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## Graduate recital : analysis of performed works

Mary Morales

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GRADUATE RECITAL: ANALYSIS OF PERFORMED WORKS

by

Mary Morales  
Bachelor of Arts, University of North Dakota, 2020

An Independent Study  
Submitted to the Graduate Faculty

of the  
University of North Dakota

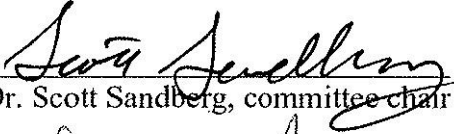
in partial fulfillment of the requirements

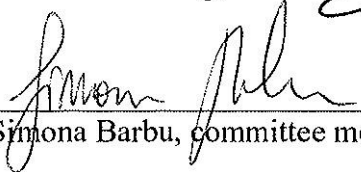
for the degree of

Master of Music

Grand Forks, ND  
August  
2022

This independent study, submitted by Mary Morales in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Music from the University of North Dakota, has been read by the Faculty Advisory Committee under whom the work has been done and is hereby approved.

  
Dr. Scott Sandberg, committee chair

  
Dr. Simona Barbu, committee member

## PERMISSION

Title                      Graduate Recital: Analysis of Performed Works  
Department              Music  
Degree                     Master of Music

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Mary Morales  
August 9, 2022

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank Dr. Sandberg for everything that he has taught me in lessons and ensembles, helping me to become the musician that I am today. I would also like to thank Dr. Barbu for all her help and guidance throughout my master's degree and time at the University of North Dakota.

## ABSTRACT

This independent study serves as an educational resource regarding the pieces which I performed for my graduate recital. It includes information about the works and their composers, as well as an analysis of each work that was performed, and overview of my experiences while learning the works. In my reflection of my experiences, I offer insight which may be used in the instruction of these works and advice for what students may find most difficult pertaining to them. This paper is organized in the program order of the recital. Each section will begin with information about the composers and historical background of the pieces where applicable, follow by an analysis of the piece or movement as a whole, and concluding with my reflection on learning and performing these works.

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## **Piece 1: Ralph Martino, *Iberian Sketches for Bb Tenor Saxophone***

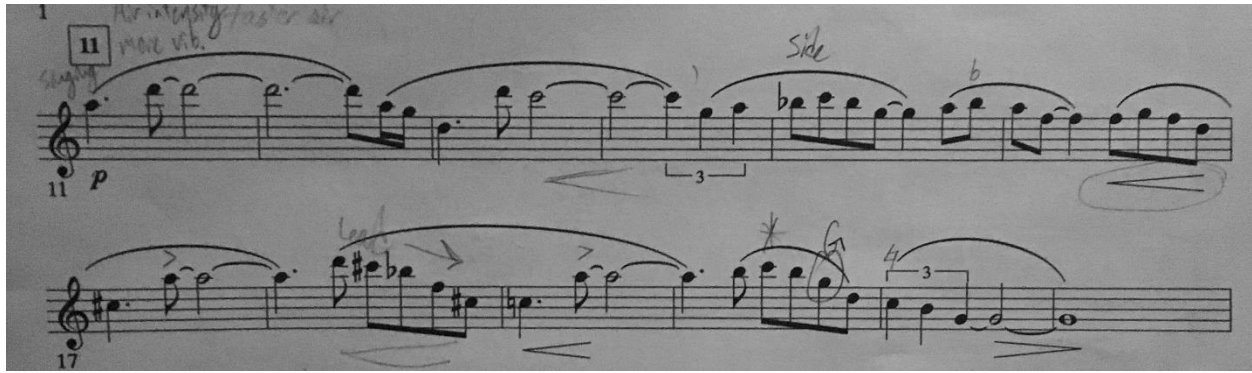
Ralph Martino was a head staff arranger/composer for the United States Navy Band for over twenty years and has well over 300 compositions and arrangements.<sup>1</sup> His publications include wide array of types of ensembles, including pieces for band, chorus, woodwind quintet, saxophone quartet, tuba quartet, and others. Martino received degrees in composition from the Manhattan School of Music and has taught college level courses on music theory, arranging, harmony, and ear training.<sup>2</sup> This piece, *Iberian Sketches* was composed in 1996 and contains musical motives which evoke imagery of the peninsula for which it is named.

*Iberian Sketches* is a single-movement work which breaks down into roughly five major sections. In the beginning of the first section, a ten-measure introduction by the piano starts the piece. This introduction slowly builds with the piano initially playing whole notes to mark each measure and then adding a syncopated rhythm on top of the whole notes. This syncopation becomes more complex with the use of a falling eighth note arpeggio pattern before the entrance of the soloist. When the saxophone enters, it is at a piano dynamic with a smooth flowing melody that soars over the rhythmic pattern in the piano. The higher register of the saxophone is used to contribute to this soaring sensation.

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<sup>1</sup> Martino, R. (1996). *Iberian Sketches for Bb Tenor Saxophone & Piano* [Sheet music], p. 8. DORN Publications, Inc.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.



Example 1 – Ralph Martino, *Iberian Sketches for Bb Tenor Saxophone and Piano*, mm. 11-22.

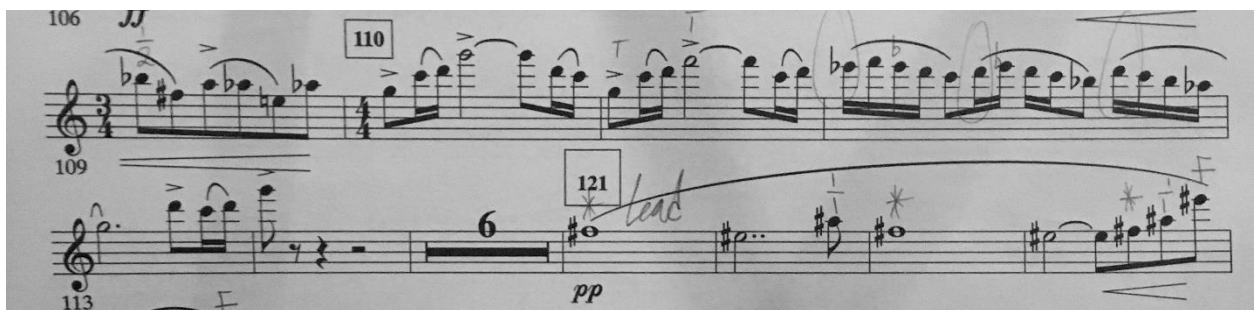
This melodic material is not complex but has the same building gesture as the opening from the piano. There is a sense of flow that resembles ocean waves or the wind. This gesture continues to ebb and flow until the quasi cadenza at measure 44. This cadenza makes use of triple meter and builds to a sustained high E in the saxophone while the piano plays chords that build in intensity until the caesura.

The second major section of this work begins at measure 54 and is labeled “Fast.” It begins with an intense fortissimo trill by the piano which leads into sixteenth notes that build until the saxophone's entrance four measures later. The melodic material of this section is marked by strong accents and has a bold character to it. The saxophone part makes heavy use of sixteenth note runs, continuing the pattern of the piano part. At two points in this section of the work, the meter changes to 6/8 time which provide an instant change of pace and stand out distinctly against the prevalent duple meter.



Example 2 – Ralph Martino, *Iberian Sketches for Bb Tenor Saxophone and Piano*, mm. 67-74.

As seen in Example 2, temporary transitions to different time signatures occur frequently throughout this section. However, the majority of this work is in the time signature of 4/4. These temporary transitions to different time signatures are one of several technical challenges present in this piece, another being the use of altissimo G. This note occurs several times throughout the piece, often without much time to prepare for it. This can be seen at measure 110 where rhythmic material similar to the opening of the “Fast” section goes to altissimo G very quickly and also uses altissimo G to end the phrase.



Example 3 – Ralph Martino, *Iberian Sketches for Bb Tenor Saxophone and Piano*, mm. 109 - 124.

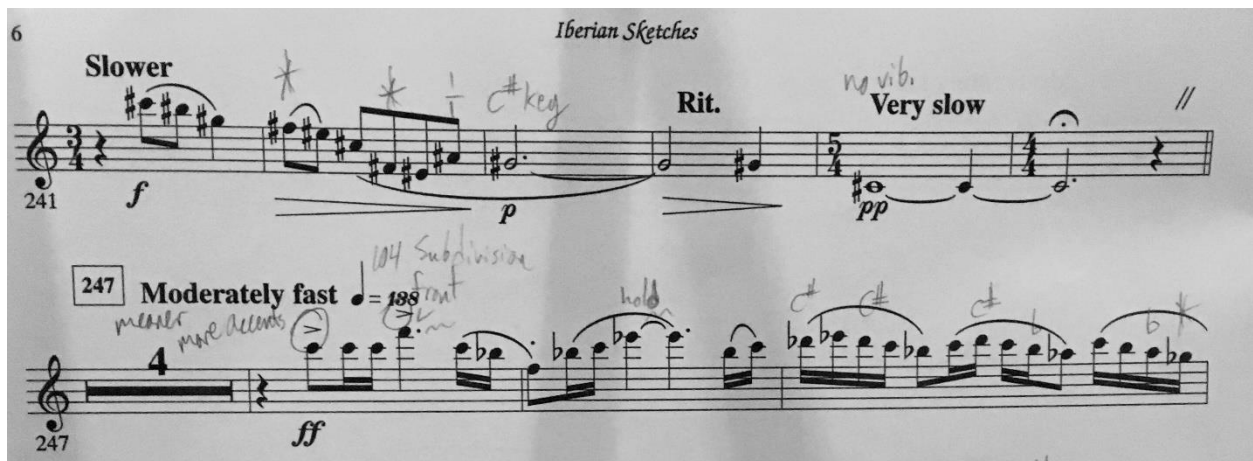
The material from measure 121 to measure 147 re-establishes the soft dynamic and the flowing sensation from the start of the piece. The section starting at measure 147 has a distinct change in character, having a forte dynamic as well as a time signature of 3/4. This material has a transitional sensation with interplay between the piano and the soloist that creates a sense of unease. The section ends with an interlude by the piano until the start of the cadenza.

The cadenza almost entirely consists of running 16th notes and includes heavy use of chromatically shifting patterns. Each motif introduced in the cadenza is repeated immediately but using a different tonality before leading to the fermata of each portion. One of the more technically challenging passages in the cadenza is near the end with a set of four groups of thirty-second note nonuplets. What makes this passage challenging is that each group descends chromatically, and no two groups overlap. The last line of the cadenza resembles the quasi cadenza at the start of the piece in its use of triplets and slower tempo. This leads into the next major section of the work.



Example 4 – Ralph Martino, *Iberian Sketches for Bb Tenor Saxophone and Piano*, m. 196, last lines of the cadenza.

This section of *Iberian Sketches* is marked as “moderately slow” and has a flowing, lyrical quality to it. There are several changes in time signature throughout, but these are consistent, changing from 3/4 time to 5/4 time and back again throughout this section starting from measure 197 all the way through to measure 237. The dynamic gradually builds, starting at pianissimo and ending at fortissimo over the course of forty measures. While sixteenth notes are used in this section, it has an overall very smooth and slow feeling to it, with the saxophone and the piano working together to create a fluid line. The end of this section contains another technical challenge of this work, which is a low C-sharp played at a pianissimo volume for at least 8 counts. Similar to the opening, a caesura ends the section.



Example 5 – Ralph Martino, *Iberian Sketches* for Bb Tenor Saxophone and Piano, mm. 241-250.

The final portion of the piece begins with a similar notation to the “Fast” section but contains the addition of new material which signals the end of the work. The bold motif from the fast section is reused for a brief introduction before transitioning to an interplay between the saxophone and piano starting at measure 262. These sets of running sixteenth notes with

occasional eighth rests do not consistently line up and create a sense of unease. Triplets once again return in this section to recall the beginning of the work and add a slight layer of difficulty in counting the fast passages. The work ends abruptly with a very strong unison passage between the piano and the saxophone.

I began working on *Iberian Sketches* in the spring semester of 2021 and was able to participate in a master class to assist in my learning of the piece. In this work, three specific sections will provide a majority of the difficulty outside of generally keeping tempo in the fast section and proper counting in the slow sections.

The first portion that will provide difficulty is measures 165 to 181. In this section, the piano and saxophone are performing similar lines but are not together. It is important for the saxophonist to have a solid understanding of where the piano enters with the melodic material and how it aligns, or doesn't, with what the piano is playing. In this section, the tendency for the saxophonist will be to rush the sixteenth note runs that occur between the eighth note melody.

The second section which will provide specific difficulty is the cadenza. This portion will require the use of alternate fingerings as well as consistent practice. Once the notation and patterns within the cadenza are fully understood, the matter of phrasing may be approached. Due to the wavelike patterns of the cadenza, it is difficult to distinctly define where dynamics and phrasing should lead. While slur marks may be an indication of phrasing, there is plenty of room for interpretation. By far the most difficult part of the cadenza will be keeping a sense of direction to the nonuplets at the end.

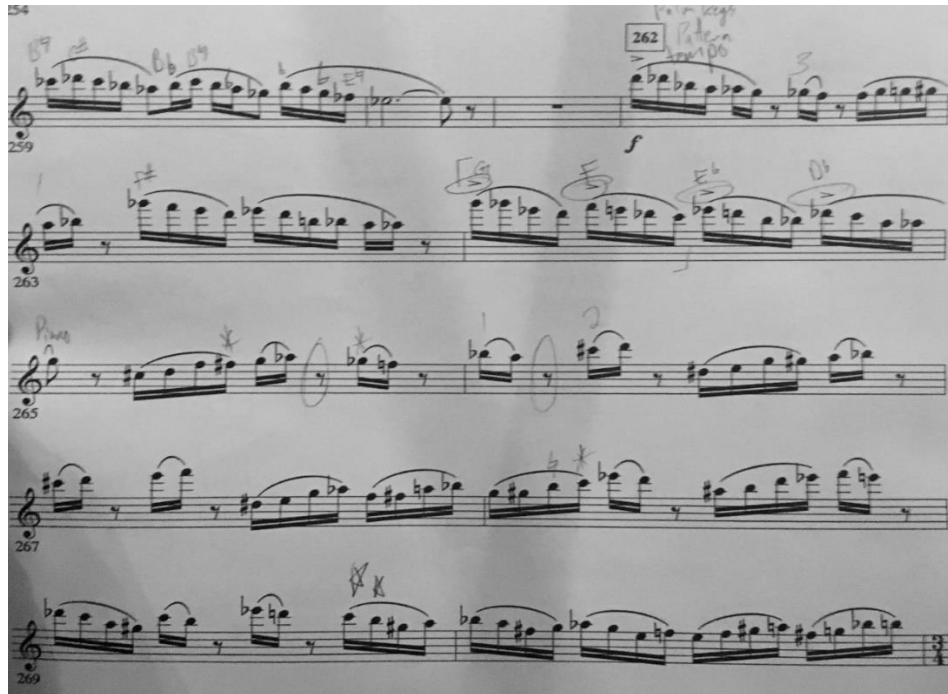


Example 6 – Ralph Martino, *Iberian Sketches for Bb Tenor Saxophone and Piano*, mm. 193-196.

One of the most difficult aspects of this piece, and the third section requiring special attention, is coordinating the ending. From measure 262 to the end, the saxophone and piano have running sixteenth note patterns which do not consistently line up. What makes this difficult is the tempo which is quite fast, as well as the erratic nature of the line and casual use of an altissimo G. Similar to the cadenza, this section uses repeated patterns that change tonality with each repetition. To overcome this difficulty, it is necessary that the saxophonist and pianist have a solid understanding of their part, as well as portions where their parts do align such as the occasional rests which overlap. This section also requires the use of several alternate fingerings on the saxophone to make the passage more manageable. Once this is accomplished, measure



290 to the end is quite manageable so long as both the saxophonist and pianist have a solid understanding of the triplet rhythm.



Example 7 – Ralph Martino, *Iberian Sketches for Bb Tenor Saxophone and Piano*, mm. 259-270.

## Piece 2: Edvard Grieg, *Holberg Suite*, Op. 40, IV. Air, Andante religioso

The *Holberg Suite* was composed in 1884 to celebrate the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the birth of Dan-Norwegian humanist playwright Ludvig Holberg.<sup>3</sup> This five-movement work was originally composed for the piano and was later adapted a year later by Grieg himself for string

<sup>3</sup> Kansas City Ballet. (n.d.). *Holberg Suite*. KC Ballet. <https://kcballet.org/repertory/holberg-suite/>

orchestra. The movements consist of a prelude and a set of dances and is an attempt to echo the music of Holberg's era, as much as was known in Grieg's time.

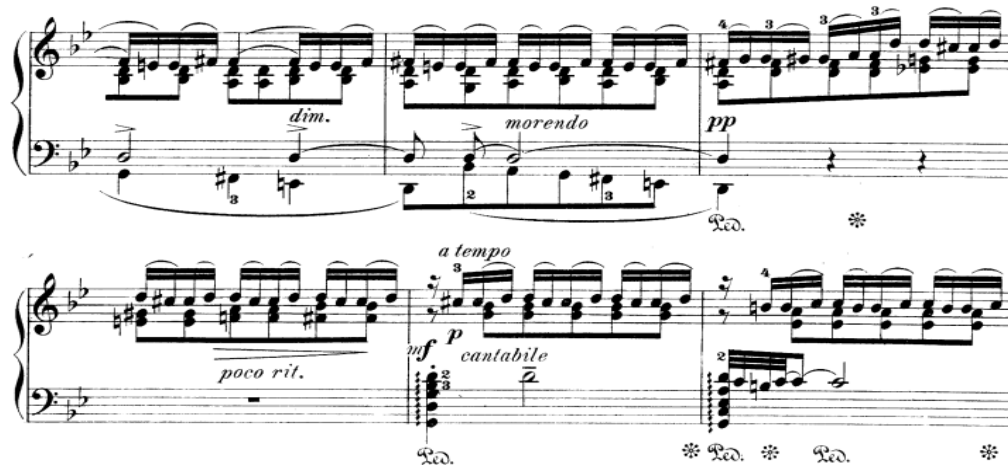
For the purposes of this paper, only the 4th movement of the Holberg suite will be focused on. The 4th movement, titled "Air," has the tempo marking *andante religioso* and has a 3/4-time signature throughout. The melody starts in the right hand with a single line while the left hand plays chords with an eighth note pulse that continues throughout the entirety of the piece. The left and right hand exchange the melody several times throughout the work. The first portion of the movement up to the repeat has a somber feeling as reflected by the use of the G minor key signature. This section establishes the primary melody that will recur throughout the movement.

Andante religioso.  $\text{♩} = 54.$   
*cantabile*  
*p*

Example 8 – Edvard Grieg, *Holberg Suite*, mvt. 4. Air, mm. 1-6.

The next portion after the repeat sign begins with a major tonality and has an upbeat feeling to it before gradually returning to the minor key with a suspended pattern that builds until

the next section. There is a sense of tension and unease throughout this section of the movement which continues until the end of the piece. A second set of melodic material is introduced which has a stepwise motion using sixteenth notes. This leads to a rising passage which transitions into the next major section with a sense of dying off, as indicated by the use of the term “morendo.”



Example 9 – Edvard Grieg, *Holberg Suite*, mvt. 4. Air, mm. 36-41.

The last portion of the movement utilizes rolled chords and places the melody primarily in the left hand. While the melody is performed in the left hand, the right hand has a suspended pattern similar to the previous material. This creates a sense of tension and continues the unease until the melody returns to the right hand which brings an intensity to the piece. This intensity builds to a fortissimo dynamic and ends with a solemn sense of resolve in the minor tonality.

I began working on this piece in the fall semester of 2021 and revisited it several times in lessons in preparation for my recital in the spring semester of 2022. One of the most important things to focus on in practicing and performing this work is having a sense of direction with the repeated eighth note pulse. It is easy to begin to rush those notes or to pull back on the tempo

with them, but it is necessary to have a clear intent on how they relate to the melodic line. In my lessons and work with the piece, this pulse was treated as the primary source of movement within the work. This determined how quickly or slowly the melodic line could be played in order to suit the feeling portrayed by the treatment of the eighth note pulse.

Another key factor to learning this movement is understanding the balance between the hands and the individual fingers. For example, there are several times throughout the piece where the eighth note pulse will be played in the same hand which has the melody. It is important to bring out the melody while also matching the treatment of the eighth note pulse with both hands. A more technical challenge of this piece comes towards the end. In the last few measures, there are octaves in both the right and the left hand. The right hand's octaves contain chordal movement between the octave which may be a source of difficulty in performance. This can be approached by playing just the inner portion of these chords to establish where the fingers will be moving in between the octave.

The image shows a musical score for Edvard Grieg's *Holberg Suite*, movement 4, *Air*, measures 51-56. The score is written for piano and consists of two systems. The first system shows measures 51 and 52. The second system shows measures 53, 54, 55, and 56. The key signature is G minor (two flats) and the time signature is 3/4. The score includes various musical notations such as triplets, slurs, and dynamic markings. The lyrics 'ri - tar - dan - do' are written under the notes in measure 54. The score is published by Edition Peters, with the number 6827.

Example 10 – Edvard Grieg, *Holberg Suite*, mvt. 4. *Air*, mm. 51-56.

### **Piece 3: Maurice Ravel, *Piece en forme de habanera*, Transcription for Bb Clarinet**

Born in Ciboure, France on March 7, 1875. Shortly after his birth, Ravel's family moved to Paris. Despite growing up in Paris, Ravel always felt close to his Basque heritage and by extension Spain.<sup>4</sup> His father was an engineer and amateur pianist and encouraged Ravel's early musical inclinations, beginning to study piano in 1882 when he was seven years old. He produced his earliest attempts at composition in 1887 when he was twelve, creating variations of one of Schumann's and Grieg's works as well as a sonata movement.<sup>5</sup> He would become known as one of the most original and sophisticated musicians of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, his music exploring new possibilities for various genres which he developed around the same time as his contemporary Debussy.

Composed in 1907, the *Piece en Forme de Habanera* was originally written as a Vocalise-étude. In its original form for the voice, it is particularly demanding and virtuosic with staccato passages, trills, and sweeping scales. It appeared in a collection of vocalises assembled by A. L. Hettich, for which it may have been specifically composed. Ravel's connection to Spain through his heritage and friendship with Spanish pianist Ricardo Viñes may explain the use of the habanera rhythm in this piece.<sup>6</sup> Ravel eventually transcribed the piece for cello and piano, perhaps to make it more accessible, and it has since been transcribed for a variety of instruments including the clarinet.

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<sup>4</sup> Kelly, B. L. (2001, January 20). Ravel, (Joseph) Maurice. *Grove Music Online*. <https://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/grovemusic/view/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.001.0001/omo-9781561592630-e-0000052145>

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> Classical Music | Cello Music. (2010, June 13). *Pièce en Forme de Habanera*. Classical Connect. [https://www.classicalconnect.com/Cello\\_Music/Ravel/Piece/3522](https://www.classicalconnect.com/Cello_Music/Ravel/Piece/3522)

This piece begins with a habanera rhythm in the piano which then establishes the melody before the entrance of the soloist. The solo line begins with a thirty-second note fluttering motion and leads into a fluid run which transitions into sixteenth note triplets before imitating the piano's melody from the start. The melodic material from the soloist is thus established to have more ornamentation when compared to the melodic material played by the piano, as demonstrated by the example below.

The image shows a musical score for Maurice Ravel's 'Piece en Forme de Habanera', specifically a transcription for Bb Clarinet. The score is in 2/4 time and features three staves: Piano, Clarinet, and Piano. The tempo is 'Presque lent et avec indolence'. The Piano part starts with a habanera rhythm. The Clarinet part enters with a thirty-second note fluttering motion, followed by a fluid run and sixteenth note triplets. The Piano part returns with a melody similar to the initial piano melody. Handwritten annotations include 'mf', 'more snell', 'w/ piano', 'stronger', 'keep steady', and 'R.H. Down'.

Example 11 – Maurice Ravel, *Piece en Forme de Habanera*, Transcription for Bb Clarinet, mm. 1-17.

After this phrase from the soloist, the melody is traded back to the piano. When the soloist returns, it is with new material which has a stronger presence. This is demonstrated by the forte dynamic as well as tenuto staccatos and accents clearly marking a distinction before returning to the initial melody. The piano once again takes over the phrase while the soloist provides ornamental material over the piano's melody before using a motif similar to the main melody and ending the phrase, as seen in the example below.



Example 12 – Maurice Ravel, *Piece en Forme de Habanera*, Transcription for Bb Clarinet, mm. 25-42.

The key then changes and another variation is created based on the melody. The soloist continues with the variation which includes more sixteenth note triplets as well as a brief cadential figure. This figure uses a downward chromatic pattern before the piano returns. The piece ends with a short interlude by the soloist followed by the piano repeating the habanera rhythm and finishing on B minor chord. This leaves an unresolved, tense feeling at the end of the piece.

The *Piece en Forme de Habanera* was the work which I had the least amount of time rehearsing before the performance. I began working on this piece towards the beginning of the spring 2022 semester, however the piece does not have too much technical difficulty. It had been some time since I had performed a solo work for clarinet, and I was only able to have one meeting with my professor to prepare for the performance. Because the piece is so accessible, the only things we had to work on were some alternate fingerings such as using the side key to play B-natural rather than using the standard fingering. Additionally, it was important to find spots that went over the break and knowing when it would be possible to keep the right hand closed for such passages. The final thing we worked on in that lesson was more air for greater projection.

The most difficult aspect of this piece is keeping track of where you are in each measure. Although the piece is written with a 2/4-time signature, it can still be quite difficult to tell where exactly you are. Because the material switches from duple to triple so frequently, it is easy to get lost in the notes, especially with the thirty-second note runs which occur several times throughout the piece. Something that helped me to keep track of where I was in the music was listening for the piano part. For majority of the piece, the piano is continually playing the habanera rhythm with little deviation. Listening for that rhythm is very helpful towards being certain of where you are in each measure.

#### **Piece 4: Robert Ward, *Concerto for tenor saxophone and piano***

Although Robert Ward received a Pulitzer Prize for Music for his opera *The Crucible* (1961) and is best known for his vocal compositions,<sup>7</sup> the *Concerto for Tenor Saxophone* stands out as his only work for saxophone. The piece was commissioned by James Houlik and composed in 1984. It was written for tenor saxophone and orchestra but later had adaptations for accompaniment with band or piano.

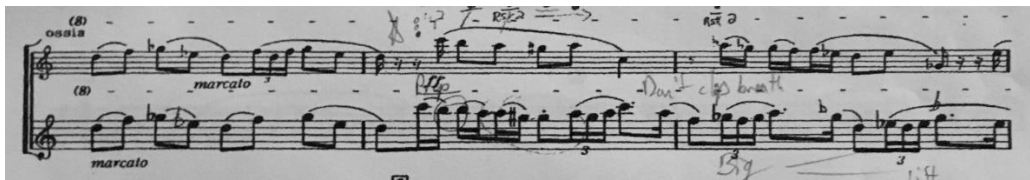
Ward's *Concerto for Tenor Saxophone* is split into two movements; a short and slow introduction followed by a longer and overall faster second movement. The first movement serves as a grandiose introduction to the work, starting with a buildup by the accompaniment before the solo line breaks through to establish itself as the lead. The slow and lyrical melodic material indicates a relaxed atmosphere and demonstrates the various elements of jazz influence that the piece contains.

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<sup>7</sup>ECS Publishing Group. (n.d.). *Robert Ward*. MorningStar Music.  
<https://www.morningstarmusic.com/composers/w/robert-ward.html>



While the first movement is generally slow and lyrical throughout, there are several technical challenges as well as stylistic challenges. First is the use of the altissimo register of the saxophone in two instances, the first being in a line in the middle of the movement which requires a slurred transition between the notes G and B-flat, and the second being towards the end of the movement which requires the soloist to play and articulate the altissimo notes G, G-sharp, A, B-natural, and C. The articulation of this section is the most challenging portion of the first movement and even includes an optional line which excludes the articulation and simplifies the rhythm to make the passage easier.



Example 13 – Robert Ward, *Concerto for Tenor Saxophone*, 1<sup>st</sup> mvt, mm. 56-58.

Another technical challenge of this movement is the variety of rhythms. In the first half of the movement, the melodic line contains primarily duple rhythms with the occasional triplet ornamentation. This mostly contrasts with the second half of the movement, where melodic material is primarily composed of triplets. The switching between these two meters in quick succession can be difficult to clearly distinguish in the slow tempo.

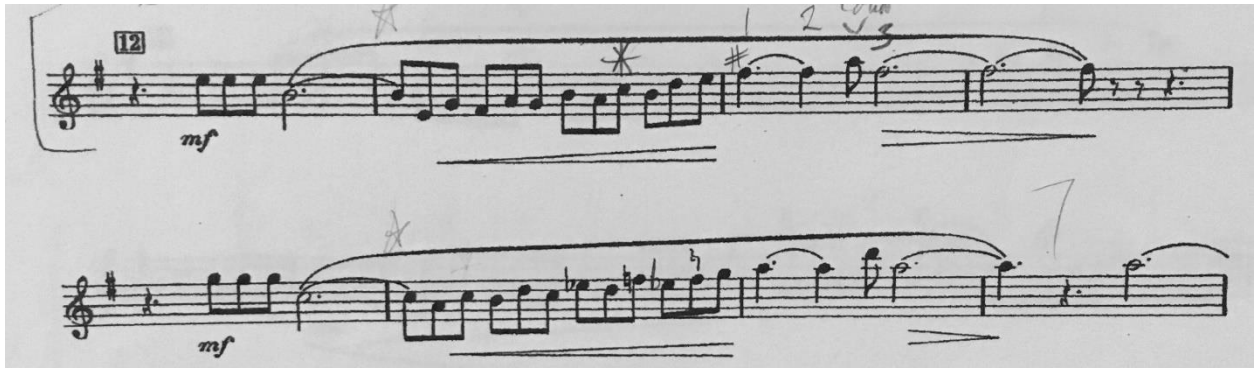
The second movement is much longer than the first, comprising approximately 10 minutes of the 15-minute work and eleven of the thirteen pages of music. The material in the second movement is much more varied than the first, although can generally be categorized as fast and rhythmic. This movement poses much more technical challenge than the first, including

even more use of the altissimo register, faster changes between duple and triple meters, difficult chromatic passages, and more. Part of the difficulty of these sections stems from the very opening of the movement, starting in cut time before soon changing to 12/8, which most of the piece is written in. Even with this apparent change in meter, portions of the notation are written to be duple against the triple patterns immediately surrounding them, as seen in the provided example.



Example 14 – Robert Ward, *Concerto for Tenor Saxophone*, 2<sup>nd</sup> mvt, mm. 108-113.

Throughout the movement, there are multiple instances of passages which at first appear to be repetitions but are not exact. While the rhythms are intervals of these repetitions are relatively similar, they are not exact. These passages are uniquely challenging because even if one pattern is mastered, it is not applicable to the following pattern which resembles the first. They are similar but not the same.



Example 15 – Robert Ward, *Concerto for Tenor Saxophone*, 2<sup>nd</sup> mvt, mm. 120-127.

The second movement continues to use melodic material built on triplet runs until measure 170. At this point, there is a fermata, and the time signature changes to 4/4 as the accompaniment takes over the melody for sixteen measures. When the soloist returns, it is with a more romantic style compared to the previous intensity and phrases have a longer, more graceful feeling to them. This portion and subsequent returns to its style are much more relaxed, in contrast with the rest of the movement. However, there are flourishes in these sections which provide some technical challenge.



Example 16 – Robert Ward, *Concerto for Tenor Saxophone*, 2<sup>nd</sup> mvt, mm. 189-198.

The movement eventually returns to the more intense 12/8 section, expanding on previous material and introducing more technical passages for the soloist. The intense section continues throughout most of the movement with some brief returns to the more lyrical material before the end of the piece.

The Ward Concerto is the piece that I had the longest practice time with, having begun working on it in the fall semester of 2021. In that time, I focused on refining my altissimo register and working on muscle memory for the difficult technical passages of the second movement. The first movement had its own challenges as well.

In the first movement, it is important to practice with a metronome to keep rhythms consistent throughout. Rushing or dragging during this movement will interfere with the clarity of each phrase so it is necessary to be as accurate as possible in placement of rhythms. A challenge that I encountered when performing this movement was placement of breaths. Once the solo line enters, there is only one instance of a rest lasting a full measure, which occurs

towards the end of the movement. While there are quick breaks in the form of sixteenth or eighth rests, it can be tricky to find locations to breathe without interrupting the flow of the phrase. Especially with the *lento* tempo of the movement, longer phrases can be particularly challenging to find appropriate places to breathe. Attention to how much air is required for dynamics will be helpful for finding spots to breathe.

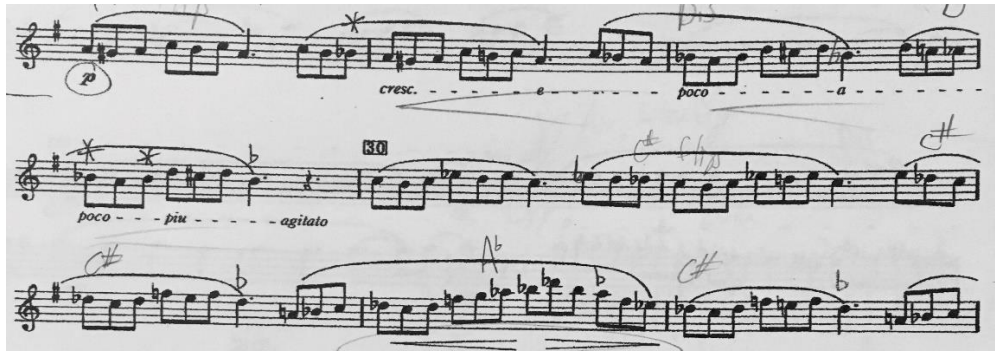
The second movement will require the most attention. It contains a multitude of difficult technical passages as well as changes in meter with little, if any, room for preparation. Additionally, because of the length of this movement it is necessary to have good stamina to reach the end. As mentioned previously, some of the technical challenges include extensive use of the *altissimo* register, technical passages which are similar but are not exact repetitions, and chromaticism requiring the use of alternate fingerings.

A passage that will prove difficult early on and one which I spent a significant amount of time working on was from measure 152 to 160. In this section, each successive note in the melody is preceded by sixteenth-note triplet flourish which transitions into a written out duple meter. This pattern repeats in a slightly modified manner. What makes this passage particularly difficult is a combination of the fast tempo and necessity for exact placement of the ornamentation. If these ornamental notes are too fast or slow, they will interrupt the flow of the melody which lands on each main beat. Additionally, the quick switch into duple meter at the end of each phrase can be challenging to distinguish from the triple meter surrounding these measures. A method that I used to help with this section was playing the downbeats independently of the ornamentation. This will help to solidify the rhythmic understanding of where the ornamentation must be placed. Additionally, use of a metronome set to the eighth note subdivision will help with distinguishing the duple meter from the triple meter sections.



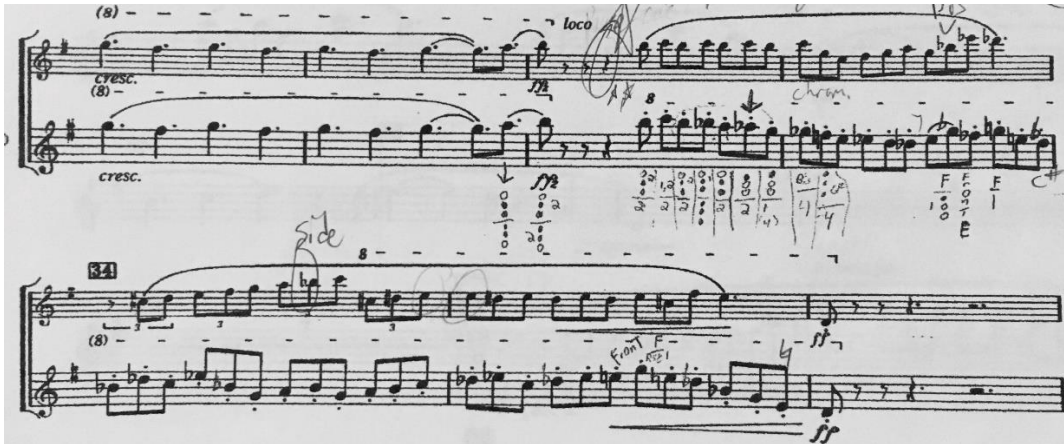
Example 17 – Robert Ward, *Concerto for Tenor Saxophone*, 2<sup>nd</sup> mvt, mm. 152-158.

The next passage which will require extra attention is about halfway through the work. This passage uses a stepwise, chromatic motion that incrementally shifts throughout the section. The fast tempo of the movement combined with the required alternate fingerings and frequent accidentals make this passage particularly challenging. For this passage, along with a majority of this movement, practicing at a slower tempo will help with keeping rhythms consistent when a faster tempo is returned to. Additionally, it is important to decide which notes will require the use of alternate fingerings. Some sections of this passage are more manageable and have less contrary motion when using standard fingerings.



Example 18 – Robert Ward, *Concerto for Tenor Saxophone*, 2<sup>nd</sup> mvt, mm. 295-303.

The last section which is the most difficult in the piece occurs near the end from measures 335 to 341. This passage is incredibly difficult for several reasons. Including the use of the altissimo register which requires its own set of fingerings, this passage uses staccato articulation which makes maintain the altissimo register more challenging. The chromatic movement of the passage provides an additional layer of difficulty, shifting in and out of the altissimo register with little preparation time. An optional line is provided which is more manageable than the primary line. However, there are challenges which are unique to this line as well. In the optional line, the difficulty comes primarily from coordination with the accompaniment. At rehearsal mark 34, as seen in the provided example, the delay of a triplet eighth rest can be challenging to properly place, especially with the fast tempo of the movement.



Example 19 – Robert Ward, *Concerto for Tenor Saxophone*, 2<sup>nd</sup> mvt, mm. 335-341.

### Piece 5: Toshiyuki O’Mori, “Bloody Stream” for Saxophone Quartet

The song “Bloody Stream” was originally written as the second opening theme of the animated television series *Jojo’s Bizarre Adventure* in 2013. With music composed by Toshiyuki O’Mori and lyrics written by Saori Kodama, the song was released as a debut single by Japanese artist Coda. The lyrics and funk style of the song work to complement the story of Joseph Joestar and his battle against the Pillar Men Esidisi, Wamuu, and Kars. Toshiyuki O’Mori is a Japanese composer and pianist with an extensive history of composing music for animation and games.<sup>8</sup>

This piece has a strong jazz influence throughout and begins with a powerful opening statement by the whole group. Heavy use of syncopation by all parts is used throughout this piece. After the strong introduction, the volume decreases to allow for the soloist to project the

<sup>8</sup> O’Mori, T. (n.d.). *Profile*. Elephantonica. Retrieved August 3, 2022, from <http://elephantonica.com/toshiyuki-omori/english/#profile>



melodic line through the ensemble. The melody is performed by each member of the group at least once, with all members playing a key role to represent different sections of the original song. There are several technical challenges within this work which require the ensemble to be keenly coordinated, such as the cascading effect emphasized by accents at measure 20 which requires careful alignment by the group to create a fluid line.

The image shows a musical score for four staves, likely representing a saxophone quartet. The score begins at measure 20. The first staff has a 'solo' marking above it. The second staff has a 'mf' (mezzo-forte) dynamic marking. The third staff has a 'mp' (mezzo-piano) dynamic marking. The fourth staff has a 'mp' dynamic marking. The score includes various musical notations such as accents (>), slurs, and a triplet in the first staff. The music is written in a key with one flat (B-flat) and a common time signature.

Example 20 – Toshiyuki O’Mori, “Bloody Stream” for Saxophone Quartet, mm. 20-24.

Roles are switched among members as the melody shifts and repeats, requiring members to pay attention to how their line interacts with the others at all times. While the melody line shifts between all members of the group, the accompaniment parts also shift. For example, from measures 13 to 19, the baseline in the baritone saxophone is later performed instead by the tenor saxophone from a measures 66 to 72.

Example 21 – Toshiyuki O’Mori, “Bloody Stream” for Saxophone Quartet, mm. 12-19.

A softer section from measure 107 to 117 breaks up the intensity of the peace, giving moment of reprieve as the alto and baritone saxophones play long tones while the soprano and tenor saxophones play the melody in unison. This leads to a buildup that brings the return of the course, this time at a fortissimo volume. The melody is passed from the Alto saxophone to the soprano and tenor saxophones in unison and the piece ends with a final statement by the baritone saxophone.

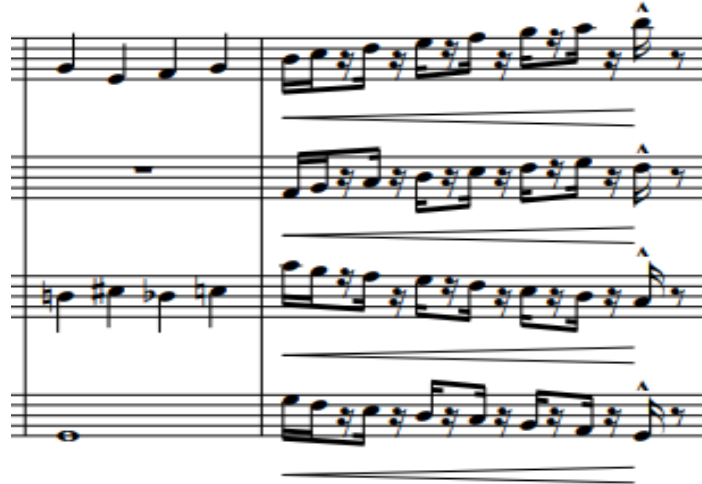
“Bloody Stream” is unique in the program of this recital, as I am the one who arranged this work for saxophone quartet and some aspects of peace developed as it was being rehearsed. Majority of the arrangement was completed in the winter break before the spring semester of 2022. While this work has its own set of technical challenges, there are several that are unique to working in a quartet setting. Independent understanding of rhythm and how melodic lines

interact or need to be brought out was particularly important in measures 54 through 60, which contains soloistic lines which are unlabeled.

The image displays two systems of musical notation for a saxophone quartet. The first system, labeled '54', consists of four staves. The top staff features a melodic line with a dynamic marking of *f* and a hairpin crescendo. The second staff has a melodic line with a dynamic marking of *f*. The third staff contains a complex, cascading melodic line with a dynamic marking of *f*. The bottom staff provides a rhythmic accompaniment. The second system, labeled '58', also consists of four staves. The top staff has a melodic line with a dynamic marking of *f*. The second staff has a melodic line with a dynamic marking of *f*. The third staff has a melodic line with a dynamic marking of *f*. The bottom staff provides a rhythmic accompaniment with a dynamic marking of *f*.

Example 22 – Toshiyuki O’Mori, “Bloody Stream” for Saxophone Quartet, mm. 54-61.

As for the consistent use of syncopation throughout the baseline, it was important that everyone in the quartet had a solid internal pulse and understood how their part lined up with everyone else’s. This was especially important in sections like the aforementioned cascading passage as well as a unison figure that occurs several times throughout the piece and is always performed by more than one member of the quartet. An internal pulse is key in these measures because everyone is off the beat in unison after the first two notes.



Example 23 – Toshiyuki O’Mori, “Bloody Stream” for Saxophone Quartet, mm. 88-89.

Overall, the techniques which helped most with all of these pieces were practicing at a slower tempo, careful planning of what fingerings to use and when to breathe, and coordination with accompaniment lines. By practicing slowly, difficult rhythms can become easier to understand and provide less challenge when played at a faster tempo. Planning what fingerings to use can help make faster rhythms more manageable and finding appropriate spots to breathe in longer phrases can aid in the execution of proper dynamics throughout each work. These practice techniques can assist in making any piece of music more approachable.

## **Conclusion**

Each of the pieces discussed in this paper offers a unique challenge that allows for growth as a musician. It is because of these challenges that I selected these pieces for my recital. Various technical and lyrical aspects had to be addressed in the learning process of each work,

which was addressed through practice and assistance from my professors using the methods discussed previously.

Despite the difficulty of some of these pieces, it was a very rewarding experience to learn them and to share them through the recital process. These works have become very significant to me personally and I will continue to use them as learning tools for both me and my future students. It is my hope that this paper will have provided some insight as to how these pieces can be used as learning tools for other music educators as well.

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