

A Performance Guide and Recordings for
Four New Works Featuring Improvisation for
Soprano Saxophone and Various Instruments

by

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ABSTRACT

This project's goal is to expand the repertoire for soprano saxophone featuring improvisation. Each work detailed in this document features improvisation as an integral component. The first piece, *Impetus*, was written by Grant Jahn for soprano saxophone and piano. The second piece, *Sonata*, was written for the same instrumentation by Brett Wery. Ethan Cypress wrote the third work for solo soprano saxophone, *Noir et Bleu*. The final composition on the project, *Counterpunch* by Gregory Wanamaker, was written for saxophone sextet. This paper also includes composer biographies, program notes, performance guides, and composer questionnaires. The central component of this project is a recording of all these works which features the author.

To my wife, Amy, and to my parents, Dean and Arden. Thank you for your steadfast love and support through the busy days that led up to the completion of this project.

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Thanks again to Amy Detweiler for accompanying me on piano during the many hours of rehearsals, performances, and recording sessions. Thanks to all the members of Eos Sextet for the music we made and the memories we forged during the academic year of 2016-2017.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This project's goal is to expand the repertoire for soprano saxophone featuring improvisation. Each work detailed in this document features improvisation as an integral component. The first piece, *Impetus*, was written by Grant Jahn for soprano saxophone and piano. The second piece, *Sonata*, was written for the same instrumentation by Brett Wery. Ethan Cypress wrote the third work for solo soprano saxophone, *Noir et Bleu*. The final composition on the project, *Counterpunch* by Gregory Wanamaker, was written for saxophone sextet. This paper also includes composer biographies, program notes, performance guides, and composer questionnaires. The central component of this project is a recording of all these works which features the author.

Questionnaires were sent to the composers in December 2017 and March, 2018. Composers individually answered the same set of seventeen questions. Results were sent to the author via email. Two of the composers were additionally interviewed live via Apple FaceTime. The live interviews covered the questionnaires in greater detail.

CHAPTER 2

IMPETUS

Composer Biography

Grant Jahn's biography reads:

Grant Jahn (b. 1992) received his Bachelor of Music in Music Composition degree at Arizona State University and studied under the direction of Jody Rockmaker, Kotoka Suzuki, Rodney Rogers, and Doug Harbin. Notable performers of his work include the Arizona State University Wind Ensemble, the Arizona Repertory Singers, the Herberger String Quartet, clarinetists Caitlin Poupard and Celeste Case-Ruchala, the Arizona State University Clarinet Choir, ClariZona, and the Mosaic Saxophone Quartet, who premiered *Traffic* at the North American Saxophone Alliance Region 2 Conference in 2015. Jahn's work, *Impetus*, for soprano saxophone and piano was also selected to be performed at the North American Saxophone Alliance conference of 2016 by Samuel Detweiler.¹ In addition, Jahn's works have been the subject of several doctoral dissertations in disciplines ranging from clarinet performance to interactive electro-acoustic performance. One example is *petrichor* for the Moreau VanTuinen Duo—a work for euphonium, percussion, fixed and interactive electronics.²

Jahn's compositional output includes many works for clarinet as well as works for saxophone quartet, string quartet, various other chamber ensembles, SATB choir, live and fixed electronics, and film music. Jahn composed the score to the full-length feature film, *Lucky U Ranch* (2015) directed by Steve Anderson, which was chosen as an official selection at the Phoenix Film Festival in 2016. Jahn currently resides in New Jersey.³

¹ "Biography," Grant Jahn Composer, Accessed March 29, 2018, <https://www.grantjahnmusic.com/biography>.

² Danielle Duron-VanTuinen, "Euphonium and Live Interactive Electronics: A Performers Examination of Three New Works" (DMA diss., Arizona State University, 2017)

³ "Biography," Grant Jahn Composer.

List of Grant Jahn's Works Featuring Saxophone

Impetus (2016) for Soprano Saxophone and Piano

Traffic (2015) for Saxophone Quartet

Program Notes

Grant Jahn's program note for *Impetus* reads:

Impetus was commissioned by saxophonist Samuel A. Detweiler in 2016. There is a constant propulsive drive during the piece, and the momentum, although ever-changing in character, never diminishes. The work combines two distinct ideas: minimalistic rhythmic patterns and ostinatos, and improvisation. The piece was performed at the North American Saxophone Alliance's Region 2 Conference at New Mexico State University in 2017.⁴

⁴ "Impetus | soprano saxophone and piano (2016)," Grant Jahn Composer, accessed March 29, 2018, <https://www.grantjahnmusic.com/copy-of-in-motion-for-flute-and-pia>.

Performance Guide

Table 1 *Impetus* – Form

Section	Measures
A	mm. 1-100
B	mm. 101-158
C	mm. 159-252
A'	mm. 253-273
B'	mm. 274-282
Transition	mm. 283-285
Coda	mm. 286-300

Both A sections of *Impetus* are written in common time, while the B sections have mixtures of asymmetrical meters. The A section is in E minor, and the saxophone melodies are based primarily on the E Phrygian mode. The interaction of Phrygian material with the repeated E in the piano part build harmonic tension throughout this section. The B section continues to build tension as the saxophonist is instructed to improvise using the chord C major 7#5#11, a chord featuring both whole-tone and diminished elements. The C section modulates to D major and resolves much of the musical tension heard in the A and B sections. A' and B' reintroduce some tension from the beginning, but the coda turns the piece toward an energetic and resolute ending.

The beginning of the work requires the saxophonist to play short phrases that rise and fall in intensity. It is important for the saxophonist to listen to the piano part and enter quietly enough to blend with the piano's sound. These rising and falling gestures create a woven texture that should slowly build through the first one hundred measures of the work.

In the beginning of *Impetus*, the pianist plays repeated eighth notes. These eighth notes may be difficult to hear if the saxophonist plays too loudly. In that case, the duo might rhythmically drift apart. Instead, the saxophonist must listen intently to hear and count the meter as the piano plays. Both performers must listen to each other to stay together, but it is especially important for the saxophonist to hear the piano part, since the pianist consistently provides the metronomic pulse.

At times, the pianist plays *forte* chords in the bass, such as in m. 42. It is helpful for the saxophonist to know where these occur and to write them in the part. The saxophone part includes many full bars of rests. The saxophonist should study the piano part in these measures of rest to learn cues for subsequent entrances.

In the A sections, Jahn writes pairs of sixteenth notes that are both articulated—the first sixteenth note is marked with an accent and staccato articulation as well as a sforzando dynamic (see example 1). The saxophonist should drop immediately to pianissimo, then crescendo. This motive is prevalent throughout the piece. It is also important to play the sixteenth notes very accurately in order to align with the piano's repeated eighth notes.

Example 1: *Impetus*, sixteenth-note figure in section A, mm. 40-43. Reproduced with permission of the copyright holder.

The image displays a musical score for three measures. The top staff features a melodic line with dynamics *pp*, *sfz pp*, and *sfz pp*. The middle staff shows a piano accompaniment with repeated eighth notes. The bottom staff includes a bass line with a forte chord marked *sfz*.

In mm. 60, 63, and 65, Jahn writes a trill from C-sharp6 to D6 (see example 2). Trilling quickly and evenly between these notes can be difficult using the normal left hand technique. Consider using the right-hand thumb to trill on the foot of the palm D key (the part of the key closest to the cork). In the case of the trill from C-sharp5 to D5, as seen in m. 137, consider using a palm key instead of the full D fingering, especially considering the soft dynamic.

Example 2: *Impetus*, trill, mm. 62-66. Reproduced with permission of the copyright holder.



Jahn writes flutter-tongue at mm. 100 and 282. Flutter tongue is the quick bouncing of the tongue tip on the roof of the mouth in order to create a trilling effect. A flutter tongue rapidly interrupts the air stream and the reed vibrations. Instead of using traditional flutter-tongue technique, the author employed a uvular flutter technique. Uvular flutter tongue is the beating of the uvula on the posterior surface of the tongue. Commonly, this sound can be observed in the form of snoring. Whereas snoring is a sound resulting from inhaling during sleep, uvular fluttering in music is usually accomplished during expiration. The author chose uvular flutter tongue instead of the traditional flutter because he has had more success with the former method.

In Jahn's questionnaire, he stressed the importance of relating the improvising portions to motives from the piece, stating "The improvisation in *Impetus* is meant to be a performer's exploration and expansion of material already presented. In this regard, the performer acts as a sort of co-composer to fully flesh out the musical material."⁵ Even

⁵ Grant Jahn, Questionnaire by Samuel Detweiler, Response received December 14, 2017.

if the composer does not make such expectations known, performers should always improvise in a way that makes musical sense, and in a way that is musically relevant to the given work.

The first improvisatory passage occurs in the B section, in three subsections, each increasing progressively in length. It is important for the performers to build the energy and tension through each of these subsections. The soloist should consider using more accented attacks, shorter phrases, more quick fluctuation of the dynamics, and more rhythmic diversity as the B section improvisations develop.

The second of the improvisation sections is scattered throughout mm. 198-235. The goal of this section contrasts with the previous improvisation. The chords Jahn wrote here are very tonal and the meter returns to simple four-four. Jahn also introduces the C motive, which the saxophonist may also feature in the improvisation (see example 3). The performer should also consider playing permutations of other thematic material from the piece here. Retrogrades or inversions of written rhythms are relatively simple ways to vary improvisation.

Example 3: *Impetus*, motive C, mm. 185-187. Reproduced with permission of the copyright holder.



At the beginning of the C section in the second half of m. 160, the piano plays only alternating D4 and A4 eighth notes until m. 164. The saxophonist may experience disorientation due to the sudden change in the piano part from the aggressive chords of the B section in asymmetrical meter to a repetitive eighth-note motive in duple meter. The saxophonist should note where the pianist's eighth-note pattern changes in order to enter with precision at m. 166. Some other spots the saxophonist should note are mm. 57, 59, 62, 67, 179, and 184. In these measures, Jahn writes syncopated rhythms in the piano part. The saxophonist would benefit from writing cues of these rhythms into the part.

CHAPTER 3

SONATA

Composer Biography

Brett Wery's biography reads:

Brett Wery (b. 1963) is an active composer/arranger in the Capital Region area of upstate New York. He is a professor at Schenectady County Community College (SCCC), where he teaches theory, conducting, and applied woodwind studies. Wery conducts the SCCC Wind Ensemble and is the Music Director/Conductor of the Capital Region Wind Ensemble. Professor Wery has been the recipient of the SUNY Chancellor's Award for Excellence in Teaching, the SUNY Chancellor's Award for Excellence in Scholarship and Creative Activities, as well as the SCCC Foundation Award for Excellence in Teaching.

As a clarinetist and saxophonist, Wery performs and records with the Empire Jazz Orchestra, Albany Symphony, and the Dogs of Desire. He and pianist, Mark Evans, present regular chamber music concerts as part of the SCCC Chamber Music Series. A member of both The American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers, and Society of Composers, Inc., Mr. Wery's recently premiered works include Sonata for Guitar Quartet, String Quartet No. 1, *Oot-kwa-tah* for chamber orchestra and *The Song of Cyrus Kleiner, the Nanotechnologist* for baritone and string quartet. In 2015, Metropolitan Opera Orchestra trumpeter Peter Bond performed Wery's *Three Conversations with Coffee* on the International Trumpet Guild New Works Recital in Valley Forge, Pennsylvania.

Wery received a Bachelor of Music in Clarinet Performance at the University of North Carolina School of the Arts and a Master of Arts in Instrumental Conducting and Saxophone Performance at the University of Denver.⁶

⁶ Brett L. Wery, email message to author, January 28, 2018.

List of Brett Wery's Works Featuring Saxophone

Sonata (2017) for Soprano Saxophone

Making the Darkness Conscious (2017) for Tenor Saxophone and Wind Ensemble

Sonata (2016) for Multiple Woodwinds and Piano

Dance Suite for Saxophones (2013) for Saxophone Quartet

The Passage of Orpheus (2009) for Saxophone Quartet

Program Notes by Brett Wery

Brett Wery's program notes for *Sonata* read:

I am proud to call Samuel Detweiler a friend and former student. Sam is a superb musician and accomplished saxophonist, equally at home in both jazz and classical idioms. Naturally, I was thrilled when Sam told me of his plans to commission a work that incorporated improvisation in what would otherwise be a neo-classical sonata form. The result is a piece that is technically demanding for most classical saxophonists but also requires a reasonable amount of proficiency in improvisation. Much of classical music is driven by development (the statement, fragmentation, exploitation, evolution, and eventual transformation of musical ideas). In this sonata, much of the development is left to the performer. The first movement is in sonata allegro form with the development being largely improvised. The second movement leaves one entire statement of the form open for improvisation much like any jazz standard. The third movement is a sonata rondo, again, leaving the development section open for improvisation.

The harmonic language of the work is based on pitch class set theory and is not strictly tonal or triadic yet much of it can be expressed in these terms. For this reason, the soloist cannot entirely rely on chord symbols but symbols have been included where applicable. Often the intervals between the pitches are as important or more important than the actual pitches. Faced with the symbol in the first example below, the soloist could certainly focus on the B-flat, D, and A but equally important are the intervals, major third, perfect fifth, and major seventh along with the inversions of these intervals.

There are three different ways in which the soloist's harmonic choices are guided:

1. Boxed sets of pitches with arrows that indicate the duration of a given harmony. These sets are accompanied by traditional chord symbols.

D⁵/B^b D^bmaj7(#11)

2. Traditional chord symbols. Keep in mind, these symbols are approximations of pitch class sets.

E(add2) C⁹

3. Governing scales. These scales prevail until the next scale is indicated.



The soloist is encouraged to experiment and be inventive. As with any improvisation, the soloist should not feel limited by these guides and, as Duke Ellington said, “if it sounds good it IS good.”⁷

⁷ Brett L. Wery, *Sonata*, (Sonata Grendel Publishing, 2017).

Performance Guide

Movement I: Allegro ma non troppo

Table 2 *Sonata* Movement One – Form

Section	Measures
A: a	mm. 1-21
A: b	mm. 22-31
A: a	mm. 32-47
Transition	mm. 45-47
B	mm. 48-75
Codetta	mm. 76-82
Development	mm. 83-112
Retransition	mm. 113-130
Recapitulation of A: a	mm. 131-144
Recapitulation of A: b	mm. 145-154
Recapitulation of A: a	mm. 155-166
Transition	mm. 167-169
Recapitulation of B	mm. 170-198
Coda	mm. 199-218

The A theme in the first movement of Wery's *Sonata* changes meters frequently and centers on A-flat. Performers should bring out each slurred group and exaggerate the accents. If the saxophonist's accents in the middle of mm. 7 and 8 (example 4) are played correctly, they will help to shape the musical phrase. All staccato articulations should be played very crisply.

create long musical lines by playing legato. The elegance of this section should contrast with the rhythmic and boisterous A section.

After a mostly improvised development section, mm. 106-112 have written material that leads into the retransition section. The job of a retransition section is to bring the development to dominant harmony, which eventually resolves to the tonic at the recapitulation. Here, the piano plays an E-flat pedal throughout the entire retransition. This draws listening ears to the expectation of the resolution to come in the recapitulation. The first notes the duo plays in the recapitulation are A-flat in the piano's bass and in the saxophone part, a descending fifth away from the E-flat of the retransition.

Wery also relates the retransition to the recapitulated B section metrically. The exposition's B section is mostly comprised of 7/8 time signature, but the recapitulated B section changes what was 7/8 time into a steadier 3/4 time. The retransition is also in 3/4 meter, relating the retransition to both A and B sections of the recapitulation differently.

I used two methods for crafting my improvisations while preparing this work. First, I invented and practiced a relevant vocabulary based on the chords and scales Wery provided in the part, and then recorded and revised musical sketches of improvisations until I arrived at something that sounded good to me.

For the first movement, I initially struggled to get comfortable improvising in the designated sections. Since many of the chords in *Sonata* are not part of functional harmonic progressions, it takes practice to build up a musical vocabulary to successfully improvise using the chords written.

For all three movements, I practiced improvising in order to brainstorm musical motives. For movements one and three, I recorded motives that worked well for the

improvisation sections, then I notated full sections of what I would play using music notation software. I went through several drafts of improvisational sketches for both of the movements before settling on a final version that sounded cohesive.

Movement II: Adagio sognando – “Bluesy” andantino

Table 3 *Sonata* Movement Two – Form

Section	Measures
Introduction	mm. 1-6
First statement (aba): Exposition	mm. 7-48
Second statement (aba): Improvisation	mm. 49-90
Third Statement (aba): Climax	mm. 91-134
Codetta	mm. 135-137

After a brief introduction by the piano, the first statement of the theme begins in the pickups to m. 7. Each large-form thematic statement is in ternary form (aba). The three small-form segments are each fourteen measures in length. The fourteen-measure length of the segments is consistent until the third large-form climactic statement, where Wery adds a measure to both the final “b” and “a” sections of the small-form.

Wery wrote movement two in the style of a jazz ballad. The first statement of the melody is a basic statement, the second statement is entirely improvised by the saxophonist, and the third is an embellished and climactic version of the material in the first.

This movement features many grace notes in the melody. The performer should play these grace notes quickly, but clearly. Each note is important since it is a member of the pitch class set Wery used to construct the melody.

Improvising in asymmetrical meters is a matter of practice. Most of the movement is constructed using 5/8 meter. It can be overwhelming to try to remember how to count through a page of varying asymmetrical meter. One tactic I commonly use is to figure out the compound groupings of the various meters, and then to write them in

the music. Instead of counting to five for every $5/8$ measure, I count them in two larger, asymmetrical beats; in this case, the quarter note and the dotted quarter note. I expand this to other asymmetrical meters as well, such as $7/8$.

Movement two's ballad structure combined with its consonant harmonic progressions facilitate real-time improvisation. I did not feel it was necessary to notate improvisations for this movement. Instead, I constructed a musical vocabulary for improvisation by practicing the chords. I performed it while aiming to play the best of the vocabulary I had practiced.

Movement III: Danza ritmica

Table 4 *Sonata* Movement Three – Form

Section	Measures
A (aba)	mm. 1-40
B (aba)	mm. 41-65
Retransition	mm. 66-70
A (aba)	mm. 71-110
Development	mm. 111-141
Retransition	mm. 142-152
A (aba)	mm. 153-184
B (aba)	mm. 185-204
Retransition	mm. 205-209
A (aba)	mm. 210-227
Cadenza	m. 228
Codetta	mm. 229-232

Movement three is in sonata rondo form. Where traditional, seven-part rondo form often takes the form: ABACABA, sonata rondo replaces the C section with a development.

Danza ritmica is influenced by Balkan folk music, seen in its repetition of thematic motives associated with the form.⁸ Another way that the movement shows Balkan folk style is in its asymmetrical meters, which are common in the style.

The saxophonist should emphasize the accents, especially since there is only one accent written per seven measure iteration of the A theme (example 6). This is another

⁸ Brett L. Wery, Questionnaire by Samuel Detweiler. Response received December 17, 2017.

movement in which the ensemble must work to communicate the written slurred groupings so that the meter is clearly enunciated.

Example 6: *Sonata*, mvmt. III, A theme, mm. 1-7. Reproduced with permission of the copyright holder.



In the development section, the saxophonist alternates between improvising over the A, then B sections' pitch class sets. Meanwhile, the piano part plays both A and B themes simultaneously. In mm. 111-115, Wery wrote the B theme in the right hand, and the A theme in the left hand (see example 7). The written accents are helpful clues to the respective meters of each section. It is interesting to note that, even though both the A and B themes look completely different, single statements of each theme occupy forty-eight sixteenth notes.⁹ This allows one of them to be superimposed over the other without any rhythmic excess.

Example 7: *Sonata*, mvmt. III, simultaneous A and B themes in development, mm. 111-115. Reproduced with permission of the copyright holder.



⁹ Brett L. Wery, Discussion with author via Apple FaceTime, December 21, 2017.

The final A section requires the saxophonist to play quick scales (mm. 210-215 example 8). Measures 213 and 214 include two full statements of the synthetic scales from the B and A themes respectively; these account for the technical difficulty in this passage.

Example 8: *Sonata*, mvmt. III, quick scales, mm. 210-217. Reproduced with permission of the copyright holder.

The image displays a musical score for two staves. The top staff begins with a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a 7/16 time signature. It features a dynamic marking of *ff* and a trill marked with a box and the letter 'R'. The music consists of rapid sixteenth-note passages. The bottom staff continues the piece, also in 7/16 time, with a trill and a sequence of notes marked with '7' below them. The score includes various rhythmic values and melodic lines characteristic of a technical saxophone exercise.

An improvised cadenza precedes the final four measures of the last movement. Wery intended that this cadenza would summarize the motives coming before it. Most saxophone concerti have notated cadenzas that have become part of the canon of the given work's performance. This piece returns to an older tradition in which the soloist improvises a cadenza. Performers should showcase their own unique strengths in order to end the work with impressive virtuosity.

The juxtaposition of Brett Wery's notated parts with the performer's improvised sections distinguishes this piece from many others in the saxophone repertory. Different players' improvisational conceptions should create distinctly personal versions of his *Sonata*.

CHAPTER 4

NOIR ET BLEU

Composer Biography

Ethan Cypress's biography reads:

Ethan Cypress (b. 1993) is a native of Oneonta, New York. While growing up, he played violin and viola in numerous string chamber groups and orchestras before finding a more comfortable niche as a trombonist. He graduated from SUNY Potsdam in 2015 with a degree in classical trombone performance. In 2017, he began his Master's degree in Jazz Studies at the University of Rochester.

While music composition has never been his primary focus, Ethan has been recognized a finalist for the American Prize in Composition—Concert Band Division, the Herb Alpert Young Jazz Composer Awards, and the Morton Gould Young Composer Awards. Cypress also received an honorable mention for the American Prize in Composition—Chamber Music Division.

Cypress also freelances as a music copyist and recording engineer and is currently an on-call copyist for the Glimmerglass Opera Festival in Cooperstown, New York. Before returning to school in the fall of 2017, he held adjunct professor of music technology and academic intern positions at Hartwick College in Oneonta, New York.¹⁰

¹⁰ Ethan Cypress, email message to author, January 21, 2018.

List of Ethan Cypress's Works Featuring Saxophone

Velox Nocturnus (2018) for Saxophone Trio

Bláthanna Taibhse (2018) for Soprano Saxophone & Electric Guitar

Noir et Bleu No. 2 (2017/2018) for Solo Soprano Saxophone

Fickle Tone Zones (2017) for Saxophone Sextet

Noir et Bleu No. 1 (2016) for Solo Soprano Saxophone

Toy Suite (2012, revised 2014) for Saxophone Quartet

Goodnight Spaz (2012) for Solo Alto Saxophone

Program Note by Ethan Cypress

Ethan Cypress's program note for *Noir et Bleu* reads:

Noir et Bleu translates to Black & Blue. This piece is a commentary on my struggle with focal dystonia and how it continues to affect my work as a trombonist.¹¹

¹¹ Ethan Cypress, email message to author, March 24, 2018.

Performance Guide

Table 5 Cypress, *Noir et Bleu* – Form

Section	Measures
A	mm. 1-21
Transition	mm. 22-30
B	mm. 31-90
A'	mm. 91-101
Coda	mm. 102-111

Noir et Bleu is in ABA form with a coda. Cypress based this piece on film noir styled music, blues, and fiddle tradition.¹² The A theme is built around a slow lyrical theme, while the B section is a twelve-bar blues form. Cypress writes two choruses of material—twenty-four measures—both before and after the blues improvisation section, which is also divided into twelve-measure segments. This piece is not to be played in a swung style, but with straight eighth notes. In that respect, it should be played as written.

Descending octaves and large leaps in the melodies are prevalent throughout the work, as seen in example 9. These leaps can be difficult to play cleanly and smoothly. Both A and B sections incorporate these leaps, so the performer must prepare to play smooth and connected octave intervals at slow and quick tempos.

Example 9: *Noir et Bleu*, leaps, mm. 1-3. Reproduced with permission of the copyright holder.



¹² Ethan Cypress, Discussion with author via Apple FaceTime, December 21, 2017.

Cypress writes many potentially confusing derivative meters. The goal of derivative meter is to suggest a different meter than what is anticipated. In mm. 47-50 (see example 10), he writes triplet eighth notes that leap by sevenths or ninths on every other note. Cypress aimed to accent the higher target notes as strong beats, even though they are played on the beat only one third of the time.¹³ The six triplet eighths are written to sound like three quarter-note-triplet beats, but they actually occur over two dotted quarter-note beats, resulting in a hemiola.

Example 10: *Noir et Bleu*, triplets, mm. 47-50. Reproduced with permission of the copyright holder.

The image shows two staves of musical notation. The first staff contains three measures of music. The first measure starts with a half rest followed by a triplet of eighth notes. The second measure contains a triplet of eighth notes. The third measure contains a triplet of eighth notes. Dynamic markings are placed below the notes: *mf* under the first measure, *p* under the first note of the second measure, *f* under the second note of the second measure, *p* under the first note of the third measure, and *f* under the second note of the third measure. The second staff contains a single measure with a triplet of eighth notes, marked with *f* below it.

Another strong example of derivative meter is in mm. 67-69 (see example 11). The first four slurred groupings create groups of three instead of two or four. Instead of counting these measures in a common time, they could be counted in a compound five, with the first four beats subdivided into three sixteenth notes, and the fifth beat subdivided into four sixteenth notes.

¹³ Ethan Cypress, Discussion.

Example 11: *Noir et Bleu*, sixteenth-note derivative meter, mm. 67-69. Reproduced with permission of the copyright holder.



In mm. 79-86, Cypress writes continuous streams of sixteenth notes. The music alternates between articulating and slurring two-note pairs. The derivative meter occurs when the performer must slur starting on the second or fourth sixteenth note of a group of four (example 12).

Example 12: *Noir et Bleu*, sixteenth-note derivative meter, mm. 80-82. Reproduced with permission of the copyright holder.



Beginning in m. 31 and ending in m. 87, Cypress writes an optional foot tap on beats two and four (see example 13). He suggests that the performer should tape a coin to their shoe, and tap it on the foot of the music stand to get a metallic sound in the tap. Performers should practice the music along with the foot tap early on in order to gain optimal coordination of saxophone technique and foot tap.

Example 13: *Noir et Bleu*, foot tap instructions, mm. 31-32. Reproduced with permission of the copyright holder.

The image shows two staves of music. The top staff is a treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a common time signature. It contains a melodic line with dynamics *mf*, *p*, *mf*, and *pp*. The bottom staff is a bass clef with a common time signature, showing a foot tap line with 'x' marks indicating the tap points.

Optional foot tap on metallic surface. I suggest taping a coin onto the tip of your shoe and tapping it against the leg of your stand. Continue through measure 86.

The coda of *Noir et Bleu* is a repeated four-measure section composed entirely of eighth-note triplets. In the score, Cypress instructs the performer that the coda should begin with only air and key noise.¹⁴ After emerging out of the key noise, the saxophone tone should gradually crescendo to *mezzo-forte*, and then diminuendo back down to pianissimo during the final three measures. Depending on how many times the performer chooses to repeat this section, circular breathing may be necessary to make it to the end of the work without breaking the sound.

Noir et Bleu has a couple of improvisation sections. The first improvisation section at mm. 16-21 is split into three two-measure segments, each featuring a different scale with which to improvise. The time spent on each two-measure segment also varies. The first two measure segment is to be played for seven to ten seconds, while the second should last from ten to fourteen seconds, and the final two measure segment should last fourteen to twenty seconds. Cypress also specifies the articulations that the performer should use during each segment. The first segment should be only staccato, the second should be only legato, and third should be a mix of staccato and legato playing.

¹⁴ Ethan Cypress, *Noir et Bleu No. 2*, 2017.

The second improvisation section, in mm. 55-66, is a twelve-measure blues form. To indicate the vocabulary he wants the performer to use, Cypress notates the relevant scale in the staff and the equivalent chord above the staff. In a note above the section, Cypress instructs the performer to start the section using “mainly half notes and quarter notes. Soft dynamics and legato articulations.”¹⁵ As the improvisation develops, he encourages the performer to play more active rhythms and more diverse articulations. These instructions are defined enough to give direction to the improvisation solo without placing too many limitations on the performer.

The instruction to begin the improvisation with half notes and gradually work toward playing faster rhythms is very helpful regarding the development of the improvisation. The objective of this instruction is to bring the solo from a point of low musical energy to a point of high energy. It can be difficult to limit rhythm to the half notes at first, especially just coming from the previous section of high-energy rhythms, but doing so will help give the solo an optimal shape. The author found it helpful to think of the solo in terms of its repetitions. Play long rhythms through the first twelve measures, and then play more quarter notes and limited amounts of eighth notes in the first repetition. On the third and final time through the section, play mostly eighth notes.

¹⁵ Ethan Cypress, *Noir et Bleu No. 2*.

CHAPTER 5

COUNTERPUNCH

Composer Biography

Gregory Wanamaker's biography reads:

Combining athletic virtuosity and lyrical expressionism, Gregory Wanamaker's music has been called "pure gold, shot through with tenderness and grace" (*San Francisco Chronicle*), "achingly beautiful" (*Palm Beach Daily News*), "compelling" (*Audiophile Audition*), "outstanding" (*American Record Guide*), and "a technical tour de force" (*Fanfare*).

Gregory's earliest musical training began at age 6 in professional summer stock theater companies, and continued through both schooled and self-guided explorations through the American folk music of the 1960s, bebop and free jazz, and Western classical music of the late 20th century. He continues his study of sounds to those from around the world, to draw from a variety of musics to inform his continually evolving voice.

His music has been commissioned and performed all over the world by soloists and ensembles including PRISM Quartet, Akropolis Reed Quintet, Trujillo Symphony Orchestra, Capitol Quartet, Timothy McAllister, Robert Spring, Christopher Creviston, Oren Fader, Masato Kumoi Saxophone Quartet, The MAVerick Ensemble, Velocity2, The Donald Sinta Quartet, The Gregg Smith Singers, janus trio, Deborah Bish, The Three Reeds Duo, Lynn McGrath, and The Society for New Music.

Fluent in all musical media, Wanamaker's best-known works are his chamber works that exploit unique timbral characteristics and technical extensions of wind instruments. To date, his virtuosic *Duo Sonata* for clarinet and saxophone has received over 300 performances worldwide and is featured on five commercial recordings. His *Sonata deus sax machina* was one of the required pieces for finalists of the 2014 Adolphe Sax International Competition in Dinant, Belgium.

Gregory Wanamaker's multimedia collaboration with 2013 MacArthur Fellowship Award Winner Carrie Mae Weems, *A Story Within a Story*, was commissioned in 2011 by the Syracuse-based Society for New Music, and was supported in part by a National Endowment for the Arts 2011 Access to Artistic Excellence Grant. He also is the recipient of a 2012 Individual Artist Commission from The New York State Council on the Arts and 20 consecutive standard awards from ASCAP in addition to awards from the National Association of Composers/USA and Britten-On-The-Bay.

Gregory also collaborates with the British award-winning director and writer, Garth Bardsley, with whom he has composed several substantial works. Their *Adirondack Songs* for chorus and large wind ensemble is available on Mark Records. Their new work *Laude!* for choir and orchestra, was premiered in December 2016 at the Crane School of Music in Potsdam, New York for broadcast on PBS affiliate stations.

Wanamaker currently serves as Professor of Composition at the Crane School of Music at SUNY Potsdam where he has taught since 1997. He studied composition with William Averitt, Thomas Albert, Anthony Branker, and Ladislav Kubík.

Gregory Wanamaker has several recorded works on several labels including Innova, Albany, Centaur, Blue Griffin, Mark Custom, White Pine, and Summit. He publishes his own music, which is available exclusively through this website.¹⁶

¹⁶ "Biography," Gregory Wanamaker, accessed March 29, 2018, <http://www.gregorywanamaker.com/about/>

List of Gregory Wanamaker's Works Featuring Saxophone

Capriccio (2018) (version with clarinet) for Clarinet, Soprano Saxophone, and Piano

Still Life: Loïe Dances (2018) for Saxophone Ensemble

Slink (2018) for Alto Saxophone and Bass Trombone

Night Set (2017) for Soprano Saxophone and Piano

Taking Turns (2017) for Soprano Saxophone and Guitar

Meditation and Dance (2017) for Alto Saxophone and Harp

Counterpunch (2016) for Saxophone Sextet

Flight (2016) for Saxophone Ensemble

The Space Between Us (2016) for Oboe, Clarinet, Alto Saxophone, Bass Clarinet, and Bassoon

Elegy (2016) (version for reed quintet) for Oboe, Clarinet, Alto Saxophone, Bass Clarinet, and Bassoon

of Light and Shadows (2015) for Alto Saxophone and Piano

Ragahoro Breakdown (2015) for Clarinet and Alto Saxophone

...unsettled/unphased... (2014) for Tenor Saxophone, Double Bass, Piano, and Drum Set

Yes, with a BANG! (2014) for Saxophone Ensemble

des ondes et les temps (2012) for Tenor Saxophone

Still Moving (2012) for Flute and Alto Saxophone

Double Cadenza (2012) for Oboe and Tenor Saxophone

Tarantasia (2011) for Alto Saxophone and Piano

Capriccio (2009) for Soprano Saxophone, Alto Saxophone and Piano

Run (2009) for Saxophone Quartet

Elegy (2009) for Saxophone Quartet

Three Episodes (2008) for Soprano Saxophone and Electric Guitar

eagles wing aloft (2007) for Woodwind Quintet and Soprano Saxophone

iYo no tengo soledad! (2006) for Mezzo Soprano, Soprano Sax, and String Orchestra

Saxophone Quartet (2005)

4 Vocalises (2005) for Female Voice and Alto Saxophone

speed metal organum blues (2004) for Saxophone Quartet

still life is life still (2004) for Alto Saxophone and Orchestra

Duo Sonata (2002) for Clarinet and Alto Saxophone

Sonata deus sax machina (2000) for Alto Saxophone and Piano

Cyclic Movements (1995) for Alto Saxophone, Cello, Piano, and Percussion

Program Notes

Program note for *Counterpunch* by Gregory Wanamaker reads:

Counterpunch is a loud concert opener or closer. It is an answer to my 2004 piece for saxophone quartet, *speed metal organum blues*.¹⁷

¹⁷ Gregory Wanamaker, *Counterpunch*, (Gregory Wanamaker Music, 2016).

Performance Guide

Table 6 Wanamaker, *Counterpunch* – Form

Section	Measures
A	mm. 1-21
Transition	mm. 19-21
B	mm. 22-33
Transition	mm. 34-35
A'	mm. 36-48
Coda	mm. 49-55

Counterpunch is in ternary form. The sextet plays homorhythmically during the entirety of both the A and A' sections. As stated in the score, “The tempo should be strictly observed, although appropriate fluctuations within the tempo are encouraged.”¹⁸ Each member must work to play consistently, evenly, and with excellent connection between every note in order to create the texture of complete oneness across the sextet.

As in every piece, all markings on the page are vital to achieving the intended musical effects. Wanamaker writes many accents marks. Sometimes the accents have an accompanying *subito fortissimo* dynamic, in which case, they should be much louder than those notes written with only accents (see example 14).

Example 14: *Counterpunch*, accent marks, mm. 3-4. Reproduced with permission of the copyright holder.



¹⁸ Gregory Wanamaker, *Counterpunch*.

The B section of *Counterpunch* is in the form of a twelve-bar blues. The baritone saxophone plays an ostinato outlining blues chords. The alto and tenor saxophones play a rhythmically unified countermelody against the bassline. On top of this texture, the soprano saxophone plays a solo.

The countermelody of the middle voices presents rhythmic challenges as triplet eighth notes are juxtaposed with duple eighth notes. Each player must subdivide the triplet and duple rhythms accurately so that the group produces each rhythm accurately (see example 15). Groups performing *Counterpunch* should conduct sectionals on this section for the middle voices. The soprano solo is fully notated, but optionally the soprano saxophonist may improvise over this entire section using twelve-bar blues chords, as outlined in the baritone saxophone part.

Example 15: *Counterpunch*, middle voice countermelody, mm. 23-25. Reproduced with permission of the copyright holder.

The musical score for Example 15 shows the middle voice countermelody for measures 23-25 of *Counterpunch*. It is arranged for four saxophone parts: Alto Sax. 1, Alto Sax. 2, Ten. Sax. 1, and Ten. Sax. 2. The notation is in treble clef with a key signature of one flat. The music features a complex rhythmic pattern involving triplet eighth notes and duple eighth notes. Dynamics are indicated as *mp* (mezzo-piano), *mf* (mezzo-forte), and *f* (forte). The score is divided into two systems, with measure 23 in the first system and measures 24-25 in the second system. The Alto Sax. 1 part has a rest in measure 23 and enters in measure 24. The other parts enter in measure 23. The music concludes in measure 25 with a final *f* dynamic and an accent mark.

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Author Biography

Samuel Detweiler is presently a doctoral candidate at Arizona State University, where he also served as the teaching assistant for saxophone under Dr. Christopher Creviston. Detweiler plays alto and soprano saxophones in the saxophone trio, Lotus, which is a group dedicated to commissioning and creating new music of diverse genres. Performing with the Eos Sextet on soprano saxophone, Detweiler has won first place in both the 2017 MTNA Chamber Music Competition and the Enkor International Chamber Music Competition. Additionally, Eos placed as a bronze medalist in the 2017 Fischhoff National Chamber Music Competition and was a semi-finalist in the 2017 M Prize International Chamber Competition. He is a member of the JJ's Band and the Groove Merchants, and he has also performed with the Phoenix Symphony Orchestra. Detweiler is currently on faculty at South Mountain Community College and Kirk's Studio for the Performing Arts.

APPENDIX A

IRB EXEMPTION LETTER



EXEMPTION GRANTED

Joshua Gardner
Music, School of
-
Joshua.T.Gardner@asu.edu

Dear Joshua Gardner:

On 12/1/2017 the ASU IRB reviewed the following protocol:

Type of Review:	Initial Study
Title:	Recording/Commission Research Projects
Investigator:	Joshua Gardner
IRB ID:	STUDY00007379
Funding:	None
Grant Title:	None
Grant ID:	None
Documents Reviewed:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Commission-Recording_recruitment.pdf, Category: Recruitment Materials;• Commission-Recording Interview Questions.pdf, Category: Measures (Survey questions/Interview questions /interview guides/focus group questions);• IRB Protocol Commission-Recording Interview Unbrella.docx, Category: IRB Protocol;• Commission-Recording Consent_able adult.pdf, Category: Consent Form;

The IRB determined that the protocol is considered exempt pursuant to Federal Regulations 45CFR46 (2) Tests, surveys, interviews, or observation on 12/1/2017.

In conducting this protocol you are required to follow the requirements listed in the INVESTIGATOR MANUAL (HRP-103).

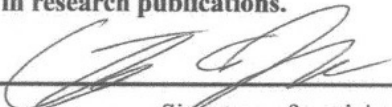

Sincerely,

APPENDIX B
LETTERS OF PERMISSION

This research has been reviewed and approved by the Social Behavioral IRB. You may talk to them at (480) 965-6788 or by email at research.integrity@asu.edu if:

- Your questions, concerns, or complaints are not being answered by the research team.
- You cannot reach the research team.
- You want to talk to someone besides the research team.
- You have questions about your rights as a research participant.
- You want to get information or provide input about this research.

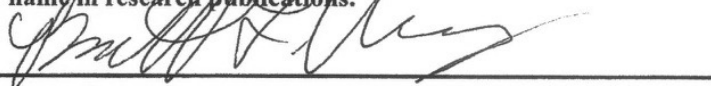
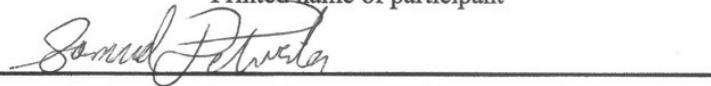
Your signature documents your permission to take part in this research and disclosure of your name in research publications.

 _____ Signature of participant	<u>12/14/17</u> _____ Date
Grant Jahn _____ Printed name of participant	
 _____ Signature of person obtaining consent	<u>01/21/2018</u> _____ Date
Samuel Detweiler _____ Printed name of person obtaining consent	<u>01/21/2018</u> _____ Date

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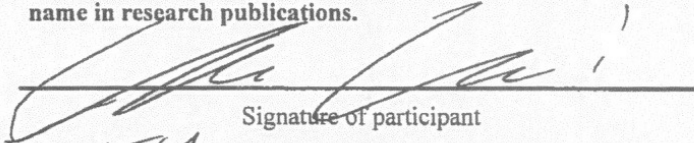
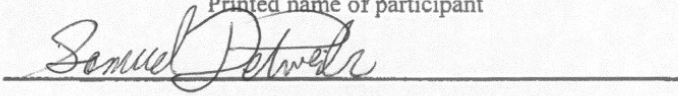
Your signature documents your permission to take part in this research and disclosure of your name in research publications.

 <hr/>	<u>12-20-17</u> <hr/>
Signature of participant	Date
<u>Brett L. Wery</u> <hr/>	
Printed name of participant	
 <hr/>	<u>01/21/2018</u> <hr/>
Signature of person obtaining consent	Date
<u>Samuel Detweiler</u> <hr/>	<u>01/21/2018</u> <hr/>
Printed name of person obtaining consent	

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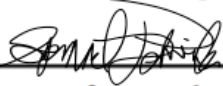
 _____ Signature of participant	<u>12/19/17</u> _____ Date
<u>Ethan Cypress</u> _____ Printed name of participant	
 _____ Signature of person obtaining consent	<u>01/21/2018</u> _____ Date
<u>Samuel Detweiler</u> _____ Printed name of person obtaining consent	<u>01/21/2018</u> _____ Date

This research has been reviewed and approved by the Social Behavioral IRB. You may talk to them at (480) 965-6788 or by email at research.integrity@asu.edu if:

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- You want to talk to someone besides the research team.
- You have questions about your rights as a research participant.
- You want to get information or provide input about this research.

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Gregory Wanamaker (electronic signature)	March 16, 2018
_____	_____
Signature of participant	Date
Gregory Wanamaker	

Printed name of participant	
	March 16, 2018
_____	_____
Signature of person obtaining consent	Date
Samuel Detweiler	March 16, 2018
_____	_____
Printed name of person obtaining consent	

APPENDIX C

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONNAIRE—GRANT JAHN

1. When and in what way did you begin your musical studies?¹⁹

I grew up in a musical family and begin piano studies in the 1st grade and clarinet in the 3rd. I performed in piano recitals and was in concert band at a very young age.

2. What is/are your major instrument(s)?

Major instruments are clarinet, which I studied from 3rd grade throughout my college career and piano.

3. How did you first become interested in composition?

Music was always around me growing up and both my mother and father helped me explore as much music as I could. I fiddled around with piano composition at a young age but it wasn't until my senior year of high school that I heard a piece of mine performed in front of an audience. Then, I was a part of the Young Composer's Project in Tucson, AZ and I had a piece performed by the Tucson Symphony Orchestra. It was at the premiere of that piece my senior year of high school that convinced me to explore my compositional voice and discover what I could bring to the music world through composition.

4. How did your compositional career develop into what it is today?

Being able to work with talented students at both the University of Arizona and Arizona State University allowed me to write freely and expand on all of my studies. In addition to school, I was also engaged in side projects that allowed me to work on music outside of the university, including my composition of a film score in 2015 in Tucson, AZ. This allowed me to develop my compositional palette and to expand my audience.

¹⁹ Grant Jahn, Questionnaire.

5. What about your compositions differentiates you from other composers?

I aim for my music to be palatable to any audience, while still incorporating new ideas. I think something that sets me apart from other composers is my ability to exist in the realm of “new music” while still utilizing traditional forms and sounds to actively engage the audience.

6. What are your musical influences, and from where do you draw inspiration?

I draw a lot of inspiration from the repetition, minimalism, and harmonic palettes of the 20th Century, namely, the music of Igor Stravinsky, Steve Reich, and John Adams. I am also significantly influenced by music associated with meditation, religion, and rituals.

7. What elements do you find to be the most important within your musical compositions?

Most of my compositions explore the intertwining of repetitive minimalist structures with melodic lines. I consider these two things to be the most important qualities in my music, and I believe that employed effectively, they can engage the listener in an emotional kind of musical meditation.

8. Can you name a person or event that greatly influenced your musical life?

My father was the most influential person in my musical life and career. It was his unwavering support that allowed me to pursue my own voice and his exposure to me of all things music and art that gave me the tools to drive my compositions and performances.

9. Do you take into consideration the qualities of individual performers when writing for them?

Before writing a piece for an individual performer, I usually meet with them to explain my vision and make sure that there are common interests in what the final product should be. That way I can write a specifically tailored piece for the performer, and they can perform it the way I intended.

10. Do you use any particular compositional techniques when writing your music, and if so, do you think they should be brought out by the performers?

In my music, I like to explore the juxtaposition of strict rhythmic phrases with bar line ambiguity. I think that the identification of these distinctions and the execution of intertwining musical ideas with equal attention to all parts are the most important qualities that need to be explored by performers.

11. Are you concerned with audience perception of your music? To what extent do you consider audience reception?

Audience reception is very important to me. I aim for my music to be musically interesting and new, while still palatable to the listener, allowing them to fully explore my ideas the way I want them presented.

Questions about the piece you wrote for this project:

- 12. What are your general concerns regarding this piece? What do you think performers should know and account for when learning and performing it?**

The most important thing to remember in *Impetus* is that the improvisatory portions of the work must be related in some way to material already presented before-hand. The improvisation in *Impetus* is meant to be a performer's exploration and expansion of material already presented. In this regard, the performer acts as a sort of co-composer to fully flesh out the musical material.

- 13. When did you feel most inspired as you wrote this piece? What part(s) of the piece reflect your greatest moments of inspiration?**

I felt the most inspired about halfway through the piece during the key change and the strongest shift in style. I often compose at the piano and I was inspired to write several rhythmic ostinatos to help clear my head as a form of meditation. The incorporations of these ostinatos as the basis for improvisation in the second half and the linking of them to the first half of the piece reflect my greatest inspiration.

- 14. Have you ever written improvisation in a musical piece before? What problems did you run across?**

This was my first piece to utilize improvisation. The biggest obstacle I had to overcome was creating a foundation for the performer to improvise upon, while still relating to the rest of the material I had already written. Because of this, the biggest problems I had were the transitions between non-improvised and improvised sections and successfully connecting the ideas.

15. What was your favorite aspect of writing a piece that features improvisation?

My favorite thing about this piece is the performer's opportunity to write a part of the piece that I would not have necessarily thought about as the composer. It allows me to experience my own work in a whole different light and from a different perspective.

16. How did you approach writing the improvisation sections for this piece?

I approached the improvisatory sections in *Impetus* by writing solid harmonic and rhythmic foundations that allow the performer to successfully present their expanded ideas while still remaining within the confines of the piece.

17. What, if anything, did you learn about writing improvisation sections while writing this piece? Is there anything the performer should keep in mind while working on the improvisation?

The biggest thing to keep in mind as a performer of *Impetus* is to make the distinction between the improvised and non-improvised sections well defined, while still keeping everything cohesive as a whole. The improvised sections should remain in the desired harmonic palette and should have strong relationships with motives previously presented in the piece.

APPENDIX D

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONNAIRE—BRETT WERY

1. When and in what way did you begin your musical studies?²⁰

I did not begin formal training until I enrolled in the music program at the North Carolina School of the Arts as a clarinet performance major. I had played clarinet, saxophone, flute, bassoon, and oboe as a high school student but had nothing in the way of private lessons. I also composed as a high school student.

2. What is your major instrument(s)?

My bachelor's degree is in clarinet performance and I double majored in conducting and saxophone performance at the master's level. I gave up oboe and bassoon to focus on flute as a third instrument.

3. How did you first become interested in composition?

I was fascinated by musical notation as soon as I started learning to read music. I first started composing in high school but stopped in college. I guess I was intimidated by some of my theory professors. I didn't begin composing again in earnest until my thirties.

4. How did your compositional career develop into what it is today?

As my score reading skills grew as a conductor I began to realize that I had something to say as a composer and could write as well or better than the composers I was studying. I started composing again in my thirties with a series of band and orchestral pieces.

5. What about your compositions differentiates you from other composers?

I often work to reconcile tonal and atonal structures through form.

²⁰ Brett L. Wery, Questionnaire.

6. What are your musical influences, and from where do you draw inspiration?

I am very fond of Bartok, Shostakovich, and Mozart. I'm inspired by Milton Babbitt and Elliott Carter but oddly enough don't particularly enjoy Babbitt's music. I've always been drawn to Eastern European and Balkan folk music.

7. What elements do you find to be the most important within your musical compositions?

Form and conservation of means.

8. Can you name a person or event that greatly influenced your musical life?

My clarinet teacher at the North Carolina School of The Arts, Robert Listokin, was more of a father to me than my real father. His compassion and dedication showed me how to change lives through music education.

9. Do you take into consideration the qualities of individual performers when writing for them?

Absolutely. I try to write to the abilities of the performers and push them to new abilities when I think it is appropriate.

10. Do you use any particular compositional techniques when writing your music, and if so, do you think they should be brought out by the performers?

I currently use a very careful technique to establish a vocabulary of pitch class sets and synthetic scales in my compositions. I don't think it's necessary for the performers to know how I create these structures but the structures themselves should be familiar and fluent for the performers. The synthetic scales can sometimes sound awkward if not practiced and drilled like their tonal counterparts.

11. Are you concerned with audience perception of your music? To what extent do you consider audience reception?

I want to be able to communicate with an average audience member on one listing on a fairly superficial level. I also want my music to be challenging enough for well-read audience members to be engaged at a deeper level in form. The conservation of means and interconnectedness of source material should provide a certain amount of entertainment (delight?) for the perceptive listener.

Questions about the piece you wrote for this project:

12. What are your general concerns regarding this piece? What do you think performers should know and account for when learning and performing it?

Learning to improvise over pitch class sets is probably the biggest concern. A passing familiarity with set theory would help but should not be required. It's important to realize that the relationship between pitches is as important as the pitches themselves. I worry that performers will limit their pitch choices too severely.

13. When did you feel most inspired as you wrote this piece? What part(s) of the piece reflect your greatest moments of inspiration?

Creating source material that enables the transformations I desire is the most exciting part.

14. Have you ever written improvisation in a musical piece before? What problems did you run across?

This was the first time I wrote for improvisation. Notation was a problem since traditional chord symbols were not always practical. In some sections I had to employ some unconventional notations.

15. What was your favorite aspect of writing a piece that features improvisation?

I'm always fascinated by how performers can bring out aspects of my pieces that I had not considered, even in non-improvised pieces. I'm excited to hear how the improvisation changes the composition. It feels very much like collaboration with the performer. I am not a jazz composer but it was hard not to include many allusions to jazz in the form of gestural references of rhythm, harmony, and melody. The last movement is inspired by Balkan folk music, which also relies heavily on improvisation.

16. How did you approach writing the improvisation sections for this piece?

Very much like a traditional jazz lead sheet with a clear harmonic rhythm and melodies that are derived from that harmonic structure; the difference, of course, being that the harmonies are all based on pitch class sets rather than functional harmony. The last movement is based on scale use rather than chord structures. In many cases, I used improvisation as a stand in for development as the two often serve the same purpose.

17. What, if anything, did you learn about writing improvisation sections while writing this piece? Is there anything the performer should keep in mind while working on the improvisation?

The performer should trust his or her instincts in terms of what sounds good. It would be a mistake to try to limit pitch choices too rigidly to the printed chords and scales. Despite the non-functional nature of the harmonies and scales, the piece is an outgrowth of western music and to quote Duke Ellington "If it sounds good, it is good."

APPENDIX E

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONNAIRE–ETHAN CYPRESS

1. When and in what way did you begin your musical studies?²¹

My folks set me and my sister up with some violins when she was 8 and I was 2. My granddad was a retired orchestra teacher and freelance musician. He taught my sister, and I tagged along for fun.

2. What is your major instrument(s)?

I'm mainly a trombonist now, but the past couple of years I've done a lot of gigging and recording as a fiddle player, bassist, and keyboard player. I can't say I dig it very much, but it pays.

3. How did you first become interested in composition?

I do remember this oddly specific turning point: My mom was driving my sister and I back home from our violin lessons out in Franklin, New York. We used to study with this violinist Julie Signitzer. She also ran a small youth orchestra that we both played in and I used to write for. I was spouting off about not digging an orchestra piece that we were doing, and I kept talking about how I wanted to change some parts of it. I think I asked my mom what someone was called if they changed a piece or wrote a new one and she said that's what composers and arrangers do. I could draw you a picture of that car ride. We were passing by this golf course a half a mile or so from the base of Franklin mountain, and I remembered thinking, yeah, that's what I'm going to do. From there, I started trying to write stuff, just melodies for myself. My mom and sister knew enough music theory to help me get started, and they both helped me develop my ears. It never seemed like work though. It was always a chill hang. Then when I was 10 and Jackie was 16, my folks got a version of Sibelius for our desktop at home. And from then on, I never stopped writing.

²¹ Ethan Cypress, Questionnaire by Samuel Detweiler, Response received December 19, 2017.

4. How did your compositional career develop into what it is today?

It's not much of a career in my eyes. I just write for friends and friends of friends. Keeps it light, pretty low stress. Just trying to get better every day.

5. What about your compositions differentiates you from other composers?

Not sure. Haven't given it much thought.

6. What are your musical influences, and from where do you draw inspiration?

Jazz has always been a big influence. I'm still really hip to progressive fiddle and folks stuff. I really dig some of the new orchestral stuff coming out of Norway and Austria right now too. Wolfgang Rihm and Esa Pekka Salonen, etc.

7. What elements do you find to be the most important within your musical compositions?

Harmonic rhythm.

8. Can you name a person or event that greatly influenced your musical life?

Most important lesson I've ever learned: I was sitting next to my Aunt Melissa. We were at the school she used to teach high school choir at. I was maybe 14. She was doing a big variety show with her students and was accompanying everyone. It was really nutty. And about half way through a rehearsal, I realized she didn't have half the charts in front of her. She said something to the effect of, yeah, most important skill you can have is "bull shitting" your way through these types of things. It made me want to practice and learn as much as I possibly could about all types of music so that I could walk into any situation and "bull shit" my way through.

- 9. Do you take into consideration the qualities of individual performers when writing for them?**

ALWAYS! What's the point of writing music if it's not for someone specific?

- 10. Do you use any particular compositional techniques when writing your music, and if so, do you think they should be brought out by the performers?**

Not really, although I do tend to use cross rhythms or "derivative meter" pretty often.

- 11. Are you concerned with audience perception of your music? To what extent do you consider audience reception?**

OF COURSE! The point of music is that it is to be enjoyed and understood. I think the 2nd School of Vienna (Schoenberg, Berg, Webern, ect.) were fairly short sighted in their ideas of performances without audience reaction. It forced what we now call "new music" into the academic setting far from the public eye. And if it doesn't exist within the public eye, it might as well not exist at all.

Questions about the piece you wrote for this project:

- 12. What are your general concerns regarding this piece? What do you think performers should know and account for when learning and performing it?**

It's a blues; have fun with it.

- 13. When did you feel most inspired as you wrote this piece? What part(s) of the piece reflect your greatest moments of inspiration?**

Writing for me has become less of an inspirational thing and more of a logical process. Sure, there are moments when I'm hung up on something, but for

the most part it's just logic, and inspiration doesn't really play into it much anymore.

14. Have you ever written improvisation in a musical piece before? What problems did you run across?

The biggest problem I've had with myself and others is when there is a lack of structure. Imposing guidelines on tonality, range, and articulation forces us all to become more creative within the architecture of what we do as improvisers.

15. What was your favorite aspect of writing a piece that features improvisation?

Knowing it will never be played the same twice!

16. How did you approach writing the improvisation sections for this piece?

I inserted the improvisatory sections into transitional areas of the piece with somewhat strict harmonic and textural limitations. I think it will allow the performer to shape or re-shape the pacing of the piece depending on how they hear the piece.

17. What, if anything, did you learn about writing improvisation sections while writing this piece? Is there anything the performer should keep in mind while working on the improvisation?

The improvisatory sections are heavily influenced by my work as a jazz musician. I'd keep that in mind when crafting the harmonic language used in the improvised sections of the piece.

APPENDIX F

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONNAIRE—GREGORY WANAMAKER

1. When and in what way did you begin your musical studies?²²

I began musical studies at age 6 in summer stock theatre companies. I began composition study at age 15 with Anthony Branker at the Hill School in Pottstown, Pennsylvania, and pursued composition degrees at Shenandoah University and Florida State University with William Averitt and Ladislav Kubík, respectively.

2. What is your major instrument(s)?

I have studied all standard Western instruments and voice with the exception of woodwinds.

3. How did you first become interested in composition?

Anthony Branker played a recording of Ornate Coleman's "Free Jazz" for me, and through that experience, I discovered John Cage, who studied with Arnold Schoenberg, who wrote about Brahms, etc... (I went backwards.) I think that I have always created music in some way, shape, and form.

4. How did your compositional career develop into what it is today?

Perseverance, performance, and writing good music.

5. What about your compositions differentiates you from other composers?

I do not shy away from all of my influences and focus on the dynamic energies unique to individual performing musicians, rather than relying on strict pitch-related systems.

6. What are your musical influences, and from where do you draw inspiration?

I have several musical influences ranging from contemporary classical composers, jazz musicians, rock and roll bands, and world musics, but my

²² Gregory Wanamaker, Questionnaire by Samuel Detweiler, Response received March 16, 2018.

influences are generally associated with still-life images and the current political and social climates.

7. **What elements do you find to be the most important within your musical compositions?**

Dynamics and performance energy—without losing sight of the importance of harmony (“harmony” meaning the all-encompassing combination of pitch, rhythm, and texture).

8. **Can you name a person or event that greatly influenced your musical life?**

Brace yourself, Sam:

After two years of boredom in a public school in Central New York, I attended an all-boys boarding school near Philadelphia for two years. I was 16 and had been “playing guitar” for a couple of years and was pretty arrogant about it in a place where it really didn’t matter if you played guitar unless you also played squash or lacrosse. I didn’t do either of those things, so I could have been Eddie Van Halen and still no one would have been impressed because I was also not <insert name of famous virtuoso lacrosse player here>.

I wanted to join the Jazz Band, which was run by a new teacher named Mr. Branker, but upperclassmen with swanky instruments already comprised the rhythm section. The only musical fulfillment I could get was by joining an old-school Glee Club run by an old-school Yalie called Mr. Tuttle, who was the school organist. We sang barbershop arrangements, Randall Thompson charts, politically incorrect songs from WWII, and Gilbert and Sullivan. We also led hymns at the daily Anglican Chapel services.

At the end of my first semester, I learned that the guitarist and bassist of the Jazz Band were being thrown out of school for slandering the reputation of one of our teachers. So when I returned from Christmas/New Years break, I

approached Mr. Branker about joining the Jazz Band, as their new guitarist. I could read music, but never really applied that to guitar in the same way that I did on piano, trombone, and violin. But Mr. Branker said that what the Band really needed was a bass player. The school had a cheap, short-scale electric bass that I took back to my dorm room along with parts for arrangements of Milestones, Freddie Hubbard's Red Clay, and some of Mr. Branker's own original music.

I basically taught myself to play bass that semester by reading charts and playing with this group of inexperienced boys who, like me, never really listened to real jazz before. I was so worried about getting my fingers in the right places that I didn't process much of what Mr. Branker tried to teach me about interacting with the drummer or the soloist. It was also great that he played with us; he was an amazing trumpet player, who graduated from Princeton in 1980.

His senior project there was an actual record called *For the Children* that consisted of Mr. Branker's original music and featured Stanley Jordan on guitar.

Somehow, after only 3 months of playing bass, I landed a gig playing in the pit for the summer-stock season at the Merry-Go-Round Playhouse in Auburn, New York. This was a nightly gig and once again, I continued to learn to play by reading music.

I returned to The Hill School the next year excited to study Jazz Composition with Tony. (That's what I call him now.) I was one of only two students in this class. He taught us basics of jazz harmony and form through example, aural training, and listening to recordings. I composed my first music for this class and had access to the Jazz Band as sort of a lab.

Anyway, every recording he played for us was new—not necessarily new as in recent, but new as in new to me. We talked about music from blues, to bop, to

fusion, and then—ONE AFTERNOON—he pulled out Ornette Coleman’s Free Jazz, placed it on the spindle, dropped the needle, and waited.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zviZZ4kui1k>

I am not going to say that I liked it immediately, but I was open-minded enough at 16 to be curious. So I asked Tony, why would anyone record group free improvisation? Isn’t that contrary to the purpose? It seemed to me at the time that philosophically, this event is something that should only be experienced once.

Tony let me borrow the record, which I took back to my dorm and happily annoyed everyone in my hall. But I did listen repeatedly—and seriously—and I discovered that there was form, interaction, lyricism, and harmony. And Energy. And I discovered that IT WAS GOOD MUSIC. And I discovered that I didn’t have to experience immediate aesthetic euphoria to appreciate the value of good music.

Anthony Branker recently retired as the director of the Princeton University Jazz Program. He has one helluva catalog and discography. While other teachers and mentors have helped me remain on the path, I credit Tony for guiding me toward MY path 30 years ago. I couldn’t be more thankful. Now go visit his website AFTER you endure the rest of my rambling.

I left boarding school that year (not by choice) and returned to public school in my hometown. I spent that summer playing another season at that theater again and also looking up books and recordings of music—any music—I hadn’t heard before. The name John Cage popped up a few times, and I discovered a link between Ornette Coleman and Cage philosophically but of course with a completely different aesthetic. I am not going to say that I liked Cage immediately, but I was open-minded enough at 17 to be curious, so I listened.

I later discovered that Cage studied with a guy called Arnold Schoenberg. So I listened to Schoenberg. To my ears at the time, some of Schoenberg's music (and Webern's music—he came along for the ride) shared an aesthetic quality with Coleman's free jazz but with a completely different philosophical basis. But, Whoa Nelly, this music really spoke to me immediately!

I read that Schoenberg and Stravinsky hated each other, so I just had to listen to Stravinsky. (Wow!) But Schoenberg also wrote some interesting essays about Brahms and his music, so I just had to listen to Brahms. (Brahms had a thing with Robert Schumann's wife, so I had to listen to them too, but Clara's music was fairly difficult to find in the 80's.)

And so on, and so on. In my Bizarro World, Brahms begat Beethoven, who begat Mozart, who begat Haydn, who begat various Bachlets, who begat J.S. Bach, who begat Vivaldi, who begat (somehow) Monteverdi, yadayaddayadda. I also listened to various types of popular music and jazz.

In any case, I totally went backwards. I can't imagine doing it any other way, but I found solace and patience in my own personal discovery of various musics. I decided to declare a composition major in college and continued listening.

Listening still turns me on. In fact, what I discovered when listening to Ornette Coleman's Free Jazz was the excitement in the spontaneity so inherent in the performance that so easily transferred to the recording. Even now, 28 years later, when I listen to Free Jazz, I still sense that same spontaneity no matter how many times I listen to it. Several other jazz and rock recordings (usually live recordings) do this for me as well. There are some classical ones too, but they're fewer and farther between.

My perpetual and perhaps unreasonable goal as a composer is to create music in which the spontaneous energy is so constructed within the score that it

is easily communicated to the performers, who will then naturally unleash this energy upon listeners in a live setting. Of course, I want my music recorded too, and am lucky to have several commercial recordings of my music available, but nothing beats a live performance. Accuracy is important, but it is not a substitute for energy.

Capturing performance energy as an essential part of a composition is tricky, and when I am not working directly with performers, I focus on critical and comparative listening to see how this energy unfolds. A complete understanding of the circumstances surrounding a composition and the circumstances surrounding a specific performance is essential for the composer, performer and the listener.

9. Do you take into consideration the qualities of individual performers when writing for them?

Yes.

10. Do you use any particular compositional techniques when writing your music, and if so, do you think they should be brought out by the performers?

I think that performers will perform most successfully when they understand everything about the music they perform. This means understanding the time when the composer composed, for whom the composer composed, and why the composer composed the work in question. A theoretical and analytical approach is necessary too. Performers now (including students) have the opportunity to contact the composer directly via internet to ask questions and obtain insight.... Very few actually do this.

- 11. Are you concerned with audience perception of your music? To what extent do you consider audience reception?**

If the music is good and the performer is honestly committed, music speaks for itself. I would never presume to assume what the audience can handle, and I resent organizations who tell audiences what they like. (Corporations, orchestra boards, etc.)

Questions about the piece you wrote for this project:

- 12. What are your general concerns regarding this piece? What do you think performers should know and account for when learning and performing it?**

Energy and dynamics. Performers need to understand minimalism and R&B to play *Counterpunch*.

- 13. When did you feel most inspired as you wrote this piece? What part(s) of the piece reflect your greatest moments of inspiration?**

I was asked by Christopher Creviston to create a short work similar to a previous work of mine called speed metal organum blues. Inspiration was not necessary.

- 14. Have you ever written improvisation in a musical piece before? What problems did you run across?**

Yes. My earliest works are jazz charts. Incorporating improvisation in classical (or crossover) works like this one requires that the composer trusts the performers.

- 15. What was your favorite aspect of writing a piece that features improvisation?**

I don't incorporate enough improvisation in my music to answer this question.

16. How did you approach writing the improvisation sections for this piece?

I didn't initially include improvisation in *Counterpunch*, but did leave room for it by allowing the performers to eliminate an "improvised solo" I composed within the work, and substitute actual improvisation.

17. What, if anything, did you learn about writing improvisation sections while writing this piece? Is there anything the performer should keep in mind while working on the improvisation?

Learn Rhythm and Blues in the style of Maceo Parker.

APPENDIX G

LIST OF RECORDINGS

[Consult Attached Files]

1. *Impetus*, by Grant Jahn
2. *Noir et Bleu*, by Ethan Cypress
3. *Sonata*, I. Allegro ma non troppo, by Brett Wery
4. *Sonata*, II. Adagio sognando – “Bluesy” andantino, by Brett Wery
5. *Sonata*, III. Danza ritmica, by Brett Wery
6. *Counterpunch*, by Gregory Wanamaker