (the early careers of Leeson, Mule, and Raschèr, and the reopening of the saxophone class at the Paris Conservatory).

1844-1894: the Earliest Saxophone Repertoire

On 3 February 1844 Hector Berlioz hosted a concert at Paris’s Salle Herz in order to introduce the public to an ensemble of Adolphe Sax’s inventions. This first public performance of the saxophone occurred two years before Sax’s patent for the instrument. For the purpose of demonstrating these new instruments, Berlioz arranged a simple choral piece of his own that he had composed approximately fifteen years previously. The Chant sacré, in this rendering, was a sextet scored for three brasses and three woodwinds and included the inventor himself playing the B-flat bass saxophone.  

After this initial performance the saxophone quickly acquired a repertoire of both transcribed works and original compositions, thanks to a small group of Parisian composers close to Adolphe Sax who were outspoken advocates of the saxophone. Besides Berlioz—who, surprisingly, did not write any original works for the instrument—four composers in particular created a number of solo pieces: Joseph Arban (1825-1889), Jules Demersseman (1833-1866), Hyacinthe Klosé (1808-1880), and, most prolifically, Jean-Baptiste Singelée (1812-1876). Many of these works were solos de concours, used by the Paris Conservatoire for annual examinations of saxophone students in Adolphe Sax’s saxophone class. In addition, to further promote his new instrument Adolphe Sax personally published more than thirty-five original compositions for various saxophones and piano (including many by the four composers listed above) along with numerous transcriptions.

Besides solos, the early saxophone debuted in orchestral literature in a small number of large-scale works during the mid- to late nineteenth century. Georges Kastner, in addition to being the first to create a saxophone method book, also gave the saxophone its first part in an

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14 Wally Horwood, Adolphe Sax: His Life and Legacy (Baldock, Herts.: Egon, 1983), 52.
16 Ibid., 15. Sax owned and operated his publishing house in Paris from the late 1850s until the late 1870s.
17 Fred Hemke, “The Early History of the Saxophone” (D.M.A. diss., University of Wisconsin – Madison, 1975), 51. Kastner’s Complete and Systematic Method for the Saxophone was published in 1845, prior to Sax’s saxophone patent application. The first portion of this method book deals with basic elements of playing the
opera (*Le dernier Roi de Juda*, 1844). Other early large-scale works incorporating saxophone parts include three operas—*Hamlet* by Ambroise Thomas (1868), and *Herodiade* (1881) and *Werther* (1892) by Jules Massenet—and the ballet *Sylvia* by Leo Delibes (1876). The only works of this type from between 1844 and 1894 to enter the mainstream repertoire, however, were Bizet’s pair of *L’Arlesienne* Suites (No. 1, 1872, and No. 2, arranged by Ernest Guiraud, 1879).\(^{18}\) Another way in which Sax publicized his instruments was to make transcriptions for military band of older, large-scale masterpieces; he began to do this in 1850.\(^{19}\)

Despite the efforts of the saxophone’s earliest composers and of Adolphe Sax himself, the first fifty years of the saxophone’s existence produced little in the way of an original concert repertoire. In the military band, however, the saxophone flourished during the latter half of the nineteenth century. Its use in the French military bands introduced the saxophone to England and the United States and afforded saxophonists the most solo as well as ensemble experience. The military band sustained the saxophone to the end of the nineteenth century, and some of the soloists of such groups acquired international reputations as virtuoso performers. From concert reviews and printed programs, it is clear that these saxophonists often performed transcriptions. Notable soloists of this age include the French virtuosos Louis-Adolphe Mayeur (1837-1894) and Henry Wuille (1822-1871), and the Bostonian Thomas Ryan (1827-1903).

The Belgian-born Louis-Adolphe Mayeur studied clarinet at the Paris Conservatoire with Klosé and—once his class opened at the Conservatoire in 1860—saxophone with Adolphe Sax. Although trained to become a member of the military band organization like all of Sax’s students,\(^{20}\) Mayeur went on to become what author Thomas Liley calls “the most brilliant saxophone performer of his era”; he appeared many times with both the Brussels Opera and, from 1871, the Paris Opera.\(^{21}\) In 1864 Sax hired Mayeur to travel throughout France, the Netherlands, and Belgium, demonstrating Sax’s instruments in concert. Since Mayeur wrote a large number of transcriptions, and since the saxophone’s original repertoire was still in its infancy, it is safe to assume that many of the works his European audiences heard him play were transcriptions.\(^{22}\)

As a saxophone soloist, Henry Wuille was regularly reviewed in Parisian newspapers. He is also credited with the first saxophone solo performance in the United States; while touring with Louis Antoine Jullien, Wuille played a solo during a concert presented in New York in 1853.\(^{23}\) In the *Revue et Gazette musicale* of 11 July 1858 Georges Kastner wrote of a Promenade Concert performed at Baden in 1858 that featured Wuille as one of four soloists. After hearing Wuille perform a *Fantasy on Themes from “Martha,”* Kastner wrote the following:

> Adding perfect taste to a marvelous ability and brilliant execution to the solid qualities of a good musician, Mr. Wuille enjoys a justly acquired universal reputation … [he] produced marvelous effects on the saxophone and possesses the true sound of that instrument … the piece which I

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\(^{18}\) Ingham, 17-18.

\(^{19}\) Hemke, 217.

\(^{20}\) Ibid., 350. Adolphe Sax’s Paris Conservatoire class was advertised as a “military band” class, the students of which would presumably go on to join one of France’s many military groups after their conservatory training. This class, Hemke states, afforded Sax many opportunities to transcribe works for his saxophone students.

\(^{21}\) Ingham, 12.

\(^{22}\) Jean-Marie Londeix, *150 Years of Music for the Saxophone* (Cherry Hill, 1994), 177; quoted in Ibid., 12.

heard played was perfectly chosen for the instrument as well as the performer. This was a *Fantasy* … on themes from *Martha*, the in vogue opera…I think that lovers of the saxophone should take notice of this work…which the public has expressed an interest in hearing again.\(^\text{24}\)

At another concert in 1859, this time in Strasbourg, Wuille again performed the *Fantasy* and was reviewed favorably:

Mr. Wuille … handles the saxophone with a rare ability and this should not be looked upon as a distraction from the brilliant manner of his performing specialty, the clarinet. He played *Fantasy* from *Martha*, arranged very expressly and ably for the saxophone.\(^\text{25}\)

A founding member of the Boston Mendelssohn Quintet Club, Thomas Ryan appeared as both a clarinetist and violist at the club’s first performance in 1849. It was during his travels to Europe that he first heard military bands and became aware of European band instrumentation, which, especially in France, included multiple saxophones.\(^\text{26}\) This may have influenced Ryan’s subsequent switch to the saxophone; on 29 November 1862, at a Saturday concert of the Mendelssohn Quintet Club, Ryan performed Jacques-Pierre Rode’s *Air with Variations*, originally for violin, in a transcription for the saxophone. John Sullivan Dwight reviewed two such saxophone performances by Thomas Ryan: this concert on 29 November and another on 6 December. Each of these concerts featured a work transcribed for the saxophone; during the December concert, according to Dwight, Ryan played Schubert’s *Serenade*, D. 957.\(^\text{27}\) And these were not the only transcriptions that Ryan performed. Due perhaps to the instrument’s growing popularity with the Boston group, Thomas Ryan was heard playing the saxophone on three successive concerts of the Mendelssohn Quintet Club in 1862. On 13 December he performed the *Romanza* from *L’éclair* by Halévy. On 20 December he played selections from *Il Trovatore* by Verdi, and on 27 December he performed selections from the last scene of *Lucia di Lammermoor* by Donizetti.\(^\text{28}\) As Frederick Hemke notes in his dissertation, not only had Thomas Ryan introduced the saxophone on programs of serious music in Boston; he had also “begun to build a repertoire through the use of his own transcriptions.”\(^\text{29}\)

The pioneering performances of soloists such as Mayeur, Wuille, and Ryan thus included many classical transcriptions. Other early transcriptions were created by Sax and performed at the concerts he hosted in the hall adjoining his Rue Saint-Georges workshop. Beginning shortly after he opened his instrument manufacturing business in Paris in 1843, these concerts began simply as informal gatherings of musicians, scientists, and writers who were interested in hearing Sax’s new instruments and to whom Sax would eagerly lecture and perform demonstrations within the workshop itself. The lecture-concerts were of a practical value to the inventor, since they received detailed coverage in the press.\(^\text{30}\) But once the demand for Sax’s instruments

\(^{24}\) Georges Kastner, article for *Revue et gazette musicale* (11 July 1858): 232; quoted in Hemke, 345-47.
\(^{25}\) Georges Kastner, article for *Revue et gazette musicale* (20 February 1859): 63; quoted in Hemke, 347.
\(^{26}\) Hemke, 392-93.
\(^{27}\) *Dwight’s Journal of Music* (6 December 1862): 287; quoted in Hemke, 393. This was Schubert’s Ständchen, from the *Schwanengesang* collection.
\(^{28}\) *Dwight’s Journal of Music* (27 December 1862): 311; quoted in Hemke, 394.
\(^{29}\) Hemke, 394.
\(^{30}\) Horwood, 50.
increased dramatically, and every inch of factory space was needed for their manufacture and the two hundred or so workmen employed there, the concerts had to be moved elsewhere. Sax acquired three artists’ studios that formed part of the Rue Saint-Georges building and turned them into a concert hall seating approximately 400 people; this opened to the public in 1847.

The Sax concert hall hosted musical events through the 1860s, during which time all of Sax’s instruments were presented regularly (this included saxhorns, saxotrombas, and saxtubas, as well as saxophones). On one particular occasion in 1863 the newly reorganized Grenadiers First Regiment band of the Garde presented a program that included Beethoven’s Septet in E-flat Major, op. 20, arranged for seven saxophones. One review of this concert praised not only the efforts of the saxophonists themselves but also Sax as a teacher, for all seven of these saxophonists were his students at the Conservatoire.

Reflecting his close association with the military and the resulting large number of brass instruments his workshop produced, many of the concerts Sax hosted featured brass bands. According to author Frederick Hemke, Sax considered the saxophone to be a member of the brass ensemble, and thus incorporated it into the brass band concerts for which Sax arranged symphonic literature and the chamber music of Haydn and Mozart. In May of 1850 he scheduled a concert of traditional chamber music for his new brass ensembles, at which one instrumentalist, listed only by the surname Printz, performed an alto saxophone solo in a transcription of the C-Minor Symphony of Jean-François Bellon (1795-1869). Léon Kreutzer described his solo on the saxophone as “one of the most moving voices to enrich our orchestras.”

Despite the fact that only passing mention is made of such performances in concert reviews, saxophonists undoubtedly performed many transcriptions during the latter half of the nineteenth century. One other notable mention of non-military band saxophonists performing transcribed works during this period occurs in reports of Rossini’s funeral on 13 November 1868, when, just before the Absolution, a quartet of saxophones played Beethoven’s Funeral March. One bystander at the ceremony commented that this arrangement “added to the melodic beauties of the ceremony and to the chill felt by those present,” while another account rendered a powerful description of the performance, stating that “You would have thought that you were hearing the sevenfold blasts of the Angels of the Last Judgment.”

At a saxophone workshop c. 1974, Sigurd Raschér recounted his experience with the score of the 1852 grand opera by Jacques-François Halévy, Le Juif errant. Although not included in the work’s official instrumentation, a quartet of saxophones is featured near the very end, during a scene in which the “wandering Jew” enters heaven. This was the first appearance of a saxophone quartet in an opera. The way in which the quartet is used in Le Juif errant, like the audience remarks

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31 This happened immediately after the 1845 decrees for the reform of the French military bands, which gave Sax an almost total monopoly over the manufacture of instruments for such ensembles.
32 Horwood, 89.
33 Hemke, 348-49.
34 Ibid., 349. The reorganization of the French military bands, begun in 1845, included the adoption of Sax’s organizational structure based on placing instruments into families and groups.
36 Whether this was the slow movement from Beethoven’s Symphony No. 3, or the Funeral March from the Piano Sonata, op.26, is not known. The saxophone arrangement was made specifically for this occasion by Gevaert.
37 Author unknown, Revue et gazette musicale (22 November 1868): 371; quoted in Hemke, 360.
regarding the transcription of Beethoven’s *Funeral March*, provide clues to how composers and audience members perceived the sound of the saxophone during the mid-nineteenth century.\(^{39}\)

The saxophonists of the mid-to-late nineteenth century thus played a variety of transcriptions; from those performances mentioned above, one will note selections from vocal and orchestral literature of the nineteenth century—contemporary works, for these instrumentalists—as well as orchestral and chamber music of the late eighteenth century. Fantasies that combined selections from a particular opera or operetta were frequently performed, as were individual arias. Saxophonists transcribed and performed similar pieces through the first four decades of the twentieth century.

After the saxophone class at the Paris Conservatoire closed in 1870, the center of French saxophonists’ classical training dissolved. Until the Conservatoire class reopened in 1942 under the direction of Marcel Mule, the saxophone would survive in Europe mainly through the military bands and touring orchestras of conductors such as Louis Antoine Jullien. Ensembles like Jullien’s provided many opportunities for saxophonists to perform transcriptions. Up to the end of the nineteenth century, the saxophone was practically never heard in German-speaking nations. During the first few decades of the twentieth century, however, German musician and composer Gustav Bumcke, a student of Max Bruch and Engelbert Humperdinck, used the saxophone in a number of his pieces (including a symphony and several chamber works). He published many studies and exercises for the saxophone between 1927 and 1932; he also conducted a saxophone orchestra in Berlin, and performed in the Berlin Saxophone Quartet. Apart from the activities of Bumcke, his orchestra and his fellow Berlin quartet members, however, the classical saxophone seems to have been almost unheard-of in that country during the early twentieth century. In the early 1930s, the classical saxophone gained a small but significant repertoire of original works by German composers such as Adolf Busch, Edmund von Borck, and Paul Hindemith, largely due to the concertizing efforts of Sigurd Raschèr. Raschèr’s career as a saxophonist in Germany ended in 1933, when the Ministry for Propaganda and Enlightenment banned the so-called “negro-music” of dance, jazz, and ragtime, effectively removing the saxophone from all public performance in Germany through the subsequent boycotting of the instrument’s use in any musical style.\(^{40}\)

1890s-1920s: The Saxophone in the United States

In the United States, the saxophone began to receive a variety of performance opportunities through American bandmasters John Philip Sousa and Patrick Gilmore, the emerging jazz and dance band scene, and vaudeville. During the last four decades of the nineteenth century the overseas concert tours of various European military bands and orchestras introduced the saxophone to an ever-increasing American audience. Saxophone virtuosos who toured with these ensembles made names for themselves in the United States. And although Henry Wuille was the first to perform a solo in the U.S., Edouard A. Lefèbre was without doubt the most outstanding saxophone soloist in America between the 1870s and the 1890s.\(^{41}\)

Originally a member of Antoine Jullien’s orchestra, Lefèbre decided to stay in the United States and subsequently joined Patrick Gilmore’s 22nd Regiment of New York Band in 1873 and John

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\(^{39}\) Personal communication from Professor Patrick Meighan, 27 July 2008.


\(^{41}\) Ingham, 37.
Philip Sousa’s band in 1892. Both Gilmore’s and Sousa’s bands became the testing grounds for developing saxophone soloists looking to perform classical music among the burgeoning popular instrumental genres at the turn of the twentieth century. Lefèbre was also a member of the first well-known United States saxophone quartet. Originating in the New York-based Gilmore band in the 1870s, this ensemble prepared Lefèbre to form his own quartet in 1905, which toured the USA, Alaska, Europe, and the Philippines. Lefèbre’s quartet’s repertoire consisted entirely of transcriptions.

With the advent of recording, dance bands, the rise of jazz, and the widespread visibility of vaudeville troupes featuring the saxophone, the United States experienced what some authors now call the “Saxophone Craze,” beginning in the early 1920s. Rudy Wiedoeft, the most recorded saxophonist of the first half of the twentieth century, helped to bring the saxophone from quiet obscurity to phenomenal success in America. Although many vaudevillian groups displayed only the more popular side of the saxophone repertoire, Wiedoeft also presented serious literature to his audiences, who may never have had the opportunity to hear it otherwise. He performed many of his own light and popular compositions alongside classical transcriptions of Massenet, Romberg, Tchaikovsky, and Verdi. His published saxophone solos with piano and instrumental accompaniments exhibit one of the earliest attempts by an American to raise the level of saxophone performance above home entertainment, vaudeville routines, and show band performance.

Although he was actually the second saxophonist to perform at New York’s Aeolian Hall, Wiedoeft set a precedent by mounting a major “classical” saxophone concert there on 17 April 1926. Sponsored by the Associated Musical Instrument Dealers of New York, Wiedoeft’s concert filled Aeolian Hall and was heard by an estimated million people over the radio. Wiedoeft, billed as the “World’s Premier Saxophonist,” played groups of solos, mainly of his own compositions, and the quartet he had assembled for this performance—three altos and a tenor—played arrangements of Bach and Tchaikovsky. The principal work of the evening was an original composition for saxophones, Willard Robinson’s *Four Futuristic Themes*, which was played by the quartet with the composer at the piano. Regarding this concert, the music critic of *The Metronome* wrote,

To the music lover it marked the first complete and satisfying appearance of the saxophone ensemble in the legitimate concert field—an offering untinged by any of the so-called “jazz” effects of the present day dance combination, yet a refreshing diversion from other offerings in the concert field … the saxophone is not only eminently suitable as a solo instrument but presents

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42 Horwood, 169.
43 Ingham, 65.
44 Hemke, 452.
45 Horwood, 169.
46 Ibid., 169. Some groups, like the Brown Brothers Saxophone Sextet, actually did include a few classical pieces on their programs, such as the quartet from *Rigoletto*.
47 Hemke, 456.
48 Ingham, 38. Jascha Gurewich, promoted as the “Heifetz of the Saxophone,” performed briefly with the Sousa Band and made his career with a number of symphony orchestras, as well as presenting the first recital of “serious” saxophone music in Aeolian Hall only months before Wiedoeft’s concert in 1926.
49 Horwood, 170.
50 Ibid., 170.
a family of instruments whose rendition of true classics not only requires no apology but permits a completeness … of pleasing uniqueness.\textsuperscript{51}

From the turn of the century up to the end of the 1930s Wiedoeft made over a hundred cylinder recordings, and his more than thirty-five compositions and innumerable arrangements became the standard repertoire of the many saxophonists he inspired.\textsuperscript{52}

The saxophone’s introduction and dissemination in the United States followed what Hemke terms the “European pattern of employment” as first a military band instrument that slowly found a casual acceptance in the symphonic orchestra and eventually became the most popular of home instruments.\textsuperscript{53} During the early twentieth century the saxophone found a home on the vaudeville stage and in dance orchestras and jazz bands, but thanks to performers such as Rudy Wiedoeft it also won a reputation as an outstanding solo instrument.\textsuperscript{54} Like their predecessors of the late nineteenth century, saxophonists during this period performed many transcriptions of opera and operetta arias, as well as nineteenth-century orchestral and chamber works. Saxophonists now borrowed from other repertoires originating in a broader variety of eras as well; Bach transcriptions began to appear on saxophone programs, as did “light” classical, waltz, and other popular instrumental tunes from the early twentieth century. Songs and arrangements of operatic selections, however, remained the most frequently performed pieces. Other repertoires from which saxophonists borrowed at this time included those for solo piano and for violin and piano; these two genres, however, provided mainly short, virtuosic compositions made popular by performers such as Fritz Kreisler. Not until the 1930s would saxophonists begin transcribing larger, multi-movement works.

\textbf{Late 1920s-1942: Leeson, Mule, Raschèr}

At the beginning of the twentieth century the saxophone made only an occasional appearance in classical music, due in large part to the lack of substantial repertoire and what author Don Ashton calls the “disinterest of orchestral musicians.”\textsuperscript{55} Many performers, like Rudy Wiedoeft, embraced both the classical as well as the lighter, popular side of the saxophone repertoire. But the classical saxophone experienced a considerable renaissance between the mid-1920s and the 1940s, mainly due to the concertizing of three international soloists: Cecil Leeson (1902-1999), Marcel Mule (1901-2001), and Sigurd Raschèr (1907-2001). It was during this time that the modern classical saxophone performance tradition was established, the foundation of which is a core of standard practice and concert repertoire composed for these three artists.\textsuperscript{56} Yet all three men were initially dependent upon transcriptions, due to the dearth of repertoire that was available at the beginning of their careers.

\textsuperscript{51} The Metronome (April 1926); quoted in Horwood, 170.
\textsuperscript{52} Ingham, 38, 111.
\textsuperscript{53} Hemke, 465. Popularity here is based upon instrument sales, marketing, and the saxophone’s widespread use in a variety of ensembles, most notably the large saxophone “orchestras” or “saxophone bands” that sprang up throughout the United States. For more information on the saxophone’s popularity in the U.S. during the early twentieth century, see Harry Burdette Hindson, “Aspects of the Saxophone in American Musical Culture, 1850-1980” (D.M.A. diss., University of Wisconsin, 1992).
\textsuperscript{54} Ibid., 465.
\textsuperscript{55} Ingham, 20.
\textsuperscript{56} David Pituch, “A Reception History of the Saxophone between 1918 and 1942” (D.M. diss., Northwestern University, 1998), 65.
Marcel Mule in particular is often cited for his pioneering work with the saxophone quartet, by far the best-known classical saxophone chamber ensemble. Despite the fact that the earliest nineteenth-century composers for the saxophone created quartet works, Mule is credited with the re-creation of this genre during the mid-twentieth century and with developing the saxophone quartet into the standardized ensemble it remains today. He is responsible, via commission or award, for more than eighty original works for a variety of concert saxophone genres. Yet he, like Leeson and Raschèr, performed and created many transcriptions.

As a soloist, Mule gained considerable recognition in Europe and abroad through performance of one transcription in particular, although it had not been written out; on at least three occasions Mule transposed at sight the trumpet part of the Brandenburg Concerto No. 2 by Bach on the soprano saxophone.\footnote{Rousseau, 63, 72-73, 75. Performances of Bach’s Brandenburg Concerto No. 2 included at least one concert in Paris and another in Prades in 1950 for the Casals Festival. Commercial recordings were released of both the Casals Festival performance and a later performance, conducted by Otto Klemperer. (Neither Mule nor Rousseau provides a date for this later concert.)} In each instance, Mule played the part only because the trumpet player was absent. These performances gained special attention from other musicians for both the instrument and Marcel Mule. On another occasion, his rendition of the alto flute solo in Maurice Ravel’s *Daphnis et Chloé*, also transposed at sight, attracted the immediate attention of composer Arthur Honegger, who, upon approaching Mule after the concert, declared, “The saxophone should always be in the orchestra.”\footnote{Ibid., 63. In his interview with Rousseau, Mule did not provide a specific date or concert for this occasion, but he adds that the concert took place in Paris in either 1940 or 1941, most likely at Salle Pleyel. The conductor was Charles Münch.}

Mule concertized as both a soloist and as the leading member of his saxophone quartet for more than three and a half decades, during which time many composers wrote original literature for him and his ensemble. On his 1958 twelve-concert tour of the United States, Mule programmed many of these original works alongside his own transcriptions of such pieces as the *Canzonetta*, op.19, by Gabriel Pierné (originally for clarinet, 1888) and the Sonata BWV 1035 (originally for flute) by J.S. Bach.\footnote{Ibid., 27. In an interview with Rousseau (90-91), Mule mentions the *Intermezzo* from *Goyescas* by Enrique Granados as another transcription that he often programmed on solo concerts.}

The saxophone quartet developed out of Mule’s relationship with three of his colleagues from the French Garde Républicaine band, which Mule joined in 1923. By 1928 Mule and his three associates had established the standard quartet instrumentation and began to give public concerts.\footnote{Gee, 221. The instrumentation Mule and his quartet established was soprano/alto/tenor/baritone, which to the present day remains the standard saxophone quartet combination.} The early repertoire of the “Quatuor de la musique de la Garde Républicaine” consisted entirely of transcriptions.\footnote{This situation was quick to change, however; by the time the ensemble left the Garde and changed their name to “Quatuor de saxophones de Paris” in 1936, their repertoire included original works by Robert Clerisse, Alexander Glazunov, Gabriel Pierné, and Pierre Vellones, among others (Ibid., 221-22).} One piece in particular that Marcel Mule recalled frequently performing with the quartet was the Andante from Tchaikovsky’s String Quartet No. 1, one of many transcriptions that Mule himself created.\footnote{Another notable quartet transcription by Mule was *Trois Pièces* by Albéniz. Along with the original baritone player, Chauvet, Mule contributed many transcriptions to the initial saxophone quartet repertoire. According to Eugene Rousseau, the Mule transcription of Tchaikovsky’s Andante remains a favorite concert piece among saxophone quartets (Ingham, 67 and Rousseau, 17).} In an interview with Eugene Rousseau late in his life Mule commented that this transcription remained “quite vivid in my memory. [It
was] strikingly beautiful, but also ... evoked such tremendous response from the audiences."

Mule’s quartet attracted considerable attention to the classical saxophone through their radio broadcasting, recordings, and extensive tours during the ensemble’s more than forty years of existence.

In 1942 Claude Delvincourt, director of the Paris Conservatory, appointed Mule professor of saxophone, thus reestablishing the saxophone class at the Conservatory after a 72-year hiatus. While at the Conservatory, Mule developed a system for teaching the concert saxophone that would be duplicated in saxophone studios throughout Europe. Transcriptions figured prominently in Mule’s conception of saxophone instruction; he found in the music of the Baroque, Classical and early Romantic periods excellent pedagogical materials for the teaching of various historical styles, and so arranged and transcribed more than 100 classic studies from the early repertoire of other instruments, as well as transcriptions of concert solos and sonatas. Many of his Pièces célèbres, collections of short transcriptions designed for use by students, are still available today. These collections include works by Gluck, Lully, and Mendelssohn, as well as complete sonatas by J.S. Bach and Handel. In his series of interviews with Eugene Rousseau for the book Marcel Mule: His Life and the Saxophone, Mule commented upon these transcriptions:

As for study materials or method books, there simply weren’t any ... So I used scales, arpeggios, and transcriptions as teaching materials in order for my students to build the foundation that is absolutely essential for one to have command of the instrument in musical performance ... From the teaching standpoint there is yet another dimension to the question of transcriptions, and it is a vitally important one. We have been speaking about the dearth of musical literature for the saxophone, a condition that was natural considering the fact that the instrument was barely 100 years old when I began my teaching ... if students of the saxophone do not play transcriptions of other music, there is no way that they will be able to develop their musical culture as performers. Music of Bach and Handel, all the music of the eighteenth century provides rich examples of ornamentation, staccato and legato style, various tempi, and the forms of that era ... Without these kinds of transcriptions the saxophonist cannot develop his foundation in musical styles. Thus the use of transcriptions is musically proper and educationally indispensable.

Sigurd Raschèr was the leading pioneer in inspiring original compositions for the saxophone during the inter-war period of the twentieth century. He publicly performed many transcribed works, and on a few occasions these transcriptions or arrangements endeared Raschèr’s playing to composers, who in turn created original pieces for him. His performance of

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63 Rousseau, 90-91.
64 Gee, 31, 222. The original Paris Conservatory saxophone class, under the direction of Adolphe Sax, had closed in 1870 (see above). Although other conservatories in France continued to offer instruction in saxophone performance after 1870—most often by clarinet and double-reed professors—the reestablishment of the class at the Paris Conservatory in 1942 was, for saxophonists, a historic moment that provided clear evidence of the classical saxophone’s rise from obscurity.
65 Ingham, 56; Gee, 222. A few of the studies from which Mule borrowed and transcribed include the flute etudes of Berbiguier, Boehm, Soussmann, and Terschak, the oboe etudes of Ferling, and the violin etudes of Campagnoli, Kreutzer, Mazas, Paganini, and Rode.
66 Ingham, 56-57.
67 Rousseau, 89-91.
68 Raschèr inspired more internationally than any other classical saxophonist during the early-to-mid twentieth century. At least 23 different works by various American, British, French, German, Polish, Russian, and Swedish composers were written for him between 1930 and 1950, including nine concertos.
a Bach transcription in 1931 led to his being invited to sit in with the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra for a work composed and conducted by Edmund von Borck (1906-1944), which in turn led directly to a concerto from Borck, which Raschèr played twice in the following year. Although he concertized throughout Europe, Australia, Central America, and the United States and inspired more than 100 original works during his fifty-year performing career, he is also well known for his more than sixty-five years as a saxophone pedagogue. Raschèr published a number of transcription collections for use by saxophone students. These pieces, a total of 84 transcriptions from works of J.S. Bach, Henry Eccles, Johann Friedrich Fasch, George Gershwin, W.A. Mozart, Robert Schumann, Antonio Vivaldi, and others, range in length from short teaching pieces to concert-length works, and many of these remain in print today.

American saxophonist Cecil Leeson used transcriptions he created to announce the presence of the classical saxophone in the United States. Beginning in the 1920s, he made it one of his goals to bring about the acceptance of the saxophone as a classical instrument in America; at the time, American audiences knew the saxophone only through its presence in dance and military bands, the emerging jazz movement, and the vaudeville stage. When Leeson began performing extensively as a classical soloist in 1925, there were no American classical saxophonists, no stylistic or tonal traditions on which to build, and no concert repertoire. To begin to build such a repertoire, Leeson took it upon himself to transcribe what he termed “little pieces.” These were short, one-movement works that his audiences would almost certainly have heard before, whether live or via radio. Virtuosic violin solos, opera arias, and other pieces familiar to the general concert-going public appeared frequently on Leeson’s programs during his early career; these allowed him to display both his extensive technical skill and his expressive tone, and to do so in pieces that his audience recognized. Examples of what Leeson termed “little pieces” include Fritz Kreisler’s Schön Rosmarin and Rondino on a Theme by Beethoven, operatic arias such as “My Heart at Thy Sweet Voice” from Saint-Saën’s Samson and Delilah, and “O Mio Fernando” from Donizetti’s La Favorita, Rimsky-Korsakov’s Flight of the Bumblebee, Rachmaninoff’s Floods of Spring and In the Silence of Night, J.S. Bach’s Air (“on the G String”) from the Orchestral Suite in D, Debussy’s The Little Shepherd, and Charles Gounod’s arrangement of Bach’s Ave Maria. Leeson felt that certain pieces were better for him to transcribe and play than others. Prominent among these are the large number of songs and opera arias that he adapted for the saxophone. In an interview with Mark Hulsebos, Leeson mentioned that “vocalists have many beautiful-sounding things, and of course the style and tone that I had [by 1924] was eminently suited for playing that kind of music.”

Although the smaller transcriptions remained on programs of the mid-to-late 1930s, Leeson sought to provide his audiences with more “serious” compositions. Once he was finally able to program original saxophone pieces (including Alexander Glazunov’s Concerto for Saxophone and String Orchestra, op. 109, and Paul Creston’s Sonata, op. 19), Leeson included larger, multi-movement transcriptions. Beginning in 1933 these included Beethoven’s Sonata for

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69 Horwood, 183.
70 The following internationally-renowned saxophone performers and pedagogues are numbered among Raschèr’s students: Sylvia Baker, Linda Bangs, David Bilger, Ronald Caravan, Lawrence Gwozdz, Kenneth Deans, James Houlik, John-Edward Kelly, Patrick Meighan, John S. Moore, Lee Patrick, Carina Raschèr, H. Ray Spires, Bruce Weinberger, and Harry White.
71 Gee, 140; Ingham, 56-57.
72 Mark Hulsebos, “Cecil Leeson: the Pioneering of the Concert Saxophone in America from 1921 to 1941” (D.A. diss., Ball State University, 1989), xi.
73 Ibid., 40.
violin and piano, op. 30 no. 3, and J.S. Bach’s Sonata no. 1 for flute and piano, BWV 1030.\textsuperscript{74} He programmed the Beethoven Sonata often and explained that he used this transcription to attract the attention of composers from whom he desired original works; “it had proven successful to the point where in the then-absense [sic] of serious saxophone literature it had become one of the mainstays of my concert programs. I had found it on many occasions to be a tremendous help in my efforts to gain recognition for the saxophone in high places.”\textsuperscript{75}

On the occasion of Leeson’s debut at New York’s prestigious Town Hall on 5 February 1937, the soloist performed four original saxophone works and nine transcriptions. This was a historic event, since it was the first saxophone recital given in this hall as well as the first performance of the Glazunov \textit{Concerto} in the United States.\textsuperscript{76} Leeson’s manner of shaping his performances to focus on original works became his signature concert structure: three of the four original compositions were placed together in the middle of the program. All eleven reviews of this concert praised Leeson’s accomplished musical style, and many mentioned specifically his exemplary technique and interpretation of the works he performed.\textsuperscript{77} One of the more prominent critics present at the concert was Olin Downes (1886-1955), chief music critic for the \textit{New York Times} from 1934 to 1955. Of Leeson’s February 5 performance, he wrote:

Cecil Leeson, saxophonist and musician of serious aims, gave a recital yesterday afternoon in Town Hall. His program contained important and interesting music … Some of the compositions Mr. Leeson played were arrangements … of music by distinguished masters. But much of it was music originally composed for the saxophone … He played with commendable technical proficiency, with a tone that was clear and in the best sense characteristic of his instrument. He showed himself a thoughtful and well-schooled musician, one with far too much appreciation and regard for his chosen medium to be content to use it merely as a vehicle for jazz. If Bizet, Ravel, and a dozen other masters of the composer’s art could take the saxophone seriously, there was, Mr. Leeson seemed to say, no good reason why a performer should regard it with less thought and ambition. The proficiency of Mr. Leeson’s playing and his zeal as interpreter were strong additional arguments in this direction.\textsuperscript{78}

It is difficult to determine Downes’s particular angle regarding this review; it appears, however, that he was being positive towards the classical saxophone and was sympathetic to Leeson’s goals concerning its classical repertoire.

Most of the classical works for the saxophone that date from between 1930 and 1950 were written for Marcel Mule, Sigurd Raschèr, or Cecil Leeson. It was due to their efforts that the classical saxophone became accepted as what author Harry Gee calls a “principal instrument,” worthy of study at the highest institutions of learning worldwide.\textsuperscript{79} And the

\textsuperscript{74} Hulsebos, 76.
\textsuperscript{75} Ibid., 119-20. In a c1980 article titled “Remembering Percy Grainger” (included in full in Hulsebos’s dissertation, 434-50), Leeson recounts the story of this transcription as an introduction to a lengthy anecdote describing how he approached Percy Grainger to write an original work for the saxophone. At the National Music Camp at Interlochen, Michigan, in 1937 Grainger agreed to play through the Beethoven transcription with Leeson. Although he claimed to hate the pairing of saxophone and piano (stating that the saxophone was “so much the better instrument of the two … when the piano comes in it just sounds like a lot of little ants crawling around”), he eventually arranged a version of \textit{Molly on the Shore} for alto saxophone and piano, with Leeson’s help.
\textsuperscript{76} See Appendix I for a list of all thirteen pieces performed on this concert.
\textsuperscript{77} Hulsebos, 113.
\textsuperscript{79} Gee, 31.
transcriptions that they created and played aided all three of these men in attracting attention to the classical saxophone.

The types of transcriptions these artists published as teaching materials have many similarities. Pedagogical transcriptions were all relatively simple and short (lasting no longer than about five or six minutes). Many of these pieces originated in the seventeenth, eighteenth, or nineteenth century and came from flute, oboe, violin, or voice repertoires; early twentieth-century art music was not included in these published collections. A notable similarity also appears among the transcriptions that Raschèr, Mule, and Leeson performed: J.S. Bach was a recurring composer in all three men’s concert repertoires between 1925 and 1940. Other than this parallel, and the fact that multi-movement works were now programmed frequently, performed transcriptions varied widely among these three saxophonists.

Leeson, in particular, played transcriptions from a few classifiable categories, which he acknowledged in his interviews and concert programming. According to him, the “little pieces” he used to open and close his programs served to impress the audience with his technique and tone quality, as well as to “fluff them out of the hall” at the end of the concert. When playing a multi-section solo recital during the 1920s and 1930s, Leeson generally isolated multi-movement transcriptions, such as Beethoven’s Sonata op. 30, no. 3. He often placed original saxophone works in their own section, away from the transcribed pieces; this may have helped to clarify to Leeson’s audiences which pieces were transcribed, and which were not. It also raised the level of importance of the original works; not only were they almost always in a section of their own, but they also occupied the middle portions of the program and rarely opened or closed a concert.

**Saxophone Transcriptions, Mid-Twentieth Century—Today**

Leeson, Mule, and Raschèr laid the foundation for classical saxophone performance and pedagogy during the 1920s, 1930s, and 1940s; their students continued this legacy, and established the saxophone as a serious instrument in concert halls and institutions of higher education worldwide. The proliferation of classical saxophonists and the creation of numerous university and conservatory saxophone studios brought a marked increase in literature for the instrument. By the end of the twentieth century the classical saxophone had a vast original repertoire numbering in the tens of thousands. In his article “Transcriptions, Then and Now” saxophonist Lee Patrick states that each year more original works are written for the saxophone than the year prior. But transcriptions remain an important component of this repertoire. Besides their role as a pedagogical tool, transcriptions are performed by professional saxophonists and are commercially recorded. Internationally renowned soloists constantly program transcriptions and arrangements. However, performing transcriptions has drawn criticism from saxophonists and non-saxophonists alike. Marcel Mule observed:

As for critics of the performance of transcriptions … one who criticizes the employment of transcriptions is one who usually has a limited knowledge of musical performance and music history. J.S. Bach … often did not write for a specific instrument … many of the critics of the saxophone’s use of transcriptions are the same critics who cannot envision it and refuse to accept

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80 Hulsebos, 133.
it as a viable medium in classical music, primarily because they perceive it only as a popular and jazz instrument. Good music played well in public on any instrument will be accepted.\footnote{82}

Cecil Leeson recognized a need for transcriptions, although in the following excerpt from 1936, he makes it clear that saxophonists should not use transcriptions as an end, but as a means:

With a little search, many pieces may be found which fit the saxophone as well or better than the original instrument they were originally written for. However, it must be kept in mind that the transcription is not an end in itself, but should be used to demonstrate the possibilities of the saxophone, with a view to inspiring composers of reputation and ability to write characteristic works in sufficient numbers to insure a wide selection.\footnote{83}

Another function that Leeson attributed to the transcriptions he played was that of providing familiarity; in order to attract new compositions, he would first have to attract an audience, and transcriptions of familiar pieces did this for him. Regarding Leeson’s radio interview by Wayne Shoemaker of the Rochester Civic Music Association on 12 January 1938, Mark Hulsebos noted that Leeson chose the two pieces he played with great care. Not only did the works have to highlight his tone quality and technique, they also had to be familiar to the public, “thereby providing a reference by which the saxophone playing could be understood.”\footnote{84}

During the past twenty-five years many saxophonists have contributed to the transcriptions debate. In his 1993 article Lee Patrick acknowledged the functions that both Mule and Leeson ascribed to saxophone transcriptions. He also supports the familiarity function: “there are more people who will pay to hear a brass quintet clown its way through the Flight of the Bumblebee than will pay to hear a superb performance of any significant works created in recent years for brass quintet.” Patrick writes that saxophonists must play transcriptions to satisfy today’s audiences; it is “a common ground where saxophonists and general audiences can meet.”\footnote{85}

World-renowned performer and pedagogue Jean-Marie Londeix, a student of Marcel Mule and saxophone professor at the Regional Conservatory of Bordeaux, France, from 1971 to 2001 created and taught many transcriptions. Prominent among his early performing repertoire and his collection of pedagogical compositions of the 1970s to 1990s are his transcriptions of the Bach Violoncello Suites, BWV 1007-1012. Of these pieces, he explained:

I regularly played one or another of the Suites while practicing at home, generally after my technical exercises. It is with the Suites that I truly learned how to play … It was here as well that I learned to go beyond the usual possibilities of the saxophone. I thus acquired my endurance … I also improved my awareness of style, developed my taste, the quality of my attacks, my technical accuracy and my sensitivity to pitch … [the Suites] prepared me for the performance of the great modern pieces of solo saxophone. They are my basic source of musical nourishment.\footnote{86}

\footnote{82} Rousseau, 89-90.  
\footnote{83} Cecil Leeson, “The Saxophone as a Solo Concert Instrument,” The Metronome (July, 1936), 372; quoted in Hulsebos, 75.  
\footnote{84} Hulsebos, 127-28. The pieces Leeson performed during this interview were Fritz Kreisler’s Schön Rosmarin, and Rimsky-Korsakov’s Flight of the Bumblebee.  
\footnote{85} Patrick, 23, 25.  
\footnote{86} James Umble, Jean-Marie Londeix: Master of the Modern Saxophone (Cherry Hill, New Jersey: Roncorp, 2000), 189-90.
Concerning public performance of the Suites, however, Londeix insisted that he never included any of the Suites in their entirety: “I have willingly played a movement as an encore (without failing to apologize to the cellists),” he stated, “but only exceptionally did I put one on a program.” In his teaching Londeix reiterated his conviction that saxophonists must embrace the avant-garde as the most important music of the classical saxophone or face increasing irrelevance, and eventual “extinction,” in the musical world.

Some saxophonists, such as noted historian, collector, and teacher Paul Cohen, are not altogether opposed to the performance of transcriptions. They do, however, share the belief that the classical saxophone now has a large enough repertoire that transcriptions do not need to be programmed. In a concert review from 1984 Cohen attacked fellow American saxophonist Laura Hunter for including the oboe Sonata, op. 166, by Camille Saint-Saëns on her 20 February concert in New York:

That Ms. Hunter should program this transcription, considering the abundance of original literature for soprano saxophone, is perplexing if not regrettable. Transcriptions of this type are appropriate for stylistic study, student recitals, and demonstrations. Whatever purpose they might serve on a formal professional presentation escapes this observer; such programming can only reflect on the maturity of the performer.

It is interesting to note, however, that in a review of John Harle’s New York debut recital from the same 1984 season Cohen did not object to the inclusion of the Sonata No. 1 in G Minor, BWV 1001, by J.S. Bach. The style of a transcription may contribute to the opinions of saxophonists when judging another’s choice of concert repertoire.

Those saxophonists who share Lee Patrick’s opinion believe that a diversified program, consisting of original works as well as a variety of transcriptions, is acceptable and perhaps necessary in order to attract an audience to a public performance. Concert saxophonist Albert Regni, presently the principal saxophonist with the New York Philharmonic, has transcribed many pieces by Johann Sebastian Bach, both for his own use and for other saxophonists. He attests to the variety that such works provide, mentioning that “transcriptions give a different flavor to the program and show the instrument’s versatility.” In an interview from 1990 performer and pedagogue Roger Greenberg commented that he has “no aversion to playing transcriptions of great works. In fact, I believe this is good for the saxophone. It favorably reaches an audience which might otherwise show no interest in the saxophone.” In the same interview he describes his career as part of the Los Angeles Saxophone Quartet and states that “The highlight of this group was when we recorded the complete *Art of the Fugue*. It was a mammoth project and each of us transcribed several of the fugues … I’m still very proud of the end result.”

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87 Umble, 190.
88 Ibid., 108.
90 Ibid., 26.
91 Regni has transcribed a number of fugues from the *Art of the Fugue* and much of the *Well-Tempered Clavier*, as well as a saxophone quartet arrangement of the C-Major Fugue from Bach’s violin sonata, BWV 1001.
94 Ibid., 19.
The music of Bach in particular remains popular among saxophonists. When asked in 2007 about his recording of the Sonata in E Major (BWV 1035), international performer, recording artist, and current professor at the University of Iowa Kenneth Tse responded that Bach’s music “should not be boxed in,” and that saxophonists “should be open to exploring and studying various types of music.” A prolific arranger and transcriber, Tse explained how he chose works to adapt for saxophone by saying that “whenever I enjoy hearing a piece and think it would work well on any of the saxophones, I purchase it.” These arrangements, he added, were prepared for both his own performances as well as for educational purposes.  

Whatever they may personally believe about the appropriateness of performing transcriptions, classical saxophonists consistently program them on recordings. On his first commercial recording, issued on the Vendome label in 1960, Jean-Marie Londeix included his transcription of Sergei Prokofiev’s *Visions fugitives*; and on his farewell program in 1995 he played his transcription of Claude Debussy’s *Syrinx*. In preparing a debut recital, some musicians, like John Harle, include one or two transcriptions. And when advertising their musical prowess and varied performance repertoire, saxophone soloists or ensembles, like the New World Saxophone Quartet, boast that they specialize in “classical saxophone music from the Renaissance to the 20th century.”

Although not mentioning non-original works specifically, Donald Dierks, former classical music critic with *The San Diego Union*, argued that saxophonists presenting debut recitals should include a “balanced variety of music.” Dierks explained that musicians have to do what he calls “merchandising” when they program a concert: “people have to want to come,” he adds, “but there is also the need to present new things, especially when you play saxophone.” Former *New York Times* reviewer John Rockwell commented about James Cunningham in his 1983 Carnegie Hall debut that, while he was “a technically adept saxophonist,” he had “trouble assembling a musically functional program. Still, most saxophonists have done better in this regard than he did Tuesday night in Carnegie Recital Hall.” He continues the review by mentioning Cunningham’s inclusion of various “dry” and “faceless” original works, “plus an unmusical stunt rendition of a Fritz Kreisler violin transcription of the Rondo from Mozart’s *Serenade in D* (K. 250).” Sometimes it is the interpretation that irks a reviewer; at other times it is the critic’s belief that a transcription’s performance is made superfluous by the work in its original instrumentation. But some critics applaud the inclusion of transcriptions and arrangements. *Fanfare* reviewer Robert Kirzinger wrote about the 1998 album, *Ars subtilior*: 

The saxophone quartet XASAX makes a very intelligent decision in deciding to interleave compositions of the 14th-century Ars Nova composer Jacob de Senleches with the four contemporary works … the three pieces, two ballades and a virelai, inject stylistic diversity where the sax quartet’s relatively homogenous timbre might overwhelm. Further, the appropriately cool and straightforward readings of these pieces contrast them with the more dramatic readings given to the modern works.

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The opinions of record reviewers will be examined in more detail in Chapter 3.

Transcriptions have received a prominent place in saxophone recordings of the later twentieth and early twenty-first century. Since the 1950s saxophone soloists and ensembles have released more than 400 recordings; over half of these recordings include some form of classical, “light-classical,” or contemporary art music transcription, and more than one fourth of the total include more than one transcription. Over 100 of these recordings are composed entirely of transcriptions. Regarding type, saxophonists have recorded a wide variety of transcribed pieces, ranging from medieval and Renaissance vocal works to nineteenth-century opera, early twentieth-century ragtime to late twentieth-century avant-garde. Most of these works have been transcribed or arranged by the saxophonists recording them, and many remain unpublished. Those works that do reach publication often become a part of the standard classical saxophone repertoire and are performed and recorded as much as, or even more often than, original pieces for the saxophone. The next chapter will discuss at length the types of transcriptions most often recorded.

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100 “Light-classical” is used here to refer to pieces that are of a lighter fare than what is generally considered “classical.” Although different from Third Stream—a term coined in 1957 by Gunther Schuller to describe the synthesis of classical and jazz music—these “lighter” works are generally shorter than most “serious” classical art compositions; they are usually only one movement in length, and either include elements of popular, ragtime, or jazz music, or they are works in simple classical forms designed mainly to show off virtuosic ability. Prominent examples include works by George Gershwin, Fritz Kreisler, and Rudy Wiedoeft.
CHAPTER 3

SAXOPHONE RECORDINGS AND REVIEWS: THE DISCOGRAPHY AND GENERAL PERFORMANCE PRACTICE CONSIDERATIONS

As the previous chapter shows, transcriptions were from the beginning, and continue to be, a major part of the classical saxophone repertoire. The recorded repertoire bears this out; between the early 1930s and the first decade of the twenty-first century, transcriptions have maintained a prominent place on records, cassette tapes, and compact discs released by saxophonists for public consumption.

Even in the earliest years of audio recording, saxophonists performed a variety of transcribed works. Jean Moeremans, Steven Porpora, Wheeler Wadsworth, and H. Bennie Henton appear on some of the earliest Edison, Columbia, and Berliner record issues of the late 1890s through the first two decades of the twentieth century. Moeremans was a Belgian saxophonist who had been soloist with the United States Marine Band prior to joining the John Philip Sousa Band at the turn of the century. An RCA record catalog published in 1900 credited him with renditions of the Carnival of Venice, Fantasy on Old Folks at Home, Gounod’s Serenade, and Arthur Pryor’s Little Nell. Rudy Wiedoeft’s and Marcel Mule’s combined collection of personal recordings bears witness to the attention transcriptions received. Mule’s collection in particular provides extensive evidence: over half of his thirty-nine 78rpm and 33rpm recordings dating from c.1930 up to the early 1950s (consisting of both solo and quartet performances), feature transcribed or arranged selections, including works by Albeniz, Beethoven, Boccherini, Bolzoni, Granados, Haydn, Ibert, Kreisler, Mozart, Rameau, Ravel, Rimsky-Korsakov, Scarlatti, Schumann, and Tchaikovsky.

One of the main tasks of this project was the compilation of a saxophone discography as a resource for analyzing and investigating the recorded history of transcriptions. Due to its size—more than 800 recordings dating from between 1934 and 2007—the discography is not included here; some of its statistics, as well as general information regarding how saxophonists perform transcriptions (as gleaned from their own published writings), will be discussed in the present chapter, along with an overview of record reviews from both saxophone and non-saxophone sources. A website has been established in order to display the discography in full.

The Discography: General Statistics

The discography shows the diversity of the recorded saxophone repertoire. Gleaned from previous published discographies, journal reviews, online catalogs, personal performer and ensemble websites, and general research databases, this list displays the classical saxophone repertoire beginning with the earliest transcriptions and extending to the present day.

102 Hemke, 417-18.
103 Rousseau, 144-49.
104 The discography can be viewed at: http://www.etheridgehaus.com/etheridgethesis/
105 Due to the overwhelming number of saxophone recordings listed in the various sources of the discography, certain limitations were enforced during the collection process. Two of the most important of these limitations are: 1) the recording must include a solo saxophone or saxophone ensemble as the spotlighted performing force on the program, and 2) the recording had to have been released for monetary profit and was, at
canon of works as it has evolved since the early 1930s, up to and through the turn of the twentieth-first century, with recent compact discs including some of the most original and experimental works to be written for the saxophone. While the repertoire of original works for solo saxophone and ensembles of saxophones has grown significantly during the past forty years, with more than 18,000 works now in existence. The discography also reveals that, although the saxophone now has the original repertoire to sustain thousands of recitals and recordings, transcriptions are still often performed.

In addition, the variety of transcription types has expanded since the mid-twentieth century. Early records by Marcel Mule and Sigurd Raschèr include transcriptions of Boccherini, Bolzoni, Eccles, Handel, Haydn, Mendelssohn, Ravel, Saint-Saëns and Schumann, with Gershwin’s piano Preludes being the closest thing to popular music to appear. But during the 1960s and 1970s ragtime, jazz, and other popular genres began to appear more frequently on saxophone recordings. The range of genres, time periods, styles, and original instrumentation types represented in this discography shows that saxophonists, who, more often than not, themselves function as arrangers or transcribers, borrow from practically any repertoire available to them. Consider the array of transcriptions shown in the sample list of twenty recordings (all of which date from 1996-2007) in Table 3.1 below:

Table 3.1: Sample list, saxophone discography; twenty recordings from 1996-2007

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<tr>
<th>Artist / Ensemble Name</th>
<th>Label / Catalog #</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Contents</th>
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<tr>
<td>Sax Allemande</td>
<td>Farao Classics</td>
<td>2004</td>
<td><em>Sax at the Opera</em></td>
<td>Nutcracker Suite, Op. 71a / Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky Don Giovanni, K 527: Arias / Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart Variations (orig. 2 oboes and English horn) in C major on “La ci darem la mano”, WoO 28 / Ludwig van Beethoven Carmen Ibericum / Stefan Zorzor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alliage Quartett</td>
<td>Koch Entertainment Dist.</td>
<td>2007</td>
<td><em>Alliage Quartet - À la recherche du rêve perdu</em></td>
<td>Piano Quintet, op. 44 / Robert Schumann Music to <em>A Midsummer Night’s Dream</em> (Ouverture; Scherzo; Elfenmarsch; Lied mit Chor; Intermezzo; Notturno; Hochzeitmarsch; Marcia funebre; Ein Tanz von Rüpel; Finale) / Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amherst Quartet</td>
<td>30701 Amherst Saxophone Quartet</td>
<td>2001</td>
<td><em>Renaissance Masterworks of Josquin Desprez</em></td>
<td>(All by Josquin Desprez) Ave Maria De profundis clamavi Absalon fili mi Salve Regina O bone et dulcissime Jesu Domine, exaudi orationem meam Missa pange lingua: Kyrie, Gloria, Credo, Sanctus, Agnus Dei</td>
</tr>
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some point, available for public purchase, whether it was commercially or privately published. The first criterion restricts the discography to purely saxophone recordings that highlight the saxophone as an instrument, a particular saxophonist or saxophone ensemble, or a particular collection of compositions written or arranged for saxophone(s). The second criterion leaves out private recitals or other recordings that may appear in library database listings but were never available for purchase. For a more thorough description of the discography’s creation, the reader is referred to the discography website front page.
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<th>Contents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Ancia Quartet          | CD-9601; TAQ Productions | 1996 | Variations | Three preludes / George Gershwin  
|                        |                  |      |        | Chanson d'autrefois / Gabriel Pierné  
|                        |                  |      |        | Golliwogg's cakewalk / Claude Debussy  
|                        |                  |      |        | Prelude from Czech Suite, op. 39 / Antonín Dvořák  
|                        |                  |      |        | A Night in Tunisia / John Birks "Dizzy" Gillespie  
|                        |                  |      |        | Variations for saxophone quartet / Gary Haynes  
|                        |                  |      |        | Prelude and fugue in D-flat / J.S. Bach  
|                        |                  |      |        | Il est bel et bon (orig. polyphonic chanson) / Pierre Passereau  
|                        |                  |      |        | Celtic collage / traditional  
|                        |                  |      |        | Premier quatuor, op. 53 / Jean-Baptiste Singelée  
|                        |                  |      |        | Ellington Suite / Edward Kennedy "Duke"  
| Arno Bornkamp          | Challenge Classics | 2003 | Saxophone and Piano | Sonata (orig. viola & piano) No. 2 in E-flat, Op. 120 / Johannes Brahms  
|                        |                  |      |        | Adagio and Allegro in A-flat, Op. 70 / Robert Schumann  
|                        |                  |      |        | Drei Romanzen, Op. 94 (orig. oboe and piano) / Robert Schumann  
|                        |                  |      |        | Sonata (orig. Violin and Piano) in A / César Franck  
| Copenhagen Quartet     | KL5142; Helicon, Kleos Classics | 2007 | Italian Baroque | Concerto Grosso, Op.6 No.8 in G minor, "Fatto per la notte di Natale" / Arcangelo Corelli  
|                        |                  |      |        | Chamber Cantata—Orfeo / Giovanni Battista Pergolesi  
|                        |                  |      |        | Concerto Grosso No. 1; Concerto Grosso No.2 / Alessandro Scarlatti  
|                        |                  |      |        | Salve Regina / Giovanni Battista Pergolesi  
| Dinant Saxophone Quartet | Rene87156       | 1999 | Concertino De Dinant | Concertino de Dinant / Fernand-Marcel Fontaine  
|                        |                  |      |        | Quentilude / Christian Debecq  
|                        |                  |      |        | Niagara / Willy Mortier  
|                        |                  |      |        | Deuxième quatuor (orig. string quartet) / Albert Huybrechts  
|                        |                  |      |        | Miniature idyllique / Alain Crémon  
|                        |                  |      |        | Saxophonecall / David Miller  
|                        |                  |      |        | Quatromosphères / Alain Crépin  
|                        |                  |      |        | Jazz suite / Nick Ayoub  
|                        |                  |      |        | Sud América : suite pour quatuor de saxophone / Lino Florenzo  
|                        |                  |      |        | Danse du Sabre (orig. orchestra; from ballet) / Aram Khatchaturian  
| Susan Fancher          | 564; Innova       | 2002 | Ponder Nothing | New York Counterpoint (orig. clarinet w/ tape; clarinet ensemble) / Steve Reich  
|                        |                  |      |        | Tre pezzi / Giacinto Scelsi  
|                        |                  |      |        | She sings, she screams: alto saxophone and tape / Mark Engebretson  
|                        |                  |      |        | Ponder nothing (orig. clarinet) / Ben Johnston  
|                        |                  |      |        | Sonata / Wolfram Wagner  
|                        |                  |      |        | Saxoscope: for alto saxophone/ Alexander Wagendriest  
| Jean-Yves Fourmeau     | 5411499 80012; Airophonic | 2002 | Music from Here and There | Le basque (orig. viola da gamba & continuo) / Marin Marais  
|                        |                  |      |        | Spanish love song / Anonymous  
|                        |                  |      |        | Music from the opera Goyescas / Enrique Granados  
|                        |                  |      |        | Once upon a time (from Lyric Pieces, orig. piano; Book 10, Op. 71 No.1) / Edvard Grieg  
|                        |                  |      |        | Hanabe no uta / Narita Mezo (Japanese trad.)  
|                        |                  |      |        | Chugokuchiiho no/ Kanoriuta (Japanese trad.)  
|                        |                  |      |        | Suite hellenique/ Pedro Iturralde  
|                        |                  |      |        | Aeolian song / Warren Benson  
|                        |                  |      |        | Cinq pièces caracteristiques / Pierre-Max Dubois  
|                        |                  |      |        | Oblivion [tango] / Astor Piazzolla  
|                        |                  |      |        | West Side Story: Prologue; Maria; A boy like that; I feel pretty / Leonard Bernstein  

25
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<tr>
<th>Artist / Ensemble Name</th>
<th>Label / Catalog #</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Contents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Klaus Gesing          | Preiser PR90711   | 2007 | Paris-New York, 1930 | Preludes (3) for piano / George Gershwin  
Concerto for piano in G major. 2nd mvt, Adagio assai  
Maurice Ravel  
Beau soir / Claude Debussy  
Meditation; Rumba / Reinhard C. Seifert  
Scaramouche, op. 165b. No. 2 and. 3 / Darius Milhaud  
Suite bergamasque. 3rd mvt, Clair de lune / Claude Debussy  
Rhapsody in Blue/ George Gershwin |
| Habanera Saxophone Quartet | Alpha 010 | 2001 | Mysterious Morning | Six bagatelles (orig. wind quintet) / György Ligeti  
Mysterious morning II / Fuminori Tanada  
Rasch / Franco Donatoni  
XAS / Iannis Xenakis  
Rasch II / Franco Donatoni  
In Erwartung / Sofia Gubaidulina |
| Kyle Horch            | CC 0046; Clarinet Classics | 2003 | Anglosax | Lessons of the Sky / Rodney Rogers  
6 Studies in English folksong (orig. cello) / Ralph Vaughan-Williams  
Keening / Michael Berkeley  
Pastoral (orig. English horn) / Elliott Carter  
Picnic on the Marne / Ned Rorem  
Come down heavy / Evan Chambers |
| Masato Kumoi          | CACG-0093; Cafua   | 2006 | Simple Songs | A Simple Song (from Mass) / Leonard Bernstein  
3 Choralvorspiele (orig. violoncello) / J.S. Bach  
Prelude, cadence et finale / Alfred Desenclos  
Italienisches Konzert "Andante" (orig. keyboard & orch.) / J.S. Bach  
Sonata / David Maslanka |
| Todd Oxford           | Equilibrium       | 1999 | Finesse | Sonata in A major (orig. violin and piano) / César Franck  
Suité no. 1 (orig. for cello) in G major, BWV 1007 / J.S. Bach  
Improvisation et caprice / Eugène Bozza  
Caprice en forme de valse / Paul Bonneau |
| Adam Schattschneider  | BCMD-1601         | 2003 | Soliloquies for Soprano Saxophone | Air (Overture in D); Sinfonia (Cantata no. 156); Andante (Sonata in E minor); Siciliano (Sonata in Eb major) / J.S. Bach  
Adagio (Quartet in D, orig. flute, violin, viola, cello), K. 285 / W.A. Mozart  
Ave Maria (Ellens dritter Gesang, D.839) / Franz Schubert  
Ave Maria : based on Prelude no. 1 by J.S. Bach / Charles Gounod  
Meditation (from opera Thais; orig. violin entr'acte) / Jules Massenet  
Pavanne, op. 50 (orig. orchestra & optional chorus); Sicilienne (from Pelléas et Mélisande), op.78 / Gabriel Fauré  
En bateau (from Petite suite; orig. piano 4 hands) / Claude Debussy  
Gymnopédie no. 3 (orig. piano) / Erik Satie  
Vocalise (Romansy, op. 34) / Sergei Rachmaninoff  
Pavane pour une infante défunte (orig. piano) / Maurice Ravel  
Emmanuel / Michel Colombier |
| Trouvère Quartet      | IMGN-3001; Imagine Best Collection | 2004 | The Planets | The Planets / Gustav Holst (arr. Jun Nagao): Mars; Venus; Mercury; Jupiter; Saturn; Uranus; Neptune; Comets; Pluto; The Earth |
Table 3.1—continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Artist / Ensemble Name</th>
<th>Label / Catalog #</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Contents</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kenneth Tse</td>
<td>ENCD00-014; Enharmonic Records</td>
<td>2000</td>
<td><em>In Memory</em></td>
<td>Sonata in E major (orig. flute &amp; continuo), BWV 1035 / J.S. Bach Chants d’Auvergne (orig. soprano &amp; orch.) / Joseph Canteloube Ballade / Alfred Reed Elégie et rondeau / Karel Husa Aria / Eugène Bozza Frissons / Jérôme Naulais Souvenirs (orig. piano, four hands) / Samuel Barber</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USM Sax-Chamber Orchestra (Lawrence Gwozdz, conductor)</td>
<td>Romeo CD7251</td>
<td>2006</td>
<td><em>Parabolically Bach</em></td>
<td>(All by J.S. Bach) Selections from: organ works (BWV 565, 558, 554) Vocal works (BWV 739, 140, 147, 244, 99) From <em>The Musical Offering</em>, BWV 1079 From <em>The Well-Tempered Clavier</em>, Book 1, BWV 867 From <em>The Art of Fugue</em>, BWV 1080 From the orchestral works (BWV 1051)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Xasax Quartet</td>
<td>ART 107; Hat Hut</td>
<td>1998</td>
<td><em>Ars Subtilior</em></td>
<td>Quatuor pour saxophones / Hugues Dufourt En attendant esperance (polyphonic chanson) / Jacob de Senleches even—the loudest sky!! / Bernardo Maria Kuczer En ce graceieux tamps (polyphonic chanson) / Jacob de Senleches Quebros: 1993-94 / Alvaro Carlevaro Fuions de ci (polyphonic chanson) / Jacob de Senleches Vue sur les jardins interdits / Henri Pousseur</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Four hundred and fifty recordings in the discography feature transcriptions. This is almost a hundred more recordings than those that include only original saxophone works. And despite the fact that the original saxophone repertoire has grown tremendously since the mid-1930s, the ratio of transcriptions to original compositions in classical saxophone recordings has increased during the past seventy-five or more years. Of the sixty-six “all-transcription” recordings in the discography, forty-five have been issued within the past twenty years alone.

Three trends in the saxophone discography have emerged that have particular interest to the present study.

1. Solo Programs Featuring One Transcription

The most popular type of saxophone recording is that of the “mixed” program. Mixed recordings feature a number of transcriptions interspersed among original works, and usually contain a variety of compositions (works that originate from different historical periods, or that represent different genres). Notable among recordings in the mixed category featuring one principal saxophonist are programs that include only one transcription among an otherwise completely original lineup. This reflects many student saxophone recitals, wherein the performer programs a “token” transcription or arrangement as proof that he or she has studied a specific musical style. In most cases, recordings in this particular category use a composition from either
the Baroque or Classic eras in the solo transcription slot, thereby contrasting the late-nineteenth and twentieth-century original saxophone works that make up the rest of the program. Notable single-transcription recordings from the past fifty years are shown in Table 3.2 below.

Table 3.2: A Sample of Saxophone Recordings Featuring One Transcription, 1950-2007

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Artist / Ensemble Name</th>
<th>Label / Catalog #</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Contents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jean-Marie Londeix</td>
<td>Vendome: STV-214</td>
<td>1960</td>
<td>(Untitled)</td>
<td>Scaramouche / Darius Milhaud Impromptu / Pierre-Max Dubois Jeux de Table / A. Ameller Visions Fugitives / Sergei Prokofiev</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harvey Pittel</td>
<td>S 105; Crystal Records</td>
<td>1973</td>
<td>Harvey Pittel Plays Music for Alto and Soprano Saxes</td>
<td>Sonata (orig. blockflote &amp; basso continuo) op. 4, no.11 / J.B. Loeillet Sonata in one movement / Robert Xavier Rodriguez Dittico / Halsey Stevens Tableaux de Provence / Paule Maurice.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trent Kynaston</td>
<td>LPS 3035; Coronet</td>
<td>1973-79</td>
<td>Trent Kynaston - Saxophone</td>
<td>Selections from Cello Suite, BWV 1009, C major / J.S. Bach Concertina da camera / Jacques Ibert Dawn and jubilation / Trent Kynaston Diary, part II / Edward Diemente</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bruce Jordan</td>
<td>LPS 3103; Coronet</td>
<td>1979</td>
<td>Saxophone Artistry of Bruce Jordan</td>
<td>Concertstücks / Pierre-Max Dubois Sonata, op. 3 no. 6 (orig. flute) / Giovanni Platti Concerto, op. 26 / Paul Creston</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robert Frascotti</td>
<td>Roncorp: EMS-001</td>
<td>1983</td>
<td>Robert Frascotti</td>
<td>Romance in F major, op. 50 / Beethoven (arr. Frascotti) Quartett, op. 22 / Anton Webern Concertino da camera / Jacques Ibert Cantilene et danse / Marc Eychenne Annexus / Frederick Fox</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neal Ramsay</td>
<td>CRP-8451; Cumberland Records</td>
<td>1984</td>
<td>Four Moods</td>
<td>Sonata, op. 1 no. 11, HWV 369 (orig. recorder &amp; continuo) / G.F. Handel Tableaux de Provence / Paule Maurice Symbols / Oscar Smith Sonata for alto saxophone and piano / Phil Woods</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pekka Savijoki</td>
<td>CD-209; Bis</td>
<td>1990</td>
<td>The French Saxophone</td>
<td>Scaramouche / Darius Milhaud Divertimento / Roger Boutrùy Cinq Danses exotiques / JeanFrançois Histoires (orig. piano) / Jacques Ibert Fantaisie-improptu / André Jolivet Annexus / Frederick Fox</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lynn Klock</td>
<td>007; Open Loop</td>
<td>1991</td>
<td>Vintage Flora</td>
<td>Tableaux de Provence / Paule Maurice Sonata for alto saxophone &amp; piano / Lawson Lunde Three romances (orig. oboe, clarinet, or violin) / Robert Schumann Élégie et rondeau / Karel Husa Sonata, op. 19 / Paul Creston</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Claude Delangle</td>
<td>BIS-CD-1357</td>
<td>2007</td>
<td>Under the Sign of the Sun</td>
<td>Concertino da camera / Jacques Ibert Concerto for alto saxophone and orchestra / Henri Tomasi Pavane pour une enfante défunte (orig. piano) / Maurice Ravel Tableaux de Provence / Paule Maurice Légende op. 66 / Florent Schmitt Scaramouche op.165c / Darius Milhaud</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2. Quartet Programs Consisting Entirely of Transcriptions

Although present in all saxophone genres, the “all-transcription” recording type is found with curiously high frequency in the quartet category (almost half of the total 66 all-transcription recordings). Many follow a particular theme, whether it be a particular composer (Bach, Scarlatti, and Piazzolla are popular in this regard), or a certain musical style, genre, or period (opera, tango, string quartets, and pieces by Italian Baroque composers are a few examples). The most popular composer to be featured in this category is J. S. Bach: four different saxophone quartets have released recordings of all, or most, of *Die Kunst der Fuge*, BWV 1080, while other quartets have recorded the *Musikalisches Opfer*, BWV1079, the Goldberg Variations, BWV 988, or a collection of various works by Bach. In every case, the recording consisted exclusively of Bach compositions played by saxophone quartet.

3. Programs including “Lighter Fare”: Jazz, Ragtime, Rock and Pop

Somewhat parallel to the recordings of jazz artists who have crossed over to perform classical music, solo saxophonists and saxophone ensembles that generally perform and record art music also occasionally borrow from the more popular styles in order to add variety to a program (and perhaps to benefit from the positive aspects of the saxophone’s reputation resulting from extensive use in these styles). The music of composers such as Scott Joplin and Eubie Blake has even become trademarks in the repertoire of some ensembles, such as the Danovitch and Amherst saxophone quartets.\(^{106}\) Jazz and big band standards also make many cameo appearances on what would otherwise be an all-classical saxophone program. Some ensembles fill their recordings with such works, blurring the lines between “classical cross-over” and “jazz cross-over.”\(^{107}\) Yet jazz and ragtime are by no means the only styles that are borrowed; progressive rock, popular songs, and excerpts from musicals are regularly chosen by saxophonists for their programs. Table 3.3 below provides a sample list from the discography of recordings that include “lighter fare” alongside art music compositions.

### Table 3.3: Sample of Saxophone Recordings that Include Jazz, Ragtime, Pop, and/or Rock Music

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Artist / Ensemble Name</th>
<th>Label / Catalog #</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Contents</th>
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</table>
| New York Quartet       | LP-ST220; Stash   | 1982 | *New York Saxophone Quartet Vol. 2* | Three preludes / G. Gershwin  
Four plus more / H. Rood  
Thank you / J. Dodgion  
Saxophone quartet no. 1 / J. Carisi  
Take the A train / Ellington, Strayhorn  
Lush life / B. Strayhorn  
Berceuse / I. Albeniz  
The Saga of Gene Carr / W. Dunbar |

\(^{106}\) Bernard Savoie, “Reviews of Recent Performances: The Gerald Danovitch Saxophone Quartet,” *Saxophone Symposium* (Summer 1986): 25. The Amherst Saxophone Quartet worked closely with Eubie Blake before releasing an entire cassette of his music in 1982 (Musical Heritage Society, MHC 6368); they went on to record two of his pieces again on their *Mozart to Modern* CD (1990), which is the focus of case study number 3.

\(^{107}\) These designations can become quite confusing when one attempts to use them for many saxophone recordings, especially if the artist or ensemble has recorded or performed both “all-jazz” and “all-classical” programs.
Table 3.3—continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Artist / Ensemble Name</th>
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</tbody>
</table>
| Sugawa, Nobuya         | TOCT-9921         | 1997 | Beau Soir | My Love / Paul McCartney (arr. Miyagawa)  
Beau Soir / Claude Debussy (arr. Higuchi)  
When You Wish upon a Star / L. Harline (arr. Asakawa)  
Je te veux / Erik Satie (arr. Nagao):  
Louv' You / M. Riperton/R. Rudolph (arr. Sahashi)  
Adios Nonino / Astor Piazzolla (arr. Tei-Ho)  
Gymnopédie I / Erik Satie (arr. Isoda)  
Bird in Grief from "Cyber Bird Concerto" / T. Yoshimatsu  
Theme from The Way We Were / M. Hamlisch (arr. Urata)  
Don't Cry For Me Argentina (from Evita) / Andrew Lloyd Webber (arr. Miyagawa) |
| Sax 4th Avenue         | AMPREC 02; Sax 4th Avenue | 1998 | Delusions de Grandeur | Bluesette / Toots Thielemans  
Improvisation / Phil Woods  
Frame by Frame / King Crimson (arr. S. Ford)  
Fugue / Friedrich Gulda (arr. P. Ford)  
Tarkus / Emerson, Lake & Palmer (arr. P. Ford)  
Seventh heaven rag / Stephen Rush  
The refinery / Pete Ford  
Quartet / Charles Rochester Young  
String quartet in G major, op. 54 no. 1: Finale; Presto / F.J. Haydn (arr. Heidbreder)  
Grave et presto / Jean Rivier  
Nuages / Eugene Bozza  
Rossini à la carte / Gioachino Rossini (arr. Schneebiege & Sax 4th Avenue) |
Choro y tango (Quarteto latinoamericano) / Aldemaro Romero  
Triguenita / Julio Valdes Brito Ibanez (arr. Medina)  
Gaucho / Francisca Gonzaga (arr. Medina)  
Spain (orig. for jazz quintet/ensemble) / Chick Corea, Joaquin Rodrigo (arr. Medina)  
That's a Plenty (orig. pop song, vaudeville) / Bert Williams/Henry Creamer (arr. Nagle)  
Selections from Porgy and Bess / George Gershwin (arr. Holcomb)  
Salute to Glenn Miller / Glenn Miller (arr. Holcomb)  
Just for Show / Lenny Niehaus  
Prologue from West Side Story / Leonard Bernstein (arr. Selden)  
Waltz for Debbie / Gene Lees, Bill Evans (arr. Medina)  
Jazz suite / Nick Ayoub  
Three improvisations, Movements I and II/ Phil Woods  
The Pink Panther / Henry Mancini  
Poison Ivy (orig. pop song) / Jerry Lieber, Mike Stoller (arr. Medina)  
My Girl (orig. pop song) / William "Smokey" Robinson, Ronald White (arr. Medina)  
Goodnight Sweetheart / (arr. Medina)  
Broadway Romance / Dave Brubeck (arr. Medina)  
Sarabande (Second English suite, BWV 807) / J.S. Bach (arr. Hemke) |
| West Point Quartet     | WPSQ01; United States Military Academy | 2003 | Fault Lines | Fault Lines / Perry Goldstein  
Saxophone quartet / David Froom  
Paranoid Android / Radiohead (arr. Abramo)  
Andante et scherzetto / Pierre Lantier  
Motherless Child variations / Perry Goldstein  
Rush / David Kechley  
Just friends / Sam M. Lewis (arr. Vinci) |
Performance Practice: Advice from Saxophone Publications

Performing transcriptions invites players to consider a number of issues. According to Lee Patrick’s 1993 article, these issues include:

- Determining how much of the transcription is the composer’s, and how much was added by others
- Taking into account the rhythms, dynamics, articulations, tempo indications, and rubrics of the transcription versus what the performer finds in the Urtext edition
- Reading performance-practice treatises that are contemporary with the original edition
- Checking the Urtext for ornaments and other embellishments that must be realized (if the transcriber realized them already, checking to see if they are appropriately realized)
- Checking the harmonies of the transcription against the Urtext, in the case of a realized continuo part (“Are the harmonies in the saxophone edition the same as those suggested in the original, or has someone ‘improved’ them?”)

A surprisingly small number of saxophonists have discussed issues of performance practice as they relate to transcriptions. Particular composers and styles popular in the saxophone transcription repertoire have received some attention in books and journal articles. In interviews with the subject of his book Jean-Marie Londeix, James Umble asked the French saxophonist and pedagogue a number of questions about how he transcribed, edited, and performed the Bach Violoncello Suites. Regarding changes he made during the transcription process, he replied,

[I changed the original keys] out of convenience … The modern cellists play these suites in the same written tonality, but today the pitch is at least a semitone above what it was in Cöthen during Bach’s time … Between the printing of the first and the second editions I … changed some of the articulations so as to conform to what cellists generally do … I noticed, particularly in Bach’s cantatas, that the oboe … was obligated to leave out certain notes from time to time in order to breathe. I chose to do the same, so as not to interrupt the musical pulse, so essential to this music, and to thus preserve the harmonic and melodic coherence of the lines. I imagine that these different arrangements shock the purists.

And in response to another question about the interpretation of the Suites, Londeix answered:

By learning to better know the dance characteristics, by considering them as one did at the time of their writing, whether popular or aristocratic, one has a powerful sense of the character of these movements. … One arrives at such an awareness by reading, by following the work of baroque specialists, by listening to and analyzing performances (this intrigues me) … by becoming interested in everything that is involved.

Londeix and Patrick both advocate serious scholarly research, especially concerning transcriptions of music originating in the Baroque or Classic eras. Such research is also

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108 This is, of course, only assumed when a musician wishes to interpret the music in a genre- and style-sensitive, historically-informed manner. Some saxophonists do not take these issues into consideration (or they have knowingly approached the interpretation of the music with an aim to transform it), and their recordings attest to this.


110 Umble, 190.

111 Ibid., 190-91.
encouraged by *Saxophone Symposium* contributor Andrew Charlton, who, in his article “The Baroque [?!] Saxophone,” clearly states that he does not object to saxophonists programming the music of Bach or Handel. “What I do object to,” he writes, “is the frequent complete disregard of the performance practices of the time and the interpretive skills and stylistic knowledge that must be brought to a given piece of baroque music.” Charlton’s article is one of a small number of articles in saxophone publications to deal with specific performance-practice issues of transcriptions. He suggests that performers wishing to play Baroque music “in a stylistic manner” should study the various embellishment and ornament types, and find reliable guidelines for their use. The article provides a thorough examination of eight basic melodic embellishments common to Baroque sonatas, complete with musical examples.

Two other authors approach transcription performance similarly to the writers discussed above. In his article “Transcriptions,” James Kasprzyk hails the saxophone as an extremely flexible instrument with a large tonal vocabulary. Development of this flexibility should include performing transcriptions, Kasprzyk states, because of the imitative demands that transcriptions create for the saxophonist. This article provides instruction regarding various compositions by Bach, as well as Debussy’s *Syrinx* (“the saxophonist should strive for the lightness, agility, and color changes as the flutist would”). Again, the author provides detailed musical examples and specific performance-practice advice. Gabriela Maurino offers similarly thorough guidelines for performing tangos in her article “Interpreting the Tango Music of Astor Piazzolla,” a sub-repertoire of saxophone transcriptions that has grown to be almost as popular as Baroque compositions.

Other saxophonists, while not providing specifics on performance practice, will often at least mention their beliefs concerning transcription performance. Paul Cohen is outspoken in this regard. His concert reviews (such as the Laura Hunter review discussed in Chapter 2) and personal interviews, as well as his long-running column in *Saxophone Journal*, “Vintage Saxophones Revisited,” have all acted as forums for Cohen’s advice regarding musical interpretation. In Carla Marie Rupp’s interview with him for the July/August 1992 issue of *Saxophone Journal* Cohen described how saxophonists are “cursed” with the ability to play an enormous variety of music.

Because the instrument is capable of all these qualities and colors of sounds, the responsibility of the player is to understand what quality of sound is going to work. … You have to know the music well and understand its styles and the traditions. This is so we can adapt our playing to make the music sound the way it was meant to be heard.

Cohen echoes the sentiments of Lee Patrick in his desire for saxophonists to attempt to understand a composer’s intentions. In the same interview Cohen implies that a lack of such awareness has contributed to the saxophone’s continuing difficulty with being completely accepted in the world of “professional music making.”

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116 Rupp, 37.
No matter how much time a saxophonist invests in researching musical style or the composer’s intentions, however, the performance of transcriptions entails a definite transformation. And it is up to the individual musician or ensemble how to incorporate the distinctive sounds and technical capabilities of the saxophone into an interpretation of music originally written for other performing forces.

As was discussed in the previous chapter, saxophonists approach transcriptions in two basic ways: either as pedagogical tools for learning a variety of musical styles, or as material for concert performances. Most recordings of transcriptions by saxophonists obviously reflect the second approach, since they are distributed to a mass audience for the sake of displaying the musicians’ interpretive and technical skills. Yet these saxophone recordings, released for profit as well as for recognition of the musicians’ personal artistry, can also function as teaching tools for musicians seeking models for learning specific compositions or musical styles. In the absence of any explicit statement by the performer or distributor, it is difficult to know with certainty into which of these categories a recording belongs. Due to the restricted scope of this study, it is impossible to explore the boundaries of such categories, and indeed a recording may have more than one purpose. Important to this discussion of recorded transcriptions, however, is that the possible pedagogical nature of recordings is one of a number of topics discussed more often in saxophone journals than in reviews by non-saxophonists in the more mainstream publications.

Reviews of Recordings

The power of music critics and record reviewers is a topic that multiple authors have debated during the latter half of the twentieth century and into the beginning of the twenty-first. This topic will not be explored in the present study; it must be noted, however, that an audience still exists for such reviews. Author Mark Grant even describes the record critic’s role, since the mid-1990s, as one of “retro-canon-makers.” And due to the widespread impact of the Internet, web-based music stores, and mp3 download hubs (such as iTunes), reviewers now make their work available online, thereby reaching the ever-growing audience who purchases most, or perhaps even all, of its music online, an audience who probably does not consult printed sources. If a listener reads these reviews and makes purchases accordingly, then reviews can reveal vital information regarding how recorded saxophone transcriptions are received or, at least, how certain reviewers would like them to be received.

Older reviews provide an interesting cross-section of viewpoints regarding the saxophone and its repertoire during the mid-twentieth century. Excerpts from the following four reviews can serve as examples.

About Sigurd Rascher’s 1953 Recital recording, John Briggs of The New York Times expressed his surprise with being impressed by a classical saxophone performance:

117 This can be said for all recordings, not only those by saxophonists.
118 For more information regarding these debates, the reader is referred to the following sources: Mark N. Grant, Maestros of the Pen: a History of Classical Music Criticism in America (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1998); Robert D. Schick, Classical Music Criticism (New York: Garland, 1996); and the article [no author given] “Whither Classical Music? Some Musical Pros Take a Look,” American Record Guide (November/December 1999): 6-10.
119 Grant, 318.
The idea of a recital on the E flat alto saxophone may strike one as faintly comical—until one hears the new Sigurd Rascher Recital… Nothing like this is heard in the playing of jazz-band virtuosos, who as a rule prize loudness over subtlety.

Outstanding…is Mr. Rascher’s own transcription of the Gershwin Prelude No. 2 for piano, which sounds as idiomatic as if written especially for saxophone.\textsuperscript{120}

A reviewer for American Record Guide (known only as J.L.) reviewed the same recording; unlike John Briggs, he recognizes that there is already a classical saxophone audience:

Nobody has to be convinced at this late date that the saxophone is a noble instrument. At least almost nobody; it would seem that composers are the lone exception. … This recording underlines the dearth of material available to the serious performer. … All saxophone people know about Rascher, of course, and they will hasten to acquire this stunning recital. Others, perforce, will regard it as a novelty.\textsuperscript{121}

Serge Barthoumieux, for the French magazine Diapason, reviewed Londeix’s first commercial recording in 1960 and recognized, seemingly for the first time, that the saxophone deserves a place among other classical recordings:

I have just discovered that the saxophone has a noble side and its place in our column. I have discovered also that J.-M. Londeix … deserves to be listed among the ranks of the great classical soloists.\textsuperscript{122}

A somewhat different view of transcriptions versus original works is seen in Alfred Frankenstein’s 1971 review of Eugene Rousseau’s The Virtuoso Saxophone, which praises two transcriptions and disparages the rest (which includes three original saxophone compositions):

Of the six pieces here recorded two are of interest. One is a flute sonata by a forgotten baroque composer named Giovanni Platti played on the B flat soprano saxophone; its bright, agile, reedy sound goes well with baroque figuration but casts a new color over it. The other… is a magnificently dramatic sonata by Hindemith [originally for alto horn] … The other four pieces on the record are trash of the kind they print in instruction books and need not even be listed by title.\textsuperscript{123}

Although both print and online sources were searched for this study, four were chosen for a close analysis of how their reviewers treated saxophone recordings: Saxophone Journal,

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{121} J.L., review of Sigurd Rascher, A Saxophone Recital (Concert Hall Society LP CHS 1156); American Record Guide 19/8 (April 1953): 272.
\textsuperscript{122} Serge Barthoumieux, review of Londeix’s first commercial recording (Vendome STV 214), in Diapason 54 (December 1960); quoted and translated by James C. Umble, Jean-Marie Londeix: Master of the Modern Saxophone (Cherry Hill, New Jersey: Roncorp, 2000): 62. This first recording by Londeix included his transcription of Prokofiev’s Visions fugitives.
\textsuperscript{123} Alfred Frankenstein, review of Eugene Rousseau, The Virtuoso Saxophone (Coronet 1601); High Fidelity (July 1971), reprinted in The Sixteenth High Fidelity Annual Records in Review (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1971): 480-81. The other works on this recording are: P. Bonneau, Caprice en forme de valse (original); F. Chopin, Largo (Sonata, op. 65); P.-M. Dubois, A l’Espagnole (original); and G. Ruggiero, Trois pieces (original).
\end{flushright}
Saxophone Symposium, American Record Guide, and Fanfare. The selection of these four was based on the following criteria:

- Availability, whether in print form, online, or in both formats
- Amount of coverage given to reviews in general, and to reviews of saxophone recordings specifically
- Age of the publication and qualifications of the contributing reviewers

A desire to acquire the viewpoints of critics both from within the saxophone community and from without guided the choice of both Saxophone Journal and Saxophone Symposium, the two publications to carry the most reviews of saxophone recordings written by fellow saxophonists. American Record Guide and Fanfare are the only two mainstream “dedicated classical review magazines” to have survived into and past the mid-1990s, making these two publications important for any analysis of reviews dating from the past 10-15 years.\(^{124}\)

To ascertain the most current viewpoints of critics from these publications, yet still acquire a large sample of reviews, all four were searched for saxophone recording reviews from the past twenty years. In general, the saxophone publications include much more background information on the performers; this could simply be due to differences in the length of reviews between saxophone and non-saxophone publications.\(^ {125}\) Another major difference is the attention that the two mainstream publications, and Saxophone Symposium, give to the sound quality of the recordings. One of the most enlightening revelations of this analysis, however, was the specificity of content within each publication’s saxophone reviews: although reviewers from Saxophone Journal and Symposium give much more space to background information, Guide and Fanfare often provide more details about the performance quality for each composition on the recording. And while most reviews in the saxophone publications are overwhelmingly positive, especially when it concerns transcriptions, those in Guide and Fanfare are often critical and occasionally reveal the critic’s personal opinions concerning a performer or type of composition. Also common in the non-saxophone journals are brief overviews of the saxophone’s history, warnings to readers concerning the saxophone’s particular qualities, or surprised comments regarding a particular reviewer’s sudden appreciation of the saxophone in a classical setting. This may also be a reflection of each publication’s target audience: one assumes the readers of saxophone journals do not need such material.

The following list of review excerpts from all four of these publications provides a sampling of opinions and critical viewpoints of saxophone recordings. Besides a preponderance of comments regarding works by Bach (reflective of a similar preponderance in the discography), these excerpts provide an illustration of the tone with which these writers approach saxophone recording reviews.

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\(^{124}\) Grant, 318.

\(^{125}\) While the average word count for reviews from American Record Guide and Fanfare is between 100 and 450 words, those in the Saxophone Journal and Saxophone Symposium are generally between 500 and 800. According to the magazine’s website, American Record Guide prides itself on providing succinct reviews: “We cover it all in less space: we are concise. Our size is compact … our writers do not indulge their egos.” (http://www.americanrecordguide.com/classical-music-reviews.html; accessed 23 June 2008)

\(^{126}\) Some of these warnings involve the style of original saxophone literature, or the radical changes apparent between original works and their saxophone transcription counterparts.
1. Saxophone Journal

The second selection is *Four Preludes* by Scriabin/Bates . This is very pleasant music for the saxophone. It sounds as if each movement was composed with the saxophone in mind. … The quartet has the sophistication necessary to really bring out the delicate parts. (Wagner and Viola, March/April 1992 issue)

*Moving Along* is a required music for anyone interested in the classical saxophone in recital. In addition, it should be a mandatory repeated listening experience for any aspiring saxophonist in the concert field. (Wagner and Viola, review of Harvey Pittel, *Moving Along*, Crystal CD655; March/April issue, 1998)

The instrument’s repertoire would have been enhanced enormously if the saxophone had been around during J.S. Bach’s life time. Luckily we have a great many transcriptions of his works for the saxophone family. Michael Ibrahim’s new recording is a whole CD of Bach . … His artistry as a saxophonist brings Bach to life in grand style. … His tone is clear, rich, and resonant which he uses delightfully to create musical arabesques. The melodic lines flow forward engulfing the listener into this awesome sound that has been given to us by Bach. (Paul Wagner, review of Michael Ibrahim, *J.S. Bach for Saxophone*, Omninova 50717; May/June issue, 2006)

The opening tune is the Bach Italian Concerto, BWV971 . . . Because of their judicious use of vibrato, their sound has an effervescence that titillates the ear and enhances the music. The Bach piece has a sparkling vitality to it and will carry the listener away with its swirling lines. (Paul Wagner, review of Paragon Saxophone Quartet, *Tuning In*, AS Records; September/October issue, 2006)

2. Saxophone Symposium

Closing the program are two Fugues by J.S. Bach . . . The Rascher Quartet’s stately treatment of Bach’s music fits it to perfection . . . Listening to the diversity presented here, one need not doubt this fantastic sound resource. (Brian Ayscue, review of *The Rascher Saxophone Quartet*, Caprice 21349; Winter 1989 issue)

Mozart’s *Canon Inversus* is a remarkably symmetrical work . . . Wolfe performs both parts on the soprano saxophone with fine taste, excellent intonation, and admirable double-tonguing. (Thomas Liley, review of George Wolfe, *Lifting the Veil*, Soundwinds SW 1133; 1999 issue)

The Cello Suite No. 1 in G Major by J.S. Bach works quite well on the baritone saxophone and can be read directly from the cello music. I compared this recording to two recordings by cellists . . . Baritone saxophone is probably one of the best choices of wind instrument on which to perform these suites . . . I felt that Mr. Oxford’s performance of the Bach was strong and very accurate.

Mr. Oxford has adapted Franck’s Sonata in A Major . . . There are articulated passages (slurring in groups of two in long sixteenth-note lines) that would challenge a string player. Mr. Oxford forges ahead and displays a remarkable lightness and agility in these lines. (Julia Nolan, review of Tod Oxford, *Finesse*, Equilibrium CD EQ22; 2002 issue)

It is inspiring to hear the use of “authentic” basso continuo. Violoncellist Dieter Wulfhorst and harpsichordist John Paul delicately balance their roles as accompanists and soloists, creating true chamber music. Gwozdz also remains constantly aware of his changing role in the ensemble . . . He plays with light and delicate sound beautifully suited to this music . . . The technical passages
are executed with light and clean articulations, often different from those on the printed transcriptions. Gwozdz provides tasteful, elegant ornamentation that also depart from what the transcriptions suggest, making an excellent reference for study in Baroque ornamentation… These works are often programmed, especially on student recitals, and it is refreshing to hear them played with such great attention to details of style. Although an excellent reference recording, this CD is also enjoyable listening for the beauty, simplicity, and grace of the music. (Debra McKim, review of Lawrence Gwozdz, Special Hand’ling: The Music of George Frideric Handel, Romeo Records; 2002 issue)

3. American Record Guide

The saxophone, now normally associated with the dance music of the 20s and 30s, had its beginnings as a supplement to the military bands, but it was praised by none other than Berlioz for its “splendid, one might say priestly calm.” … But it has been an uphill struggle to achieve even a slight respectability for the saxophone in the concert hall. Offering literature from the 18th to the 20th centuries, Bongiorno and his compatriots demonstrate both stylistic diversity and consummate artistry … . I was pleasantly surprised by Bongiorno’s deft and convincing arrangement of the Mozart oboe quartet for four saxophones. The Empire Saxophone Quartet jumps feet first into it, pulling it off with conviction and aplomb. The remaining transcriptions of music of Fauré and Telemann are merely light and pleasant fare. (Carter, review of Frank Bongiorno and the Empire Saxophone Quartet, Classic Saxophone 2, Liscio 09193; March/April issue, 1999)

… the Britten Six Metamorphoses for oboe will not be displaced by this version. It is nice to hear it with a new timbre. Debussy’s Syrinx does very well by Paulsson’s cool, evocative sound … . But it is in the Bach that you hear the main weakness of the album. After such a wide and varied program, on track 13 the G-minor Partita does not sound intrusive at all, though by all rights it should. … from the first note of this album, the style has been pretty much the same: loose, highly reflective, quite personal and even egotistical. Instead of Bach’s feelings … we are getting Anders Paulsson’s feelings first and foremost. (Steven Ritter, review of Anders Paulsson, Date with a Soprano Saxophone, Caprice 21668; July/August issue, 2003)

It’s a lovely combination, saxophone and organ, especially in works written for the combination. I have no need to hear a saxophonist playing Gluck, Fauré, Telemann, Bizet, Bruch, or Schubert… (Kilpatrick, review of Daniel Rubinoff, Dance of the Blessed Spirits, Carnival 33; May/June issue, 2004)

While listening to this recording, the words of St. Paul kept echoing in my mind: “All things are lawful unto me, but not all things are expedient.” Would that these words were taken to heart by more performers. For saxophone players and aficionados, the fact that a saxophone can actually play some of these works is a victory of sorts against those who may have doubted the instrument’s possibilities. But the question has to be asked: does this recording do anything to expand or add to our knowledge and appreciation of Bach? Does Mr. Ibrahim have anything new to say in these pieces? The answer to both must be “no.” … when important harmonic and melodic changes are made to accommodate the deficiencies of an instrument, the very premise of an endeavor needs to be re-examined. Ibrahim is a very fine player … and I would probably be thrilled to hear any of this on one of his recitals. But a recording is something else altogether. (Steven Ritter, review of Michael Ibrahim, Saxophone, Omninova 50717; May/June issue, 2006)
4. Fanfare

Not being a great fan of the saxophone, I should perhaps have returned this CD to the editor. I did, however, decide to listen to at least the first cut and was immediately struck by the playing of this quartet … . In addition, instead of relying entirely on arrangements, these performers have found some interesting music specifically written for four saxes … (Richard Burke, review of New Century Saxophone Quartet, Drastic Measures, Channel CCS 5994; July/August issue, 1994)

Here is a whole world of composers writing sublime music for saxophones, and of great performers bringing their creations to life. Why is this delightful musical universe so little known? Snobbery? The sheer overload of information out there, leaving us all staggering to catch up? No matter. You can do something about it. You can go out and buy An American Tribute to Sigurd Rascher at once. (Elliott S. Hurwitt, review of Lawrence Gwozdz, alto saxophone, An American Tribute to Sigurd Rascher, Crystal CD 652; July/August 1995)

Timothy McAllister and Kevin Class have clearly determined to expand the repertoire while also joining several of their contemporaries in proving that the virtuoso saxophone-piano duet is as much natural and important a combination as violin-piano, vocalist-piano, and so forth … . No doubt this disc will be much studied and admired by saxophone players. It certainly deserves a hearing among a still wider audience. (Robert McColley, review of Duo Nuova, Visions, Centaur CRC 2280; November/December 1996)

Here we have … a program in which three of the six works presented are arrangements … . Based on that, and the title of the disc, “Ballades for Saxophone and Orchestra,” I was initially inclined to dismiss the entire enterprise as another one of those easy-listening, stupor-inducing crossover CDs we see so many of these days … (Jerry Dubins, review of Theodore Kerkezos and London PO, Ballades for Saxophone and Orchestra, Naxos 8.557454; May/June 2005)

Conclusion

This chapter has provided an overview of the popularity and variety of transcriptions in the saxophone discography. Though transcriptions are accepted and obviously fashionable, saxophonists do not often discuss performance practice issues associated with transcriptions in writing; this is one issue that Lee Patrick laments in his article on the topic. Yet more often than not those who record these pieces are the same saxophonists who transcribe or arrange them.

The reviews, at least from non-saxophone sources, do not generally cover recordings that include transcriptions; when they do, these reviews often show transcriptions in a negative light. However, the critic’s estimation of the recording as a whole, or of the performer(s), may not be affected by an unfavorable, or even nonexistent, review of the unoriginal works on the program. The author may even focus more on the fact that he or she has to review “classical saxophones,” which, for some of the critics writing for both American Record Guide and Fanfare, still comes as a surprise. Overall, the reviews from the saxophone publications are much more favorable to transcriptions than the more mainstream, non-saxophone periodicals.

In order to take a closer look at recordings of saxophone transcriptions, the following chapters focus on four CDs from the past twenty years. Each of these CDs is representative of a particular category in the number and type of transcriptions included, as well as how the transcriptions are programmed alongside original works. The case studies will also allow a closer examination of how saxophonists interpret a variety of transcriptions, and will each include a
discussion of how the CDs have been reviewed by two or more of the publications discussed above.
INTRODUCTION TO THE CASE STUDIES

The following case studies are included in this project in order to discuss specific aspects of a variety of different saxophone recording types that include transcriptions. All four of the compact discs were recorded within the past twenty years, and they therefore represent relatively recent trends in classical saxophone recording. Each study includes a description of the program, including sections about the CD’s liner notes—used here as an indicator of how the performers are presenting their program—a comparison of the transcriptions with original scores, the major reviews of the recording, and finally, a new evaluation of the performers’ interpretations in comparison to published transcription scores (if any exist) as well as to scores and recordings (if any exist) of the works in their original version. When space allows, a list of other recordings that include these transcriptions is given. (If it is too long to be shown in the case study chapter, the list will appear in Appendix III.)

The four saxophone recording types represented by these case studies have been chosen due to the high frequency of their occurrences in the discography. These types are listed below, grouped within two larger designations: “solo” and “ensemble”:

I. “Solo” saxophone recording: saxophone with piano accompaniment. By far the most popular “solo” saxophone recording type, recordings of this genre are represented in the case studies by two CDs.

A. Program featuring only one transcription. This recording type is represented by *Vintage Flora*, featuring Lynn Klock on saxophone and Nadine Shank on piano.

B. Program featuring a mix of original works and recordings. This recording type is represented by *Visions*, by the saxophone/piano partnership of Timothy McAllister and Kevin Class (listed on this CD as “Duo Nuova”), which features three transcriptions and three original saxophone compositions.

II. “Ensemble” saxophone recording: saxophone quartet. Because of its extreme prevalence, the saxophone quartet is the representative for saxophone ensemble recordings. Two CDs of quartets have been included.

A. Program consisting entirely of transcriptions. This recording type is represented by the Aurelia Saxophone Quartet, *Aurelia Quartet Plays Debussy, Ravel, Roussel*.

B. Program with a mix of transcriptions, including pieces in a jazz, ragtime, or popular style. This recording type is represented by the Amherst Saxophone Quartet’s collaboration with composer/pianist Lukas Foss, *Mozart to Modern*. 

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CHAPTER 4

CASE STUDY I: LYNN KLOCK, SAXOPHONE AND NADINE SHANK, PIANO,

VINTAGE FLORA. OPEN LOOP CD 007; 1991.

Through many performances and recordings, a number of transcriptions have become standard works for the classical saxophone. One such piece is Robert Schumann’s *Drei Romanzen* (Three Romances), Op. 94, originally for clarinet, oboe, or violin, with piano accompaniment, but transcribed or arranged for many different performing forces, including trombone and flute. Frederick Hemke’s transcription, published in 1973, appears to be a popular version: of the eight times this piece has appeared, in part or full, on a saxophone LP, cassette tape, or CD recording during the past three decades, three of those recordings have featured the Hemke arrangement. The following case study focuses on one particular recording of the Schumann Romances, Lynn Klock’s 1991 CD *Vintage Flora*.

The CD’s only transcription is the Schumann Romances; the other four pieces on Klock’s CD are original works for saxophone, with piano accompaniment. The original compositions are varied in style and date of composition: Paul Creston wrote the *Sonata*, op. 19 in 1939, while Karel Husa’s *Elégie et Rondeau* dates from 1961. Lawson Lunde’s *Sonata* and Paule Maurice’s *Tableaux de Provence*, originally for saxophone and orchestra, both date from approximately the same time (mid-to-late 1950s), but these two works differ markedly in style and form.

In such saxophone and piano recordings—“solo” recordings, given that the saxophone is prominent on such a program—the presence of only one transcription is a common programming choice. Many saxophonists and saxophone ensembles include only one transcription on any single recording; often, the transcription is placed at either the beginning of the program or the end. On Klock’s CD, however, the Schumann appears in the middle of the program. While this placement might highlight the transcription in a live performance, on a CD it is more hidden among the middle tracks of the recording. Like the Schumann, each original work on this CD has been recorded many times. All four of these works are standards for the saxophone; Klock’s inclusion of the Schumann among these works makes a strong statement regarding the transcription’s place in the repertoire.

Although arranged by Hemke in 1973, Schumann’s Three Romances were not commercially recorded by a saxophonist until 1983. Between 1984 and 1991 the Romances were recorded four more times, in full or in part; therefore, Klock’s recording the transcription was by no means new. Table 1 lists all recordings of *Three Romances* transcribed for saxophone by Hemke and by other arrangers:

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127 Because constant reference will be made to both the original version of this work, as well as the transcription by Frederick Hemke, the original piece by Schumann will be referred to as *Drei Romanzen*, and the transcription, *Three Romances* (which is the title under which Hemke published his transcription).

128 Most of the other six recordings of Schumann’s Three Romances were transcribed by the saxophonist on the recording. Only the Hemke arrangement has been recorded more than once.

129 This recording was made by saxophonist Brian Sparks and pianist Gary Chapman. The LP was issued by Contemporary Record Society: CRS 8323, in 1983.
## Table 4.1: Recordings Featuring Robert Schumann’s *Three Romances*, Op. 94, Transcribed for Saxophone

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Artist / Ensemble Name</th>
<th>Label / Catalog #</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Contents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sparks, Brian</td>
<td>Contemporary Record Society: CRS 8323</td>
<td>1983</td>
<td>Recital</td>
<td>Three romances, op. 94 / Robert Schumann Vocalise (from Romansy, op. 34) / Sergei Rachmaninoff Prelude / Guy Lacour Reflections: for alto saxophone &amp; piano / Alan Oettinger Five moods in miniature / David Saturen Six preludes for piano / Jay Reise (1st work originally for oboe and piano, the 2nd for voice and piano)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foley, Brad</td>
<td>EMS-030; Roncorp</td>
<td>1984</td>
<td><em>Brad Foley</em></td>
<td>Sonata no. 2 in E-flat major, BWV 1031 (orig. flute &amp; harpsichord) / J.S. Bach Scaramouche suite / Darius Milhaud Sonate / Edison Denisov Sonata (orig. oboe) / Francis Poulenc Improvisation II / Ryo Noda Romance, op. 94, no. 1 / Schumann/Hemke Fantasia / Heitor Villa-Lobos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Klock, Lynn</td>
<td>007; Open Loop (CD)</td>
<td>1991</td>
<td><em>Vintage Flora</em></td>
<td>Tableaux de Provence / Paule Maurice Sonata for alto saxophone &amp; piano / Lawson Lunde Three romances / Robert Schumann (Hemke) Élégie et rondeau / Karel Husa Sonata, Opus 19 for Eb alto saxophone &amp; piano / Paul Creston (Schumann: Romances, oboe, piano, op. 94 arr)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 4.1—continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Artist / Ensemble Name</th>
<th>Label / Catalog #</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Contents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Leaman, Clifford        | EQ 55; Equilibrium (CD) | 2002 | Excursions | Tableaux de Provence / Paule Maurice  
Vocalise, op. 34, no. 14 / Sergei Rachmaninoff (Leaman)  
Rumba / Maurice Whitney  
Three romances, op. 94 / Robert Schumann (Hemke)  
Sonata for alto saxophone and piano / Bernhard Helden  
Six studies in English folksong / Ralph Vaughan Williams (Leaman)  
Le carnaval de Venise / Jules Demersseman (Hemke)  
(2nd work orig. voice; 4th orig. oboe & piano; 6th orig. cello & piano) |
| Bornkamp, Arno          | Challenge Classics (CD) | 2003 | Saxophone and Piano | Sonata for Viola and Piano No. 2, E flat, Op. 120/2 / Johannes Brahms  
Adagio and Allegro in A flat, Op. 70 - Robert Schumann  
(3) Romanzen, Op. 94 - Robert Schumann  
Sonata for Violin and Piano in A - César Franck |

Compared to the other recordings that include the Schumann transcription, *Vintage Flora* presents a typical program; however, it is the only one to feature the Schumann as its sole transcription. Of the eight recordings listed above, only three include mostly transcriptions; the other five are structured similar to Klock’s CD, with transcriptions interspersed among compositions original to the saxophone. Interestingly, Paule Maurice’s *Tableaux de Provence* appears on three of these recordings, and Sergey Rachmaninoff’s *Vocalise*, op. 34 no. 14, is also included on three. While this may simply point to the fact that these two pieces are recorded frequently, it does show an interesting uniformity in programming.

*Drei Romanzen: The Original Work*

About *Drei Romanzen*, the author of *Vintage Flora’s* liner notes states the following, which may be understood as an indication of the performers’ perspective on this particular work:

The *Romanzen* were intended for Clara … Their clever accompaniments would certainly have benefited from the touch of her able hands. Schumann recorded in his “housekeeping books” that he had composed the three pieces on the 7th, 11th, and 12th of December. He gave them to Clara as a Christmas present. Although she performed the *Romanzen* privately for the Schumann household, their first known public performances did not occur until 1863, when the Danish oboist Emilius Lund, accompanied by the German composer/pianist Carl Reinecke, presented them in the Leipzig Gewandhaus.

Simrock published the *Romanzen* in 1851, complete with alternative parts for violin (Clara Schumann had performed them with violinists) and clarinet (though these additions were not intended by the composer). The piece has since been transcribed and transposed for flute and piano as well.\(^{130}\)

The *Drei Romanzen*, op. 94, represent the many small sets, or cycles, of chamber works written by Robert Schumann in 1849, one of his most fruitful years of composing. During this year Schumann created such chamber works as the *Adagio und Allegro* for horn, op. 70, the *Fantasiestücke*, op. 73 (for clarinet, or violin, or cello, and piano), and the *Fünf Stücke im Volksston*, op. 102 (for cello, or violin, and piano). The last two of these works were structured

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\(^{130}\) Author unknown, liner notes, *Vintage Flora* (Open Loop CD 007, 1991).
similarly to the *Romanzen*: each was conceived as a cycle of poetic miniatures, unified by a central tonic and an overall affective profile.\textsuperscript{131} Eric Frederick Jensen identifies these works as products of Schumann’s “utilitarian” compositional period, during which he penned a wide variety of pieces that served as a much-needed means to earn additional income. About the chamber works from 1849, including the *Drei Romanzen*, Jensen states,

Schumann would have perceived a substantial amount of the music created during the latter 1840s as being primarily pragmatic—intended to be pleasurable to listen to and pleasurable to perform. In those goals it often admirably succeeds. The emphasis is on a lyrical simplicity. As Schumann frequently mentioned to prospective publishers, much of it is fairly easy to perform. … He never intended these compositions to be those on which his reputation as a composer would be based.\textsuperscript{132}

As *Hausmusik*—chamber music intended for performance in middle-class homes for personal entertainment—Schumann’s *Drei Romanzen* are somewhat simple, lyrical compositions that show, in John Daverio’s words, “melodic flexibility characterized by the fluid passing of brief ideas from one instrument to the other, resulting in a lyric-coloristic composite shared by solo instrument and piano alike.”\textsuperscript{133} He and other authors who discuss this work often mention the piece’s vocal, singing quality, describing each Romance as a “song without words” due to Schumann’s poetic melodic line, as well as the ability of metric irregularities in the line to serve as a means of imparting the character of spoken utterance. Daverio also cites the narrative quality inherent in Schumann’s entire *Hausmusik* repertoire; although no specific content is being narrated, each composition in this group projects what he calls a “once-upon-a-time” quality.\textsuperscript{134}

As Schumann created and sold his *Hausmusik* in the years surrounding 1849, he explored the coloristic possibilities of the various small chamber groups for which he wrote. Schumann scholar Jurgen Thym, in his assessment of the original *Drei Romanzen*, states that Schumann’s “sense for the different timbres and idiomatic treatment of wind instruments as manifest in these pieces is particularly remarkable.”\textsuperscript{135} Yet herein lies a dilemma; how can Schumann’s writing in his opus 94 be idiomatic, given that this piece was originally published with the top line optional for not only winds (clarinet or oboe), but also the violin? Like the *Fantasiestücke*, op. 73 (written for clarinet, or violin, or cello, and piano) and the *Fünf Stücke im Volkston*, op. 102 (for cello, or violin, and piano), *Drei Romanzen* offers a choice between multiple melodic instruments, demonstrating that this composition has a certain amount of flexibility.\textsuperscript{136} It is this flexibility that helps to endear Schumann’s opus 94 to transcription, and the liner notes for *Vintage Flora* communicate this.

\textsuperscript{133} Daverio, 412.
\textsuperscript{134} Ibid., 414-15; see also Jurgen Thym’s liner notes for *Robert Schumann: Chamber Music* (Vox LP SVBX 5111, 1980).
\textsuperscript{135} Thym, 3.
\textsuperscript{136} This “flexibility” present in much of Schumann’s *Hausmusik* also demonstrated a need on the composer’s part to increase the music’s desirability for purchase.
The three reviews found for this CD include one by Joseph Viola and Paul Wagner for *Saxophone Journal*, James North’s review in *Fanfare*, and Karl Miller’s review in the *American Record Guide*. Although these were the only reviews to be located, the fact that this recording received a review in both *Fanfare* and *American Record Guide*, a rare accomplishment for classical saxophone CDs, points to its entry into the mainstream of classical record reviews.

The *Saxophone Journal* review offers little insight regarding Klock’s interpretation of specific pieces. Instead, the authors open the review by simply stating that the CD is “an excellent collection of standard repertoire”; they follow this with a brief biography of Lynn Klock, and then proceed to list each piece on the disc. As they name each composition, they make very general single-line statements such as “on the Lunde Sonata, Klock is very comfortable,” “Klock presents it extremely well,” or “he moves about [the Maurice Tableaux] in such a manner that the piece becomes a very authentic presentation.” Overall, the review is exceedingly positive, but with no substantive content. And the Schumann *Romances* are mentioned only at the very end, more as an afterthought, perhaps to guarantee the presence of every track name in the review. Unfortunately, this particular review offers no real information on Klock’s interpretation of the transcription.

James North’s remarks provide more specific information, especially regarding the Schumann. As in the *Saxophone Journal* review, every original composition on this recording is given a positive appraisal; “everything but the Schumann,” North concludes, “is at the highest level.” It is not the fact of the transcription itself that is questionable, and the reviewer makes this clear: “Schumann’s Three Romances for oboe and piano work nicely in a transcription by saxophonist Frederick Hemke,” North states earlier in the review, “but this performance seems less than ideal; there is an occasional hiccup in the saxophone line, and the pianist doesn’t make the most of Schumann’s finely honed accompaniment.”

The review in *American Record Guide* is also of an overall positive nature, yet critic Karl Miller bluntly remarks that he does not care for the transcribed version of the *Romances*. “Schumann on saxophone just doesn’t do it for me!” he states emphatically, and this despite his praise for Klock’s playing: “he has a wonderful tone without the exaggerated mellowness one often finds in the cultivated styles of playing these days.” Miller writes that “the saxophone is not a clarinet and Klock makes that clear without the harshness one often encounters in the more popular use of the instrument.”

The three reviews discussed above thus provide different appraisals of the *Vintage Flora* CD. Viola and Wagner present a very general, positive view of the recording; they also obviously view the Schumann as a tried-and-true standard of the saxophone repertoire, with no question of its inclusion on a disc of otherwise completely original works. North and Miller also think well of the CD, but both exhibit different concerns over the one transcription on the disc. In contrast to Viola and Wagner’s estimation, Miller’s statement implying that the Schumann does

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137 This portion of the review reads: “The Creston Sonata is an old favorite and no one will be disappointed here. It is done extremely well, as are the Schumann Romances.” Joseph E. Viola and Paul Wagner, “Recording Reviews,” *Saxophone Journal* 17/3 (November/December 1992): 71-72.
139 Karl Miller, review of *Vintage Flora* (Open Loop 007), *American Record Guide* 55/4 (July/August 1992): 270.
not “do it” in a version for saxophone perhaps represents a gap between how saxophonists view their repertoire, as opposed to the view offered by non-saxophonists.

**Comparison: Original, Transcription, Interpretation**

Frederick Hemke’s published score for his transcription of *Three Romances* differs little from the original *Drei Romanzen*. Besides obvious differences (transposition to C minor instead of A minor; English tempo designations instead of German), the transcribed score is nearly identical to that of Schumann’s *Drei Romanzen*, op. 94, regarding notes, dynamics, and phrasing. The transposition from A minor to C minor keeps the alto saxophone part from playing above its natural range (sounding D-flat and A). Other differences, such as the removal of optional double stops and low A naturals (A) from the original score, accommodate the transcription’s intended instrument.

**Lynn Klock’s Interpretation**

Although the transcription score is almost identical to the original, a discussion of Lynn Klock’s interpretation of Schumann’s *Drei Romanzen* on *Vintage Flora* requires an analysis of those elements not present in either score. For this piece, important elements include tempo (especially rubato), grace notes, vibrato, and phrasing. A number of recordings by oboists were also analyzed in order to compare the ways in which they treated these elements in the Romances.

140 On *Vintage Flora* Klock’s tempos stay close to the score, although his heavy use of rubato obscures any sense of a steady tempo. This is especially true of the first Romance, which is marked *Nicht schnell* (“Not fast,” in transcription), with the quarter note set at 100 beats per minute. The second Romance, marked *Einfach, innig* (“Simple, heartfelt”), quarter note = 104, features a steadier tempo, but Klock’s phrase endings each receive a pronounced *ritardando* even when *ritard.* is not marked in the score. The slowest and longest of these occurs during the last eight measures of the second Romance, without any such designation in either score. Apart from the 2003 *Schumann* CD (featuring Alexei Ogrintchouk), all of the analyzed oboe recordings feature this same interpretation. This section of Romance No. 2 is shown below, in Example 4.1.

141 A few discrepancies were found, including one different pitch in the saxophone part of the first Romance, four measures deleted from the original version of the second Romance, and various dynamic markings—which appear in both the oboe and the piano parts in the original—that only appear in one part in the saxophone transcription. When listening to Klock and Shank’s recording, however, it becomes evident that these deletions and changes were simply typographical errors in the new score. At each of these points in their recording, the performers follow the original work’s markings, rather than the transcription’s.

142 These two exclusions are examples of designations in the original score that were included specifically for the violin version of the piece; as such, they are marked with “Viol.” in the original *Drei Romanzen*. Records of the Schumann *Drei Romanzen*, for oboe and piano that have been used in this study are the following: *Drei Romanzen für Oboe und Klavier* op. 94 (Ray Still, oboe; 1978 Telefunken 6.42081 LP); *John Mack, Oboe* (1977 Telarc Records 5028 LP); *Ronald Roseman, Oboe, plays Hindemith and Schumann* (Desto 1970, DC 6484 LP); *Schumann* (Alexei Ogrintchouk, oboe; 2003 Harmonia Mundi France HMN 911804 CD); and *The Virtuoso Romantic Oboe* (Paul Dombrecht, oboe; 1987 Accent ACC 78330 D CD). Recordings of the oboe version were chosen for comparison with the saxophone version because (a) the violin version, although much recorded, does not share many of the woodwind techniques of the saxophone, and (b) many more recordings of this work exist for oboe rather than clarinet; also, the oboists include vibrato, similar to the saxophone, while the clarinetists do not.
Example 4.1: Romance No. 2, mm. 73-80.

Klock plays the third Romance, marked like the first (Nicht schnell, quartet note = 100), a little faster than the score indicates. This does not become clear until measure 7, however; during the first six measures, an alternation of ritard. (or “hold back,” Hemke’s translation for zurückhalten and a tempo occurs six times. At the start of this Romance’s middle section (in F major, measure 25), pianist Nadine Shank slows down markedly in preparation for the saxophone’s entrance at measure 28, marked dolce. This section maintains a steady pace until the restatement of the opening at measure 43. Unlike some of the oboist’s interpretations of this section, Klock curtails his use of vibrato; even the phrase endings here are remarkably straight, compared to the way in which the saxophonist closes his phrases throughout the other two movements. This section can be seen in Example 4.2 below. Oboist Ronald Roseman (1970 Desto LP) treats this section in a similar fashion to Klock; he and pianist Gilbert Kalish even increase the tempo for this section. Apart from Roseman, however, most of the oboists in the other recordings exhibit no marked change in their playing style from the section prior to, or immediately following, this one.

Example 4.2: Romance No. 3, mm. 28-32 (to be played dolce, according to the original score)
The coda of the third Romance is marked “in tempo” in both scores. Klock and Shank, however, take the entire coda almost twice as slow as the rest of the piece—and their tempo continues to become slower until the very end. The coda is shown below, in example 4.1:

Example 4.3: Romance No. 3 (“Not fast”), mm. 68-76.

However, this interpretation is heard on four out of the five oboe recordings, as well.\textsuperscript{143} It may be an unwritten performance practice convention for this piece that the coda is played at such a slow tempo.

A final element of Klock’s interpretation to be discussed here is his treatment of grace notes. On the Vintage Flora recording grace notes designated in the score of Three Romances are played as anticipatory notes, whether the figure appears at the beginning, middle, or end of a phrase. Three are shown below, in Example 4.4. In all of these instances, Klock places the grace note approximately one half or one fourth of a beat before the regularly notated pitch.

\textsuperscript{143} The only recording on which this slower tempo does not occur is the 2003 recording by oboist Alexei Ogrintchouk, Schumann.
Example 4.4: Grace notes occurring at the beginning, middle, and end of phrases in *Three Romances*.

4.4a: Romance No. 1, mm. 1-3. Grace note, phrase start.

4.4b: Romance No. 3, mm. 1-3: grace note, phrase middle.

4.4c: Romance No. 2, mm. 27-29: grace note, end of phrase.

Klock’s interpretation of the grace notes many not be strictly accurate when compared to performance practices of nineteenth century. German musicians and writers of the middle nineteenth century traditionally instructed that grace notes should be performed on the beat, where the grace note received greater accent than the main note to which it was attached. Approximately half of the recordings for oboe and piano that were analyzed for this study featured grace notes played in this way. However, the most recent recording (2003) by oboist Alexei Ogrintchouk features a mix of anticipatory notes and grace notes occurring on the beat; those that were most often played on the beat appeared at the ends of phrases, as in Example 4.4c above, from the second Romance.

Apart from differences in tempi and grace notes, Klock’s performance of the Schumann Romances shares many characteristics with the oboe recordings: for example, most of

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the oboists use a pronounced vibrato, especially on held tones at phrase endings. The main difference in sound between the saxophone and oboe in all of these recordings is the lighter, “thinner” tone quality exhibited by the oboists, whereas the alto saxophone sounds thick and full by comparison. Also, the transposition down to C minor in the transcription changes the color of the work somewhat, creating a deeper, fuller-sounding timbre in the alto saxophone version.

Conclusion

Besides key change and a few differences in performance practice, Lynn Klock performs Robert Schumann’s *Three Romances* very similarly to a number of oboists who have recorded the work in its original form. This raises a question regarding the views of the final two reviews discussed above: why did neither James North nor Karl Miller describe the performance positively? James North mentioned “hiccups” in the saxophone line, and also wrote that pianist Nadine Shank “doesn’t make the most of” her part. These two statements could refer to any number of things about the performance. Karl Miller, on the other hand, is simply expressing personal preference when he disapproves the Schumann transcription for saxophone; he provides no constructive criticism at all. As was mentioned in Chapter 3, the mainstream classical music critics who even bring up transcriptions in their reviews often express viewpoints similar to Miller’s. Rarely do transcriptions receive the same positive remarks accorded to original works in reviews by non-saxophonists.
CHAPTER 5

CASE STUDY II: DUO NOVA, VISIONS. CENTAUR CRC 2280 CD; 1995.

Although the *Vintage Flora* program type featuring only one transcription is quite common in the classical saxophone discography, so, too, are mixed recordings that include a variety of transcriptions beside multiple original works. The 1995 recording *Visions*, by saxophonist Timothy McAllister and his pianist Kevin Class (“Duo Nuova,” as they are called on this particular CD), provides such a program.

The transcriptions on this CD were created by multiple arrangers; all three of them, the Ravel *Pièce en forme de habanera* (arranged by Paul Viard), *Visions fugitives*, op. 22, by Sergei Prokofiev (selected and arranged by Howard Harrison), and Giovanni Platti’s Sonata in G Major (transcribed by saxophonist Eugene Rousseau), have been published. Many other saxophonists have recorded these transcriptions; the Ravel and the Platti pieces are two of the most recorded transcriptions for saxophone and piano. See Table 2 for a list of recordings that include the saxophone transcriptions of Platti’s Sonata in G Major, and see Appendix II for a list of twenty-eight recordings, both solo and ensemble, that include Ravel’s *Pièce en forme de habanera*.

Table 5.1: Saxophone Recordings that Include Platti’s Sonata in G Major, Op. 3, No. 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Artist / Ensemble Name</th>
<th>Label / Catalog #</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Contents</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rousseau, Eugene</td>
<td>1601; Coronet</td>
<td>1968</td>
<td><em>The Virtuoso Saxophone, Vol. 2</em></td>
<td>Caprice en forme de valse / Paul Bonneau Largo ( Sonata, op. 65) / Frédéric Chopin Sonata in G major / Giovanni Platti A l’Espagnole / Pierre-Max Dubois Trois pieces / G. Ruggiero Sonata / Paul Hindemith</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brodie, Paul</td>
<td>RE 7041; Golden Crest</td>
<td>1971</td>
<td>Baroque and classical music for soprano saxophone</td>
<td>Grave / Tartini Musette / Jean-Marie Leclair Chant d'église / Philidor Les fêtes de l'hymen / Rameau Sarabande et rigaudon / Porpora Aria; Sinfonia / J.S. Bach Gavotte / C.W. Gluck Adagio / Luigi Boccherini Phaeton / Jean-Baptiste Lully Passacaille et passpied / Degourdi Sonata in G major / Giovanni Platti</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jordan, Bruce</td>
<td>LPS 3103; Coronet</td>
<td>1979</td>
<td><em>Saxophone Artistry of Bruce Jordan</em></td>
<td>Concertstück / Pierre-Max Dubois Sonate op. 3, nr. 6, in G Major / Giovanni Platti Concerto, op. 26 / Paul Creston</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liley, Thomas</td>
<td>Roncorp: EMS 017 (cass)</td>
<td>1983</td>
<td><em>Thomas Liley</em></td>
<td>Sonata in G major / Giovanni Platti (arr. Rousseau) Romance in F major, op. 50 / Beethoven (arr. Fraschetti) Sonata, op. 29 / Robert Muczynski Annexus / Frederick Fox Sonata / Bernhard Heiden</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Artist / Ensemble Name</td>
<td>Label / Catalog #</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mauk, Steven</td>
<td>008; Open Loop</td>
<td>Classical Bouquet</td>
<td>1991</td>
<td>Sonata, G major / Giovanni Platti Sonata, E-flat major, BWV 1031 (orig. fl./ harpsichord) / J.S. Bach Pièce en forme de Habanera / Maurice Ravel Sonata for soprano saxophone and piano / Young Fantasia / Heitor Villa-Lobos Concerto (orig. for oboe) in C major, K.314 / W.A. Mozart</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| McAllister, Timothy    | CRC 2280; Centaur | Visions | 1996 | Pièce en forme de habanera / Maurice Ravel Lessons of the Sky / Rodney Rogers Lilith / William Bolcom Visions fugitives: op. 22 / Sergei Prokofiev (arr. Harrison) Distances within me / John Anthony Lennon Sonata in G major, op. 3, no. 2 / Giovanni Platti (tran. Rousseau) Prokofiev’s *Visions fugitives*, op. 22, is different from the other two transcriptions in that it has rarely been recorded in any version for saxophone. The only other such recording to be included in this project’s discography is on an untitled album by Jean-Marie Londeix, released on the Vendome label in 1960.\(^{145}\)

The three transcriptions of the *Visions* are all very different from one another.\(^{146}\) They provide contrast to the three original saxophone works on the album, which were all written within the six years between 1979 and 1985. The transcription types are familiar ones in the saxophone discography: short vocal works, solo piano pieces, and Baroque/early Classic flute sonatas are common in classical saxophone recordings (as Appendix II demonstrates). Interspersing newer, less familiar original works with well-known transcription types allows Duo Nuova to present a balanced program.

**Liner Notes**

Liner notes for the *Visions* provide lengthy and detailed descriptions of all of the pieces on the recording. Each of the transcriptions receives three paragraphs or more concerning the composer’s life and compositional style, the history of the composition’s creation, and the piece’s later history and various transcribed incarnations; there is just as much background information provided for the transcriptions as there is for the original saxophone pieces.

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\(^{145}\) Jean-Marie Londeix, saxophone, and Gilles Maurice, piano, untitled album (Vendome: STV-214, 1960, LP). The track listing for this recording gives no information regarding how many of the *Visions fugitives* pieces are included.

\(^{146}\) This is despite the fact that the Prokofiev and the Ravel were originally written within a decade of each other: the original *Vocalise-étude en forme de habanera* dates from 1907; Prokofiev’s *Visions fugitives* were written between 1915 and 1917.
Of the *Pièce en forme de habanera*, liner notes author and conductor Scott Parkman\(^{147}\) writes:

> [This piece] has been transcribed for a capacious number of other instruments. A seemingly insignificant creation in light of surrounding works from 1907 (*Rhapsodie Espagnole*...*L’Heure Espagnole*), *Pièce en Forme de Habanera* is a charming inspiration revealing Ravel’s special admiration for exotic influences...of all Ravel’s Spanish inclinations, the *Pièce en Forme de Habanera* is the most sentimental and true to the essence of its origin.\(^{148}\)

No information about the saxophone version recorded on this CD is included. But by mentioning the piece’s numerous transcriptions, Parkman seems to validate the saxophone transcription’s existence.

The liner notes say even more regarding both Prokofiev’s *Visions fugitives* and Platti’s Sonata. After describing Prokofiev’s various musical influences during the period between 1915 and 1918, and listing the other compositions he created during this period, Parkman claims that the “seemingly simplistic” *Visions fugitives* represent “a more personal glimpse of Prokofiev’s compositional desires … the pieces show an unashamed romanticism rooted in lyricism and gentleness. A predisposition towards Russian Nationalism is manifested by a mature feeling for melody and harmony of the Russian song.”\(^{149}\) Parkman goes on to describe the events surrounding the work’s creation, citing when each individual piece was composed and when the entire cycle was premiered. This section of the notes ends with one sentence each about the individual form and style of the eight pieces Duo Nuova recorded from Prokofiev’s cycle.

Parkman briefly describes two of the Platti Sonata’s four movements, and mentions that the saxophonist Eugene Rousseau transcribed the solo part, while pianist (and former accompanist to Marcel Mule) Marion Hall created the keyboard realization. Four sentences are provided regarding the Sonata’s place in the late-Baroque/early Classic *galant* style, emphasizing, perhaps, the perspective from which this CD’s performers are approaching the music. Overall, the liner notes attempt to place each transcription in its own historical setting. Information on the original works and their transcriptions that was not included in the liner notes is provided below.

**Ravel: Vocalise-etude (Pièce) en forme de habanera**

Maurice Ravel was no stranger to the rhythm of the habanera; his first published work (1895) for two pianos used a habanera form, and in his 1909 one-act opera *L’Heure espagnole* it served as the dominant rhythm for the finale. The traditional habanera contains a simple dotted rhythm in duple time, featuring the following rhythmic ostinato: \(\text{♩♩♩♩} \). This rhythm is almost constant in Ravel’s 1907 *Vocalise-etude en forme de habanera*, which became the first evidence of what author Burnett James calls Ravel’s “Spanish period.”\(^{150}\) The *Vocalise* was originally intended to be sung by “low voice,” with piano accompaniment; it was written in response to a commission by A. L. Hettich, a professor of voice at the Paris Conservatoire, who

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\(^{147}\) Scott Parkman is currently Music Director of the Saint Louis Symphony Youth Orchestra.

\(^{148}\) Scott Parkman, liner notes for Duo Nuova (Timothy McAllister and Kevin Class), *Visions* (Centaur CRC 2280; 1995): 3.

\(^{149}\) Ibid., 4.

sought student etudes that included contemporary vocal techniques. Ravel was one of about seventy composers to respond to Hettich’s commission; his relatively simple, 59-measure vocal etude with sparse piano accompaniment provided its soloist with plenty of opportunity for vocal display within a limited range of virtuosity.151

Ravel’s Vocalise has been transcribed for a variety of musical instruments, orchestral or otherwise. It was not actually recorded in its original form until after 1950; the earliest recordings of the piece, created during 1929 and 1930, include versions for cello, solo piano, and violin, with one recording from 1929 featuring the saxophone transcription by Paul Viard.152

Although not technically demanding, the Pièce en forme de habanera allows the soloist to dominate the texture, while the piano mostly keeps time with the habanera rhythm. Two of the soloist’s closing melodic figures are marked après la voix in the piano part, requiring the pianist to wait until the soloist has completed his or her melody line before entering. This provides the vocalist as much time as required to perform the closing flourish of the melodic line; it also suggests the vocalist’s dominant role with regard to tempo throughout the rest of the piece.

Viard’s transcription of the Pièce is notated a fourth lower, allowing the saxophone to stay within a comfortable range. Other than this, comparing the saxophone score with that of the original version yields no significant differences. Perhaps the most obvious difference between the scores lies in the transcription’s piano part, at measure 11: although the original piano line changes here to a new ostinato, temporarily dropping the habanera rhythm, Viard’s version continues the ostinato from the previous ten measures through measure 12. The sound of the saxophone transcription, however, offers new timbres and subtle ensemble changes, which are markedly different from those of either a violin or vocal performance of this piece. Duo Nuova’s recording of the Pièce en forme de habanera will be discussed more during the final section of this study.

Prokofiev: Visions Fugitives, op. 22

Sergei Prokofiev penned the twenty short piano works of his Visions fugitives while he was still living in St. Petersburg (renamed Petrograd during this piece’s creation). The Visions were written between larger works he began and completed at this time, which included two ballets for the impresario Sergei Diaghilev, the Violin Concerto No. 1, the Classical Symphony, the choral work Seven, They are Seven, and the Piano Concerto No. 3. Numbers 5, 6, 10, 16, and 17 of the Visions were composed in 1915, and the rest between 1916 and 1917; this last group exemplifies Prokofiev’s turn towards quiet lyricism and a marked “softening of the mood,” especially when compared to many of his earlier works.153

Visions fugitives as a whole resembles a simple collection of character pieces more than it does a unified or connected multi-movement work. “Visions fugitives” is a French translation of the Russian title “Mimoletnosti,” meaning fleeting and transient impressions or ideas.154 Many of them reveal what Israel Nestyev calls “a strong leaven of the national in the artist, his unusual feeling for the melody and harmony of the Russian song”; they feature translucent, diatonic

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151 Arbie Orenstein, “The Vocal Works of Maurice Ravel” (Columbia University PhD, Music, 1968), 175.
152 This information is based upon the “Historical Recordings” section regarding Vocalise-Etude en forme de Habanera, provided by Arbie Orenstein, Ravel: Man and Musician (New York: Dover Publications, 1991), 257.
153 Israel V. Nestyev, Sergei Prokofiev: His Musical Life (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1946), 51. This new, “softer” category included the Violin Concerto, the Classical Symphony, and the sonatas for piano; previous works by Prokofiev in a “harsher” vein include the Scythian Suite, The Gambler, and the Sarcasms.
harmony, as well as Prokofiev’s “characteristic” vacillations between major and minor.\textsuperscript{155} Despite the sweeping lyricism and clear melodies found in many of the pieces, the Visions fugitives can also be cryptic and atmospheric. The composer did not arrange them in simple chronological order, and none had a specific program.\textsuperscript{156} The more playful pieces, like the Ridicolosamente and the Feroce, stand out against an overall spirit of reflection, for nearly half of the pieces bear slow tempo markings.

Author Harlow Robinson uses the word “dense” to describe the collection of impressionistic and often harmonically complex pieces,\textsuperscript{157} but the density of Visions is relieved, to a certain extent, in Harrison’s arrangement. This is due to the extraction of the melody line, in full or in part, for the saxophone. Shaping this into a solo-plus-accompaniment piece does not completely transform Visions into a homophonic work; all of Prokofiev’s notes are still performed. But separating out the melody and assigning it to an instrument with a completely different timbre from that of the piano, creates an entirely new composition in which melodic and harmonic emphases are both transformed. As will be discussed in what follows, the recording of Harrison’s arrangement of Visions fugitives raises issues beyond those of dynamics, phrasing, and articulation.

\textbf{Platti: Sonata op. 3 no. 2, in G Major}

The Platti Sonata stands out from the other pieces on the Visions disk, having been written more than 140 years before any of the other pieces on the album. This piece is fairly typical of the eighteenth-century sonatas that saxophonists record; Baroque and early-Classic flute sonatas especially are common in the discography.

Little is known about Giovanni Benedetto Platti (c.1692-1763) before 1722, when he entered the service of the court of the Prince-Archbishop of Bamberg and Würzburg, Johann Philipp Franz von Schönborn, where he worked until his death. Platti was a singer as well as an instrumentalist; he played and composed for violin, cello, oboe, flute, and harpsichord. Although his surviving oeuvre is not very substantial in comparison with that of his contemporaries, it does display both an exceptional sense of structure and the lively, elegant, and simple manner of the galant style. He made use of both Baroque and pre-Classic forms.\textsuperscript{158} Platti’s six Sonatas for flute and violoncello or harpsichord, op. 3, were originally published in Nuremberg by Ulrich Haffner around 1758; the original score indicated that a violin could be substituted for the flute, which attests to the flexibility of scoring that was already a part of this repertoire. In his 1924 edition of the Sonata in G Major, Philipp Jarnach wrote the following concerning these works:

Platti’s sonatas occasionally remind the listener of Handel as a model; only the fugato-movements seem less natural to the Romantic artist, as is shown by the homophonic treatment of

\textsuperscript{155} Robinson, 74.
\textsuperscript{156} The logic behind the final arrangement of Visions fugitives is not known.
\textsuperscript{157} Robinson, 292.
\textsuperscript{158} Alberto Iesuè, “Platti, Giovanni Benedetto,” in Grove Music Online, Oxford Music Online, http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com.proxy.lib.fsu.edu/subscriber/article/grove/music/21924 (accessed May 24, 2008). In his Sonatas, op. 1, for harpsichord and in his Masses, Platti employed the Baroque fortspinnung technique. The Miserere, however, is more Classic in nature, with a richer harmonic content.
the allegro-movements. But the purity of the melodic contours, the emotional intensity of the slow movements especially make these little pieces unusually valuable works of art.\textsuperscript{159}

Platti’s Sonata op. 3 no. 2 is in a four-movement, \textit{sonata da chiesa} format: movement 1 is marked \textit{grave}; movement 2, \textit{allegro}; movement 3, \textit{adagio}; and movement 4, \textit{allegro molto}. Each movement is in two parts, with both of the \textit{allegro} movements split evenly into two repeating sections. Even at such a general, structural level, Rousseau’s transcription for soprano saxophone and piano does much to transform the eighteenth-century sonata.\textsuperscript{160} Most of the repetitions have been deleted; the only ones remaining are those that indicate a repeat of the first half of movements 2 and 4. Hall’s realization of the figured bass creates an accompaniment far different from that heard on flute recordings of this piece. Many dynamic markings have been added, along with breath marks and articulations; Rousseau also provides metronome markings for each movement. A notable change is Rousseau’s transposition of many sections of the sonata up or down an octave, in order to keep the saxophone within a comfortable range; often the transposition occurs halfway through a phrase, thus dividing what would have been a continuous descending or ascending line in the original version. One instance of this transposition is shown in Example 5.1a and 5.1b below. Whereas measure 14 of the original flute part begins with an octave-and-a-half leap from B\textsubscript{4} up to E\textsubscript{6}, the soprano saxophone arrangement takes the leap down one octave, thus avoiding a high F-sharp. Also, the larger leap that occurred at the beginning of measure 14 is moved to beat 3, from the soprano saxophone’s written A\textsubscript{4} up to C\textsubscript{5}.

\begin{example}
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{Example_5.1a.png}

\textbf{Example 5.1a: Platti, Sonata in G Major, Movement I (Grave); mm. 13-15, flute version}\textsuperscript{161}
\end{example}

\begin{example}
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{Example_5.1b.png}

\textbf{Example 5.1b: Platti, Sonata in G Major, Movement I (Grave); mm. 13-15, saxophone version}\textsuperscript{162}
\end{example}

\textsuperscript{159} Philip Jarnach, editor, \textit{Platti: Sonata II (G dur) für Flöte und Klavier} (New York: Schott/Associated Music Publishers, 1924), 2.

\textsuperscript{160} Neither facsimile nor edited edition of Platti’s original score could be acquired for the present study. As a result, the comparisons in this section include only two recordings by flutists, who both present a “historically-informed” rendition of this sonata, and the score transcribed for flute and piano, cited in the previous note.

\textsuperscript{161} Jarnach, 4.
Upon comparing Duo Nuova’s performance with two different recordings of the sonata in its original form, one discovers that Timothy McAllister does not follow all of Rousseau’s instructions; instead, he (with pianist Kevin Class) seems to take cues from the flutists, imitating the work’s original instrumentation quite convincingly. This will be explained in more detail below, after an overview of what three different critics have written regarding the Visions CD.

Reviews

The reviews of Visions to be discussed here include Steve Mauk’s, from Saxophone Journal, Stephen Max’s, from American Record Guide, and Robert McColley’s, from Fanfare. McColley was the first to review the CD, in 1996. Unfortunately, his assessment is very general—it is positive, but has no substance regarding the author’s reaction to individual pieces. Granted, the three original works on Visions are all relatively new, at least in a commercial recording; McColley uses most of his review to describe the general form and style of these compositions. Yet nothing is said of the transcriptions, beyond one comment concerning the Prokofiev: “Apart from Ravel’s Pièce en Forme de Habanera, only the eight selections from Prokofiev’s Visions Fugitivies are close to being standard repertoire, and they take on a strikingly different color in Howard Harrison’s arrangement for saxophone and piano.”

McColley’s only mention of the Platti Sonata occurs when the reviewer relates which other recording labels have released the work in its original form (flute, cello, and cembalo). He gives the recording an overall positive appraisal, and ends the review by stating that “this disc will be much studied and admired by saxophone players. It certainly deserves a hearing among a still wider audience. There is much remarkably good and thought-provoking music here.”

Stephen Max of American Record Guide provides more opinion regarding the transcriptions; unlike McColley, he passes judgment upon the original works as well. Max begins his 1997 review by stating that the disc “grew on me in several hearings. At first, I was ready to dismiss it as a concoction of pretty piping and twittering. Indeed, there is a bit of that.” The “piping and twittering” that he refers to is revealed later in the review to be represented by Duo Nuova’s interpretations of the Ravel, Platti, and Rogers pieces. “In the Ravel,” Max adds, “I find McAllister too cool and uninvolved.” The reviewer does state that, as he gave the recording repeat hearings, he began to appreciate “the high level of musicality in the playing and the compelling nature of most of the music.” But the fact remains that Max did not seem to be impressed by at least two of the transcriptions and one of the original saxophone works. As to the Prokofiev, he describes only the piece itself, with no mention of how the musicians on the recording interpreted it. To close the review, Max states that the musicianship of Duo Nuova is “impeccable.”

Like most of the articles appearing in Saxophone Journal, the review of Visions supplied by Steve Mauk in the November/December 1999 issue includes much more information than either Fanfare or American Record Guide regarding the artists themselves; one page of the one-and-a-half page assessment of this recording relates how Tim McAllister was appointed to the faculty of The Crane School of Music in 1998, what types of awards he has received, with which

164 Stephen Max, review of Visions (Centaur 2280), American Record Guide 60/1 (January/February 1997): 204.
ensembles he has performed and which ones he himself founded. Yet in the space left for an evaluation of the recording, Mauk still manages to provide a detailed review of *Visions*. His is a very positive evaluation of both the musicians’ performance, and their choice of program. Of the Ravel, Mauk states that the ensemble “captures the flair and grace of the Spanish-flavored work well [while adding] their own personal touches.” Although a bit vague, this comment gives an altogether different impression from Stephen Max’s, in his *American Record Guide* review. It is possible that Duo Nuova managed to capture the essence of the work in their performance of the *Pièce en forme de habanera*, while still somehow sounding “cool and uninvolved”; however, this does not seem likely. After describing the general form of Prokofiev’s *Visions fugitives*, Mauk applauds Duo Nuova’s interpretation of the transcription, stating that “these brief transcripts are perfect vehicles for the duo to display their outstanding sensitivity and complete understanding of … Prokofiev’s musical style.”

This is quite a compliment for McAllister and Class; neither McColley nor Max provide any substantial information regarding the Prokofiev in their respective reviews (besides McColley’s observation that the piece “takes a strikingly different color” in this arrangement, and it is unclear whether McColley uses “strikingly different” positively). Overall, these three reviews applaud Duo Nuova’s efforts on *Visions*, despite a few negative comments from Stephen Max regarding the Ravel and Platti arrangements.

**The Recording: Duo Nuova’s Interpretation**

Although the above reviewers are all positive in their assessment of *Visions*, listening to the recording reveals a number of features of the three transcriptions that stand in considerable contrast to recordings of these compositions in their original form. Recognizing these differences may help to show what aspects of a transcription’s interpretation “work” for reviewers.

**Ravel:**

Recordings of the *Vocalise/Pièce en forme de habanera* by vocalists, violinists, and others exist in abundance. Therefore, no small number of recordings can realistically be used for comparison in this study. McAllister approaches this piece very similarly to soloists on other recordings, with one exception: Duo Nuova’s pianist, Kevin Class, does not wait for McAllister to finish a particular flourish or run before he enters, even in the two measures (13 and 25) which are designated, in the piano part, *après le saxophone* (*après la voix*, in the original). A number of recordings featuring voice with piano, as well as violin with piano, were surveyed to see how the accompanist treated these same entrances. Almost unfailingly, the pianist in each of these recordings did wait at measures 13 and 25; in addition, the pianists for most of the vocalists delayed their entrances at measures 54 and 57, so as not to interrupt the soloist’s *portamenti*. Measures 13 and 25 are shown in Example 5.2 below.

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Example 5.2: Vocalise-etude en forme de habanera, m. 13 and m. 25: piano part marked après la voix

On the Duo Nuova recording in both of the measures shown above pianist Class enters exactly on the downbeat; he also makes these entrances much louder than the pianissimo dynamic indicated. More of the emphasis is placed upon the piano part than would otherwise have been the case, increasing its importance. Thus although not a very substantial change, this treatment helps to make Duo Nuova’s interpretation of the Pièce en forme de habanera an ensemble work, rather than a strictly “flashy” solo encore piece. McAllister and Class also maintain a fairly steady tempo, unlike the other recordings surveyed: this affects the flourishes in the upper part much more than the somewhat repetitive piano part, making the saxophone’s runs, trills, and portamenti less showy. Perhaps these were aspects of the Pièce that caused Max to perceive the performance as “cool and uninvolved.”

Prokofiev:

As was mentioned previously, the transcription of Visions fugitives extracts much of the melodic line from each of the eight selected pieces to create the saxophone part. Examples 5.3a, b, and c below show three different instances in which a melodic line has been split between the saxophone and piano, with the saxophone melody marked by brackets.

Example 5.3a: Visions fugitives No. 10 (Ridicolosamente), mm. 27-39

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167 Because a score of the transcription could not be acquired for this study, the original score is shown in each of the Prokofiev musical examples: Sergei Prokofiev, Sketches for piano solo, op. 22: Mimoletnosti (New York: E. F. Kalmus, 19--).
Example 5.3b: *Visions fugitives* No. 17 (*Poetico*), mm. 12-29

Example 5.3c: *Visions fugitives* No. 8 (*Commodo*), mm. 10-19

Two recordings of the original version were used to compare McAllister and Class’s interpretation of these pieces: the first CD features pianist Michel Béroff, and the second CD, pianist Evgeny Kissin.168 In the pieces from which the examples above were taken, the performers from both of the solo piano recordings maintain an almost equal dynamic balance between the melodic line and the accompanying lines of the piano. Not only is there no significant difference in dynamics or articulation but, with all parts played by the same instrument, the timbre remains constant; also, the solo pianists have much more freedom in their application of *rubato* than do the saxophone and piano duo.

As a transcription for saxophone with piano accompaniment, *Visions fugitives* is no longer one unified whole; a portion of what was originally intended to be fully integrated into one somewhat denser texture has been extracted and raised in importance through its transferal to a “solo” instrument line above the now “accompanimental” piano part. Although this makes the

melody lines clearer, this alters the original sonoral conception of the music. The transcription maintains many instances of solo piano playing, however: in Example 5.3b above, the second theme (mm.15-22) of Poetico is kept completely in the piano part. This may have been done by the arranger so as not to transpose the original melody out of its range; whatever the case may be, much of the original piece remains intact, in Poetico and other extracts of Visions fugitives on this CD. In the transcription, a solo piano work with many layers becomes a saxophone solo with piano accompaniment, and Visions fugitives is transformed into an entirely new type of composition. Presumably, this is the “strikingly different color” that McColley mentions in his Fanfare review.

Platti:

Two recordings of the Platti Sonata in G Major, for transverse flute and basso continuo, were located for this study, and have been analyzed in comparison to the transcription recording on Visions: the first, from 1990, features flutist Bernhard Böhm with harpsichord and cello accompaniment, and the second, from 2007, features flutist Paul Wåhlberg, with clavichord and double bass accompaniment. A number of obvious differences between the two flute recordings and Duo Nuova’s rendition are listed below.

- Instrumentation. Not only does the Duo Nuova recording not use either cello or double bass in their interpretation of the accompaniment, but it employs the piano instead of the harpsichord. Also, both recordings of the original employ period flutes.
- Tempi. Duo Nuova’s tempo in the first movement, Grave, is approximately $\frac{d}{2} = 58$ bpm, which falls right in the middle of Rousseau’s metronome designation in his transcribed score (48-66 bpm). The two flute recordings both take this movement markedly faster, with both of them averaging around 92 bpm for the eighth note. The differences in tempo on the second movement are just as obvious: while Duo Nuova plays the Allegro at the extremely fast tempo of $\frac{d}{2} = 175$ bpm (much faster than Rousseau’s designated 144), the flute recordings average about 136 bpm. The final Allegro molto movement shows a similar difference, in which the transcription is taken at a much faster pace. The only movement in which all three recordings use a similar tempo is the third, Adagio (where the average for all three is $\frac{d}{2} = 45$ bpm). Both flutists employ much more rubato throughout the sonata than does Tim McAllister on soprano saxophone.
- Form. In the transcription recording, McAllister and Class take only those repeats that are marked in their score, the first halves of both the Allegro and the Allegro molto movements. The flute recordings, on the other hand, each repeat various other sections of the piece, including (in Böhm’s case) both portions of the slower movements and (in Wåhlberg’s case) the second half of the quicker movements.
- Realization of the accompaniment. Pianist Kevin Class follows the transcription’s score precisely, while the keyboard players for both of the flute recordings play completely different realizations; also, they have much more freedom to embellish their parts, given that they are both sharing the accompaniment role with either a cello or double bass.
- Ornaments. Although many of the ornaments that McAllister uses are identical to those used by the flutists, both Böhm and Wåhlberg use more ornamental figures than McAllister; this is mostly due to the fact that in the repeats (those not taken by Duo Nuova) the flutists take the opportunity to embellish their lines much more than they did the first time through.

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Transposition of the melody line. As was mentioned previously, the original flute part will, at times, go either too high or too low for the saxophone; as a result, there are a number of runs and other figures that are broken by necessary transposition in the transcription.

Although the tempi of the transcription recording are quite different from those of the two flute recordings, the aspect of McAllister’s interpretation that differs the most from that of the two flutists is the occasional transposition of the melodic line. Regarding this, McAllister follows the transcription score verbatim; nowhere in the piece does he transpose a phrase any differently from Rousseau’s score. The broken melodic lines give the Platti Sonata somewhat different contours in the soloist’s part, as Example 5.1 showed. This type of transposition occurs many times throughout the score; unfortunately, most of the breaks occur in places similar to that of Example 5.1, interrupting the intended flow of the melodic line and disrupting the parallels between original leaps and dynamic changes. Like the Prokofiev Visions fugitives, this version of Platti’s Sonata for saxophone is a substantially altered composition; here, however, the new version even includes with different melodic lines.

One way in which McAllister’s interpretation actually differs from Rousseau’s score is his generous application of ornaments. In this, it seems that McAllister has taken a cue from the flutists, or at least from Baroque performance practice; many of the trills, grace notes, and turns that he adds to the transcription parallel—in both style and location—the ornaments played by the two flutists. Example 5.4 shows an example of this; here the added ornaments are shown in the transcription score above the notes to which they are applied. Both Böhm and Wåhlberg execute these figures exactly the same as McAllister.  

Example 5.4: Platti Sonata (transcription score), Mvt. 4 (Allegro molto): mm. 72-77

Most of the ornaments that McAllister adds to the transcription occur at the ends of melodic phrases (such as the one shown in m. 76 above), just as they are played by Böhm and Wåhlberg. In adding traditional ornaments, McAllister makes Rousseau’s transcription more historically informed.

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170 This portion of the transcription parallels the melody of the original exactly; no extra transposition was necessary between mm.72 and 77. Therefore, only one score, the transcription, is shown in Example 5.4. Both of the trills shown in Example 5.4 begin on the upper note of the figure.
**Conclusion**

*Visions* represents a mixed recording of almost equal proportions of transcription and original material; all three reviews for this CD approve, despite Stephen Max’s negative comments regarding the Platti and Ravel. This demonstrates that, overall, McAllister and Class’s interpretations of the Ravel, Prokofiev, and Platti are successful for the reviewers mentioned above. The recording comparisons show what McAllister has taken from or added to the transcriptions. In the Ravel work he and pianist Class have simply added another, similar rendition of an already much-recorded and transcribed composition. In the Prokofiev pieces the addition of the saxophone brings out the melodic lines from within the original piano texture; although it no longer represents the music as a solo work, the equality between the saxophone and piano parts keep this transcription from becoming a saxophone showcase with piano accompaniment. And in the Platti Sonata, it appears that McAllister and Class are attempting a historically informed rendition. McAllister uses very little vibrato or *rubato*; he has also taken the liberty of adding appropriate ornaments, even when they are not designated in Rousseau’s transcription. Although the instrumentation differs from that of the flute recordings with which it has been compared, using a saxophone instead of a flute negates any attempt to faithfully reproduce an authentic sound. But this is not what Duo Nuova is trying to do. Instead, this is an updated ensemble’s translation of a historical style. The tension between the scoring of “later” instruments and the performers’ attempt to create a “Baroque” style is one of the most significant performance practices that this recording exemplifies in saxophone transcriptions.
CHAPTER 6

CASE STUDY III: AMHERST SAXOPHONE QUARTET,

*Mozart to Modern.* MCA CD 10055; 1990.

One of the most pronounced trends in the programming of saxophone recordings is mixing classical or art music works with lighter, even strictly popular, compositions. Often a saxophone soloist or ensemble will include jazz, ragtime, folksong, or contemporary “pop song” transcriptions next to original works for their instrument. Approximately one third of the almost 800 saxophone recordings catalogued for this project include at least one non-classical composition, and over half of those include more than one jazz or ragtime, folk, or popular work.

*Mozart to Modern,* the title of the Amherst Saxophone Quartet’s 1990 CD, is both clever and misleading. While the Amherst Quartet begins their CD with the oldest piece, they skip to the newest piece at the middle of the program and close with transcriptions of two popular tunes, whose original versions date from 1924 and 1973, respectively. A transcription of Mozart’s Quintet for Piano and Winds in E-flat, K. 452, begins the program; as might be expected, however, the most recent work on the recording, Lukas Foss’s Saxophone Quartet (1985), does not take the final place on the CD. Instead, the Foss Quartet is placed between transcriptions that share characteristics of early twentieth-century popular music: George Gershwin’s 1919 *Lullaby,* and James Hubert (“Eubie”) Blake’s *Jassamine Lane* and *Eubie Dubie.*

Since the only original work on this CD is the Foss Quartet, it would seem that it is overshadowed by transcriptions. It is nevertheless noteworthy that the one original work on the entire CD takes third place, framed by two transcriptions before and after it. This may have been done to highlight the Foss Quartet, by placing it in the exact middle of the track listing.

The final two transcriptions on *Mozart to Modern* reflect the Amherst Quartet’s ongoing fascination with Eubie Blake’s oeuvre: in 1981, with the permission of Blake himself, the quartet released an album composed entirely of saxophone transcriptions of the ragtime pianist’s works. Other transcriptions that the Amherst Quartet has recorded include works by Renaissance composer Josquin des Prez, and a number of pieces J. S. Bach; in each composer’s case the Quartet dedicated an entire album to transcriptions of his music. Yet the Amherst Quartet is also devoted to the dissemination of original saxophone repertoire, and they have recorded two albums of completely original works. They have commissioned or received as gifts more than one hundred compositions, many of which have since entered the general repertoire of saxophone quartets throughout the United States. *Mozart to Modern* represents the Amherst Quartet’s compromise between the completely original and completely transcribed recording.

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172 Amherst Saxophone Quartet: *Amherst Saxophone Quartet* (Mark Records: MES20600, 1985); *Lament on the Death of Music* (Innova 516, 1998).

Liner Notes

Edward Yadzinski provides very detailed and lengthy notes for *Mozart to Modern*. He begins them with a brief history of the saxophone, a note about the Amherst Quartet’s many commissions and premieres, and one paragraph about Lukas Foss and his participation in the recording. After this, the individual pieces are given space according to their length; for example, the Mozart Piano Quintet is discussed in four paragraphs, while George Gershwin’s *Lullaby* takes up only one paragraph. The sole original work on the CD is allowed almost a full page of notes, so as to explain the work’s intricate four-movement form.

From Yadzinski’s notes one learns that the incentive for composer/pianist Leo Smit to transcribe Mozart’s Piano Quintet was “the possibility to score a verbatim translation of the original wind parts (clarinet, bassoon, horn, oboe) into the ideally suited registration of the classical saxophone quartet.” Smit therefore maintained the original key of E-flat. About Gershwin’s string quartet *Lullaby*, Yadzinski writes that it was not publicly performed in its original form until 1967, almost fifty years after it was completed. About the quartet Yadzinski writes, “The piece begins with a demure introduction marked *Molto moderato e dolce*. The gossamer ambiance created here by the quartet offers a most unexpected insight into the feathery nuance that can be adumbrated by saxophones.” The final paragraph of liner notes describes the Amherst Quartet’s relationship with Eubie Blake and points out that the two Blake pieces included on this recording, the ballad *Jassamine Lane* and the rag *Eubie Dubie*, are second recordings by this saxophone ensemble; the Amherst Quartet first recorded both works on their all-Blake album in 1981. Yadzinski’s notes emphasize the saxophone quartet’s intense interaction with each piece on the CD, placing the saxophone quartet as an ensemble, and the Amherst Quartet, as a personality, into each piece’s ongoing story.

W.A. Mozart (1756-91): Quintet for Piano & Winds in E-flat Major, K. 452 (1784)

Although it is the only work in this genre by Mozart, the Quintet for Piano and Winds in E-flat Major was, according to the composer, the best piece he had written up to that time. Conceived after his permanent move to Vienna, the Quintet was one of more than a dozen works with piano that Mozart created between 1783 and 1786. Mozart’s chamber compositions from the early to mid-1780s show a new relationship between instruments, one in which every voice is more or less equal to the others, with all parts engaging in a musical dialogue throughout a particular work. His music for winds during this time also shows Mozart’s growing interest in

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174 Edward Yadzinski is currently listed on the faculty page for The University at Buffalo as a “lecturer” in saxophone; he is not, however, the University’s primary saxophone instructor.


176 Ibid., 3.

177 Mozart made this statement in a letter he wrote to his father nine days after the Quintet’s premier; quoted in Donna Rager Rathke, “Chamber Music for Piano-Wind Quintet (Oboe, Clarinet, Horn, Bassoon, Piano): A Survey” (D.M.A. Diss., University of Kentucky, 2003): 21.

178 Between February 9 and April 12 of 1794, Mozart wrote four piano concertos; by December of 1786, he had composed eight more.

texture and the desire to use novel combinations of instruments; as a prime example, the Quintet for Piano and Winds in E-flat Major, K.452, was the first of its kind.

In his dissertation on the subject, Eric Ohlsson speculates why Mozart had such a high opinion of his Quintet for Piano and Winds:

[Mozart] must have had specific reasons for having such a strong opinion. The most striking demonstration of the work of a genius is the way in which Mozart overcame the difficulties of writing for a small group of wind instruments and piano.\(^{180}\)

Ohlsson quotes Donald Ferguson regarding Mozart’s ability to solve the problems inherent in this combination of instruments:

Since the voice of any wind instrument is more distinctive and less variable than that of a stringed instrument, the kind of phrase—and consequently the kind of theme—that will sound well on an oboe or a clarinet may be quite unfit for a horn or a bassoon. Moreover, the combination of these “voices,” either with each other or with the piano, is tonally much more precarious than the combination of piano and strings. Thus the range of the composer’s thematic invention and likewise his whole process of development are much restricted; for while he may easily invent brilliant or characteristic figures for each of the instruments, these figures may be quite unsuited for combination…\(^{181}\)

Thus, according to Ohlsson, the “genius” of this work resides in Mozart’s mastery of the Quintet’s instrumentation. Not only does Mozart demonstrate his ability to write for each individual instrument (as he had already done in the piano concertos and in the serenades for various wind instruments composed during the 1770s); he also proves his skill at combining the individual timbres and technical abilities of five very different instruments. This combination was one that, at the work’s 1784 premiere, “called forth the very greatest applause.”\(^{182}\)

Several authors cite the Quintet’s concertante character and describe in various ways how each instrument of the ensemble is placed in equal balance to the others.\(^{183}\) Many portions of this three-movement work show the composer’s pairing of individual members of the ensemble and the alternation of combined timbres. No voice is subsidiary to the other four, despite the fact that the piano enjoys many virtuosic passages (perhaps owing to Mozart’s recent experience with piano concertos). It is obvious that Mozart wanted to hear the differences among the five instruments, as well as how each timbre combined with the others. More specific aspects of this work will be discussed below in the analysis of the Amherst Saxophone Quartet’s interpretation.

**George Gershwin (1898-1937): *Lullaby* (1919-20)**

The history of Gershwin’s string quartet *Lullaby* adds an interesting sidenote to the subject of transcriptions and arrangements. Originally created as an assignment for his instructor

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\(^{182}\) Mozart’s letter to his father, 10 April 1784 (see note 7 above).

\(^{183}\) See above-cited dissertations by Ohlsson and Rathke, as well as C.M. Girdlestone, *Mozart and His Piano Concertos* (Norman, Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press, 1952).
in harmony, counterpoint, and musical form, Edward Kilenyi, Sr., \textit{Lullaby} remained Gershwin’s only foray into a classical musical genre until his immensely-popular orchestral work \textit{Rhapsody in Blue} (1924), which effectively mixed jazz and classical styles. As for \textit{Lullaby}, the work as a string quartet existed only on paper until its premiere by the Juilliard Quartet in 1967. Much earlier, however, Gershwin used the melody from \textit{Lullaby} in an aria of his one-act “jazz opera” \textit{Blue Monday Blues} of 1922. It was also performed in an arrangement for harmonica and strings in the early 1960s. It has since been arranged for piano, string orchestra, and chamber orchestra, among other scorings.\footnote{Howard Pollack, \textit{George Gershwin: His Life and Work} (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006), 245.} Given the work’s varied history and its numerous manifestations, this saxophone quartet arrangement is not out of place.

\textbf{Eubie Blake (1883-1983): Jassamine Lane (1924); Eubie Dubie (1973)}

James Hubert Blake—better known as “Eubie”—was an American pianist and composer whose ragtime music had a major impact on the development of the Harlem stride-piano school of the 1930s. Blake had a long and productive musical career: he wrote his first piano rag, \textit{Charleston Rag}, in 1899, and at the age of ninety he was still composing for this genre, creating both \textit{Eubie Dubie} and \textit{The High Muck de Mucks} in 1972. Blake’s more than 300 songs reflect the diversity of his contributions to American popular music; Blake wrote numerous ethnic songs, music-theater ballads, spirituals, and \textit{double-entendre} novelty songs. Some of his solo piano works reflect, in form and style, the small amount of classical training that he received both as a child and after his official retirement in 1946.\footnote{As a child, Blake studied music theory with a local musician, Llewelyn Wilson, in his home city of Baltimore. In 1946 he returned to the study of composition at New York University.} Pieces in a more serious style include his series of waltzes (\textit{Valse Marion, Valse Eileen, Valse Vera}, to name only a few). The American ragtime revival of the 1950s\footnote{Although ragtime enjoyed its peak popularity during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, it has had several periods of revival since then; a significant one occurred in the 1950s, during which a wide variety of ragtime styles of the past were made available on records. Also, new rags were composed, published, and recorded. Many of the rags recorded during this revival present the music as a light-hearted, nostalgia-inducing novelty.} brought renewed interest in Blake’s talents as a rag pianist, effectively starting him on his second career as both a touring performer and a lecturer. His work as performer and composer earned him honorary degrees from Brooklyn College (1973), Dartmouth College (1974), Rutgers University (1974), the New England Conservatory (1974), and the University of Maryland (1979).

Much of Blake’s music is characterized by a large melodic range and frequent chromatic progressions, which show a marked use of contemporary styles applied in the framework of more popular genres. The two Blake selections on \textit{Mozart to Modern}, the ballad \textit{Jassamine Lane} and the rag \textit{Eubie Dubie}, were originally written almost fifty years apart; yet both of these works display highly embellished melodies and arpeggiated figurations, both of which indicate Blake’s own virtuosity at the keyboard.\footnote{Eileen Southern and John Graziano, “Blake, Eubie,” in \textit{Grove Music Online, Oxford Music Online}, http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com.proxy.lib.fsu.edu/subscriber/article/grove/music/03207 (accessed May 30, 2008).} The Amherst Quartet’s attraction to this music has so far resulted in two separate recordings of Blake’s work, the first of which, titled \textit{An American Classic: Eubie Blake} (1981), was created with the blessings of the then 98-year-old composer.
No published scores exist for these transcriptions, but given the quartet’s personal association with Blake, the translation from piano to saxophone likely had the composer’s approval.

Reviews

Four reviews were located for Mozart to Modern: they were published in American Record Guide (March/April 1991), Fanfare (November/December 1990), Saxophone Journal (May/June 1991), and Saxophone Symposium (Summer 1994).

Beginning with the earliest published reviews, the non-saxophone publications express two similar viewpoints regarding the transcriptions. Both Stephen Max (for American Record Guide) and Michael Ullman (for Fanfare) were disappointed by the Mozart Piano Quintet, but they praised the Gershwin and Blake compositions as the highpoints of the recording. Max, however, is much harsher in his assessment of the Mozart.

After introducing his discussion of the transcription (“the repertory is small,” so “some players have turned to transcriptions to enhance it”), Max offers his first and only compliment to the Mozart: “The attempt to reproduce the sounds of the original instruments of K. 452 … works well when concerted passages are played.” This is followed by:

Otherwise, the result is somewhat anemic. The saxophones are too sweet, and there is no bite to the sound. The performance itself is marginal, at best. Foss is not a great interpreter; he pounds too much in the first movement, is not sensitive in the slow movement, and is flaccid in the last movement. There is no poetry. No one would substitute this earthbound performance for any good recording with standard instrumentation (Perahia, Lupu, et al).

Max comments, then, not only on the performers’ interpretation of the work, but upon the transcription itself. His remaining remarks concerning Mozart to Modern mention the Amherst Quartet’s “creamy-smooth sonic texture” in the Gershwin Lullaby (which “sounds lovely with saxophones”), his admitting to not “connecting” with the Foss (“Much of it sounds like hiccups”), and a single sentence on the final two pieces: “The Eubie Blake transcriptions are terrific.”

Although not as harsh as Max, Michael Ullman also expresses disappointment with the Mozart Quintet: “I am of two minds about this transcription,” he begins, and describes the ensemble’s performance by saying that they “play with satisfying skill.” However, he writes that if one “goes from the supremely sensitive playing of Ashkenazy and wind quartet in a recording on London, or from the Perahia on Columbia, to this rendition, one misses immediately the variety of tone in the accompanying quartet that gives the piece its characteristic texture.” According to Ullman, the saxophone version “seems to diminish the quintet.” Like Max, he finds the other transcriptions much more satisfying, and states twice that the 1920s American popular music arrangements are, for him, the “highlights” of the recording.

In stark contrast to the two reviews above, both Clifford Leaman of Saxophone Symposium and Saxophone Journal’s classical review duo Joseph Viola and Paul Wagner, praise all tracks on Mozart to Modern, most especially the interpretation of the Mozart Quintet. Viola

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189 Ibid., 160.
and Wagner comment on how the saxophones are “appropriately light and never forced” in the Quintet, while Leaman states that the performance is “stylistically accurate with all of the performers maintaining the grace and elegance so necessary in Mozart.”\textsuperscript{191} Viola and Wagner mention how the saxophone timbre is “well-suited” to the piece, and provide counterbalance to the piano.\textsuperscript{192} The single negative criticism offered by either of these reviews is Leaman’s observation that “the only minor flaw [in the Mozart is] an occasional pushing of the tempo in the fast movement, ‘Rondo: Allegretto.’”\textsuperscript{193}

Both of the saxophone reviews, then, describe the Amherst Quartet’s interpretation of each of the three transcriptions as stylistically accurate, “appropriate,” and, overall, pleasant to listen to. Yet even Leaman for \textit{Saxophone Symposium} is more enthusiastic about the Gershwin and Blake selections, similar to Ullman’s review in \textit{Fanfare}. Clearly, the Mozart Quintet is considered the weakest of the three transcriptions.

\textbf{Interpretation of the Mozart Quintet}

Because the four reviews above praise the Gershwin and Blake selections on \textit{Mozart to Modern}, and because both of the non-saxophone reviews spend much more time commenting on the Mozart than on the other two transcriptions, the following section concerns only the Amherst Quartet’s interpretation of the Quintet in E-flat, K.452. Because both Max and Ullman mention the Murray Perahia recording of this work\textsuperscript{194} as an exceptional one in their reviews of \textit{Mozart to Modern}, this version will be used as the standard against which the Amherst Quartet’s interpretation will be compared.

Overall, the Amherst Quartet, with pianist Foss, presents a clean performance of Mozart’s Quintet. The original piano part and the original key of E-flat have both been maintained. Each member of the saxophone quartet uses minimal vibrato for their respective parts, at least no more than one hears from the oboist of the English Chamber Orchestra, Neil Black. Written dynamics are followed, although the piano is prominent throughout the piece.\textsuperscript{195} A few differences in tempi are notable: not only is the transcription recording much quicker in the first and last movements than the recording of the original, but the second movement is markedly slower in the transcription performance.\textsuperscript{196} The Amherst Quartet, with pianist Foss, also use \textit{rubato} in many sections of the middle \textit{Larghetto} movement, while Perahia and the English Chamber Orchestra members maintain a steady pace. Although the saxophone quartet version attempts to keep each wind part separate, there are a few passages in the music during which high notes in the clarinet or bassoon parts that fall outside the range of the alto and baritone saxophones must be transferred to either the soprano or tenor saxophone.

\textsuperscript{192} Paul Wagner and Joseph E. Viola, review of \textit{Mozart to Modern} (MCAD-10055 CD), \textit{Saxophone Journal} 15/6 (May/June 1991): 63.
\textsuperscript{193} Leaman, 11.
\textsuperscript{194} Murray Perahia, piano, and members of the English Chamber Orchestra, \textit{Mozart and Beethoven: Quintets for Piano and Wind Instruments} (CBS CD MK 42099, 1986).
\textsuperscript{195} The loudness of the piano may be attributable to microphone placement.
\textsuperscript{196} Regarding Leaman’s remark about the final movement’s tempo, the \textit{Rondo: Allegretto} movement is taken approximately 110 bpm in the transcription recording, while the Perahia and his collaborators play it at least 10 bpm slower.
The most significant differences between these two recordings are those related to timbres and articulation. As was stated previously, Mozart’s specific instrumentation for this work combines the unique sounds of oboe, clarinet, horn, bassoon, and piano. Even the liner notes by Yadzinski mention Mozart’s dramatic use of the varying timbres, stating that “the music here does have a theatrical sense. The keyboard and quartet of winds seem to convey character roles as if rendered from a dramatic scenario on-stage.”

Although any number of examples could be used from the piece, the following three are shown as samples of some of the passages during which each recording of the Quintet produces a very different sound. The first example shows a passage from the opening Largo-Allegro Moderato movement, during which the same ascending thirty-second note run is played in turn by the clarinet, oboe, piano, and bassoon. This type of trade-off or imitation occurs in numerous places throughout the piece, displaying not only the equality of the parts, but also the composer’s intention that the same musical figure should be heard in varying timbres. Example 6.1 below shows measures 57-59 of the first movement’s exposition.

**Example 6.1: Movement I, Allegro Moderato, mm. 57-59**

In measures 57-58, the 32nd-note ascending run is passed from the clarinet to the oboe. But in the transcription, the sixteenth-note run in the original clarinet line is played twice by the soprano saxophone. Due to the limited range of the saxophones, this is an understandable modification. Yet it highlights the sacrifice of contrasting wind parts: instead of hearing the run played by two instruments with differing timbres, the saxophone version makes it sound like simple repetition.

In the recapitulation of the opening movement, all four wind parts combine in a busy contrapuntal texture played above the piano’s 32nd-note runs. In the Perahia recording each part is balanced against the others so that all layers of the texture are clear; although this could be due to dynamics or microphone placement, the markedly different sounds created by five different instruments allows these layers to be heard. In this section of the transcription the four saxophone parts blend, and their use of legato articulation (as opposed to the other recording’s

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197 Yadzinski, 2.
198 Because this transcription has not been published, examples in this chapter have been taken from a copy of the original score: Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, *Quintett in Es für Klavier, Oboe, Klarinette, Horn und Fagott (KV 452); Neue Ausgabe samtlicher Werke*, Serie VIII: Kammermusik, Werkgruppe 22, Abt. 1 (Basel: Bärenreiter Kassel, BA 4506, 1957).
use of detached or *staccato* articulation during this section) muddies the counterpoint. This section is shown in Example 6.2 below:

![Example 6.2: Movement I, mm. 92-94](image)

Example 7.2 also shows a sample of the wind instruments’ range, which Mozart has taken advantage of in the Quintet. Both the horn and bassoon cover more than an octave and a half in mm. 92-93, with the horn completing a full two octaves. Such extensive range in an original piece does not translate well in a saxophone transcription, as was observed earlier with both the Platti Sonata in Case Study 2, and the Ravel Quartet in Case Study 4.

A second example shows another instance of this. It comes from the final movement (*Rondo: Allegretto*) of the quintet and occurs during the section marked “Cadenza in tempo” (mm. 159-204), during which all four wind parts play a number of figures in imitation. As a cadenza, it is designed to give individual instruments a final opportunity to display their technical and musical prowess before the final statement of the rondo theme and the subsequent close of the piece. Two sections of this cadenza are shown below in Example 6.3a and b.

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199 In her article entitled “Mozart and the Clarinet,” Martha Kingdon Ward describes Mozart’s writing of the ranges of both oboe and bassoon in K. 452 as extensive, compared to the “moderate” compass of the clarinet part. *Music & Letters* 28/2 (Apr., 1947): 145.

200 Rathke, 25.
In Example 7.3a the bassoon has a lengthy eighth-note passage in mm.165-68. The registral compass only covers the interval of a tenth, but it includes some of the highest notes in the baritone saxophone’s natural range. This is probably why the arranger split this run between the tenor and baritone saxophones; the break occurs on the downbeat of m. 167, with the first note of 167, E, left out. While the octave leap and the beginning of another mostly stepwise ascent make this a fitting place to create such a break, the tenor saxophone switches to the horn’s pedal-tone C, once the baritone takes up the bassoon line. The result is that the continuity of the bassoon line is audibly interrupted, only partially due to the omission of the downbeat E at 167.
In addition, the tenor’s switch to the pedal C in the original horn part is dynamically overpowering.\(^{201}\) The effect of the original bassoon line is lost.

Example 7.3b shows the final twelve measures of the cadenza, before the transitional material begins in m. 89 for the return to the rondo section. Once again the range of both the horn and the bassoon are displayed, as are those of the oboe and clarinet. The imitated figure in this section is an ascending leap of a twelfth, followed by a string of eighth notes in stepwise motion either descending (oboe, m.78, or clarinet, m.82) or oscillating around a central pitch (oboe and clarinet, m.80). When played by wind instruments of varying timbres, the initial leap of this figure sounds remarkably different with each repetition. Each of the clarinet’s three statements of this interval requires a jump from the chalumeau register to the mid-to-upper clarion register, producing noticeable timbral changes. The oboe’s leaps in m.78 and m.85 stand out because of the oboe’s pronounced vibrato on the higher tones, this being the only instrument in the piece that uses vibrato. The horn’s slurred leap of a fifth in m.87 has a singular audible effect that only brass instruments can imitate. When played by four saxophones, each of these leaps sounds much the same, even though the alto saxophonist holds back somewhat on the vibrato, perhaps in an attempt to mimic a clarinet sound.

Although they perform the work well technically, it is impossible for the Amherst Quartet or any saxophone quartet to create the same ensemble sound heard in Mozart’s original instrumentation. And despite the *Saxophone Journal*’s reviewers’ comment regarding the quartet’s “appropriately light” playing, their attacks are still much heavier than those of the oboe, clarinet, horn, and bassoon in the Perahia recording. Moreover, four similar instruments articulating unison passages maximizes the heavier articulation, making these sections of the transcription much more pronounced than the same passages played by oboe, clarinet, horn, and bassoon. The Amherst Quartet rarely uses vibrato in the Mozart Quintet (save for the “oboe” part played by the soprano saxophone); neither do they use any more *rubato* than does the other recording. But for a work that originally emphasized the differences among five unlike instruments, the transcription for four saxophones and piano, while an effective study piece of the Classic style, does not have the same effect.

**Conclusion**

As a saxophone quartet recording that includes an original work and multiple transcriptions, *Mozart to Modern* is quite diverse in the styles of music it offers to its listeners. The four reviews of this CD seem to favor the Gershwin and Blake works, which implies that, at least for the Amherst Quartet, they handle transcriptions of lighter or more popular works better than a Mozart transcription (or even the lone original work, the Lukas Foss Quartet, with which critic Stephen Max stated he could not “connect”). Comparison of the recording of the Mozart Quintet transcription to one of the exemplary recordings suggested by both Max and Ullman draws attention to what is sacrificed when the more homogenous sound of a saxophone quartet replaces the rich variety of timbres offered by the original version.

\(^{201}\) A number of explanations for the tenor saxophone’s marked increase in volume at m. 167 are possible. Once again, this could be due to microphone placement, although given the tenor’s sudden switch from an eighth-note run to a low C (the saxophone’s written low D, only two whole steps above the lowest pitch in its range) necessitates a certain increase in air pressure, especially if the C is to be sustained for two measures. Therefore, the need of the tenor saxophonist to increase air pressure may have caused the increase in volume.
CHAPTER 7

CASE STUDY IV: AURELIA SAXOPHONE QUARTET,

*DEBUSSY, RAVEL, ROUSSEL. ETCETERA KTC 1088 CD; 1990.*

The saxophone quartet is the most popular, most recorded, and most performed saxophone ensemble in the past forty years. Recalling Marcel Mule’s popularization of the saxophone quartet during the 1930s, and the many transcriptions that he and his fellow quartet members created in order to perform in such an ensemble, we should not be surprised that the repertoire would include many such pieces. The following case study focuses on a particular CD that falls into the “all transcription” recording category: the Aurelia Saxophone Quartet’s 1990 recording titled simply *Debussy, Ravel, Roussel.*

Like many saxophone recordings that include only transcribed works, the Aurelia Quartet’s CD adheres to a certain pattern; all three pieces were originally string quartets, which date from approximately the same time period. All three of the composers featured on the disc are French, and each wrote only one string quartet. The liner notes for the CD, written by Willem van Merwijk, the quartet’s baritone saxophone player, recount briefly the life of each composer and the history of his string quartet, including, in the case of Debussy and Ravel, the manner in which audiences first received each work. Van Merwijk explains that for Debussy’s Quartet “the audience reaction was one of shock and confusion”; Ravel’s quartet, on the other hand, was “acclaimed with genuine warmth.” No mention is made of the Roussel quartet’s reception, although his short biography ends with the phrase “Roussel was among few twentieth-century composers to develop a contemporary and personal idiom that was chiefly based on traditional values.”

Through stressing the individuality or striking newness of each of these works, the Aurelia quartet claims to present listeners with transcriptions of significant and fascinating compositions. And this fascination can, according to Aurelia, be showcased through the translation to saxophone quartet.

The act of transcribing string quartets for four saxophones is not a recent trend. Some of the earliest quartet recordings of Marcel Mule and his fellow Garde bandsmen feature Mule’s transcription of the Andante from Tchaikovsky’s String Quartet No. 1; this and the Scherzo from Schumann’s String Quartet op. 41 no. 2 are still among the more popular string quartets to have been recorded by saxophonists.

Two of the quartets on the CD, however, have never been recorded by any saxophone ensemble other than Aurelia. The quartet’s own personnel made these transcriptions, maintaining one of the oldest traditions in saxophone performance, creating one’s own repertoire.

**Creation of the Transcriptions**

The arrangers for this recording are both members of the Aurelia Quartet: André Arends, the alto saxophonist, and Johann van der Linden, the soprano. Both are accomplished arrangers,

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202 “Popularization” in that, before Mule formed his ensemble, the saxophone quartet was rare in art music performance. After Mule’s pioneering efforts, the quartet steadily grew in popularity among classical saxophonists.


204 Willem van Merwijk, liner notes for *Debussy, Ravel, Roussel*, 1.

205 The discography includes just two other recordings that include the Debussy String Quartet, one of which (Paul Brodie Saxophone Quartet, 1977) includes only the *Andantino.*
and many of their works are performed by saxophone soloists and ensembles in Europe and elsewhere. Van der Linden has arranged works by Albinoni, J. S. Bach, Barber, Beethoven, Fauré, Gershwin, Grieg, Handel, Mussorgsky, Piazzolla, and Saint-Saëns, not to mention his arrangements of popular songs and holiday music, most of them for either saxophone quartet or saxophone choir (twelve saxophones, ranging from soprano to bass). Besides the works on this Aurelia CD, Arends has created new versions of Gershwin’s American in Paris and Ravel’s Boléro, as well as many arrangements for big bands and stage bands, school bands, wind ensembles, and popular music groups. Many of these transcriptions are published; apart from the Debussy quartet, however, the pieces on this recording have not been published. On the Aurelia Quartet website, the group includes the following regarding their ensemble’s literature:

Over seventy world premieres of works by [Jacob] ter Veldhuis, [Perry] Goldstein, [Tristan] Keuris, [Louis] Andriessen and many others. The group gives compositions the chance to grow and plays pieces frequently so that they are heard often. … Astounding and ambitious arrangements. String quartets by Ravel, Debussy and Shostakovich. The Art of Fugue, the sonatas of Domenico Scarlatti. Pushing boundaries for our one great love: the saxophone quartet.

The Debussy and Ravel quartets appear among the “astounding” and “ambitious” arrangements. Apparently, these works mean a great deal to the Aurelia saxophone quartet: not only do they list them on their website in seemingly equal importance to the original compositions that they have premiered, but they also sought individualized instruction for interpreting these pieces. For these works and other string quartet transcriptions the Aurelia Quartet received coaching from Raphael Hillyer, former violinist and founder of the Juilliard Quartet, and Stefan Metz, cellist for the Orlando Quartet. Just after participating in a masterclass with these two string players Johann van der Linden’s arrangement of the Ravel String Quartet was premiered during the 1988 Orlando Festival.

The following section discusses and compares the original versions of the Debussy, Ravel, and Roussel Quartets, and comments upon Aurelia Quartet’s program for this recording.

**Claude Debussy (1862-1918): String Quartet in G Minor op. 10 (1893)**

The year 1893 was pivotal for Claude Debussy. Not only did he make his first appearance on the larger stage of Parisian artistic society with the performance of La damoiselle élue at the Société Nationale in April, but during the next month he saw Maeterlinck’s Symbolist play Pelléas et Mélisande and began sketching his career-changing opera of the same name, all the while continuing work on another of his ground-breaking compositions, the Prélude à l’après-midi d’un faune. Paul Griffiths has written that these activities of 1893 point to a metamorphosis in the composer’s personal style, especially because both the Prélude and the eventual opera...
**Pelléas et Mélisande** broke away from the traditional genre, forms, and textures that make up the opus 10 String Quartet. These features, Griffiths states, were all to be “discarded” by Debussy once the String Quartet was completed. The work was dedicated to the Ysaÿe Quartet, who gave the work’s first performance on 29 December 1893 at a concert of the Société Nationale de Musique. Some of the main features of Debussy’s String Quartet include modal harmonies (for example, the work’s opening and principal theme in Phrygian mode), repetition, large crescendos, a flexible tempo, and modified sonata form. The pizzicato effects in the Scherzo point up the work’s emphasis on timbre.

**Maurice Ravel (1875-1937): String Quartet in F Major (1902-03)**

Ten years after the first performance of Debussy’s only String Quartet, Maurice Ravel created what was to be his only work of the same genre. The Quartet was premiered in Paris by the Heymann Quartet on 5 March 1904. As in Debussy’s case, this period in Ravel’s life was one of change and development; his failure to win the Prix de Rome five times in a row (1900-05), his dismissal from the Paris Conservatory after attending classes there for more than ten years, and the subsequent rallying of a sympathetic public to his compositions and musical style all worked to transform Ravel’s musical career.

His String Quartet in F Major shares many of the musical features of Debussy’s Quartet, although it bears the stamp of Ravel’s more objective, architectural style, with an emphasis on traditional forms. The similarities between Debussy and Ravel’s respective String Quartets are numerous: both have a four-movement form that displays cyclic thematic recurrence, as well as flexible tempi and textural and timbral variety. The set-up of the four movements is similar: each quartet has a fast introductory movement, followed by a scherzo with prominent pizzicato parts, a slow movement, and an energetic finale. Also like Debussy, Ravel's String Quartet is widely performed and recorded, quite often sharing the program with the Debussy Quartet.

**Albert Roussel (1869-1937): String Quartet in D major op. 45 (1931-32)**

Unlike Debussy and Ravel, Albert Roussel did not attend the Paris Conservatory; instead, he entered the Schola Cantorum in 1898, at the relatively old age of 29. There he studied under Vincent d'Indy for four years, until d'Indy entrusted him with the counterpoint class, which he taught until June 1914.

Like his late entry into formal musical training, Roussel did not write his String Quartet in D, op. 45, until he was well into his last compositional period (after 1925). His statement that “this severe form, the quartet … is music’s most significant expression” perhaps sheds light upon why Roussel created only one work in this genre. The Quartet in D is also his only piece of chamber music with four movements; it is the longest chamber piece written during the last twenty years of his life. Basil Deane writes that the overall form of the piece indicates the composer’s extreme seriousness of intention: not only did he abandon what was until then his “favorite” three-movement formula, but he also made the finale a climax to the other three

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209 Paul Griffiths, liner notes, *Debussy and Ravel: String Quartets* Emerson String Quartet (1986: Deutsche Grammophon 427 320-2, CD): 2. Debussy’s use of cyclic structure did, in fact, appear in future works, such as the *Fantaisie* for piano and orchestra and *La mer*.

movements. Similarly, Norman Demuth explains that it is in chamber works such as the String Quartet that Roussel shows his innate classicism. The opening movement is a succinct Allegro in sonata form, the exposition of which displays the customary two contrasting ideas. The second movement Adagio follows a familiar ternary pattern; the Scherzo is equally characteristic in form (ternary) and style (brisk, dance-like), and the final Allegro molto is a fugue, the most extended example of this form in all of Roussel’s music. Like Debussy and Ravel, Roussel makes plentiful use of the coloristic resources of the string quartet medium: pizzicato, mutes, and natural and artificial harmonics. Unlike his predecessors, however, color is always strictly subordinated to what Deane calls “the exigencies of intellectual expression.”

Reviews

Only two major, published reviews could be found of this recording. Both are positive, although Viola and Wagner’s language in their review for Saxophone Journal is, as was the case for their review of the Amherst Quartet’s Mozart to Modern CD, too general to provide a constructive critique. And while Robert McColley’s review for Fanfare praises the Aurelia Quartet, it opens and closes with a warning to listeners regarding classical saxophone recordings in general.

Viola and Wagner remain vague in their admiration of the Aurelia Quartet’s performance, although they provide informative comments about the transcriptions themselves. The authors mention Arends and van der Linden deserving “a round of applause” for creating “new and fantastic literature” for the saxophone quartet. Viola and Wagner urge that these three arrangements be published, stating that all of them are “perfect for virtually any concert setting, and also for student quartet training material.” Thus the issue of the transcription as pedagogical tool surfaces once again. Although they are overwhelmingly positive in their assessment of each piece, added praise is offered to Arends for his arrangement of the third movement of Debussy’s String Quartet; and the arrangement of Ravel’s Quartet (created by van der Linden), they write, is “superb.” They offer multiple compliments regarding the Aurelia Quartet’s powers of interpretation, with comments such as “the writing is exceptionally lovely … and is again enhanced by the sensitivity of the players to the music.” When discussing the Ravel, the reviewers claim that Aurelia has “captured all the unique flavors of both Ravel, and impressionism, and presented them on a velvet platter of sound.”

With no mention of his response to the individual pieces, Robert McColley uses his review to reassure anyone considering purchasing this disc of its respectability, despite the fact that it is of a saxophone quartet. The reviewer begins his piece,

On finding this disc in the mail, my first reaction was a stoical, “Well, someone must review discs

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211 Deane, 114.
212 Norman Demuth, Musical Trends in the 20th Century (London: Rockliff, 1975), 64.
213 Deane, 118.
214 Ibid., 113-114. In saying this, Deane seems to imply that the restraints of the more “learned” style of a string quartet restricted Roussel from extensively exploring the possibilities of musical color (i.e. Roussel uses color only to aide the work structurally).
216 Ibid., 62.
by saxophone quartets.” But the disc has made for pleasing listening on several different occasions, and the reason may be as follows …

McColley expounds upon the virtues of this ensemble type for most of the review; he praises the saxophone quartet’s ability to be able to sound like a “single, multivoiced instrument, [just like] a piano or a string quartet.” Unlike the usual brass or wind quartets or quintets, he explains, the saxophone quartet is “a family of wind instruments whose tones blend together just as perfectly as strings.” This is a compliment for the ensemble in general. So, too, is McColley’s opinion of the saxophone quartet’s sound in the transcriptions, as compared to these pieces played in their original version: “While some may reasonably wish to hear the quartets of Debussy, Ravel, and Roussel played only in their original versions, others may, like me, find the warm expressiveness of the saxophones a welcome and interesting change.” McColley endorses the transcriptions, then, as appealing to those listeners who perhaps would like to hear classical compositions in new and, surprisingly, appropriate renditions, given the similarities between the string quartet and saxophone quartet that he cites.

**Aurelia Quartet’s Interpretation of the Ravel**

The Ravel Quartet in F Major was chosen as a representative sample from the Aurelia CD in order to discuss the similarities and differences between the recorded original and the saxophone quartet’s interpretation. Choosing one quartet to discuss, rather than including all three, also reflects Robert McColley’s review of this recording, in which he generalized about the virtues of the saxophone quartet and this ensemble’s ability to translate string quartets.

Because of the absence of a published score for this arrangement, the analysis of the Ravel depends upon recordings alone. Three recordings of the original String Quartet in F Major were initially chosen and compared with the transcription. Unlike in recordings of music from the Classic era and earlier, though, few differences in interpretation could be discerned among the recordings of this early twentieth-century string quartet.

A number of general differences between the transcription recording and the original are immediately obvious:

- The saxophone quartet cannot play double stops, and many of the tremolos have been removed (this is especially obvious in the fourth movement); also, many of the trickier repeated octave leaps have been exchanged for saxophone trills (also prevalent in the fourth movement). Example 7.1a and b below shows two sections from the beginning of movement 4, for which the saxophone part had to be modified.

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218 Ibid., 187.
The removal of certain figurations—such as those mentioned above—significantly changes the mood of portions of the piece. To compensate, the Aurelia Quartet has altered either tempo or articulation. Once again, the tremolos of the finale are a prime example; with their removal, the Aurelia quartet decided to increase the movement’s tempo approximately 20bpm, thus maintaining the music’s vivacity and effect of perpetual motion.

As in case studies 2 and 3, the range of the instruments in the original work often exceeds that of the saxophones, and this requires some phrases to be transposed (as it is, the entire transcription has been transposed from F down to E-flat). Such transpositions only stand out in high range, exposed phrases originally belonging to the first violin line. An especially obvious example occurs at the very end of movement three, m. 119, shown in Example 7.2 below.

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220 Because the transcriptions featured on the Aurelia Quartet’s CD have not been published, all musical examples for this section have been taken from a copy of the string quartet score: Maurice Ravel, Quartet in F Major for Two Violins, Viola and Cello, Score No. 539 (New York: International Music Company, 1942).
Example 7.2: Ravel String Quartet in F Major, Movement III—mm. 115-119

In m.119, the soprano saxophone plays the high B-flat (transcribed to a sounding A-flat) one octave lower than written. Although this is necessary due to the instrument’s range, this transposition sacrifices much of the final phrase’s distinct color. Aside from these and other minor differences, the Aurelia Quartet provides a faithful reading of the Ravel. The last three movements in particular showcase the saxophones’ skill in interpreting the string quartet.

Movement II

The Assez vif-Très rythmé portion of the String Quartet in F Major is a percussive, scherzo-like movement that is, in its original version, designated pizzicato for the majority of the first and final sections of the ABA form. This notation brings out the intricately syncopated, dance-like rhythms of the movement. Example 7.3 shows the first five measures of this section.

Example 7.3: Ravel String Quartet in F Major, Movement II—mm. 1-5

In the movement’s second theme long, legato melodies, most often played by just one of the string players, provide breaks from the mechanical, all-pizzicato texture. These lyrical melodies occur above an accompaniment thick with constant sixteenth notes and arpeggiated figures. The first instance of this melody can be seen in Example 7.4 below: beginning in the first violin part, the melody is passed to the viola at m.17.
Example 7.4: Ravel String Quartet in F Major, Movement II—mm. 13-17

In both of the above examples, the saxophone quartet adopts tempo, dynamics, and ensemble balance that are all similar, if not identical, to those in the recorded string quartets. Although the saxophonists cannot actually play *pizzicato*, the Aurelia Quartet’s use of short, light articulations mimics the percussive effect and keeps the work’s focus on rhythm. Throughout the piece, the Aurelia Quartet excels in their treatment of long, lyrical melodies; the melody shown in Example 7.4 is no exception. Even though the “Violin I” soprano saxophone is almost at the top of its natural range in m. 14, Johann van der Linden plays the line *pianissimo*. Another impressive feature of this section is the accompaniment; the saxophone arrangement retains all of the sixteenth-note runs in mm. 13-17, and both the alto and tenor saxophonists keep their parts subordinate to the already very soft dynamic level of the soprano melody, while the baritone saxophone, which takes the cello line for this section, maintains the accented pulse below.

**Movement III**

Lengthy legato melodies are a central feature of Ravel’s third movement, designated *Très lent*. The connectivity of phrases in this movement provides Aurelia with numerous opportunities to showcase the saxophone’s legato playing abilities, as well as the saxophonists’ outstanding breath support; striving to create a connected, string-like effect, the saxophone quartet rarely breaks a long melody. An example of this occurs in the section shown in Example 7.5 below. The baritone saxophone, playing the part of the cello at mm. 61-64, plays the slow, ascending melodic line in one breath. What most stands out in this passage, however, are the trade-offs occurring in mm. 63-65, as the C₅ is passed from cello (baritone), to viola (tenor), and up to the second violin (alto). This could very well be one of the passages that prompted McColley’s comment regarding how the saxophones’ tones “blend together just as perfectly as strings.” Completely in tune and timbrally matched, the C sounds as though it is played by the same instrument. Only the tenor saxophonist’s addition of vibrato at m. 65, which is much lighter than

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221 One exception to this is the Borodin Quartet, whose recording of the second movement proceeds at least 15bpm slower than the Keller and Emerson Quartets.

222 The violin F-sharp in this passage is a written high E for the soprano.
baritone vibrato, gives away the change. Of the three string quartets that were compared, only the Borodin Quartet performed this transfer as smoothly as Aurelia.\footnote{\vspace{5pt}It is difficult to determine what Ravel had in mind regarding this transfer. Other passages in the Quartet suggest that, in performance, the instruments sound identical (this can be heard in the string quartet recordings surveyed). That being said, both Emerson and Keller Quartets seem to bring out the timbre change from cello to viola at m. 64 of movement III, while the Borodin Quartet performs a smooth, barely-noticeable change.}

Example 7.5: Ravel String Quartet in F Major, Movement III—mm. 61-65

One other noticeable feature of the passage shown above occurs in the first measure of the \textit{Pas trop lent} section, in which the second violin’s melody is supported by chords in the viola and continuous thirty-second note runs in the first violin. In the Aurelia Quartet’s performance the soprano performs these runs at an extremely soft dynamic, and without the noise of key mechanisms so often heard in such passages. Also, van der Linden performs all five measures of these continuous runs without an audible break.

\textbf{Movement IV}

The finale of Ravel’s Quartet, marked \textit{Vif et agité} (“lively and agitated”), is exactly that; and although the original tremolos have been removed in the saxophone version, the Aurelia Quartet has increased the tempo as compensation. One of the chief highlights of Aurelia’s performance of this movement occurs in ensemble unison passages, during which two, three, or all four parts play the same line. The blend of the saxophone timbres, combined with the (now astonishingly fast-paced) continuous rhythmic motives, makes such passages sound as though they are produced by a single instrument. The multitude of dynamic changes in the fourth movement heightens this impression; a prime example of such unified sound occurs at mm. 222-
28, during which all four parts crescendo over a span of six measures (see Example 7.6). Although the lower saxophone parts are a little overpowering in this passage compared to their string quartet counterparts, they remain well-balanced with the upper saxophone parts and their legato melodic line.

![Example 7.6: Ravel String Quartet in F Major, Movement IV—mm. 222-28](image)

Another well performed unison passage occurs in the finale’s coda, a dizzying accelerando and dynamic climb to the work’s spectacular and virtuosic finish. With the omission of the tremolos, this portion of the fourth movement moves more quickly, especially beginning in m. 268. The build-up to this measure is dramatic: beginning at a unison pianissimo in m. 261, all four parts crescendo for seven measures, the viola joining the cello at m. 263 with the same eighth-note figure to increase the rhythmic intensity. In its original form this part is probably made even more dramatic by the bowing instructions, especially as the meter changes to 5/8 at m. 265, and the violins alternate down- and up-bowing to accent their repeated A-flat chords. Once again the Aurelia Quartet displays a remarkable unity of tone and articulation; during this passage, the upper parts are heavily accented, while the continuous eighth-note rhythm below remains fluid and clean, despite the difficulties posed by such a passage (especially for the baritone saxophone, whose part reaches almost to the bottom of the instrument’s range). As the upper parts take over the eighth-note runs at m. 268, the tenor and

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224 Ravel includes no written accelerando during any portion of the movement IV coda; all three of the surveyed string quartet recordings include one, however.

225 The bowing directions indicated in mm. 261-67 represent the only continuous use of such notation during this movement, pointing up the emphasis placed upon this climax at the Quartet’s end.
baritone saxophones perform their best imitation of *pizzicato*, producing accented staccato tones that sound, at least in their decay, similar to plucked strings.

Example 7.7: Ravel String Quartet in F Major, Movement IV—mm. 261-69

**Conclusion**

Because of the large amount of negative commentary aimed at saxophone transcriptions (as described in Chapter 3), it is somewhat rare to observe a mainstream reviewer writing as favorably as McColley does regarding an entire disc of such works. Yet the Aurelia Quartet’s interpretation of the Debussy, Ravel, and Roussel String Quartets made a very positive impression upon McColley. Whether this was due more to the transcriptions’ being extremely well executed and interpreted, or simply that string quartets performed on saxophones provided a welcome new timbre for familiar music, is difficult to ascertain. McColley provides evidence for both. A comparison of the Aurelia Quartet’s interpretation with those by string quartets shows that style and texture remain similar, apart from the inherent differences in instrumentation and the limitations of the saxophone quartet. The examples discussed above show portions of the Ravel Quartet in F Major in which the Aurelia Quartet provides exemplary interpretation, especially when compared to the interpretations by Emerson and other string quartets of the same segments. The saxophonists’ training with string players immediately before premiering the Ravel Quartet most likely informed Aurelia’s performance. The coaching they received from string players, then, helped the Aurelia Quartet to interpret these pieces in a fashion similar to the versions offered by at least three different string ensembles.
CHAPTER 8

CONCLUSION

Because of the marked differences existing between the original works and their saxophone adaptations, most of this study’s focus has been upon transcriptions that, in varying degrees, might be considered “arrangements” for the saxophone. It is fitting, then, to return briefly to the Grove Dictionary article on the subject. Malcolm Boyd states there that “few areas of musical activity involve the aesthetic (and even the ethical) judgment of the musician as much as does the practice of arrangement.”

That, in part, has been the intention of this thesis. Whether practiced by a saxophonist or any other performing musician, this activity is complex and multi-faceted. Most saxophonists are arrangers; many of the pieces they perform and record were created by them, as well. This is why the study of transcriptions, and of saxophonists performing them, must go hand in hand with a study of the saxophonists themselves and the ways in which they view this repertoire. The choice to perform these transcriptions requires, or should prompt, more decision-making on the part of the saxophonist than does that of completely original works, especially if the performer is also the arranger.

This project has raised three overarching points:

Transcriptions have been and remain an important component of classical saxophone performance and recording. Chapter 2 described how, since the invention of the saxophone in the 1840s its repertoire has grown simultaneously along two tracks: transcriptions and original works. Arrangements most certainly dominated during the late nineteenth century and the first three decades of the twentieth; yet even after pioneers such as Cecil Leeson, Marcel Mule, and Sigurd Raschèr inspired a large number of composers to create a sizeable original repertoire for the instrument during the mid-twentieth century, transcriptions have continued to be created, performed, and recorded.

Recorded saxophone transcriptions range from high art to popular, their material borrowed from the last nine centuries or more of Western music history—and these works are reviewed differently in different journals. In Chapter 3 the discography was discussed as evidence of the enormous variety of arranged works that have appeared on saxophone recordings during the past 75+ years. Chapter 3 also discussed the various concerns held by saxophonists regarding their performance of transcriptions. A sampling of reviews from various journals showed how the reviewers in saxophone journals tend to be more positive about these works than those from more mainstream publications.

The key to a successful programming of transcriptions lies in historical and performance practice research, and in awareness of one’s audience. Although the four case studies presented in Chapters 4-7 delve into only a very small portion of recorded saxophone transcriptions, each differs from the others in its program. Vintage Flora’s construction—as mentioned in the Saxophone Journal review—shows that saxophonists consider at least some transcriptions to be “standards” of the repertoire, to be performed along with original works. The inclusion of only one transcription on this CD—a template employed by many recording saxophonists—may also indicate a notable restraint with which transcriptions are handled, especially if the performer wants to provide his or her audience with a variety of original works on the same recording.

Both the Duo Nuova and the Aurelia Quartet CDs show the results saxophonists can achieve through researching stylistic authenticity. After comparing Duo Nuova’s performance of the Platti Sonata with recordings of the work in what could be called a more historically-informed format, the saxophone and piano duo’s interpretation was found to be sensitive to style-appropriate performance practice. McAllister chose to add ornaments that were not indicated in Rousseau’s transcription, which demonstrates that saxophonists should not feel obligated to perform these pieces only as the score indicates; if the performers feel that improvements on the side of historical accuracy need to be made, they should, as Lee Patrick encourages, “modify it so that it is acceptable.” The Aurelia Quartet’s interpretation of the Debussy, Ravel, and Roussel string quartets provides evidence that transcriptions can be well-received by non-saxophonist critics, even to the point that they astonish reviewers positively with their interpretive skills. Being coached by knowledgeable musicians who play the original instrumentation can aid saxophonists in achieving an interpretation that is closer to what listeners understand to be the essence of the original work. And the inclusion of transcriptions of jazz, ragtime, and more popular music alongside classical pieces may help to reach a broader audience (especially one that is accustomed to hearing saxophones in a jazz or popular setting). Reviewers of the Amherst Quartet’s Mozart to Modern all expressed pleasure at the inclusion of the Blake arrangements, the non-saxophone reviewers claiming these as the ensemble’s strength.

In conclusion, transcriptions remain an important and valuable component of the recorded saxophone repertoire. Saxophonists use them as teaching tools; the number of transcribed works that appear in method books and student collections attests to this. But the large number of recordings that include these pieces also indicates that there is perhaps an audience for them beyond fellow saxophonists. Returning, for the last time, to Lee Patrick’s article:

The bottom line is that, at a time when programming of transcriptions has become almost a matter of necessity, if we are to reach our audiences, there is little reason why saxophonists can’t perform them so that the composer’s inner vision is revealed as fully as possible. If programming transcriptions is helpful to build an audience for the classical saxophone, why should saxophonists not attempt historically informed interpretations? Perhaps some audiences would not be concerned that what they were hearing was stylistically inaccurate. This, however, would be a disservice to the audience, the music, and the performer, especially if she or he seeks to take full advantage of an arrangement, performance of an arrangement, or both. And for listeners, a high-quality arrangement affords a means of rediscovering a work with which they may already be familiar, and to learn aspects of a composition of which they may not have been aware. Transcriptions offer to audiences not only a “fresh hearing” or “new interpretation,” but also the opportunity to hear a stylistically appropriate rendition of music that adds variety and broader appeal to the classical saxophone repertoire, thus opening the way for more listeners to discover and enjoy this sound resource.

227 Patrick, 26.
228 Ibid., 26.
APPENDIX A

CECIL LEESON’S DEBUT AT NEW YORK’S TOWN HALL, 5 FEBRUARY 1937:
FULL PROGRAM

In the Silence of Night       Sergei Rachmaninoff (1873-1943)
Komm, Süsser Tod, BWV 478    Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)
                            (arr. Hintze)
Rondino                      Fritz Kreisler (1875-1962)
Hora Staccato                Grigoraş Dinicu (1889-1949)
                            (arr. Heifetz)
Rhapsodie for Saxophone      Claude Debussy (1862-1918)

Concerto in E-flat for Saxophone Alexander Glazunov (1865-1936)

Intermission

Sérénade espagnole           Alexander Glazunov (1865-1936)
Pavane (from the Mother Goose Suite) Maurice Ravel (1875-1937)
Bourée                        George Frideric Handel (1685-1759)
The Little Shepherd           Claude Debussy (1862-1918)
Flight of the Bumblebee       Nicolai Rimsky-Korsakov (1844-1908)
## APPENDIX B

**TABLE A.1. SAXOPHONE RECORDINGS THAT INCLUDE PIÈCE EN FORME DE HABANERA (MAURICE RAVEL)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Artist/Ensemble Name</th>
<th>Label / Catalog #</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Content</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bensmann, Detlef</strong></td>
<td>Koch Schwann; CD 310 071 HI; also LC1083</td>
<td>1990</td>
<td><em>Saxophone and Piano</em></td>
<td>Scaramouche / Darius Milhaud&lt;br&gt;Five-o’ clock Fox trot / Maurice Ravel&lt;br&gt;Pièce en forme de habanera / Maurice Ravel&lt;br&gt;Atoll II / Isoa Matsushita&lt;br&gt;Akzente for t.sax and piano / Erdmann&lt;br&gt;Suite / Dessau&lt;br&gt;Hot-Sonate / Erwin Schulhoff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Borioli, Orazio</strong></td>
<td>Gallo 947516, CD500516</td>
<td>1987</td>
<td><em>Duplo</em></td>
<td>Fantaisie sur un thème original / Jules Demersseman&lt;br&gt;Intermezzo dall’opera &quot;Goyescas&quot; / Enrique Granados&lt;br&gt;Fantaisie / F. Cesarini&lt;br&gt;Prelude et saltarelle / Robert Planèt&lt;br&gt;Deuxième morceau de concert, op. 17 / N. Beeckmann&lt;br&gt;Sarabande et allegro / G. Grovlez&lt;br&gt;Pièce en forme de habanera / Maurice Ravel&lt;br&gt;Histoires / Jacques Ibert</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bornkamp, Arno</strong></td>
<td>Challenge Records CHL 72006</td>
<td>1995</td>
<td><em>Devil’s Rag - The Saxophone in 12 Pieces</em></td>
<td>Devil's Rag / Jean Matitia&lt;br&gt;L’arlesienne Suite no 2 : Intermezzo / Georges Bizet&lt;br&gt;Pictures at an Exhibition: The Old Castle / Modest Mussorgsky&lt;br&gt;Pièce en forme de Habanera / Maurice Ravel:&lt;br&gt;Danses exotiques (5) for Alto Saxophone and Piano / Jean Françaix&lt;br&gt;Preludes (3) for Piano / George Gershwin&lt;br&gt;Songs (14), Op. 34 : no 14, Vocalise / Sergei Rachmaninov&lt;br&gt;Fantasy for Saxophone and Piano / Jules Demersseman&lt;br&gt;Aria for Alto Saxophone / Eugène Bozza&lt;br&gt;Fantaisie-impromptu for Alto Saxophone and Piano / André Jolivet&lt;br&gt;Valse Vaniité / Rudy Wiedoeft&lt;br&gt;Pequeña czarda / Pedro Itturalde</td>
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<tr>
<td>Artist/Ensemble Name</td>
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| Brodie, Paul         | Golden Crest RE-7102 | 1982 | Encores! | Largo / Frédéric Chopin  
Minuet (from L’Arlesienne) / Bizet  
La cinquantaine / G. Marie  
Pièce en forme de habanera / Maurice Ravel  
Spring song / Félix Mendelssohn  
The swan / Camille Saint-Saëns  
Badinerie / J.S. Bach  
Plaisir D’amour / Martini  
Dance of the blessed spirits / C.W. Gluck  
Serenade-Badine / G. Marie  
Serenade / Franz Schubert  
Souvenir / Drdla  
Prelude to Cantata #156 / J.S. Bach  
Rondino / Ludwig van Beethoven / Fritz Kreisler  
Reverie / Robert Schumann |
| Brodie, Paul         | MV-1005-2; Musica Viva | 1982 | The Golden Age of the Saxophone | La cinquantaine, for piano "The Golden Wedding"  
Serenade Badine for orchestra / Gabriel Marie  
Marche Miniature Viennese / Fritz Kreisler  
Liebesfreud "Love's Joy" / Fritz Kreisler  
L' Arlésienne / Georges Bizet  
Pièce en forme de habanera / Maurice Ravel  
Piggle-Wiggle / Edward Barroll  
Ambassador-Valse Intermezzo / F. Wangermeier  
Jack and Jill / Andy Sanella  
Karussell / Albert Brau  
Vocalise, Op. 34/14/Sergey Rachmaninov  
Souvenir for saxophone & piano / František Drdla  
Work(s) [Unspecified] Tango / Isaac Albeniz  
Andaluza (Playera; from “Spanish Dances”) / Enrique Granados  
Salut d'amour, Op. 12 / Edward Elgar  
Preludes (3) for piano Prelude No. 2/George Gershwin  
Valse Marilyn; Valse Vanité; Sax-A-Doodle; Sax-O-Phun / Rudy Wiedoeft  
Largo in E flat major, KK IVb/5, CT. 49 (B. 109) / Fryderyk Chopin  
Dizzy Fingers / Zez Confrey |
| Brodie, Paul         | Truly Fine TF-020 (CD) | 1987 | Soprano Saxophone and Harp | Meditation (from Thais) / Jules Massenet  
Concerto / Cimarosa  
Vocalise / Sergei Rachmaninoff  
La plus que lente / Claude Debussy  
Pavane / Maurice Ravel  
Bolero / Salzedo  
Solveig's song / Grieg  
The old castle / Modest Mussorgsky  
Pièce en forme de habanera / Maurice Ravel  
Girl with the flaxen hair / Claude Debussy  
Jesu, joy of man's desiring / J.S. Bach  
3 romances / Robert Schumann  
Playera / Enrique Granados |
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<th>Artist/Ensemble Name</th>
<th>Label / Catalog #</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Chouraki, Fabien</strong></td>
<td>CD/CL010; PMP Productions</td>
<td>1998</td>
<td>Saxophone Et Piano; Vol. 2, Légendes</td>
<td>Rapsodie / Claude Debussy Elégie &quot;Impressions d'automne&quot; / Caplet Légende, op. 66 / Florent Schmitt Reflets dans l'eau / Claude Debussy Deux vocalises/ Roussel Légende/ Caplet Syrinx / Claude Debussy Choral varié, op. 55/ Vincent d'Indy Pièce en forme de habanera/ Maurice Ravel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Harle, John</strong></td>
<td>Hamnibal / Rykodisc HNCD1331</td>
<td>1987</td>
<td>La Habanera</td>
<td>Three folksongs (from the country of Csik) / Bela Bartók Gymnopedie I / Erik Satie Elegy for Trane / J. Wall Three preludes for piano / George Gershwin Fantasia / Heitor Villa-Lobos Allegro / L. Vinci Deep purple / P. DeRose Theme from Tender is the Night / R.R. Bennett Sonata in G major (BMV 1020) / J. S. Bach Homage to Edith Piaf (Improvisation, C minor) / F. Poulenc Syrinx / Claude Debussy Pièce en forme de habanera / Maurice Ravel Out of the cool / Dave Heath</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Harle, John</strong></td>
<td>DKP(CD) 9160; Unicorn-Kanchana</td>
<td>1995</td>
<td>John Harle's Saxophone Songbook</td>
<td>Vocalise, op. 34, no. 14 / Sergei Rachmaninov Melodies, op. 35. No. 1; No. 3; No. 5 / Sergei Prokofiev Flow my tears; Can she excuse / John Dowland Miserere paraphrase / Michael Nyman Voyager / Stanley Myers Children's songs / Chick Corea Tom sails away; Berceuse / Charles Ives Syrinx / Claude Debussy Pièce en forme de habanera / Maurice Ravel N'arait autre depart / Guillaume de Machaut What if I never speed?; Sorrow stay / John Dowland Where the bee sucks / Robert Johnson II Ariel songs / Michael Nyman Dinah and Nick's love song / Sir Harrison Birtwistle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Kerkezos, Theodore</strong></td>
<td>8.557454; Naxos</td>
<td>2004</td>
<td>Ballades for Saxophone and Orchestra</td>
<td>Ballade for alto saxophone and orchestra / Henri Tomasi Ballade for saxophone and orchestra / Frank Martin Pièce en forme de habanera / Maurice Ravel Tango suite for saxophone and orchestra / Astor Piazzolla Ballade for saxophone and strings / Dimitris Dragatakis Czárdaš for saxophone and orchestra / Pedro Ituralde</td>
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<tr>
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| Kihara, Takashi        | Yanagisawa: B-3001 (cd) | 1988 | Saxophone’s Toy Shop | Copacabana / Barry Manilow  
Song of India / Nicolai Rimsky-Korsakov  
A Collection of Pictures in Tea Time / M. Miura  
Pièce en forme de habanera / Maurice Ravel  
Histoires / Jacques Ibert  
Tango / Isaac Albeniz  
Song of Japan / M. Miura  
Serenade / R. Drigo  
Elite Syncopations / Scott Joplin  
Star Dust / H. Carmichael  
The Girl from Ipanema / A. Jobin |
| Louie, Gary            | NPD 85563; Newport Classic | 1993 | Pastorale | Siete canciones populares españolas / Manuel de Falla  
Four romantic pieces, op. 75 / Antonin Dvorák  
Pastorale / Igor Stravinsky  
Sonata, op 167 / Charles Saint-Saëns  
Caprice viennois / Fritz Kreisler  
Pièce en forme de habanera / Maurice Ravel  
Scaramouche / Darius Milhaud |
| Marsalis, Branford     | MK 42122; CBS Masterworks | 1986 | Romances for Saxophone | L'Isle joyeuse / Claude Debussy  
Pavane / Gabriel Fauré  
Arabesque no. 1 / Claude Debussy  
Vocalise / Sergei Rachmaninoff  
Pastorale / Igor Stravinsky  
Emmanuel / Michel Colombier  
Bachianas brasileiras no. 5 / Heitor Villa-Lobos  
Gymnopédie : no. 3 / Erik Satie  
Prelude / Maurice Ravel  
Pièce en forme de habanera / Maurice Ravel  
Sicilienne / Gabriel Fauré  
Serenata / Igor Stravinsky  
The old castle / Modest Mussorgsky |
| Mauk, Steven           | 008; Open Loop      | 1991 | Classical Bouquet | Sonata in G major, op. 3 / Giovanni Platti  
Sonata in Eb major, BWV 1031 / J.S. Bach  
Pièce en forme de Habanera / Maurice Ravel  
Sonata for soprano saxophone and piano / Young  
Fantasia / Heitor Villa-Lobos  
Concerto for oboe in C major, K.314 / W.A. Mozart |
| McAllister, Timothy    | CRC 2280; Centaur   | 1995 | Visions | Pièce en forme de habanera / Maurice Ravel  
Lessons of the sky / Rodney Rogers  
Lilith / William Bolcom  
Visions fugitives: op. 22 / Sergei Prokofiev  
Distances within me / John Anthony Lennon  
Sonata in G major [op. 3, no. 2] / Giovanni Platti |
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<tr>
<th>Artist/Ensemble Name</th>
<th>Label / Catalog #</th>
<th>Year</th>
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</thead>
</table>
| Mule, Marcel         | CC 0013; Clarinet Classics | 1996       | *Marcel* *Mule: "Le Patron" of the Saxophone* | Gavotte / Rameau  
Pavane et menuet vif / Roelens  
La tyrolienne / Fonse  
Patres / Foret  
Variations sur Marlborough / Genin  
Le carnaval de Venise / Jules Demerssmann  
Concerto, Andante / Pierre Vellones  
Valse chromatique / Pierre Vellones  
Quatuor, theme & scherzo / Alexander Glazounov  
Menuetto / Bolzoni  
Serenade comique / Jean Frances  
Concertino de camera / Jacques Ibert  
Canzonetta / Gabriel Pierné  
Pièce en forme de habanera / Maurice Ravel  
Les millions d'Arlèquin / Drigo  
Esquisse / Combelle  
Concertino / Eugène Bozza  
Sevilla / Isaac Albeniz  
Cache-cache / Clérissie  
Scherzo / Eugène Bozza |
| Muto, Kenichiro       | Fontec Records: FOCD3206 (cd) | 1987       | *Super Virtuoso*              | La ronde des lufins / A. Bazzini  
Pièce en Forme de habanera / Maurice Ravel  
Fantaisie sur un theme espagnol / P. Genin  
Intermezzo from “Goyescas” / Enrique Granados  
Csardas / Vittorio Monti  
Serenade badine / G. Marie:  
Salut d’amour / Edward Elgar  
Aria / Eugene Bozza  
Fantaisie sur un theme original / Jules Demersseman:  
Ständchen (from “Schwanengesang”) / Franz Schubert  
Après un rêve / Gabriel Faure  
Vocalise / Sergei Rachmaninoff  
Bihari roman tancok / F. Farkas |
| Patzold, Dieter       | Natter Records PP 095007 | 1995       | *Ars Musica Medicorum*         | All'Offertorio / Zipoli  
Adagio in G Moll / Albinoni  
Solfeggietto / C.P.E. Bach  
Priere a Notre-Dame (from Suite Gothique) / Philip Boellmann  
Valse Chromatique; Rapsodie, Op.92 / Pierre Vellones  
Pièce en forme de habanera / Maurice Ravel  
Quatuor pour Saxophones / Pierre-Max Dubois  
Huldigung fur J.S. Bach / Aranyi-Aschner  
Dioscuridica / Zebinger  
Exitus / Cibulka |
| Ramsay, Neal          | Dis 010689; Medici       | 1997?      | "Pictures" and Other Exhibitions | Pavane / Gabriel Faure  
Pictures at an exhibition / Modest Moussorgsky  
Minute waltz / Frederic Chopin  
Pièce en forme de habanera / Maurice Ravel  
Sonata in E-flat major / Johann Sebastian Bach  
Three preludes (orig. piano) / George Gershwin  
Two-part invention, no. 8 in F major / J.S. Bach |
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<tr>
<th>Artist/Ensemble Name</th>
<th>Label / Catalog #</th>
<th>Year</th>
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<tr>
<td>Roth, Iwan SM 596; Colosseum</td>
<td>1983</td>
<td>The Magic Saxophone</td>
<td>Czardas / Vittorio Monti Vocalise / Sergei Rachmaninoff Flight of the bumble-bee / Rimsky-Korsakov Aria / Eugène Bozza Minute waltz / Frédéric Chopin Après un rêve / Gabriel Fauré Scaramouche / Darius Milhaud Fantaisie sur un thème original / Jules Delsart Piece en forme de habanera / Maurice Ravel</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Rousseau, Eugène ALCD-7021; ALM Records</td>
<td>1991</td>
<td>Meditation from Thaïs</td>
<td>Vocalise, op. 34 no. 14 / Sergei Rachmaninoff Liebesleid / Fritz Kreisler Beau soir / Claude Debussy Piece en forme de habanera / Maurice Ravel À l'espagnole / Pierre-Max Dubois Tosca fantasy from Tosca / Puccini Meditation from Thaïs / Jules Massenet Andante / F.J. Haydn À la Parisienne / Pierre-Max Dubois Porgy and Bess medley / George Gershwin Meditation / Kaufmann Après un rêve / Gabriel Fauré Schön Rosmarin / Fritz Kreisler</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sugawa, Nobuya TOCZ-9209</td>
<td>1993</td>
<td>Nostalgia</td>
<td>Reverie; La Fille Aux Cheveux De Lin / Claude Debussy Je Te Veux ; Gymnopédie I / Erik Satie Selections from &quot;Pleiades Dances&quot; / T. Yoshimatsu En't'acte / Jacques Ibert Piece en forme de habanera; Pavane Pour Une Infante Defunte / Maurice Ravel Aria / Eugene Bozza Nostalgia / Y. Kanno Morning / Y. Kanno Dream-colored Mobile / T. Yoshimatsu</td>
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<td>Artist/Ensemble Name</td>
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<tr>
<td>(Various – see website for complete listing)</td>
<td>AUR CD 3128; Arizona University Recordings</td>
<td>2006</td>
<td>America’s Millennium Tribute to Adolphe Sax, Vol. 11</td>
<td>Transcension / Michael Albaugh&lt;br&gt;Konzertstück für zwei Altsaxophone / Paul Hindemith&lt;br&gt;Etudes / Cindy McTee&lt;br&gt;Pièce en forme de habanera / Maurice Ravel&lt;br&gt;Jungle pour saxophone alto (from Neuf etudes) / Christian Lauba&lt;br&gt;Out and about / Leo Kraft&lt;br&gt;Variations on a sentimental song / Julian Harvey&lt;br&gt;Mountain under the sea, op. 392 / Alan Hovhaness&lt;br&gt;Saxophone quartet no. 2 / Milan Kaderavek</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wehage, Paul</td>
<td>EPM Musique: FDC 1131 (cd)</td>
<td>1990</td>
<td>Saxofolies</td>
<td>Sax-o-phun / Rudy Wiedoeft&lt;br&gt;Dizzy fingers / Zez Confrey&lt;br&gt;Saxarella / Rudy Wiedoeft&lt;br&gt;Bethena / Scott Joplin&lt;br&gt;Saxophobia / Rudy Wiedoeft&lt;br&gt;Traumerei / Robert Schumann&lt;br&gt;Hungarian dance / Rudy Wiedoeft&lt;br&gt;Humoresque / (no composer listed)&lt;br&gt;Tango / Isaac Albeniz&lt;br&gt;La cinquantaine / G. Marie&lt;br&gt;Molly on the shore / Percy Grainger&lt;br&gt;Londonderry air / traditional&lt;br&gt;Flight of the bumble bee / Nicolai Rimsky-Korsakov&lt;br&gt;Chant indou (Indian love song) / (no composer listed)&lt;br&gt;Schon Rosmarin; Liebesleid / Fritz Kreisler&lt;br&gt;Pièce en forme de habanera / Maurice Ravel&lt;br&gt;Le Petit Nègre / Claude Debussy&lt;br&gt;Gymnopédie / Erik Satie&lt;br&gt;Méditation de Thaïs / J Massenet&lt;br&gt;Brazilieria de &quot;Scaramouche&quot; / Darius Milhaud&lt;br&gt;Stars and Stripes Forever / John Philip Sousa&lt;br&gt;The whistler and his dog / (no composer listed)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wolford, Dale</td>
<td>GP 001; Gliddon Productions</td>
<td>1994</td>
<td>More than Sax</td>
<td>Pièce en forme de habanera / Maurice Ravel&lt;br&gt;Sonata in Jazz / Werner Heider&lt;br&gt;City Called Heaven / Negro Spiritual&lt;br&gt;Shtetl Voices / Ivan Rosenblum&lt;br&gt;Reflections on Raga Todi / Charlie Buei&lt;br&gt;Sonata in F minor / William Babell&lt;br&gt;Lullaby-Wirth / Carl Anton Wirth</td>
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### Reviews


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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Kathryn Etheridge
Historical Musicology

EDUCATION

2006-Present: Master’s Degree (in progress) in Historical Musicology from Florida State University—Tallahassee, Florida (expected graduation date: December 2008)

2006: Bachelor’s Degree in Music Education from the University of Southern Mississippi—Hattiesburg, Mississippi


GROUPS AND ORGANIZATIONS

Member of the MENC Collegiate Division, 2004-2006

Member of the American Musicological Society (2007-present)

Member of the Golden Key National Honour Society