

Writing a Piano Reduction for
Henry Brant's Concerto for Alto Saxophone and Orchestra

by

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A Research Paper Presented in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Musical Arts

Approved March 2013 by the
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May 2013

ABSTRACT

The purpose of the paper is to outline the process that was used to write a reduction for Henry Brant's Concerto for Alto Saxophone and Orchestra, to describe the improvements in saxophone playing since the premiere of the piece, and to demonstrate the necessity of having a reduction in the process of learning a concerto. The Concerto was inspired by internationally known saxophonist, Sigurd Rascher, who demonstrated for Brant the extent of his abilities on the saxophone. These abilities included use of four-octave range and two types of extended techniques: slap-tonguing and flutter-tonguing. Brant incorporated all three elements in his Concerto, and believed that only Rascher had the command over the saxophone needed to perform the piece. To prevent the possibility of an unsuccessful performance, Brant chose to make the piece unavailable to saxophonists by leaving the Concerto without a reduction. Subsequently, there were no performances of this piece between 1953 and 2001. In 2011, the two directors of Brant's Estate decided to allow for a reduction to be written for the piece so that it would become more widely available to saxophonists.

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CHAPTER 1

IMPORTANCE OF THE PIECE

Between 1931 and 1941, Henry Brant wrote a series of seven concertos for different instruments; the last of which was the Concerto for Alto Saxophone and Orchestra.¹ Brant was inspired to write this concerto after listening to Jacques Ibert's Concertino da Camera on a radio broadcast. The Concertino was premiered in 1935 by the eminent concert saxophonist, Sigurd Rascher, and Brant was surprised by the level of musicality Rascher achieved on the instrument. Rascher heard about Brant's interest, and, ever seeking to expand the saxophone repertoire, contacted Brant via post card offering to consult on the venture.²

After this introduction, Rascher met with Brant and demonstrated his musical and technical abilities on the saxophone, including a four-octave range, slap-tonguing, and flutter-tonguing. Though Rascher did not create these techniques, he was the first to encourage composers to include them in their compositions.³ Brant included both types of tonguing and the four-octave range in his Concerto for Alto Saxophone and Orchestra. The modernity of these unique elements at the time this piece was written along with Henry Brant's substantial contribution to contemporary American music has made this Concerto a substantial work in the saxophone repertoire. The piece had a preliminary premiere by the National Youth Administration Orchestra conducted by Dean Dixon.⁴

1 Paul Cohen, "The Saxophone Redefined Composing for the Saxophone: Henry Brant," *Saxophone Journal*(March-April 2000): 17

2 Ibid pg. 18

3 Noah Getz, "Henry Brant's Concerto for Alto Saxophone and Orchestra: History, Analysis, and Performance Practice" (DMA diss., Florida State University, 2002), 39 in ProQuest Dissertation and Thesis <http://udini.proquest.com/preview/henry-brants-concerto-for-alto-goid:276466726/> (accessed August 16, 2012).

4 Noah Getz, "Henry Brant's Concerto for Alto Saxophone and Orchestra: History, Analysis, and

However, Brant considered Rascher's performance with the Detroit Symphony Orchestra on January 17, 1942, conducted by Victor Kolar, as the professional premiere. In addition to Brant's Concerto, the Detroit Symphony performed Debussy's *Rhapsody for Saxophone and Orchestra* as well as the premiere of Percy Grainger's *The Immovable Do*. Rascher was the saxophone soloist for both the *Rhapsody* and Brant's Concerto during that evening's concert.⁵

Rascher had premiered several concertos prior to moving to the United States including *Concertino Da Camera* by Ibert, Alexander Glazunov's Saxophone Concerto, as well as Lars-Erik Larsson's *Konsert för Saxofon och Stråkorkester*, Op.14. Rascher demonstrated his abilities on the saxophone for each of these significant composers so they would know that they were composing a piece for an instrument that could play a beautiful melodic line as well as fast, virtuosic technical passages.

Not only was Brant's work the first saxophone concerto written by an established American composer, but it was also the only concerto written during this time that incorporated Americana themes.⁶ This style was developed after the Depression when composers wanted to gain the interest of the general public. In a direct quotation from a 1993 essay, Brant describes composition during the Depression in this way:

Our composers had three choices: a) to stop composing altogether (Varèse did just that); b) to compose and/or orchestrate commercially, for documentary or feature

Performance Practice" (DMA diss., Florida State University, 2002), 39 in ProQuest Dissertation and Thesis <http://udini.proquest.com/preview/henry-brants-concerto-for-alto-goid:276466726/> (accessed August 16, 2012).

5 Detroit Symphony Orchestra, perf. Sigurd Rascher, cond. Victor Kolar, Masonic Auditorium, Detroit, January 17, 1942.

6 Noah Getz, "Henry Brant's Concerto for Alto Saxophone and Orchestra: History, Analysis, and Performance Practice" (DMA diss., Florida State University, 2002), ix in ProQuest Dissertation and Thesis <http://udini.proquest.com/preview/henry-brants-concerto-for-alto-goid:276466726/> (accessed August 16, 2012).

films, for radio minidramas, for jazz groups; c) to compose in a simpler, much less radical style (Aaron Copland) became the leading exponent of this practice).⁷

Brant goes on further to outline a fourth way which he took during this difficult compositional period.

There was a fourth possibility. Satiric and comedic ingredients, echoes of the circus, the dance hall and of street music, insincere nostalgias, and more or less glossed-over horseplay were all tolerated in the concert music of the time. I found in this approach a welcome escape from the grim goings-on of the concert world.⁸

This fourth possibility became known as Brant's Americana and Satire period which lasted from 1931 to 1941. These Americana themes center on jazz, folk tunes, and music which listeners would relate to "the Old West". In his compositions, Brant incorporated tunes from the *American Songbag* by Carl Sandberg; a collection of songs from all across America. Brant's Concerto for Saxophone and Orchestra was written in 1941, which fit very late in this compositional period. As such, it is focused more on Americana and less on the various satirical elements that had become part of his compositional style. He had written pieces based on the Marx Brothers and another which he described as "a comic strip opera as revealed in a nightmare."⁹ However, with the Saxophone Concerto, he knew that the purpose of this piece was to show off Rascher's incredible artistry while showcasing the instrument.

Brant understood that there would be a greater chance of his pieces being performed if he wrote in this style. The composer's description of the three movements in

7 Alex Ross, "The Rest Is Noise: Brant and Ives 'tribute to Ives After 30 Year Effort,'" *New York Times on the Web*, February 23, 1996. <http://www.therestisnoise.com/2007/12/brant-and-ives.html> (accessed September 8, 2012)

8 Ross, "The Rest is Noise"

9 Getz, 56

the Concerto highlights its association with his Americana and Satire period; particularly in the description of the third movement:

The first movement of the Saxophone Concerto is called Prelude and indicates good weather. The second movement, Idyll, is more astronomical. Finally, there is a snide rondo called Caprice, complete with a cadenza. It is aimed to exploit to the utmost capacities of the solo instrument in virtuoso hands. Generally speaking, this seems to be a country concerto.¹⁰

The Americana period continued through the 1940s and 50s in works by other composers such as Copland and Bernstein. Copland wrote works such as *Rodeo* (1942), *Lincoln Portrait* (1942), and *Appalachian Spring* (1944). Bernstein composed *Fancy Free* (1944), *Big Stuff* (1944) which was sung by Billie Holiday, and continued to write in the Americana style during the 1950s with *West Side Story* (1957) and *Candide* (1956).

Although Henry Brant is often thought to be a composer who was native to the United States and included American folk tunes in his compositions, he was actually born in Montreal, Canada in 1913 to American parents. Coming from a musical family, Brant's musical interests were apparent from a young age. At the age of eight, Brant started to compose music, and, at the suggestion of Ernst Bloch, his family moved to New York City in 1929 so that Brant could pursue studies in composition. Brant studied at the Institute of Musical Art Juilliard School of Music between 1929 and 1934.¹¹ While attending Juilliard, Brant studied with Rubin Goldmark, the head of the Composition Department and one of the founders of the Juilliard School.

Brant eventually studied composition during the 1930s with Aaron Copland and George Antheil. Brant considered his music during this time to be a "...long period of

10 Paul Cohen, "The Saxophone Redefined Composing for the Saxophone: Henry Brant," *Saxophone Journal*(March-April 2000): 17

11 John Vinton, *Dictionary of Contemporary Music* (New York: E.P. Dutton, 1974), 97.

writing bland and non-provocative music, as everyone had to who wanted to survive through the 30s and 40s.”¹²

During the 1940s, when Brant was writing the Concerto, he worked as a conductor and composer for radio stations including ABC, NBC, and CBS. This experience taught him much about the craft of conducting. Working as a conductor for live radio broadcasts required him to learn how to communicate specific directions to musicians, including last minute changes, the character of the music, and what he considered “emergency work” which involved coordinating background or transitional music

In the 1950s, Brant began to go back to his experimental roots and write compositions which were more in tune with his interests in spatial music. Even though the basic idea of spatial music was used quite often in churches during the 16th and 17th centuries with choirs and instrumental groups spread throughout a church, Brant gave credit to Charles Ives as having a significant influence on the progression of this musical idea. In an interview, Brant stated that he was interested in how Ives applied the concept of spatial music in a few of his works:

It’s the idea that by separating the performing forces, instead of having them all in one place, you can have much more going on and have it intelligible, and also that you can use the shortcomings of separating them as an advantage. If you separate them, the players can’t hear each other very well, they can’t play in tune together, and they have trouble keeping together. It’s difficult for them to follow a conductor. Everything about it seems to be negative. On the other hand, they’re much more distinct (the separate parts) than they ever could be together in one place. If what you want is to have different kinds of music played at once, well, that’s the way to do it so you’ll hear them all.¹³

12 Alan Baker, “An Interview with Henry Brant,” American Public Media, June 2002 Online.
http://musicmavericks.publicradio.org/features/interview_brant.html

13 Getz, 108

Brant often related music to life; he believed music could be just as “complex and contradictory” as living.¹⁴ According to Brant scholars Kurt Stone and Kyle Gann, Brant also saw that space added a fourth dimension to music; next to timbre, pitch, and time.¹⁵ During his life, Brant witnessed performances of his works throughout the world including a performance in the Netherlands comprising 22 of his spatial and non-spatial works covering 60 years of composition and lasting seven hours.¹⁶ He continued writing spatial music until his death in 2008.

14 David A. Jaffe, “Henry Brant: Composer,” <http://www.jaffe.com/BrantBio.html> (accessed 28 October 2012).

15 Kyle Gann and Kurt Stone. "Brant, Henry." *Grove Music Online. Oxford Music Online*. Oxford University Press, (accessed February 17, 2013) <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/03850>.

16 Gann and Stone, “Brant, Henry”

CHAPTER 2

THE HISTORY AND FUTURE OF THE CONCERTO

At Rascher's request, Brant arranged the concerto for wind ensemble so that Rascher could perform it more often. Brant later re-created the piece for chamber ensemble and allowed it to be performed by either saxophone or trumpet. This chamber version varies greatly from original and, according to Brant, is the result of unfavorable performances of the orchestral version. In an interview with Noah Getz, Brant stated:

I removed [the orchestral version] from performance because I thought it was not doing me any good, i.e. slopped off performances where the orchestra is not properly rehearsed. After all, it's not a perfunctory accompaniment. There is detail in the accompaniment. I thought what I want is a carefully worked out performance in which I could participate.¹⁷

In addition to the orchestras performing below Brant's standards, Brant knew that Rascher was an exceptional player and that there were very few, if any, saxophonists other than Rascher during this period who could perform this piece without ossia alternatives and with Brant's preferred articulation. Even reviews of the piece from this time describe Rascher's unique abilities:

He believes and proves his point, that the saxophone is capable of anything from the song of the lark to the hottest kind of squawk and that this enormous scope is the legitimate concern of a soloist with a symphony orchestra. Whether anybody but Rascher can play it is something else.¹⁸

Because of this sentiment, the *Concerto for Saxophone and Orchestra* was not played again for decades after Rascher's last performance in 1953.

17 Getz, 108

18 Noyes, 17

The piece did not re-emerge until 2002, when Noah Getz, a doctoral student at Florida State University at the time, received permission from Brant to perform the Concerto with the Florida State University Orchestra. Brant was highly involved in the preparation of this performance, and it was only after hours of lessons and interviews with him that this performance came to fruition. His permission to perform this piece was even documented by Brant in a 2003 letter of recommendation stating, “This is to confirm that Noah Getz has studied my Concerto for Alto Saxophone and Orchestra intensively under my guidance, during 2001, that I consider him fully capable of performing it at the highest level of excellence, and that I recommend him as a soloist of the first rank in this work whenever the occasion may arise.”¹⁹

It was no surprise to many of Brant’s colleagues that he decided not to write a piano reduction for his work. Brant wanted to control the quality of performance as much as possible and, by not writing a reduction, he was able to control who had access to the piece. The expectations for saxophonists have increased dramatically since Rascher’s last performance in 1953. The most significant expectation is that all saxophonists have a considerable altissimo range. The altissimo range on the types of saxophones used during the first half of the 20th century began on an F#6; the sounding pitch is the A which sounds two octaves above middle C. Saxophones today have an added key which moves the starting pitch of the altissimo register to a written G6. The altissimo range is produced by the manipulation of harmonics created by alternative fingerings and a change in tongue position.

¹⁹ Noah Getz, “Noah Getz Concert Saxophonist: Letter of Recommendation,” January 2003, <http://www.noahgetz.com/brant.html> (accessed August 18 2012).

The best example of the progression of altissimo is found within the Concertino da Camera by Jacques Ibert. The Concertino demands much of the soloist. In addition to requiring clean technique and control over the altissimo register, it also contains a cadenza that requires the use of slap-tonguing, which prevented many people from playing the Concertino as written. The Concertino is currently a standard work for undergraduate level students in many colleges and universities. It is seen on repertoire lists at several schools renowned for their saxophone studios, such as Indiana University, Northwestern University, Bowling Green State University, and Ithaca College. Though there are still some sections of the Concertino that require a mature musician to play, many of the sections which were once considered unplayable are now easily within the reach of most juniors and seniors in college. In an article from *The Saxophone Symposium*, Dr. Daniel Gordon stated, "Many of the issues that faced Sigurd Rascher and Marcel Mule 75 years ago no longer apply today." He then mentions, "...the many players who are comfortable playing in the altissimo register."²⁰

In addition to an increasing expectation that saxophonists play in the altissimo register, slap-tonguing has also become a standard technique in contemporary saxophone repertoire. Slap-tonguing, a percussive effect, is produced by using the tongue to create suction against the saxophone's reed. When the tongue pulls off the reed, the reed bounces back and slaps against the mouthpiece. Slap-tongue can vary greatly between being more of a percussive hit and having more tone. There is a specific type of slap-tongue that Brant wanted saxophonists to use.

²⁰ Daniel Gordon, "Jacques Ibert's Concertino da Camera: Origins, Early Reception History, and Current Performance Considerations," *Saxophone Symposium*, Vol. 33 (2010): 58.

Brant described the slap-tonguing in his Concerto as sounding “like a good marimba,” very staccato, but with a solid tone.²¹ In an interview with James Noyes, Brant discusses his distaste for an overly percussive slap-tongue. “I think teachers have to learn Rascher’s slap-tonguing and not the silly little clacks that a few players think is slap-tonguing...I’ve heard a few people attempt the passages in my concerto with little clacks which are nothing.”²² Although there are some saxophonists who find this technique to be too difficult or even impossible due to the anatomy of their oral cavity, most saxophonists are able to learn how to do it readily, and those performing the piece should be able to adjust their slap-tonguing so that they can achieve Brant’s preferred style.

Like slap-tonguing, flutter-tonguing is another articulation that was new at the time of the premiere of Brant’s Concerto, but is now commonplace in contemporary saxophone literature. The flutter-tongue technique is executed by using the same tongue-motion which people use to roll their R’s in Spanish. Instead of vocalizing the ‘R’, the saxophonist blows air through the instrument, producing a tone with a fluttering effect. Flutter-tonguing is a difficult technique to achieve on the saxophone because the tongue cannot touch the reed. For those who cannot flutter tongue, a technique called “growling,” which involves humming while playing, has become a substitute generally accepted by composers.

Flutter-tonguing, slap-tonguing, and a four-octave range were preventing saxophonists from being able to perform this piece for many years. Although these elements are still difficult to achieve, many more saxophonists today are capable of taking on the challenge to learn these components found within Henry Brant’s Concerto.

21 Getz, 148

22 Noyes, 21

What was once deterring saxophonists from playing this piece is no longer an issue. Henry Brant's widow: Kathy Wilkowski, and Neely Bruce, the co-director of Brant's musical estate, join many saxophonists in calling for a piano reduction for this work.

With its history as well as its appealing musical content, this Concerto should be available for saxophonists for pedagogical purposes, to compete with, perform in recital, and prepare with the intention of performing with orchestra. Reductions, however, are often not pianistically written, which makes finding a pianist willing to play these works very difficult. Reductions often include too many notes or too few notes from the original score. They might include awkward chords which require the pianist to stretch their hand over an interval of a 10th, or they may not include prominent solo lines or textures which soloists rely on for aural cues. Finally, aside from including too many or too few parts, reductions are not usually written pianistically. Phrases are broken by awkward stretches, consecutive octaves in a fast tempo dissolve a melodic line, and articulations like the pizzicato in the string section are not transferred to the reduction and are, as a result, ignored. By being aware of the complications associated with reductions, I have attempted to avoid these problems while writing the reduction of the Concerto.

For many composers, the idea of a reduction is a sensitive topic regardless of the abilities of the pianist playing. The main reason reductions are unfavorable is that the piano is not capable of achieving the same sounds as an orchestra. The textures, layering, and colors created by mutes or extended techniques are lost in a reduction. In addition to lacking orchestral colors, pianists cannot sustain a note longer than a few seconds, nor can they crescendo while sustaining a note. When a chord that is played by the strings is held for several bars and is marked with a crescendo, the piano cannot replicate what the

orchestra is doing unless the notes in the chord are repeated. Finally, a piano cannot perfectly imitate a percussion instrument. There are many ways to alter the timbre, texture, and pitches created by a piano through the use of extended techniques. Nevertheless, it is impossible to achieve all the percussive sounds represented in the orchestral score. All of these problematic aspects of a reduction can make a strong, substantially orchestrated piece sound weak.

Regardless of these concerns, a piano reduction is necessary for any concerto to be performed without an orchestra. Obviously, most instrumentalists and vocalists do not have a large ensemble at their disposal, which means they rely on a pianist in order to learn new pieces, perform in solo competitions, or present music in collegiate performance settings. Many saxophone works remain in the repertoire specifically because they can be performed with piano, and, as they remain in the public eye, they are appreciated and enjoyed by musicians and audiences. For this reason, piano reductions have become necessary to perpetuate important repertoire.

CHAPTER 3

PROCESS

Over the course of this project, a process for dealing with the complex task of creating a piano reduction has been formed. The process has eight steps: obtaining appropriate permissions, researching the piece, condensing the score, writing a first draft, play testing, engraving the music electronically, revising and creating subsequent drafts, and publishing.

Section 1.3

Obtaining Appropriate Permissions

The process of writing this reduction did not begin with the music. In order to obtain permission to write the reduction, I searched for the contact information of the people who have control over the publication of Brant's music. The Internet makes it easy to find contact information for a deceased composer's close relatives or the persons in charge of their estates. The people who are currently in charge of a composer's works will usually have a contact with the composer's publisher; in this case, Carl Fischer. Close relatives are also helpful in convincing a publisher that having a reduction for these concertos will be a profitable venture. Once a publisher agrees to a reduction, the publishers will send contractual agreements to the reducer.

Section 2.3

Research

When permission is received, the next step is to get a copy of the full score and anything else that may assist with writing the reduction. Recordings, correspondence between performer and composer, and interviews are essential to writing a reduction, since works will often accumulate changes to the original score over time. There are many interviews with Henry Brant, including one in which Brant gives Getz a list of addenda as well as specific ideas about articulation and note lengths. In addition, there are letters between Brant and Rascher discussing tempos and style. Much attention was given to these aspects as the work of creating a reduction continued.

Additional scores are also very useful when writing a reduction. I found different versions of the saxophone solo part of Brant's Concerto. One particular version contained different articulations and meters from the solo part found in the full score. There is also evidence that Henry Brant had started writing a piano reduction, and then abandoned it as unusable. Much of the reduction was not idiomatic for the piano; the composer had written general ideas of what he wanted in the reduction, even leaving some measures blank. It was later determined that this could be either the reduction Brant used in rehearsals with Getz, or it was one written when he first wrote the Concerto.

Section 3.3

Condensing the Score

After completing the research phase, I decided to write out all of the parts in a condensed score. The parts in this score are as follows: 2 flutes with flute 2 doubling on

piccolo, 2 oboes, 2 clarinets with clarinet 2 doubling on bass clarinet, 2 bassoons, 3 trumpets, 2 trombones, piano, 8 first violins, 6 second violins, 4 violas, 4 cellos, and 2 basses. The percussion parts involve timpani, bass drum, snare drum, triangle, gong, cymbals, cowbell, xylophone, glockenspiel, and woodblock. Writing out the majority of the parts in a condensed score simplifies the reducing process later on, both because there is less to read and because most pianists struggle with reading a full score. In reductions which followed Brant's Concerto, I was able to skip this step entirely as a result of becoming familiar with reading full scores.

Section 4.3

The First Draft and the Role of Listening

To successfully reduce the Brant, I approached the reduction as a conductor would approach a score. A conductor dissects the score's architecture; they find the most prominent parts and secondary parts in the ensemble and practice cueing entrances and solos. Finally, they listen to recordings in order to get a sense of the work; even if they are premiering the piece and only have a Sibelius or Finale midi file to reference.

Listening to the original version of this piece even before receiving the score was an integral part of the reduction process. This step of the process helped me to better interpret the indications in the score. Even when Brant had worked on this piece with Getz, the composer had Getz listen to Rascher's performance in order to play the articulation with the correct interpretation. In the reduction process, there are often times when the way the music looks is not the way it sounds to an audience. An example of this is in measures 168–175 in the first movement of Brant's Concerto. According to the

score, the flute, violins, and viola are playing the melodic line at a mezzo-forte dynamic while the first trumpet plays along at piano dynamic. At the same time, the piccolo, oboes, and clarinets all play octave C's, which are marked with mezzo-forte and sostenuto.²³ Knowing that the range of the piccolo in these measures is especially audible, it would seem as if these repeated octaves were a substantial part of the overall sound of the orchestra. However, after listening to the recording, it is apparent that the octaves are nothing but an underlying accompaniment, hardly noticeable compared to the lush sound of the strings along with the flute and trumpet. Since the octave C's are also in the same range as the string and flute lines, the decision was made to leave out the octave C's entirely from the piano reduction, so the melodic line would not be interrupted.

²³ Henry Brant, *Concerto for Alto Saxophone and Orchestra*, (New York : Carl Fischer Inc. 1978.)

M. 168 piccolo

Handwritten musical score for Mvt. 1, measures 168-170. The score includes parts for woodblock (labeled 'C2 II'), timpani (labeled 'Tn'), and Glockenspiel. The woodblock part features a prominent rhythmic pattern with notes marked 'p' and 'mf'. The timpani part has notes marked 'p' and 'mf'. The Glockenspiel part is marked 'mf'. The score is written on multiple staves, with some parts circled in red ink. The notation includes various musical symbols such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings.

Figure 3.1: Score, Mvt. 1 mm.168–170

It is especially important to listen to recordings in order to find sections in which the percussion section predominates. In Brant's Concerto, the woodblock has a significant part, especially in the Caprice movement, and to leave out this part would be equivalent to taking out a solo line in another section of the orchestra. A further

discussion of this can be found later in this document in which I use an extended technique in order to create a non-pitched sound similar to a woodblock.

There are several other sections in which solos or parts of the orchestra need to be highlighted. An example of this is in measures 199–203 in the first movement.

The trumpets begin this phrase with a duet. This duet is then traded off to the oboes and clarinets in measure 202.²⁴ It was very clear to me that these two groups of instruments needed to be heard above the other parts of the orchestra. It should be noted that, in this section, the piano is marked *fortissimo* and the woodwind parts are marked *forte*.

Although the trumpets are only marked with a *mezzo-forte* dynamic, the other parts contain small portions of the melodic content found within in the trumpet line. Since these other parts interfere with the melodic line, they were left out in the final reduction.

In measures 71–78 of the second movement, there is a violin solo that interacts with the saxophone solo.²⁵

24 Henry Brant, *Concerto for Alto Saxophone and Orchestra*, (New York : Carl Fischer Inc. 1978.)

25 Henry Brant, *Concerto for Alto Saxophone and Orchestra*, (New York : Carl Fischer Inc. 1978.)



Figure 3.2: Score, Mvt. 2 mm. 71–72

It is a solo line that adds an extra element to thematic material previously stated in this movement. However, because of the thick texture in the rest of the strings parts which create the accompaniment, it would be easy to disregard this solo if someone had not listened to a recording of this piece. The other parts must be taken in the left hand which requires a leap in every bar. The accompaniment sounds thick in this section in part because of the octaves in the bass, which create the wider leap in the left hand. The decision was made to maintain the octave in the reduction for two reasons which can be described by Gerald Moore in his book, *The Unashamed Accompanist*.²⁶ Moore is describing an orchestral reduction for a vocal work, though the same aspects of his description apply in this instrumental work. “It is permissible in such arias...to enrich the

²⁶ Gerald Moore, *The Unashamed Accompanist*, (New York: Macmillan, 1944) 91.

accompaniments somewhat by enlarging the chords and by doubling the bass to ensure that the singer will get something approaching the support that he gets from an orchestra. This enriching and enlarging, however, should not be mere extemporization, but the result of knowledge of the orchestral score.”²⁷ In this section, the saxophone part is marked *molto espressivo e dolce*.²⁸ The saxophonist needs to play with a pure, delicate sound. The orchestra has a rich sound in this section which warms the overall sound of the music. Adding the octave in the piano would better imitate this richness and warm the sound which would support the efforts of the soloist to create the sound they wish to achieve.

Finally, having a sense of the tempos by listening to a recording is absolutely essential to reducing an orchestral score. The colors of the orchestra are difficult to imitate on the piano which is why slow movements of concertos with long, sustained notes are frustrating for pianists to play. As a result of the decay in the sustained notes of a piano, phrasing suffers. On occasion, it is necessary for a pianist to stay on the front of the beat, creating a sense of momentum in order to better achieve phrasing. This is one way which a pianist is able to imitate the forward motion created by an orchestra when the strings and winds crescendo from note to note.

A more obvious problem which occurs during the reduction process is the inclusion of an unrealistic number of notes in pieces which have faster tempos. This reiterates the importance of listening to recordings of the original music with orchestra. During the process of writing several reductions, I have found that my own tendency is to

²⁷ Moore, 91

²⁸ Henry Brant, *Concerto for Alto Saxophone and Orchestra*, (New York: Carl Fischer Inc. 1978.)

include too many three-note chords. These are chords which are commonly seen in piano repertoire and include the root, third and fifth in any inversion. What looks physically possible for a pianist is not always realistic once all of the other musical elements are added in a performance. This is one of the reasons why it is also important to play through the reduction at tempo with a soloist.

Section 5.3

Testing the Reduction

It is common to immediately realize which notes need to be dropped from a reduction when playing through the piece for the first time with a soloist. This was especially true in the first movement of Brant's Concerto, measures 96–97 and 108–109.



The image shows a musical score for measures 96 and 97. The score is written for two staves. The top staff is a grand staff (treble and bass clefs) and the bottom staff is a piano staff (bass clef). The key signature is one flat (B-flat). The time signature is 4/4. The music consists of dense chords and arpeggiated patterns. The first staff has a '7' in the first measure, indicating a seventh chord. The second staff has dynamic markings: *p sub.* in the first measure and *cresc.* in the second measure. The score is marked with measure numbers 96 and 97 at the top.

Figure 3.3: Original Reduction, Mvt.1 mm. 96–97

This musical score shows two measures, 96 and 97. The top staff contains a complex melodic line with many accidentals and slurs. The bottom staff contains a bass line with chords and slurs. The dynamic marking *p sub.* is placed under the first measure, and *cresc.* is placed under the second measure.

Figure 3.4: Revised Reduction, Mvt.1 mm. 96–97

This musical score shows two measures, 108 and 109. The top staff contains a complex melodic line with many accidentals and slurs. The bottom staff contains a bass line with chords and slurs. The dynamic marking *f* is placed at the beginning of the first measure.

Figure 3.5: Original Reduction, Mvt.1 mm. 108–109

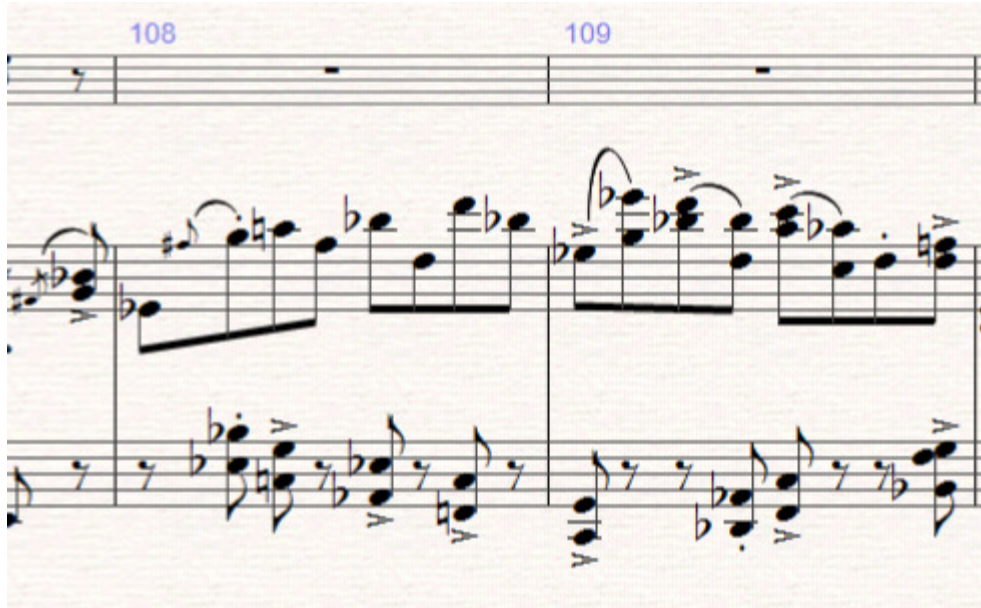


Figure 3.6: Revised Reduction, Mvt.1 mm.108–109

In an effort to include several added harmonies to the melodic line, the quantity of notes was so great that the quality of the performance was diminished. These sections should sound easy and not labored. Thus, they were simplified in the final reduction, and harmony was only added when it could be achieved easily by the pianist.

Section 6.3

Engraving the Music

Writing all of the notes of the Brant by hand was very useful for working through early drafts of a reduction; however, engraving, the music was necessary in order for it to be as legible as possible. When beginning the engraving process, I decided to forgo dynamics, articulation and phrasing marks. Including these elements of the music early on would result in more hours of formatting later. If there were significant changes to the score, all of these markings would need to be moved around.

Once all of the notes were written, I printed the first draft and played through the music. Without all of the extra musical elements on the page, I was able to make numerous markings and revisions as I played through the piece. Playing through the piece also involved practicing what I had written. I needed to know whether or not the difficult sections would be achievable after some practice. While practicing the piece, I noticed sections that would require a lot of time to practice but could easily be played if a few notes were taken out.

This part of writing the reduction was the most taxing, involving many re-writes. Once the notes themselves are decided upon, the dynamics, phrase markings, articulation, tempos, and stylistic notes of the composer can easily be added.

Section 7.3

Subsequent Drafts

When the stylistic notation is added in, this does not mean that changing notes and note-checking is finished. Note-checking occurs throughout the rest of the reduction process. This part of the process is equivalent to reading over a document several times to check for misspellings since it can be easy to miss errors in one's own writing. The Brant had several errors throughout the reduction. This is partly due to working with a copy of a hand-written full score. The full score is legible; nevertheless, markings are not as clear as a full score that has been engraved.

Once all of the notes were in place, I began formatting the score. This stage of the process is about making the reduction easier for a pianist to read. Formatting involves spacing between staves to make sure none of the notes overlap or come too close to one

another if the notes fall well below or above the staff. This occurred several times throughout the Brant score because of the extensive range of the saxophone part. This stage also involves centering dynamic markings, adjusting phrase markings, slurs and ties, and moving accents and other articulations so that they fall directly above the appropriate note. It has been typical for the reduction to go through two formatting processes: first, one by myself, and second, one by the composer or publisher. Composers and publishers will use a specific font size, page size, and page layout for all of their music and like to maintain that consistency in the reductions as well.

CHAPTER 4

REDUCTION OF THE CONCERTO

Section 1.4

Movement 1, *Prelude*

The opening section of the Concerto stretches from the measure 1 to measure 34. Within this section, it is easy to notice the amount of time Brant spent on notating articulation. Rather than writing staccato above a quarter note, he went further, writing an eighth note, followed by an eighth rest in addition to the staccato mark. He also uses an eighth note followed by a sixteenth rest instead of a dotted eighth with a staccato. Because there are so many notes with a shorter articulation, notes that have length or a tenuto marking become easily noticeable by the performer and listener. Brant was very specific in his notation of articulation; therefore, I incorporated most of the articulations from the original score into the piano reduction.

Measures 31–34 demonstrate how crucial it is for a reducer to pay close attention to contour when listening to a recording of the piece. I found it necessary to combine all the wind parts in this section in order to create a phrase that would achieve the spirit of the piece. When imagining how the sound of this section would look visually, I realized the result would resemble a sine wave, descending until the downbeat of measure 33 when the line ascends. It is important to pay close attention to all of the instruments participating in this section. If only the oboe or clarinet parts were used in the reduction, the line would “re-start” in the middle of measure 31. The flute and piccolo only play for one full measure but their participation in the contour of the line is critical to the

reduction.²⁹

Figure 4.1: Score, Mvt.1 mm. 31-34

The inclusion of the flute and piccolo line is important in this section, but I decided that using the notes in the range of these two instruments would be impractical due to the significant leap from the notes in the previous measure. The resolution was to combine the notes of the oboe and clarinet line with the trumpet line. By doing this, the contour of the phrase is achieved while lessening the leap between measures 30 and 31.

²⁹ Henry Brant, *Concerto for Alto Saxophone and Orchestra*, (New York: Carl Fischer Inc. 1978.)



Figure 4.2: Reduction, Mvt.1 mm. 30–34

It is not only important for a reducer to be familiar with the piece they are reducing, but they should also be familiar with the texture and timbre of an orchestra. As discussed earlier with Gerald Moore’s addition of octaves in aria reductions, I incorporated octaves in this reduction in order to maintain the fullness of sound which is created by the orchestra. An example of this is from measures 53–61. I decided that using only the top notes in the right hand made the dyad sound thin while using only the bottom note made this section less “cantabile”. I also used full octaves in the left hand to add more depth to the sound which would normally be provided by the bass section or low brass in an orchestra.

The image displays a musical score for measures 53 through 61. It is a piano reduction of a section from the first movement. The score is written in 3/4 time and consists of two systems. The first system (measures 53-57) shows a complex, rhythmic texture with many slurs and accents. The second system (measures 58-61) continues this texture, with dynamics ranging from *f* to *p*. The score includes a variety of articulations and dynamics, such as *cresc.*, *f*, *dim.*, and *p*.

Figure 4.3: Reduction, Mvt.1 mm. 53– 61

Once the legato section ends in measure 76, the music returns to the original texture and tempo. The articulation returns to a very short “pizzicato” with occasional heavy accents and slurred notes.³⁰ In these sections, it is important to make a very clear difference between the different types of articulation since they often precede one another. Brant was specific about articulation in his interview with Noah Getz and said, “Short—that’s the thing. The accents *do not* mean long. That is perhaps what is confusing.”³¹

The next section that I found challenging to reduce begins with the pick-up to measure 92. For this section, I needed to use my knowledge of the different timbres of

³⁰ Henry Brant, *Concerto for Alto Saxophone and Orchestra*, (New York: Carl Fischer Inc. 1978.)

³¹Getz, Dissertation, 145.

each octave on the piano. The melodic line is in the flute, piccolo, and trumpet. Instead of writing the line in the same octave as the woodwinds or the trumpet, I chose to write the line in the octave in between. With the way the accompaniment is provided in the strings, it would overshadow the melodic line if it is written too low or too high.

This section is also one of the more difficult sections of the reduction to execute in performance because of the octaves in the left hand. The main reason for incorporating octaves in this section is because of the way which Brant uses octaves in the score. There are many instruments playing the bottom octave: bassoon, piano, cello, and bass.³² Taking away the octaves would make this section significantly weaker compared to its original composition.

³² Henry Brant, *Concerto for Alto Saxophone and Orchestra*, (New York: Carl Fischer Inc. 1978.)

M. 92

The score is for measures 92-95 of the first movement. It features a complex orchestration with multiple woodwinds, strings, and percussion. The notation is dense, with many notes and rests. A large handwritten '4' is written on the Piano and Saxophone staves. A circled 'Xylophone' marking is on the Percussion staff. A circled 'mf' marking is on the Piano staff.

Figure 4.4: Score, Mvt.1 mm. 92-95

Another reason why this section is problematic is because of the harmony in measure 94. The satiric humor of the trumpet part needed to be present in the reduction but if the part was written in its entirety, it would interfere with the melodic line in the woodwinds. Therefore, I reduced this part down to only quarter notes and made it the top most audible line to achieve this effect.

As mentioned previously, the percussion section is often neglected in piano reductions because it is nearly impossible to replicate the percussive sounds while continuing the pitched accompaniment. I found an exception to this with the part of the woodblock which cannot be ignored when listening to the piece. To re-create a woodblock sound, two wedges are placed in between the top C or B flat on the keyboard. The wedge is put into place prior to the performance because these notes are not used in any part of the Concerto reduction. The C is recommended because it is easiest to physically and visually find on the keyboard quickly. However, for some keyboards, there is crossbar which prevents the wedges from being placed in the strings without being struck by the hammer. The hammer must strike the string, not the wedge. The highest B flat on the keyboard is also easy to locate quickly and typically allows more room for wedges to be placed in between the strings. When the pianist strikes the note, it should make a percussive, non-pitched sound similar to a woodblock.

The *Tempo Primo* section brings the return of the initial thematic material. Once again, articulation and odd harmonies bring back the satire style. Articulation for an orchestra and articulation for a pianist vary greatly even though the markings are the same. This is due to the differing numbers of people in addition to the timbre of the instruments. Again, listening to a recording and understanding the tendencies and timbre

for all the instruments is essential when determining how to notate articulation in a reduction. In measure 128, Brant marks “no pedal” in the piano part of the score and pizzicato and staccato in the strings and woodwinds.³³ I decided to keep the eighth notes in the right hand and quarter notes in the left with the notation of “no pedal” written in the piano part. This will communicate to the pianist that the left hand notes should resonate slightly longer than the right hand notes. The right hand notes will better replicate the resonance of the string section with this notation.

The image shows a handwritten musical score for measure 128, labeled "M. 128". It consists of three systems of staves. The first system is for the Piano, with a treble clef and a 4/4 time signature. The right hand part features a sequence of chords and eighth notes, while the left hand part consists of quarter notes. A handwritten "no pedal" instruction is written below the left hand part. The second system is for the Saxophone, with a treble clef and a 4/4 time signature, showing a melodic line with slurs and accents. The third system is for the Strings, with four staves, each starting with a "pizz" (pizzicato) instruction and a dynamic marking of "p". The string parts consist of quarter notes.

Figure 4.5: Score, Mvt.1 m. 128

33 Henry Brant, *Concerto for Alto Saxophone and Orchestra*, (New York: Carl Fischer Inc. 1978.)



Figure 4.6: Reduction, Mvt.1 mm. 128-131

Immediately following the short section at measure 128, there is a four bar phrase followed by another new texture. The four measure phrase beginning in measure 136 has mostly woodwinds with only a small violin part. The bassoons are in octaves which were kept in the reduction because the octaves are easy to execute. However, after these four measures, the octaves were discontinued and replaced with the line played in the string bass.³⁴ If the octaves had been used in the section, the pianist would have to do a large amount of shifting. In addition to this, the articulation, specifically the slurs between the dotted quarter notes and eighth notes, would be broken, or at the very least, difficult to achieve. I used the bottom octave in this section to create a similar depth which the orchestra would provide. It is important to make sure that the saxophone is well supported by a substantial sound from the lower register of the piano. The saxophone solo is generally at a *forte* dynamic and benefits from a larger sound from the piano.

In measures 232 and 233, Brant wrote a witty woodwind and piano part along with a string part in a way that is similar to a jazz solo with a bass line. I decided to keep the piccolo line which is similar to the right hand of the piano part along with the bass

³⁴ Henry Brant, *Concerto for Alto Saxophone and Orchestra*, (New York: Carl Fischer Inc. 1978.)

notes to bring out the humor in this measure. The harmonies in the left hand of the piano part in the score are left out since it would be too difficult to manage both lines. Additionally, the piccolo line is the most audible part since it reaches into the highest range of the instrument.

The image shows a handwritten musical score for measures 232 and 233 of the first movement. The score is arranged in a standard orchestral format with staves for various instruments. The instruments listed on the left are: PICCOLO, FLUTE, CLARINET, BASSOON, PIANO, SAXOPHONE, VIOLIN 1, VIOLIN 2, VIOLA, CELLO, and BASS. The score is marked with a large '31' at the beginning of measure 232 and 'M. 232'. The music is in 2/4 time and features complex rhythmic patterns, including triplets and sixteenth notes. Dynamics such as 'f' (forte) and 'p' (piano) are indicated. The score is handwritten and shows some corrections and markings.

Figure 4.7: Score, Mvt.1 mm. 232–233

Measures 237 and 238 were the most difficult to work with in terms of deciding which parts to keep and which to eliminate.³⁵ In these measures, the most prominent

³⁵ Henry Brant, *Concerto for Alto Saxophone and Orchestra*, (New York: Carl Fischer Inc. 1978.)

audible goal of the passage is a forward motion towards the last measure by combining groupings of sixteenth note triplets and duples between the woodwind, trumpet, piano, and string parts. All of these groups of instruments are ascending until measures 238.

M.237

flute
cresc. poco a poco

oboe
cresc. poco a poco

tpt
cresc. poco a poco

pcuss

piano
cresc. poco a poco

sax

vln 1
arco sul ponticello
cresc. poco a poco

vln 2
arco
cresc. poco a poco

viola
arco
cresc. poco a poco

cello
arco
cresc. poco a poco

Perc.
Small Triangle
Tambourine
Bass Drum

Figure 4.8, Score Mvt.1 mm. 237–239

The string line is too hard to replicate on piano because of the stress it would cause on the wrists with the repeated notes. The woodwind line does not have a continuous flow for the reason that the oboe is playing triplets on each beat followed by an eighth rest while the flute is playing a combination of sixteenths and eighths. The faster triplets in the oboe would sound disrupted by the dupe sixteenths. There is a similar scenario with the piano line. The eighth notes on the beat disrupt the flow of the sixteenths. I decided that, because the trumpet line is playing the same two notes as the eighth notes found in the piano part during these measures, it would be best to use the two sixteenths of the trumpet line and then the following sixteenths of the piano line.

M. 237

p cresc. poco a poco

sfz

Figure 4.9, Reduction Mvt.1 mm. 237–239

Section 2.4

Second Movement, *Idyll*

The beginning of the second movement is notated with staccato markings in the flutes and pizzicato in the strings.³⁶

The image shows a handwritten musical score for the beginning of the second movement, 'Idyll'. The score is written in 3/4 time and includes the following parts:

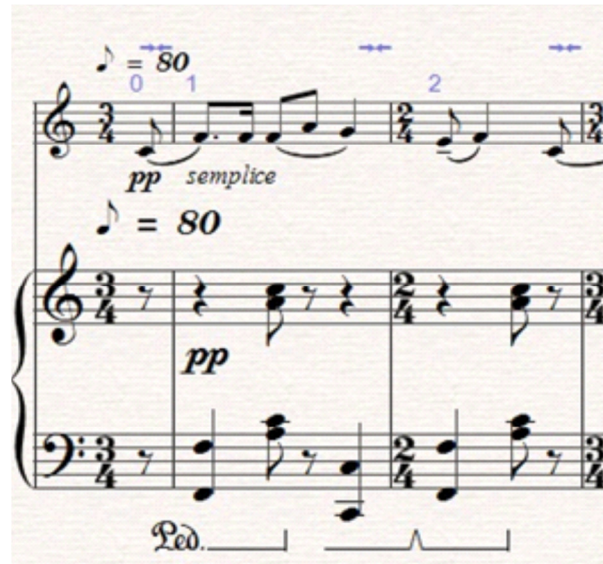
- Flutes:** The first staff shows a staccato marking (*pp*) over a series of notes.
- Solo Saxophone (Alto):** The second staff shows a staccato marking (*pp semplice*) over a series of notes.
- Violins:** The third and fourth staves show the first and second violins, with a staccato marking (*pp*) over a series of notes.
- Violas:** The fifth staff shows the violas, with a staccato marking (*pp*) and a pizzicato marking (*pizz*) over a series of notes.
- Cellos:** The sixth staff shows the cellos, with a staccato marking (*pp*) and a pizzicato marking (*pizz*) over a series of notes.
- Basses:** The seventh staff shows the basses, with a staccato marking (*pp*) over a series of notes.

Figure 4:10, Score Mvt 2 mm. 1-2

Although Brant stated in his interview with Getz that the staccatos should be very short, the staccato marked in the second movement requires some length. The viola and cello pizzicato will resonate longer than a violin pizzicato because of the length of the strings on the instruments. Also, the length of the flute staccato should not be too short. A

³⁶ Henry Brant, *Concerto for Alto Saxophone and Orchestra*, (New York: Carl Fischer Inc. 1978.)

flutist would not play the eighth note as staccato as possible since it would not fit the character of the movement. Finally, the way that the saxophone part is phrased in this movement encourages the downbeats of the 3/4 and 2/4 bars to be emphasized. Brant even marked the downbeat of the 2/4 bars in saxophone part with a tenuto. The third beats in the 3/4 bars also require some length in order to phrase the line towards the downbeat. This leaves the second beat of each of these bars with less emphasis. Brant showed that the second beat of these measures should be de-emphasized by writing an eighth note marked with staccato in the flute part rather than a quarter note. I decided to maintain the eighth note on the second beats of each bar in order to represent the flute part though I did not include the staccato. I included a pedal marking for the first two bars of the movement to indicate that the second beat should resonate without becoming too



thick in texture.

Figure 4.11: Reduction, Mvt.2 mm.1-2

Another reason to better replicate the sustaining qualities of an orchestra is that, without the pedal, the sound quality of the piano would be too austere. In this section, an

orchestra would create a sustained sound with forward momentum by using vibrato and crescendo. If a pianist did not include pedal, each beat in the measure would be separated from the previous note. Adding pedal not only adds a warmer, orchestral quality, but the pianist is also able to keep the momentum of a musical phrase moving.

There is a tendency for saxophonists to drag this section or use too much rubato. In a letter to Rascher from February 26th, 1950, Brant wrote that this movement should not “sound too rubato or sentimental”.³⁷ After over 10 years of Rascher’s performing of this piece, Brant gave in to his interpretation and use of rubato and told him to not change the way he is playing the piece.³⁸ Brant also noted in the score that this section should be “*semplice*” and recommended that there should be little vibrato in this opening section until measure 10 when the tessitura changes.³⁹ When this change occurs, Brant includes other woodwinds and eventually the string bass.

When the return of the original material comes in measure 16, a legato violin line enters which acts as a subtle counter melody to the saxophone part. At this point, Brant notated that the violin line should be played pianissimo, muted, and also *molto dolce*. Though the score looks thick with octaves in the string parts, these bars are marked “*divisi*” in each part.⁴⁰ This will result in a quieter dynamic as not all of the parts are playing in unison.

37 Henry Brant to Sigurd Rascher, February 26, 1950, Rascher Archives, Fredonia, NY.

38 Henry Brant to Sigurd Rascher, November 7 1953, Rascher Archives, Fredonia, NY.

39 Getz, 147

40 Henry Brant, *Concerto for Alto Saxophone and Orchestra*, (New York: Carl Fischer Inc. 1978.)

The image shows a page of a musical score for measures 16-18 of the second movement. The score is arranged in six staves. At the top, there are four time signature changes: 2/4, 3/4, 2/4, and 3/4. The first staff is labeled 'M. 16'. The second staff is for the Saxophone (Sax), starting with a piano (p) dynamic. The third and fourth staves are for Violin 1 (Vin 1) and Violin 2 (Vin 2), both marked 'muted' and 'pp' (pianissimo), with the instruction 'molto dolce' (very sweet). The fifth staff is for the Viola, and the sixth staff is for the Cello and Bass, both marked 'pp'. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings.

Figure 4.12: Score, Mvt. 2 mm. 16–18

I decided to use all of the upper string parts in the right hand in this section for two reasons. First, a legato phrase is not difficult to achieve in this section because of the slow tempo. Second, the octave adds richness to the sound. The bottom octave acts as a support for the upper octave in the same way that a singer or instrumentalist needs to be supported especially when they are in the higher range of their voice or instrument.

It is necessary to be aware of what is easiest to read, both in regard to enharmonic spellings, as I mentioned earlier in this paper, and in terms of clef. Starting in measure 29, the positioning of the chords in the left hand are better suited to the treble clef than the bass clef. The clef change is for a brief three bars, but, I found that it was logical to make this addition so that this would be easier for a pianist to read.



Figure 4.13: Reduction, Mvt.2 mm. 29–32

It is important to make a reduction as clear as possible because, in many cases, a collaborative pianist is working on numerous pieces in a very short period of time. Highlighting important solo lines and making them clearer by changing the direction of the stems shows a pianist exactly what line they need to bring out the most. In measure 42, it is marked that there is a “cello solo” which applies to the notes with the stems facing downward. The layering in one hand occurs at various times throughout the reduction and is meant to point out the different voices in the orchestra.



Figure 4.14: Reduction, Mvt.2 mm. 42–45

The next section at measure 63 also demonstrates the clarity which comes with using different stem directions. This section contains three different layers. First, the melody is found in the same octave in the clarinet and oboe parts. Second, there are two separate accompaniment figures which create a unifying accompaniment when put together. The muted trumpets initiate the accompaniment on the second sixteenth note of the bar and the lower strings with piano, bass clarinet and flute come in on the second eighth note of the bar. Together, they create consistent sixteenth notes throughout the bar which makes each part important to have in the reduction. Finally, the third layer is created by the low strings. The melody, trumpets, and low strings were used in the reduction. The trumpet and low string parts are generally played with the left hand throughout this section.⁴¹

41 Henry Brant, *Concerto for Alto Saxophone and Orchestra*, (New York: Carl Fischer Inc. 1978.)

M. 62

Oboe 1. *mf* *espi.*

Clarinet 1. *mf* *espi.*

Bass Clarinet *pp*

Bassoon *pp*

Trumpet

Trombone

Perucssion

Piano

10

Violin 1

Violin 2

Viola

Cello

Bass

M. 63

Fl. *mf*

Ob. 1. *mf*

Cl. 1. *mf*

Bs. Cl. *mf*

Bn.

Trump. *(muted)* *p*

Tromb. *(muted)* *p*

perc.

Pno. *sva* *sva*
ms
Pedal Pedal

Sax. *in* 4

Vi. I (+)

Vi. II

Vi. III

Celli *Tutti* *pizz* *p*

Basses *pizz*
Both players *p*

Figure 4.15: Score, Mvt. 2 mm. 62–63

Figure 4.16: Reduction, Mvt. 2 mm.62–63

The end of this movement, unlike the first movement, is relatively sparse and works well in transitioning to the piano. The woodwinds and strings trade bars to the last beat of the movement. It is difficult to replicate what these last bars sound like since the woodwinds and strings produce such different colors. Fortunately, Brant composes lower in the string part and much higher in the winds. The different octaves allow the listener to hear the differences between the parts even when they are represented on a single piano.

Section 3.4

Third movement, *Caprice*

In the beginning of the third movement, the sound produced by the two wedges to represent the woodblock is used again along with octaves in the left hand. I marked a staccato on each of these notes to correspond with the pizzicato markings in the string part. Also, the trumpets have a very precise and pointed staccato when they begin to play

in measure 4 which is another reason to use clear staccato markings in this section.

In measures 8 and 9, the piccolo has a short line of eighth notes. In the other movements, I have taken the piccolo part down an octave so that it fits better in the hands and requires fewer large leaps. I used the original piccolo tessitura in this section so that the overall contour of the line between all the instruments would be maintained through measure 12.

The image displays a musical score for a reduction of a movement. At the top, a single staff represents the piccolo part, starting with a '+' sign above it. The first measure contains a quarter rest, followed by a measure labeled 'M. 8' with a whole rest. The final measure of this section shows a quarter note with a '+' sign above it and a dynamic marking 'p' below it. Below this, a system of three staves represents the piano part. The top staff of this system has a dashed line labeled '8va' above it, indicating an octave shift for the piccolo part in measures 8 and 9. The piano part begins with a dynamic marking 'f' and continues with various rhythmic patterns and articulations. A dynamic marking 'p < f' is placed between the second and third staves of the piano part. The score concludes with a treble clef and a final note.

Figure 4.17: Reduction Mvt.3 mm. 7-12

The next section with new material begins in measure 43. In this section, there are four triangle hits and two tambourine hits between measures 44 and 58. Like the woodblock, these hits are audible though I decided not to replicate them in the reduction. I did this because of the high range on the piano in which I would represent these two percussion instruments. During these bars, much of the upper woodwinds as well as the xylophone are high in their register. If I were to use the triangle and tambourine in the

reduction, I would use a similar register as the winds to represent these two other instruments. The triangle and tambourine parts would sound as if they were part of the melodic line created by the woodwinds and xylophone, and the audience would not be able to decipher between the parts.

Fortunately, because the orchestration is so sparse in this movement, it reduces very well for the piano. Henry Brant was a pianist as well as conductor and composer and in some of these sections, the orchestration looks similar to what a pianist would be playing in many different types of accompaniments. The section between measures 113 and 117 uses a downbeat in the low strings with rotating chords in the right hand.⁴²

M.113

The image shows a page of a musical score for measures 113-117. The score is for six instruments: Saxophone (Sax.), Violin 1 (Vln 1), Violin 2 (Vln 2), Viola, Cello, and Bass. The Saxophone part is in the top staff, starting with a *pp* dynamic and a *rit.* marking. The Violin 1 and Violin 2 parts are in the second and third staves, respectively, with *pp* dynamics. The Viola part is in the fourth staff, with *pizz* and *p* markings. The Cello and Bass parts are in the fifth and sixth staves, with *pp* dynamics. The score shows a series of chords and melodic lines across five measures, with a *rit.* marking at the end of the section.

Figure 4.18: Score, Mvt.3 mm. 113–117

42 Henry Brant, *Concerto for Alto Saxophone and Orchestra*, (New York: Carl Fischer Inc. 1978.)

Later on in this movement, there are five bars that are not as easy to reduce for the piano. I had to use the same concepts that I used to reduce the ending of the first movement in order to reduce measures 155 to 160.

The ending of the first movement involved combining a few voices in order to represent the ascending line that is played by multiple instruments in the orchestra. I combined several voices in this section of the third movement in order to achieve the general sound created by the orchestra.

First, I used the *sfp* in the low strings, bassoon, and piano on beat one of measure 155.

The image displays a handwritten musical score for measures 155 to 158 of a third movement. The score is arranged in a standard orchestral format with multiple staves. The instruments and their parts are as follows:

- Flute:** Part 1 (M. 155) with dynamics *mf* and *cresc. poco a poco*.
- Oboe:** Part 1 with dynamics *mf* and *cresc. poco a poco*.
- Clarinet:** Part 1 with dynamics *mf* and *cresc. poco a poco*.
- Bassoon:** Part 1 with dynamics *mf* and *cresc. poco a poco*.
- Trumpet:** Part 1 with dynamics *mp* and *cresc. poco a poco*.
- Piano:** Part 1 with dynamics *sf*.
- Violin:** Part 1 with dynamics *mf* and *cresc. poco a poco*, marked *pizz*.
- Viola:** Part 1 with dynamics *sf* and *cresc. poco a poco*.
- Cello:** Part 1 with dynamics *sf* and *cresc. poco a poco*.
- Bass:** Part 1 with dynamics *sf* and *cresc. poco a poco*, marked *dobbe*.

The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings. The handwriting is in black ink on white paper.

Figure 4.19: Score, Mvt.3 mm. 155–158

In order to include some of the harmonies between the strings, trumpets, and woodwinds, I made it clear to the pianist that both the left and right hands are playing in the treble clef beginning on the second count of measures 155–158. I included an indication to use the sostenuto pedal during three of these bars so that the chord in the lower register would ring while the left hand shifted to the higher register. I also clarified which notes are played by each hand by changing the direction of the stems. The notes with the stems going upward are for the right hand while the stems of the notes pointing downward are for the left hand. I did this again in the next four measures, though the different directions of the stems in the bass clef are left to indicate the different voices of the orchestra the left hand is representing, the stems pointing down in the bass clef represent the sustained notes in the bassoon and low strings while the stems pointing upward represent the brass. I specifically used the trombone part instead of the first trumpet part (which plays the same line, though one octave higher) because the trumpet voice and the woodwind voices would have collided. I combined the flute, oboe, clarinet, and second trumpet in order to create the right hand part. All of these voices are equally present in the orchestra so it was necessary to find a way to include them all in the reduction.

Figure 4.20: Reduction, Mvt.3 mm. 155– 158

Another section requiring a more creative placement of stems can be found in measures 230 –233.

Figure 4.21: Reduction, Mvt.3 mm. 230– 233

I wanted to show the pianist that the left hand part is one complete accompanimental figure. I decided to use cross-staff beaming which allows for the use of both clefs. I used this technique again in measures 265 –266.



Figure 4.22: Reduction Mvt.3 mm. 265–266

The last few notes in the saxophone lead up to a concert B flat, two octaves above the staff. The ending is exciting, much of it at a *forte* dynamic level from measure 363 until the end. It was important for me to keep the fullness of the orchestra in these bars, so the majority of the octaves in the score were used in the reduction. I also used a note to represent a triangle in measure 375 and noted this representation in the reduction.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

The reduction for this Concerto was performed twice with saxophone Thomas Giles; once at the North American Saxophone Alliance National Conference in March 2012 and later that year at the 2012 World Saxophone Congress. The publication of the reduction is forthcoming with Carl Fischer. This is appropriate considering 2013 marks Brant's centennial.

In addition to Brant's Concerto, I currently have permission for and have begun working on six other saxophone concertos, with the prospect of creating several more in the next few years. The reduction for this piece is the beginning of a life-long process of writing reductions for numerous concertos in order to make these reductions more available to saxophonists. As this repertoire becomes available, more saxophonists will work to achieve what the repertoire demands, and that eventually; the overall level of playing for saxophonists will rise as a result. As they exist in their current form, these concertos are only available to rent with a full score or not available at all. In addition to technique books and etudes, repertoire is often used to push instrumentalists in all aspects of music.

In an interview with Henry Brant from the March/April 2000 issue of *The Saxophone Journal*, interviewer James Noyes asked Brant if the 1941 orchestral version of this would ever be revived. Brant's response was the following:

In recent years, I have received numerous communications from former students of Sigurd Rascher, all of whom prefer the 1941 form of the piece to the published revision and requesting permission to perform it. I have also noticed an encouraging development in greatly increased skill and aptitude of the part of the new generation of American conductors, in their ability to present American

music in a convincing, authoritative way as well as a new generation of Rascher-trained virtuoso saxophonists. I have accordingly decided, in the near future, to make the 1941 version of the Concerto once again available.⁴³

In this statement, Brant says that he would make this piece available; however, he maintains the idea that this piece should be performed by “virtuoso saxophonists.” All composers wish to have their pieces performed by those who can play their works with the best style, technique, tone, and artistry. Most composers, even those who are well-known, understand that some of their pieces are being studied by inexperienced performers who lack skill in some of these areas. The published version of the Concerto will undoubtedly be performed by saxophonists, orchestras, and now pianists in a manner that Brant would find unacceptable. All the same, this piece will also be performed by “virtuoso saxophonists”, orchestras with great conductors, and pianists who perform this piece with incredible musicianship and the ability to highlight this piece as a work that should become a staple in the saxophone repertoire.

43 Cohen, 20

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APPENDIX A

PERMISSION LETTER FROM CARL FISCHER

CARL FISCHER, LLC.

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April 8, 2013

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CONCERTO FOR ALTO SAXOPHONE AND ORCHESTRA – Henry Brant (Piano Reduction by Liz Ames)

Score:

Mvt 1: 31-34, 92-95, 128, 168-170, 199-203, 232-233, 237-239,

Mvt. 2: 1-2, 16-18, 62-63, 71, 72 90

Mvt 3: 76, 113-117, 155-158

Piano Reduction (by Liz Ames):

Mvt 1: 30-34, 53-61, 96-97, 108-109, 128-131, 237-239,

Mvt 2: 1-2, 29-32, 42-45, 62-63,

Mvt 3: 7-12, 76-78, 113-117, 155-158, 230-233, 265-266

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