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A Hero's Journey:

A Modern Musical Exploration of the Monomyth

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A Hero's Journey:

A Modern Musical Exploration of the Monomyth

by

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Thesis

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Fairy tales are more than true;

not because they tell us that dragons exist, but because they tell us that dragons can be beaten.

- G.K. Chesterton

A Hero's Journey:

A Modern Musical Exploration of the Monomyth

by

Conor Lane Brace, M.Music The University of Texas at Austin, 2009 SUPERVISOR: John Mills

This thesis presents and analyzes the author's original jazz composition *A Hero's Journey*, based on the ancient and widespread storytelling pattern that Joseph Campbell called the "monomyth." Using major concepts from the monomyth, the author composed a suite for ten-piece jazz orchestra consisting of six scenes divided into two acts. Although rooted in the jazz tradition, the piece borrows freely from classical music, African music, Indian music, and modern rock and hip-hop to create an adventurous and continually evolving musical experience. This thesis first provides an overview of the entire suite, then discusses its important melodic themes, and finally analyzes the techniques used for harmonic development within the piece.

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Chapter One: Overview and Story Connections

In *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* (1949), Joseph Campbell observed that many of humanity's great stories, spanning thousands of years and a wide variety of cultures, share a similar pattern. Campbell called this pattern the "monomyth," and summarized it as follows:

A hero ventures forth from the world of common day into a region of supernatural wonder; fabulous forces are there encountered and a decisive victory is won; the hero comes back from this mysterious adventure with the power to bestow boons on his fellow man.¹

This pattern can be found in Greek mythology, in religious stories of Buddha, Moses, and Christ, in the adventures of comic book superheroes, in fantasy tales such as Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings*, and in science fiction works like the *Star Wars* and *Matrix* trilogies. Now popularized as "the hero's journey," it has become a staple device for writers, particularly those who write for film² and games.³ If it has become a cliché, it's one we don't seem to mind too much; we tend to consider these stories "classic" (an

¹ Joseph Campbell, <u>The Hero with a Thousand Faces</u>, 3rd ed. (Novato, CA: New World Library, 2008), 23.

² Christopher Vogler, "A Practical Guide to Joseph Campbell's *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*," 1985. Memo published online by Storytech Literary Consulting, http://thewritersjourney.com/hero's journey.htm#Memo> (1 December 2009).

³ Jesse Schell, <u>The Art of Game Design: A Book of Lenses</u> (Burlington, MA: Morgan Kaufmann Publishers, 2008), 273-275.

appropriate term considering their ancient roots), to be touched and inspired by them, and to feel that they are relevant to our lives despite their often fantastical settings.

My composition *A Hero's Journey* is divided into two acts, each with three distinct scenes representing the major story elements from which I drew inspiration. By focusing on just those elements that I felt were most crucial, I was able to create a musical arc that felt faithful to the classic hero story while still allowing myself a great deal of freedom with the specifics. *A Hero's Journey* therefore represents the broad strokes of Campbell's monomyth, filtered through half a century of pop culture and finally through my own experience and interpretation. I took similar liberties with the jazz tradition, weaving in elements of classical music, African and Indian music, and even hip-hop breakbeats to suit the needs of the moment.



Figure 1.1: *A Hero's Journey* opens with a statement of the "Village" theme, a folk song that will play a major role in the suite's development.

Act I begins with a scene called "The Village," a glimpse of peaceful life in a simpler time. A wash of piano and cymbals sets the stage for a bowed bass solo. Imagine the arco bass as the voice of an ancient storyteller, singing the song that begins a cherished ritual: "Listen, and I will tell you of the hero who was born long ago in this very village..." This brief prologue introduces the piece's most important melodic theme (Figure 1.1), which would not be out of place as a traditional folk song. When the bass melody reaches its conclusion, the rhythm section strikes an open, dramatic chord, bringing us into the world of the story at the moment of the hero's "call to adventure."⁴

The solo flugelhorn represents the voice of the hero throughout the piece. Here it is heard over an unusual solo form (Figure 1.2). The rhythm section strikes an open chord, over which the flugelhorn plays a rubato phrase. After each phrase, the soloist cues a new rhythm section chord, and the cycle begins again. The solo's development is guided by a series of notes that are revealed in a specific order, leading to greater and greater dissonance against the rhythm section's pedal point.

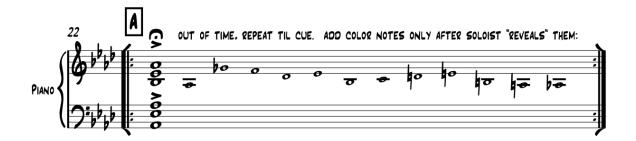


Figure 1.2: Piano part demonstrating the simple but unusual form of the first flugelhorn solo, with the soloist leading the rhythm section through increasingly dissonant sounds.

⁴ Campbell, 42.

When this cycle is complete, the turbulence dies down and the full horn section enters with a chorale version of the "Village" theme (Figure 1.3). Partial phrases are played in harmony while the continuing flugelhorn solo fills in the gaps, until all the voices come together in a unison line that resolves into a tense chord in a new key and tempo. The hero has said his goodbyes and set off on a new adventure.



Figure 1.3: Reduction of the transition from "The Village" into "The Winding Road," showing the conclusion of the chorale and the new groove set up by the drummer.

The next scene, "The Winding Road," adapts some of the sections traditionally found in big band music – head, solos, backgrounds, shout – into a more fluid, gradually

evolving form that evokes a feeling of wandering through an exotic landscape. This scene is built on the slow 6/4 tom groove that begins during the final phrase of the chorale, establishing a natural connection between the two scenes. Repetitive rhythmic figures and a persistent pedal point create a sense of slow but steady progress through the dissonant harmonic landscape. A melody is introduced in the tenor saxophone (A), then harmonized in the flute over an octave above (A again). The bottom momentarily drops out to reveal a pair of muted, high-voice fanfares played against low-voice counterlines (B), but the music quickly returns to the plodding pedal-point section. This AAB form repeats a second time, and begins a more ambitious build: the melody is joined by a counter-melody in flute and guitar, then by more brassy harmonies (Figure 1.4). When the fanfare comes around again it is without mutes, and much more aggressive. A descending series of horn chords leads into a tenor saxophone solo, which begins over a long, tense pedal point and then settles down into a soft groove with a slowly wandering chord progression.

Although the tenor saxophonist begins improvising at letter H (m. 91), this could actually be heard as part of an orchestrated decrescendo from G (m. 85) to I (m.99), with the true solo form beginning then. The solo's ending is similarly veiled by the backgrounds that gradually build up behind it, referencing the melody and countermelody and eventually becoming a full-fledged reprise with the soloist taking the melodic lead. Next the ensemble makes way for a trombone solo, which similarly rises up out of the general horn-section diminuendo and eventually becomes lost behind a final statement of this scene's melody.

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Figure 1.4: Reduction of melodic and transitional material from "The Winding Road."

There are quite a few musical influences behind "The Winding Road." Duke Ellington's long, carefully-orchestrated crescendos (as in "Koko" and "Diminuendo and Crescendo in Blue"⁵) and Maria Schneider's use of solos as transitional sections (as in "The Pretty Road"⁶) were on my mind as I crafted this scene's relatively simple themes into a complete movement. African music was a rhythmic inspiration, both in the tribal drum groove that runs throughout as well as in specific instances where duple- and triplemeter figures overlap to create interesting polyrhythms (Figure 1.5).



Figure 1.5: A four-against-six line in the low horns pushes towards the first B section.

⁵ Duke Ellington, <u>The Essential Duke Ellington</u>, Duke Ellington and His Famous Orchestra, Sony compact disc 89281.

⁶ Maria Schneider, <u>Sky Blue</u>, Maria Schneider Orchestra, ArtistShare compact disc 0065.

The first movement of Mahler's *Symphony No. 5* also played a significant role in my thinking as I composed this scene. Mahler repeatedly builds his opening theme up to a dramatic climax, then pulls it down in a tiered decrescendo that makes way for new material and the start of a new build.⁷ This technique is reflected in my own transitions from brassy fanfares to darker, more subdued horn chords and finally into quiet solo sections.

Following the trombone solo, the audience expects to hear the full fanfare once again, but instead it is cut short after the initial sting. The drums suddenly break into an aggressive 9/8 + 9/8 Afro-Cuban pattern. An alto saxophone solo begins over an ominous pedal point, and soon the entire horn section joins in a wild group solo. Something sinister has interrupted our hero's wanderings. As a fan of medieval fantasy tales, I like to imagine that he has stumbled into the den of a vicious, fire-breathing dragon; but those specifics hardly matter as far as the music is concerned. It is the adrenaline rush, the struggle, and the anguish of defeat that are the subject of the third scene, "The Impossible Task."

A brief drum solo kicks off a new, faster tempo and cues a rhythm section vamp, replacing the preceding chaos with a more focused energy. Tight-knit 3/8 cross-rhythms, non-functional harmony, and a mixed-meter hook characterize this section (Figure 1.6). Saxophones and trombone join in during the second repetition with an aggressive blues lick, and on the third repetition muted trumpets and bass clarinet add an angular, off-beat counterline. These are the A sections of what is essentially an AABC form.

⁷ Gustav Mahler, <u>Symphony No. 5 in C Sharp Minor</u>, Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, Riccardo Chailly, Decca compact disc DEC 2894588602.



Figure 1.6: Rhythm section parts for an A section in "The Impossible Task." The drums play these same rhythms, with fills under the longer note values. The mixed-meter closing phrase (mm. 246-248) is this scene's primary recurring hook.



Figure 1.7: Rhythm section parts for a B section in "The Impossible Task." Drums play a two-bar, hip-hop breakbeat pattern.

The bridge changes up the groove, with piano and bass figures accenting the drummer's hip-hop breakbeat (Figure 1.7). The horns work within this rhythmic framework as well, playing an angular riff that starts subtly and builds up over time, while the guitar and flute soar above with a new melody. This melody provides a lyrical element in a tune otherwise built on rhythmic patterns and riffs.

The C section returns to the A section's swing feel, now unencumbered by intricate chord changes or cross-rhythmic hits (Figure 1.8). The horns play a bluesy riff, similar to the one heard in the A section, over a series of four repeating chords with a pedal point in the bass. A final, full-band statement of the mixed-meter hook completes the tune.

"The Impossible Task" continues with a rampaging guitar solo, the voice of the story's villain. While the rhythm section vamps over the C section chord pattern, the guitarist has instructions to play a power octave with "wild distortion, bends, etc. ad lib" (m. 296) and then to "shriek, wail, roar!" over the non-functional chord changes (m. 304). After those 15 bars, the solo continues over the full AABC form, which naturally leads the soloist to settle down a bit before building up to a new climax over the last C section. Here again the audience hears an extremely chaotic introduction to a more focused section.

With its complex time feel, hip-hop bridge, often non-functional harmony, and distorted rock guitar solo, "The Impossible Task" hardly sounds like traditional jazz. However, there is one respect in which this is the most traditional scene in the entire

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Figure 1.8: The final section of the form in "The Impossible Task" features a burning blues riff over a driving swing feel. Each repetition of the riff adds new players, until the full ensemble comes together with powerful quartal harmony on the mixed-meter hook.

suite: it is the only place where a tune is followed by a solo over the same form and chord changes. As the guitar solo finishes, the horn section returns with a quick series of tension-building chord stabs, ending on a powerful altered dominant. The scene's mixed-meter rhythmic hook appears again here, but there is little else to provide a sense of

closure; the tune is not restated, the dominant chord not resolved. It is with a strong sense of unfinished business that Act II begins.

After a pause, a brief classical interlude leads into a mournful piano motif, and from there into a soft, minor-key ballad (Figure 1.9). This scene, "Doubt and Inspiration," portrays the hero struggling to lift himself up from a dark place. The ballad melody is heard first on bass, then on piano, and finally on flugelhorn. With each iteration a new instrument is added, and the tune is spun out in a different way. This is especially true when the flugelhorn takes the melody: the key shifts up a whole step, the tempo gets slightly faster, and after a few bars the meter changes to 3/4 time. The music is more hopeful here, but it doesn't stay that way for long before descending back into an almost dirge-like 4/4 pedal point.

This ballad section is very much inspired by the compositions of Kenny Wheeler. Certain devices are right out of Wheeler's playbook, such as the opening bass melody (Wheeler uses this device in "Consolation" from *Sweet Time Suite*) as well as the melodic shape and slow 3/4 feel in the latter half of the flugelhorn solo (resembling "For Jan," another movement of *Sweet Time Suite*).⁸ More importantly, the harmony here is inspired by the techniques Wheeler uses to create his signature "romantic melancholy."⁹

What finally rouses the hero is a reprise of the "Village" theme from the beginning of Act I. Perhaps he has remembered why he came on this journey in the first

⁸ Kenny Wheeler, <u>Music for Large and Small Ensembles</u>, Kenny Wheeler Orchestra, ECM compact disc 843 400-2.

⁹ Gene Lees, "Kenny Wheeler: Slowly but Surely," <u>JazzTimes</u>, December 1999, <<u>http://jazztimes.com/articles/20565-kenny-wheeler-slowly-but-surely</u>> (1 December 2009).









Figure 1.9: Act II begins without the rhythm section in a brief classical interlude that descends into a melancholy ballad. The ballad form is heard in three different variations on different instruments, with the solo piano motif (mm. 402-05) played before each.

place; perhaps he has found strength in his commitment to the people who are counting on him. Here the theme is presented in its chorale form, with the first two phrases left incomplete and the holes filled in by the flugelhorn soloist. As before, these conversing voices come together in a unison line, a brief a cappella bridge leading to a return of the music from "The Impossible Task." The hero has finally found his inspiration, and is now prepared to face his challenge head on.

"The Impossible Accomplished" portrays the final struggle between hero and villain, and the victory of the hero. Guitar and flugelhorn trade A sections, with horns playing background figures the last two times to keep the momentum going. The guitar and flugelhorn trade fours through the B section, and their duel reaches a climax as they solo together over the C section. The music moves one last time from chaos to focused energy as the soloists hit the mixed-meter hook rhythm together, then continue into a unison statement of the B section melody. The angular horn riff appears underneath, first in the alto and tenor saxophones and then expanding throughout the horn section, building up toward a final climactic C section.

This time, however, the C section material never comes. Instead it is replaced by an unexpected statement of the village theme, fully harmonized and soaring above a new 12/8 Afro-Cuban groove in the rhythm section. Gaps between phrases are filled by the B-section riff in guitar and flute, and the groove shifts rapidly back and forth between these two rhythmic frameworks until the new material wins the day. The full band strikes a triumphant dominant-sus chord over a newly energized 12/8 groove (Figure 1.10).





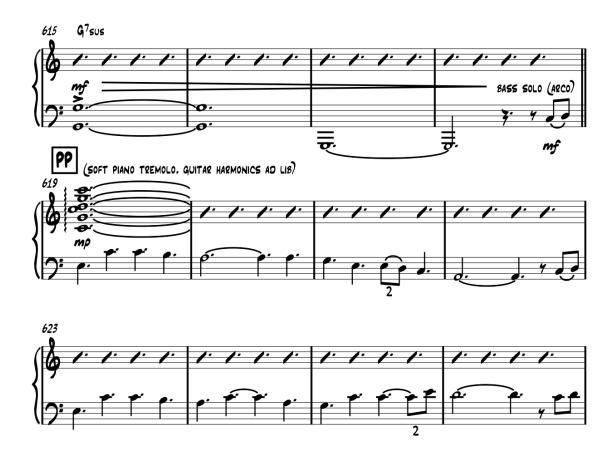


Figure 1.10: At the climax of the suite, the full ensemble ascends to a triumphant dominant-sus chord (m. 611). The orchestration thins out over the next eight bars, until only the rhythm section remains to play a final rendition of the "Village" theme. It has a new, quiet intensity here, a sign of how the hero has been changed by the journey.

The music stands on the dominant for eight bars in an orchestrated diminuendo, eventually dropping down to just the rhythm section. Finally the texture is reduced to a wash of piano tremolos and guitar harmonics, with the drummer continuing the 12/8 feel softly with hands rather than sticks. The bassist takes up his bow again for a final reprise of "The Village." It is the full version of this theme, not heard since the piece's beginning, and now it is in a brighter key with a subtle rhythmic drive, a quiet intensity that was missing before. The journey has come full circle as the hero returns home and the old storyteller delivers his epilogue. The final, rubato phrase of the folk song resolves into a soft horn chord (Figure 1.11), bringing an end to *A Hero's Journey*.



Figure 1.11: The suite concludes with an allusion to the chorale version of the "Village" theme and a final, soft horn chord.

Chapter Two: Melodic Themes

A Hero's Journey features four important melodic themes, coinciding with the first four scenes: "The Village," "The Winding Road," "The Impossible Task," and "Doubt and Inspiration." The "Village" theme is the first to be introduced, and also the most important to the story. It symbolizes the hero's humble origins, the people he fights for, and the place where his journey begins and ends. It is simple but profoundly meaningful: it is home.

This theme appears through the piece in three significant variations, distinguished primarily by their orchestration. The most complete version is played on solo bass, a simple folk song with a light wash of harmony behind. *A Hero's Journey* begins and ends with solo presentations of the theme, easily recognizable but not exactly identical: the opening is played rubato in the key of A-flat major, while the conclusion is in more energetic 12/8 time in the key of C major. The conclusion also features a subtle reprise of the chorale harmony in the piano part (Figure 2.1). The effect is not one of simple bookends, but rather of a storyteller delivering a prologue and epilogue.



Figure 2.1: The "Village" theme as presented at the end of *A Hero's Journey*, with the piano alluding to the chorale version of the theme in the last four bars.

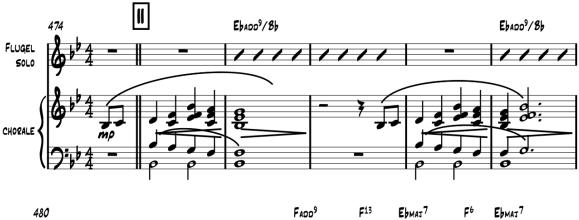




Figure 2.2: The chorale version of the "Village" theme as heard in Act II. The initial rising line is reshaped to better accommodate the horns, and shortened phrases create gaps that are filled in by the flugelhorn soloist.

The second version of the "Village" theme is written as a horn-section chorale, and is heard in A-flat near the end of "The Village" in Act I, as well as in B-flat near the end of "Doubt and Inspiration" in Act II (Figure 2.2). In this version the initial ascending leap is softened by an intermediate note, creating a more idiomatic horn line that also lends itself well to a gradual unfolding of harmony through contrary motion. Another significant change is that the first two phrases are incomplete, leaving a gap to be filled in by the flugelhorn soloist. While the solo bass theme opens and closes the story, the chorale version is a living part of it, a chorus of voices interacting directly with the hero to send him off on the journey and later inspire him to complete it.

A third and final variation of the "Village" theme is heard near the end of the piece, in the scene "The Impossible Accomplished" (Figure 2.3). This version resembles the chorale version, with horn section harmony, shortened phrases, and gaps filled in by another voice (this time a written figure for flute and guitar). However, this time around the atmosphere is very different, with a brighter key, a more lively tempo, rapid shifts between rhythmic feels, and a triumphant ascent into the suspended dominant chord at the climax of the piece.

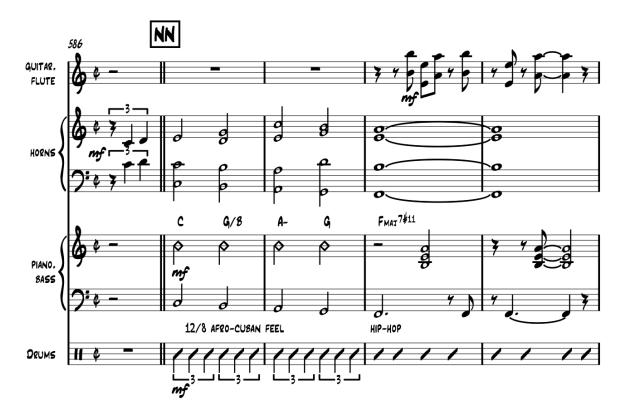




Figure 2.3: This intense section in "The Impossible Accomplished" sets the "Village" chorale to an eclectic set of rhythms, moving back and forth between the established hiphop breakbeat and a new 12/8 Afro-Cuban pattern. Figure continues on next page.



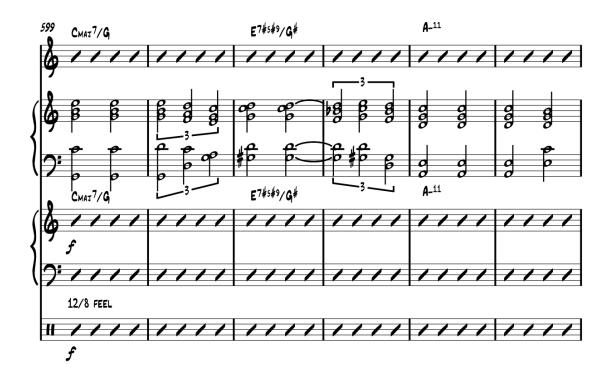
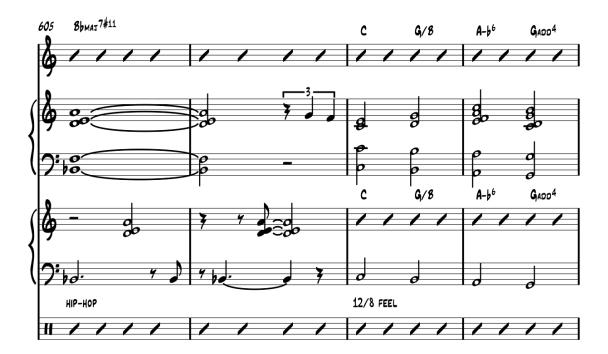


Figure 2.3 (continued): The music intensifies with a deceptive resolution to F-sharp minor (m. 595) and the beginning of a longer horn line. Figure continues on next page.



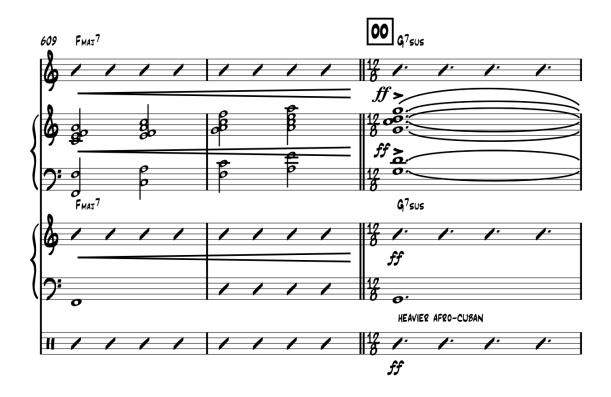


Figure 2.3 (continued): The "Village" chorale ascends to a dramatic peak, landing on a triumphant dominant-sus chord that sets up a return to the opening material.

The "Winding Road" theme in the second scene is built around a rising-fourth motif. It is first presented in the tenor saxophone at letter D (Figure 2.4), with the orchestration gradually building up to include full horn section harmony along with a counter-melody (Figure 2.5) in guitar and flute. The rising fourth motif reappears in the backgrounds behind each of this scene's two solos (Figure 2.6), building up each time into a full statement of the theme with varying instrumentation.

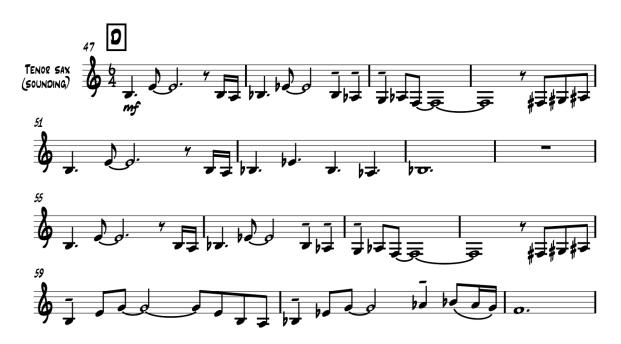


Figure 2.4: The exposition of the "Winding Road" theme, built on a rising-fourth motif.



Figure 2.5: The second time through the "Winding Road" form, a new melodic voice is added whose patterns of activity and space create a counterpoint to the main theme.



Figure 2.6: The main theme's rising fourth motif reappears in the solo backgrounds.

The "Winding Road" music is intended to evoke a sense of wandering through an unfamiliar landscape. It is full of ups and downs, but never arrives at a clear destination and is ultimately interrupted by the abrupt shift at letter S (m. 201) into the chaotic group solo section. However, it does make a brief cameo appearance near the end of the flugelhorn ballad in "Doubt and Inspiration," providing some small sense of resolution for this theme (Figure 2.7).

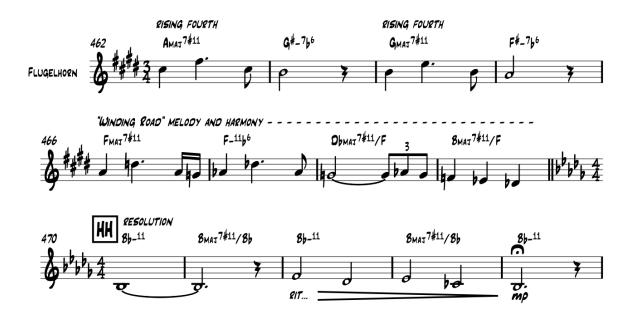


Figure 2.7: The rising fourth motif from "The Winding Road" appears in the 3/4 section of "Doubt and Inspiration," followed by a more complete version of the theme including both melody and harmony (mm. 466-69).

The next important melodic theme occurs during the bridges of "The Impossible Task" and its continuation, "The Impossible Accomplished" (Figure 2.8). If these two scenes are thought of as a single tune spanning both acts, then the bridge melody can be heard as the "head in" in Act I and the "head out" in Act II. This tune also has a significant non-melodic theme in the mixed-meter hook that ends the A and C sections (see Chapter One, Figures 1.6 and 1.8). The hook helps tie the diverse sections together into a cohesive whole, while the lyrical bridge melody provides contrast against the hyperactive rhythms that characterize these two scenes.



Figure 2.8: The bridge melody in "The Impossible Accomplished," played by guitar and flugelhorn, immediately follows their improvised duet and effectively acts as the "head out" of a tune that spans both acts of *A Hero's Journey*.

Chapter Three: Harmonic Development

A Hero's Journey begins with a folk song, and the harmony that accompanies it is extremely simple: for the first 15 bars, it doesn't move at all. After that, only one note changes, suggesting a movement from I to IV (Figure 3.1).

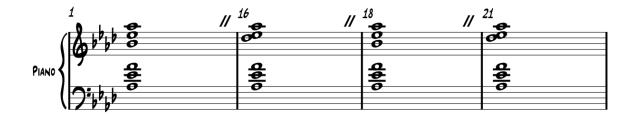


Figure 3.1: Simplified piano part showing its single moving voice during the opening.

The following solo section (Figure 3.2) takes this idea of slow development through a single changed note to an extreme, inspired in part by the ritual revelation of individual notes in Indian ragas. As the soloist introduces each note, the rhythm section incorporates it into their accompaniment chord: first one new note, then two, then three, until eventually every note but the leading tone is available. Above a persistent A-flat pedal point, the harmony has gradually transformed from a simple added-ninth chord into a complex wave of dissonant sound.

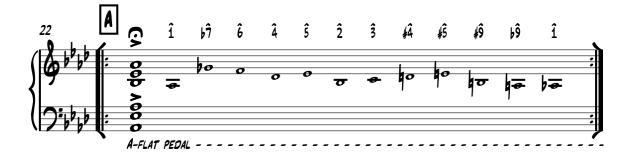


Figure 3.2: The notes in the first flugelhorn solo progress from relative consonance to relative dissonance over the persistent pedal point before finally resolving back to the root. Every chromatic pitch is represented except for the leading tone G.

In the chorale version of the village theme, the horns begin in unison but quickly fan out to create simple, functional I-IV-V harmony over a root pedal (Figure 3.3). In the third phrase (mm. 29-33) this harmony becomes slightly more colorful, with major sevenths added to the I and IV chords along with a few passing tones, and the bass line slowly begins moving to hit the chord roots. Finally, in the last phrase (mm. 34-36) the bass joins the lowest horn voice in its scalar descent. This is completely diatonic music, intended to feel like home; but even here there is a subtle progression away from stability and toward something more adventurous.

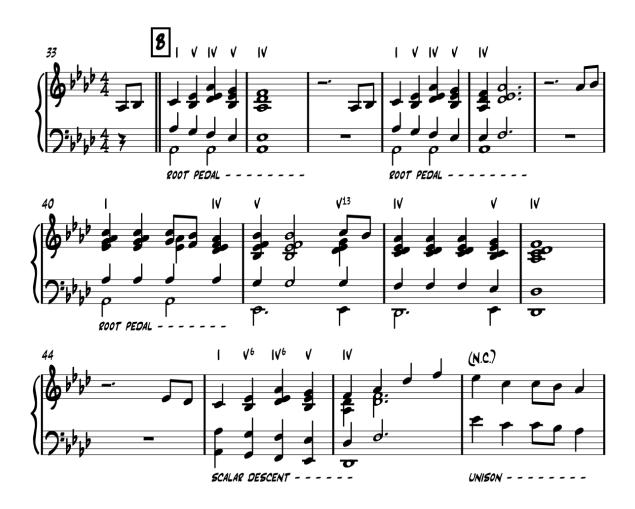


Figure 3.3: Harmonic analysis of the village theme chorale.

All three sections of "The Village" make use of pedal points, and pedal points will reappear throughout *A Hero's Journey* in different contexts. There is also another common harmonic device that has yet to be introduced: parallel motion of chord shapes, especially parallel triads. The next two scenes, "The Winding Road" and "The Impossible Task," derive much of their harmonic material from interactions between these two devices.

The A sections in "The Winding Road" derive their harmony from pairs of righthand shapes that move in parallel over a left-hand pedal point (Figure 3.4). The stacked fourths in the first bar move down a half step in the second, the fourth + tritone shape in bar three is repeated a whole step down in bar four, and so on. The final two bars of the phrase break the pattern, condensing into a triad and moving upwards to create tension leading into the next phrase. The pianist plays only these bare shapes at first, contributing to a mood of desolation, but during the solo sections they are fleshed out into a chord progression for comping: Fmaj7(#11), F-11, D maj7(#11), Bmaj7(#11),

Fmaj7(#11), F-11, Bmaj7(#11), G/F.

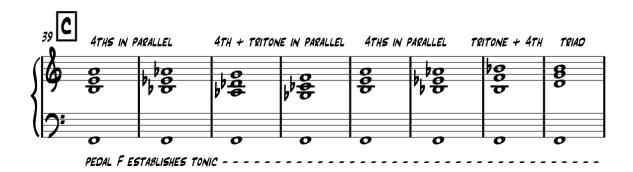


Figure 3.4: The A-section harmony in "The Winding Road" is derived from 4ths-based shapes moving in parallel over a pedal point.

The bridge abandons this pedal point, but the chromatic planing continues in force. The horns pick up on the second-inversion G major triad heard in the piano part, moving that shape around in alternating major thirds and whole steps during their brief fanfare (Figure 3.5). The softer chords that follow use the same technique, but a fourth

voice is added underneath the triads: first a whole step below, creating a suspended sound, then a half step below for the resolution into the solo section.



Figure 3.5: The "Winding Road" bridge features chromatic planing of major triads in the horns. The soft chords are derived from similar triad shapes with an added note below.

The solo changes themselves continue the theme of pedal points and parallel motion, although in more subtle ways. Parallelism can be found in the shifting minor chords at letters I (m. 99) and O (m. 157). An obvious pedal point is the long minor-sus sound at the beginning of each solo section. A less obvious example occurs later: the motion from Bb-11 to Amaj7(#11) and back again (mm. 107-112) is based on the idea of a right-hand pedal point, formed by the key chord tones Db/C#, Eb/D#, and Ab/G#, against a changing bass note. This particular harmonic pattern plays an important role in "The Impossible Task" as well (Figure 3.6). The rapid harmonic motion in the A section is contrasted by the relatively static harmony in the B section, emphasizing the B section's melodic line and especially its unique rhythmic groove.

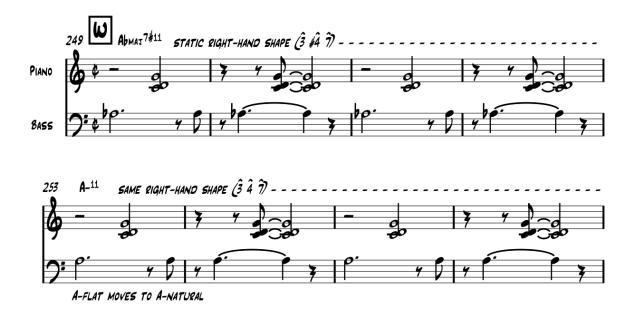


Figure 3.6: A right-hand pedal point over a changing bass note begins the B section in "The Impossible Task," placing the focus on rhythm rather than harmony.

The mostly nonfunctional A section harmony in "The Impossible Task" was constructed using major triads above varied bass notes. This section's minor-7s, sus chords, and slash chords can all be expressed as a major triad above a root, and that's exactly how they are voiced the first time through (Figure 3.7). The only exception is the long altered-dominant chord at the end, but even it has the implication of an Eb tonality in its upper structure. Each four-bar phrase can be thought of as an two-bar antecedent where the triads move upwards in parallel, and a two-bar consequent where their motion is more free. The consequent phrase in measures 210-211 holds a bit of an Easter egg: these four chords are actually a reinterpretation of the parallel triad motif heard in "The Winding Road" (Figure 3.5 above), following the same pattern of movement down a major third, up a whole step, and down a major third.



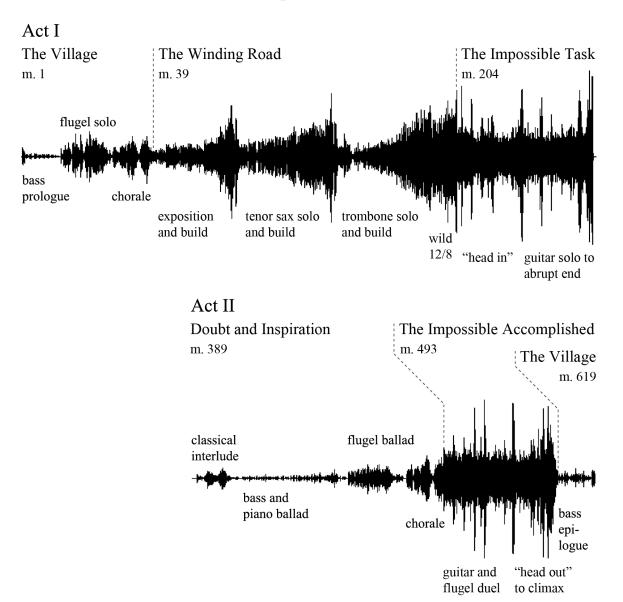






Figure 3.7: In the first A section of "The Impossible Task," every chord except the last is voiced as a major triad above a root. Several of these structures recall the chromatic planing from "The Winding Road."

APPENDIX A



Waveform Map of A Hero's Journey

Figure A-1: A labeled waveform presents a visual image of the suite's overall developmental arc. The waveform used is from the premiere performance of *A Hero's Journey*, recorded in the Recital Studio at The University of Texas at Austin by Butler Music School Recording (Dan Hemingson, engineer), 1 November 2009.

APPENDIX B

A Hero's Journey

Suite for Ten-Piece Jazz Orchestra

by Conor Lane Brace

copyright 2009

Act I: The Village, The Winding Road, The Impossible Task

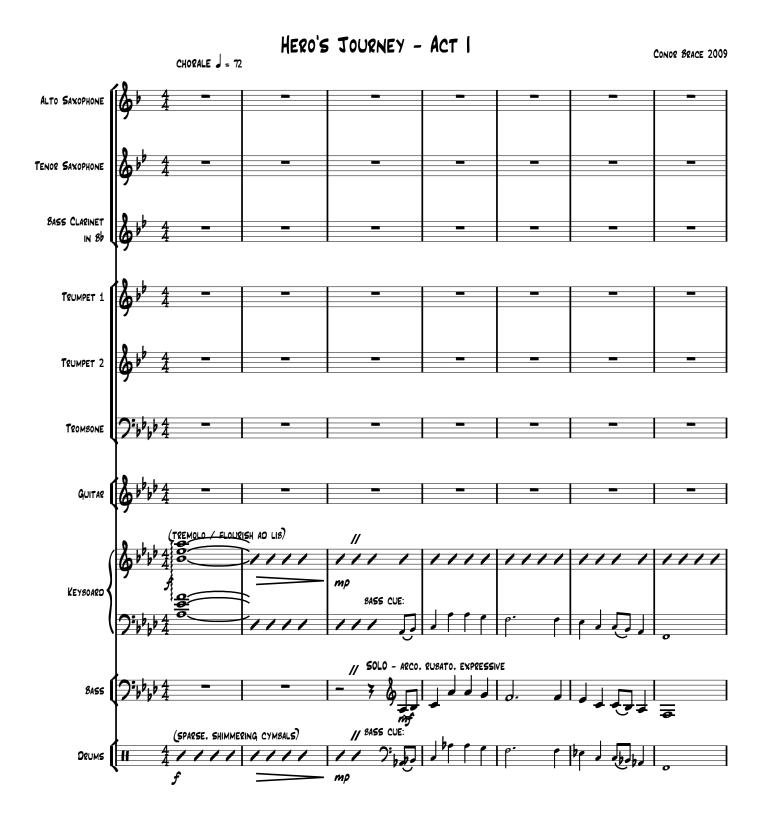
Act II: Doubt and Inspiration, The Impossible Accomplished, The Village

Approximate total length:

25 minutes

Instrumentation:

Alto Saxophone (doubling on Flute) Tenor Saxophone Baritone Saxophone (doubling on Bass Clarinet) 2 Trumpets (1 doubling on Flugelhorn) Trombone Guitar Piano Bass Drums































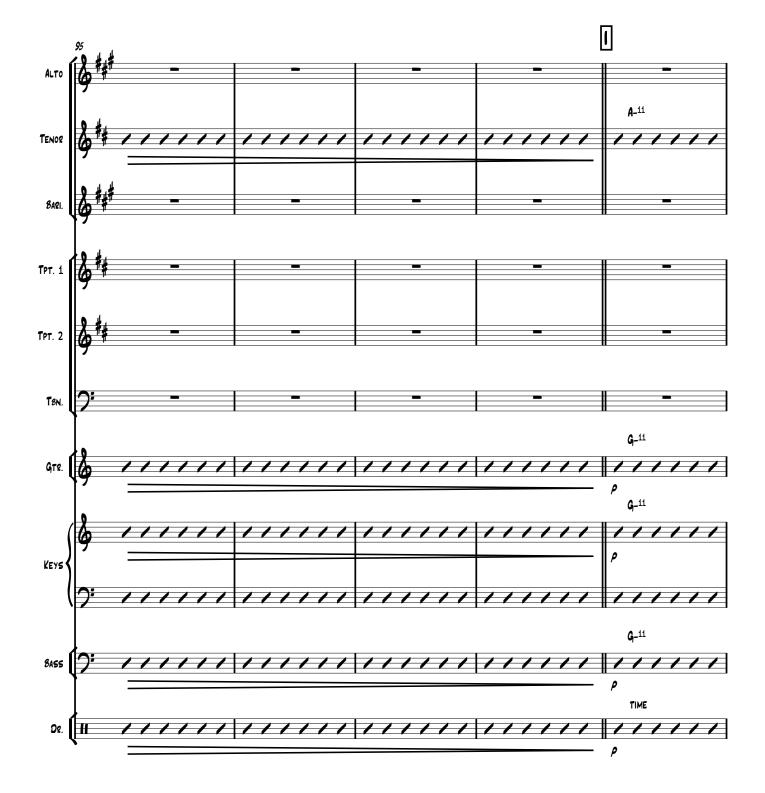


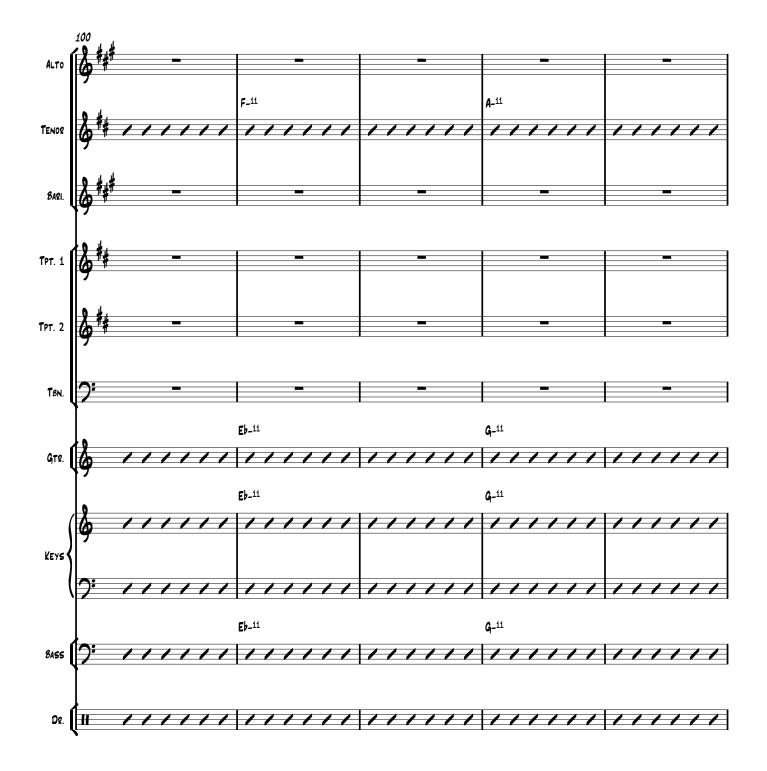


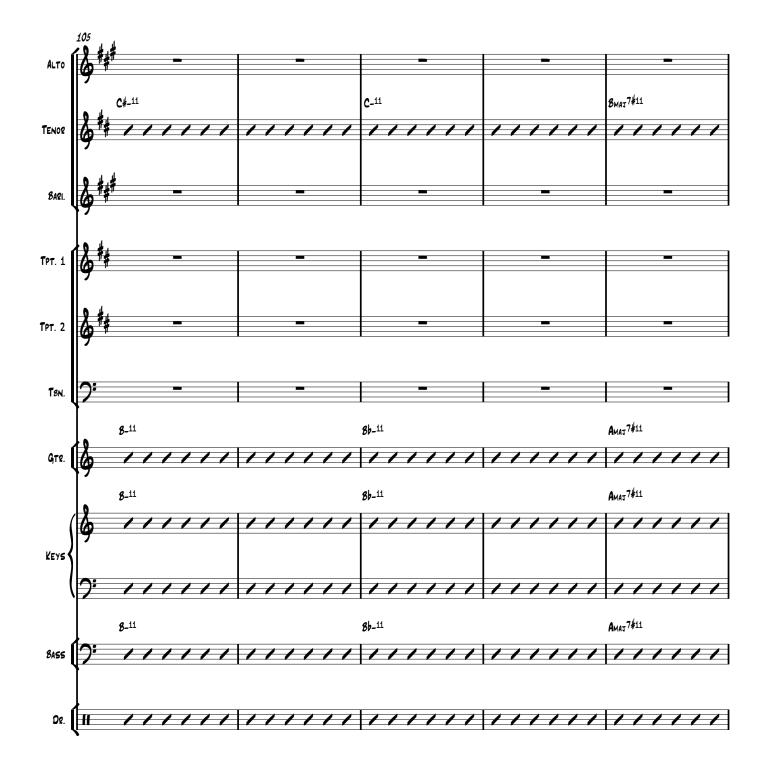


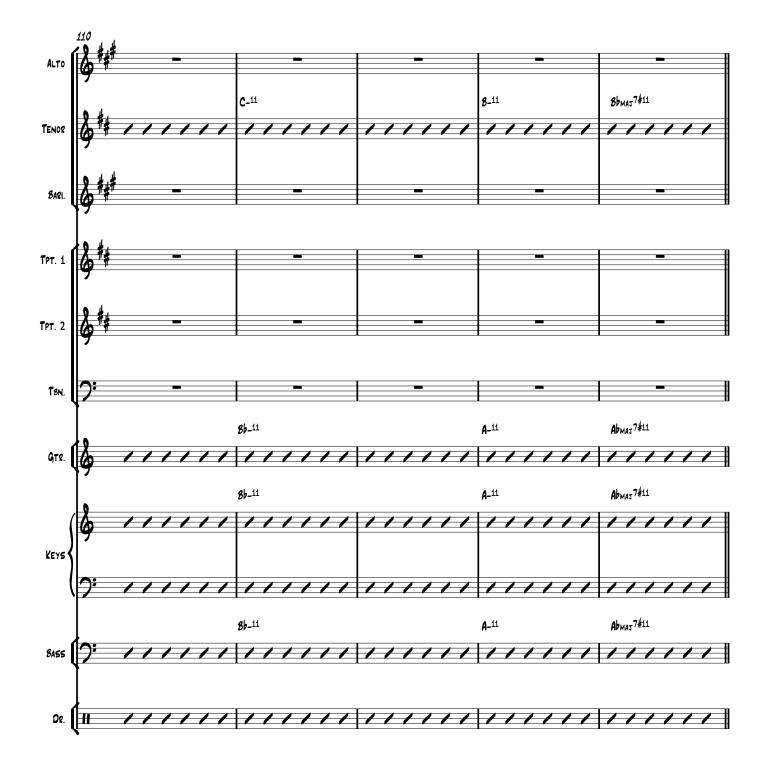


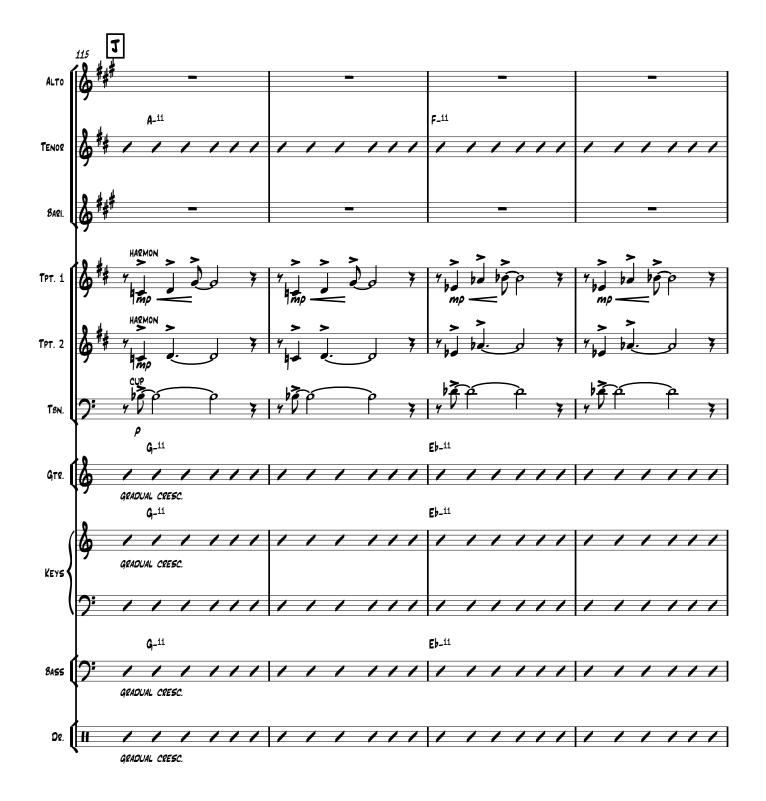






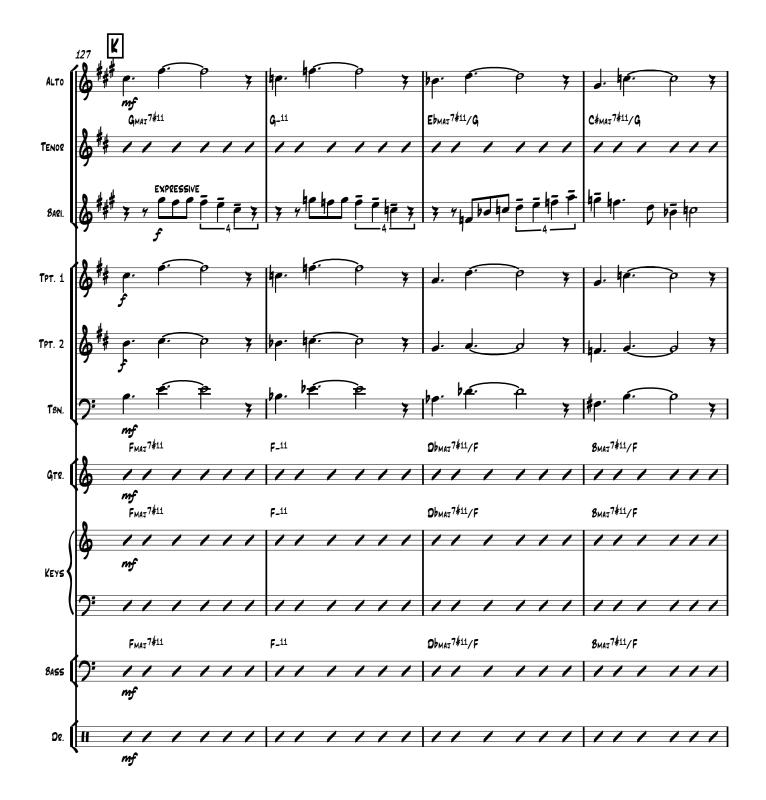












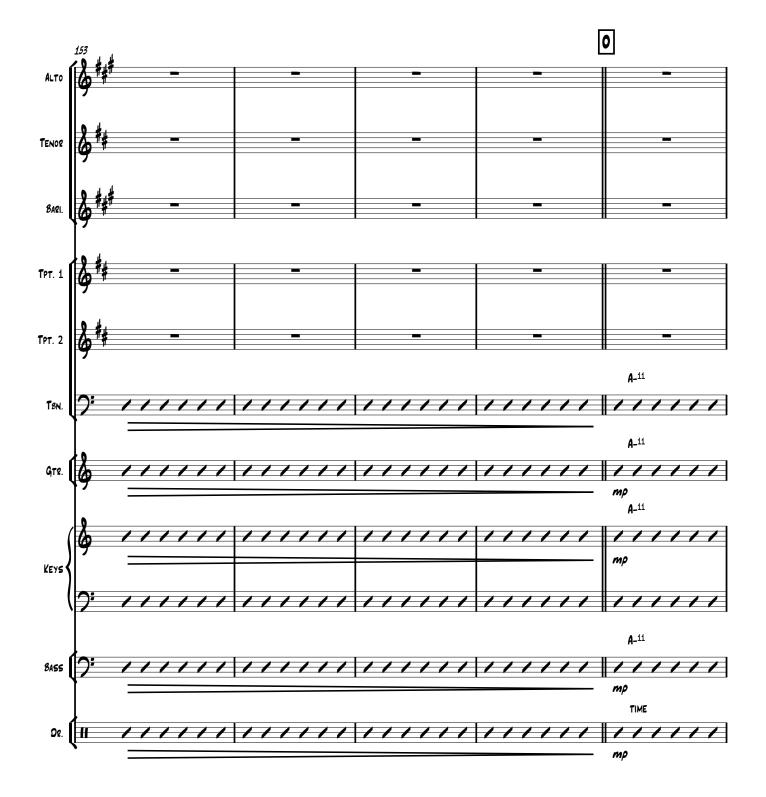


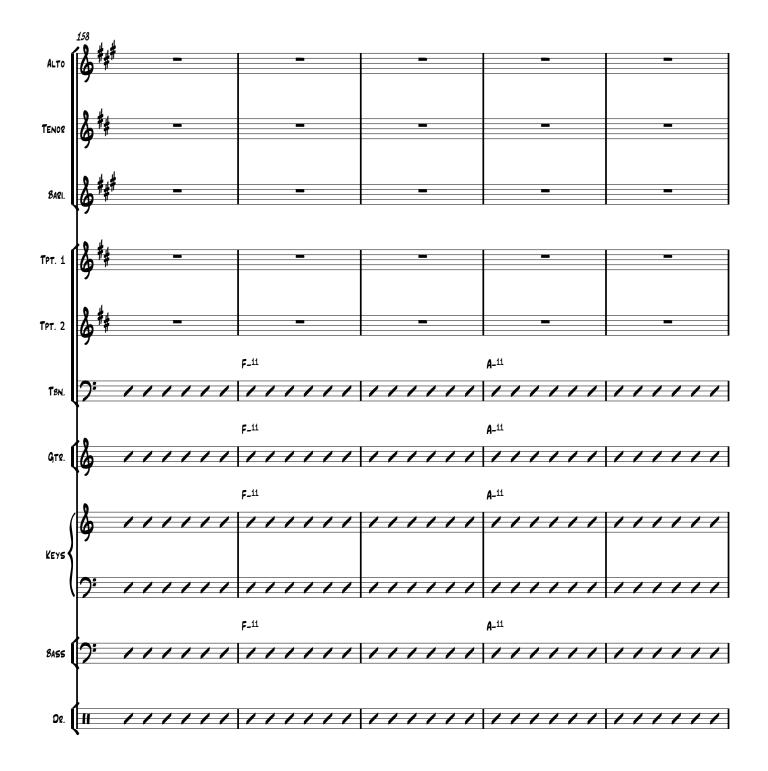


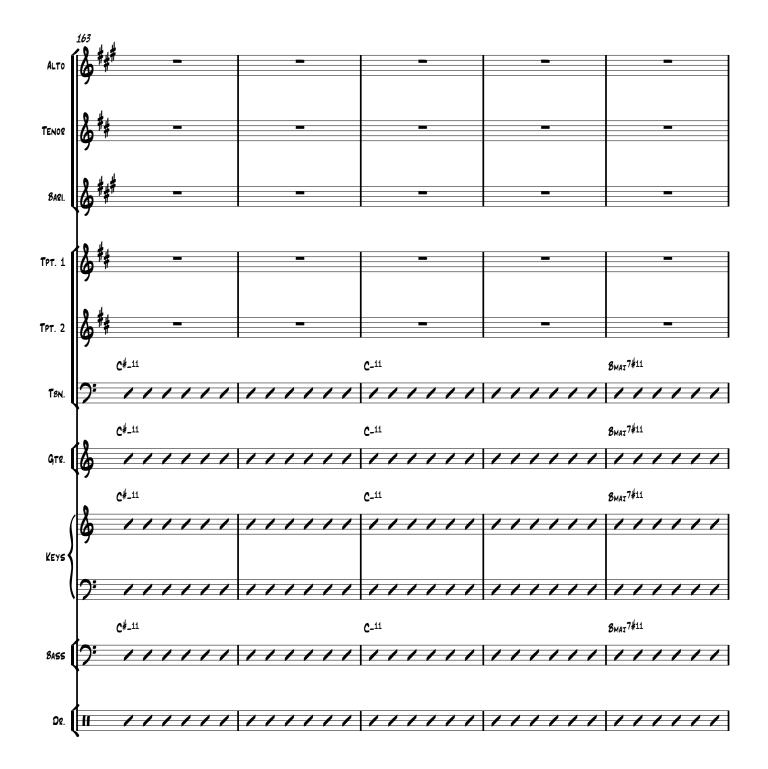


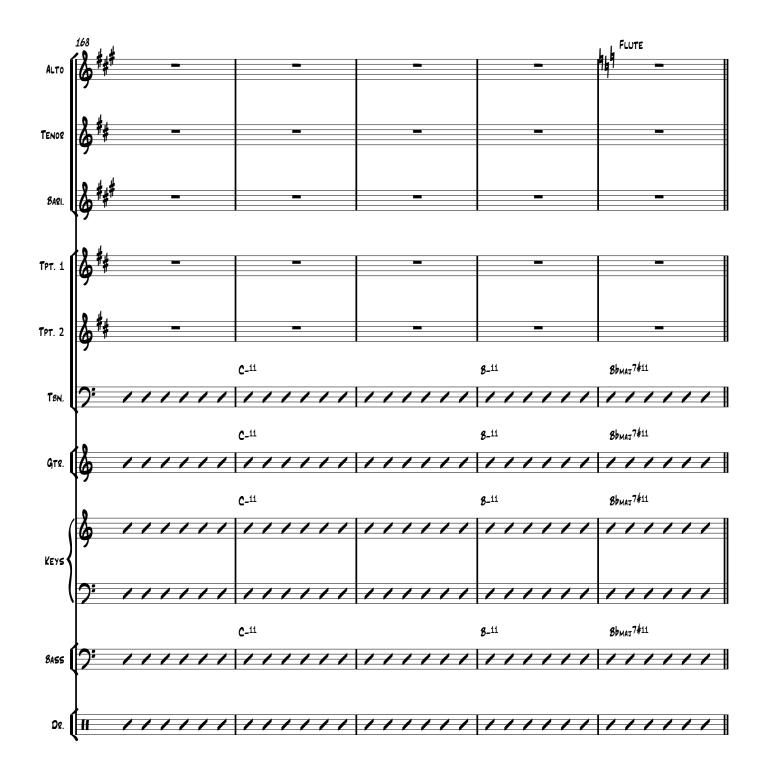


















































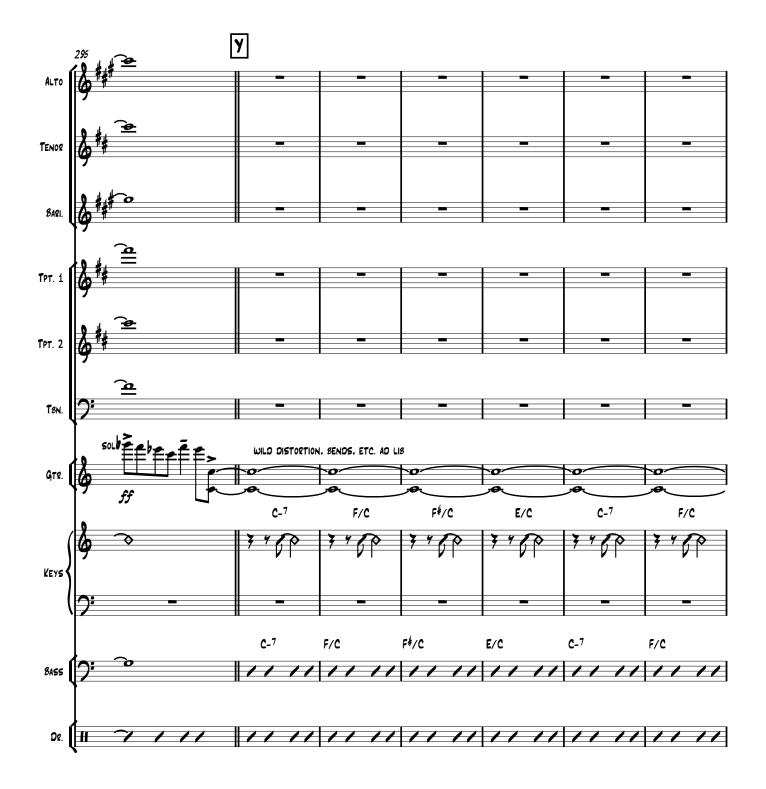










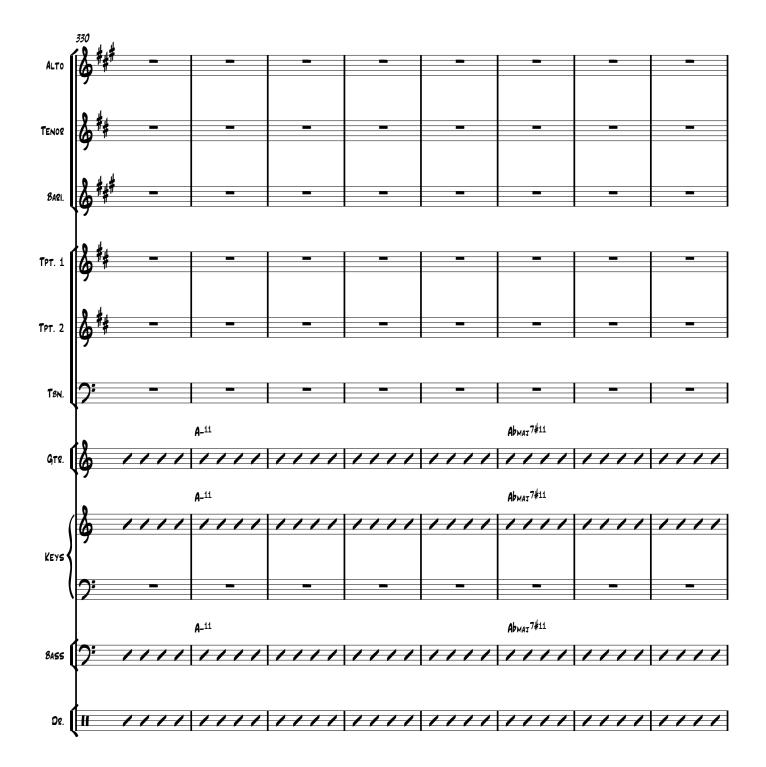


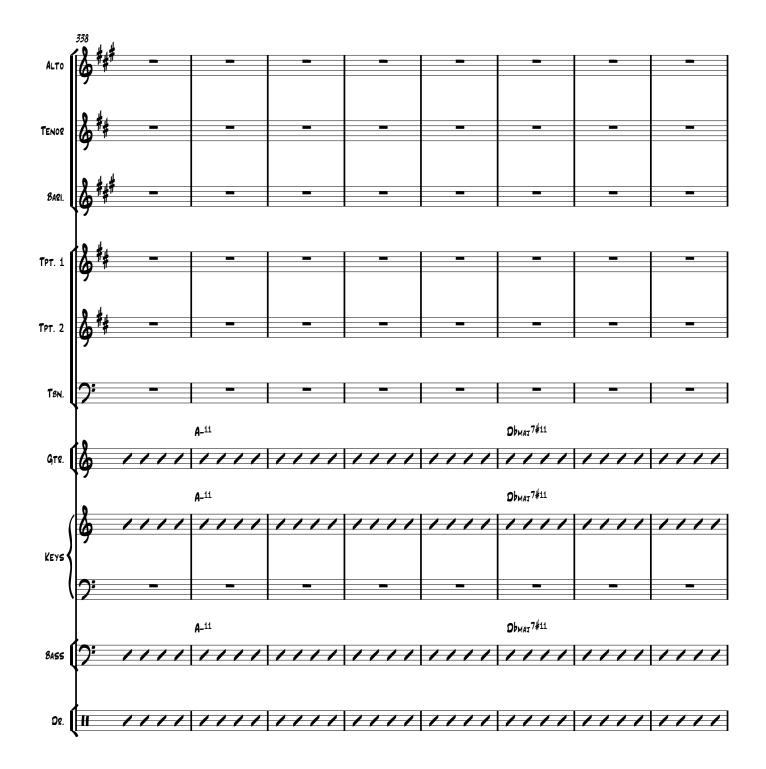


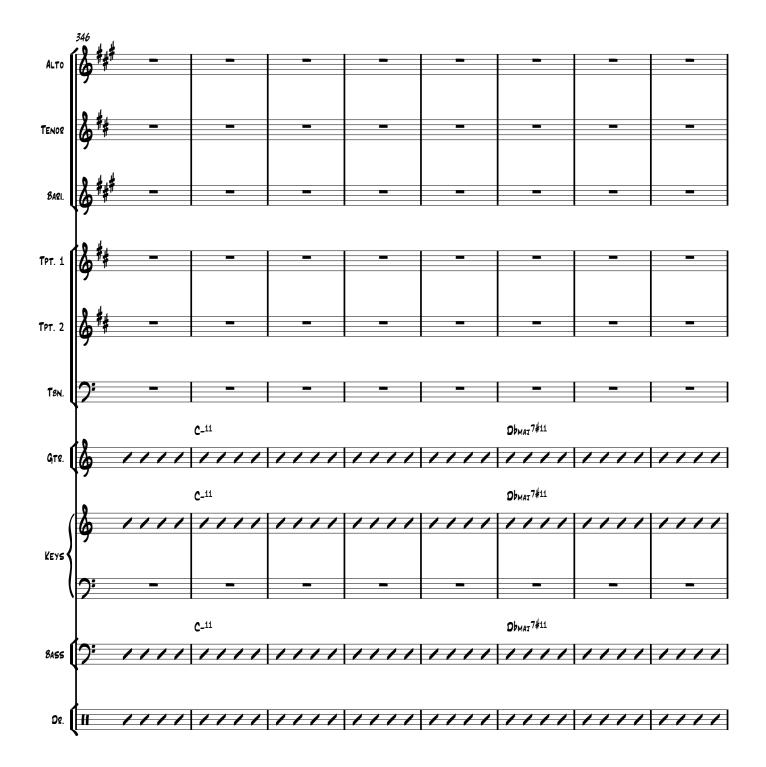


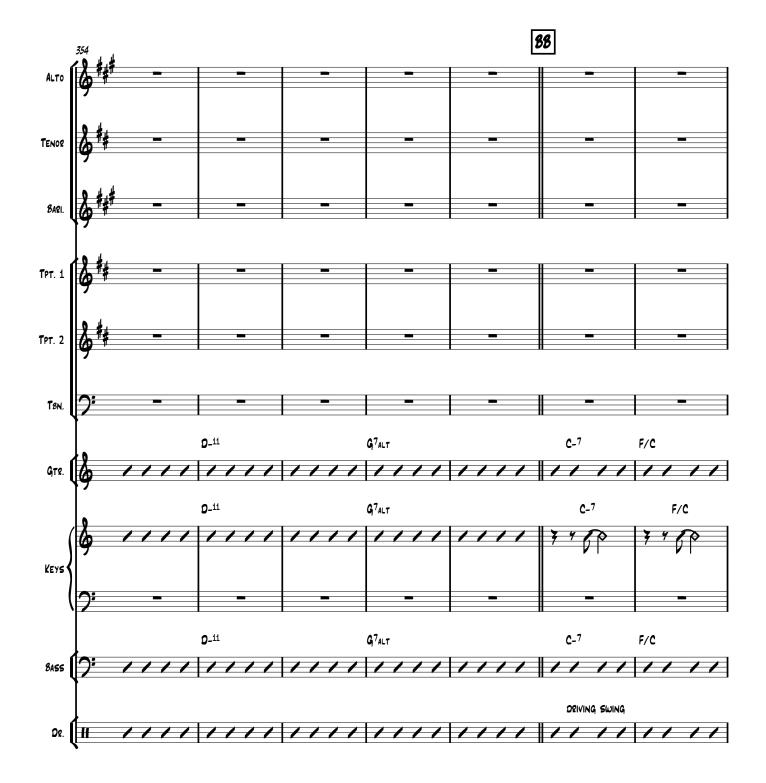


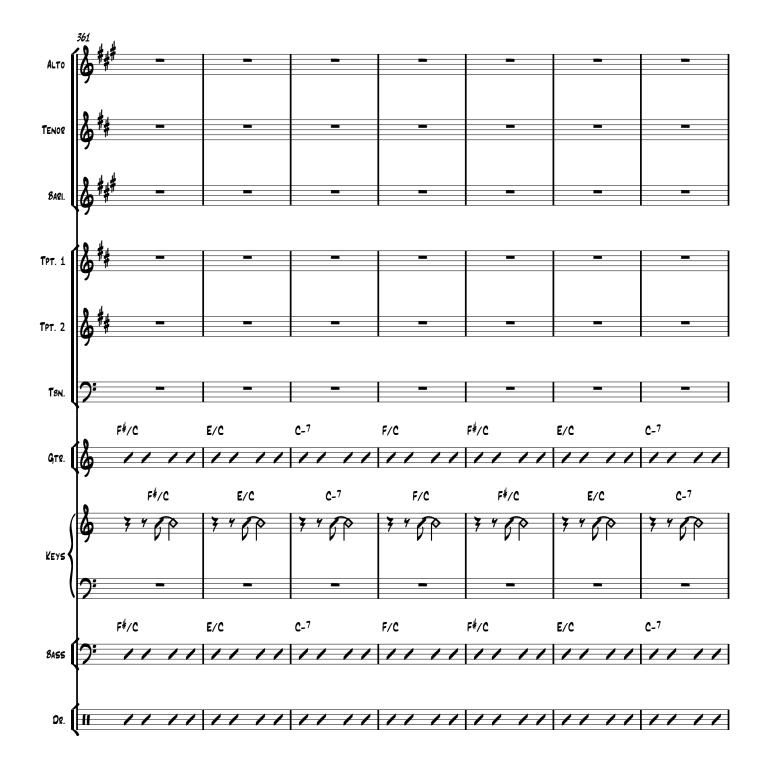












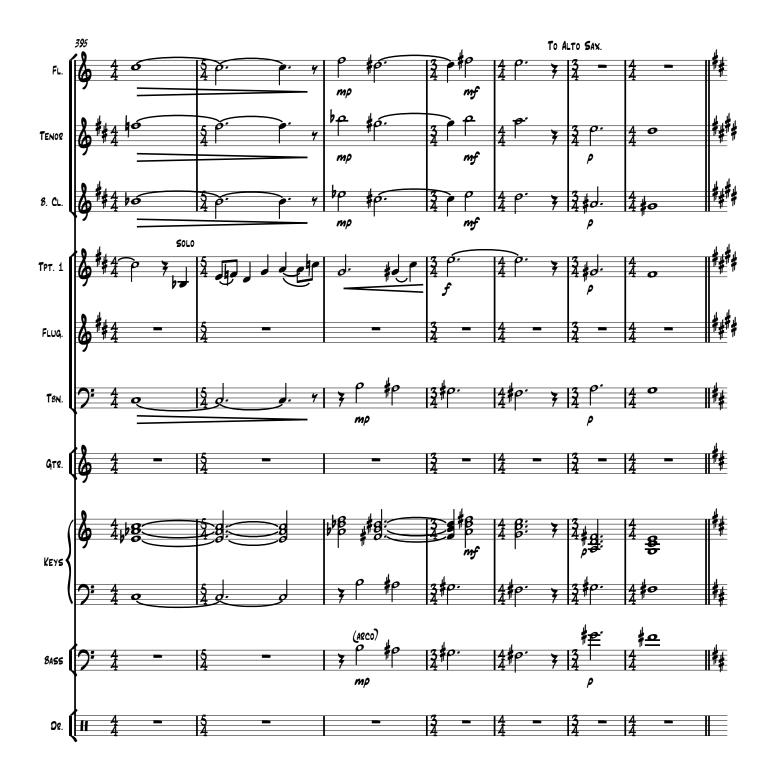








HERO'S JOURNEY - ACT II CONOR BRACE 2009 = 80, FREELY PLAY (FLUTE) 38**9** (BASS CUES) 0 há Flute mp рцаў РДАУ (BASS CUES) Б 2 TENOR SAXOPHONE 4 mρ PLAY (BASS CLARINET) (BASS CUES) BASS CLARINET þe 10 240 5 4 IN Bb mp (BASS CUES) PLAY -To-. TRUMPET 1 2 4 mp mf FLUGELHORN (BASS CUES) PLAY 5 br 15 ρ TROMBONE 4 4 mρ GUITAR 6 (BASS CUES) PLAY 36 268 100 4 'nρ KEYBOARD SOLO, ARCO è 24 **5** 4 Bass mρ 4 5 2 2 DRUMS H









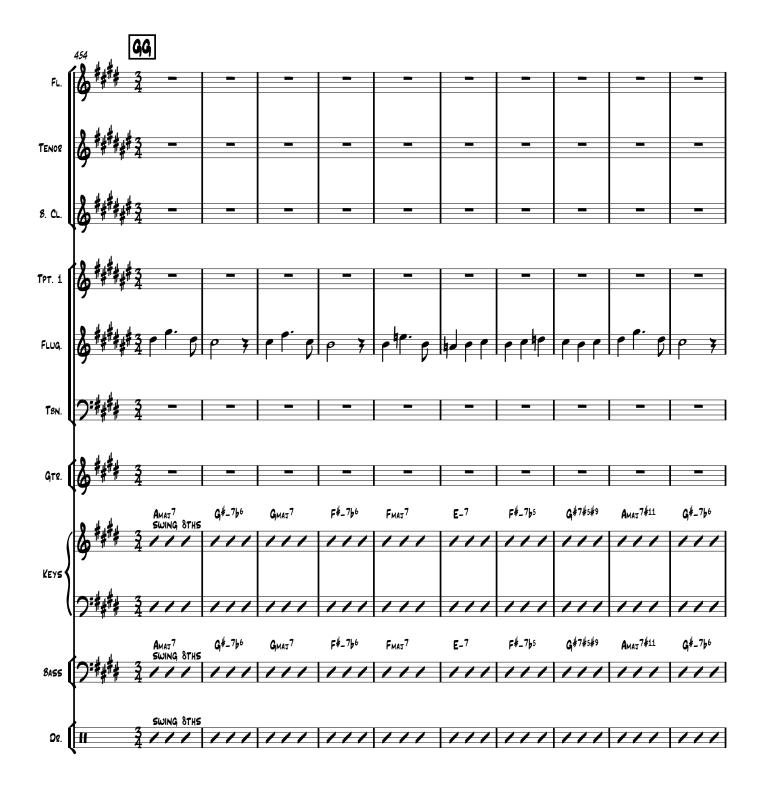


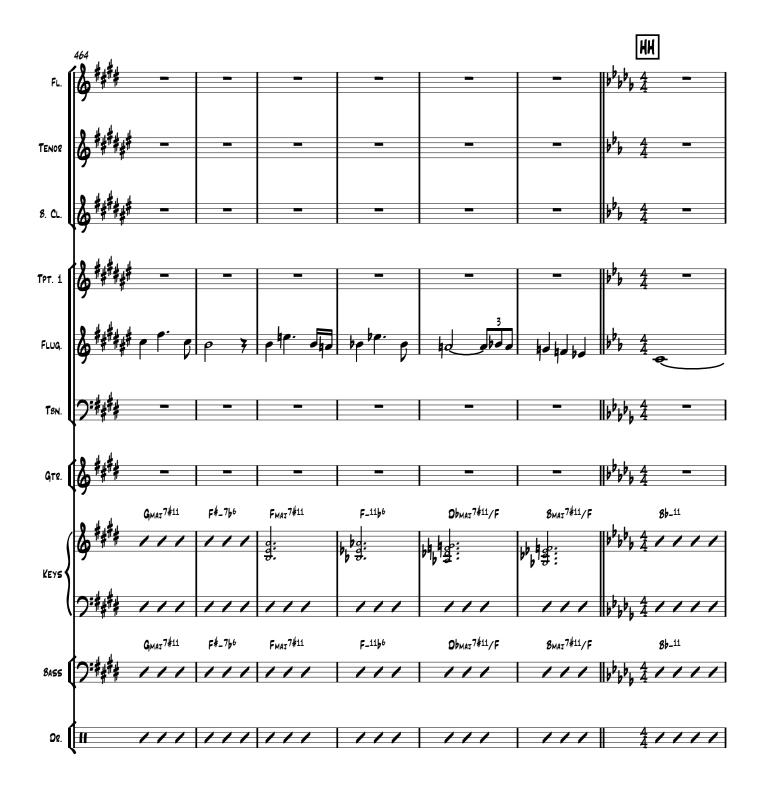
















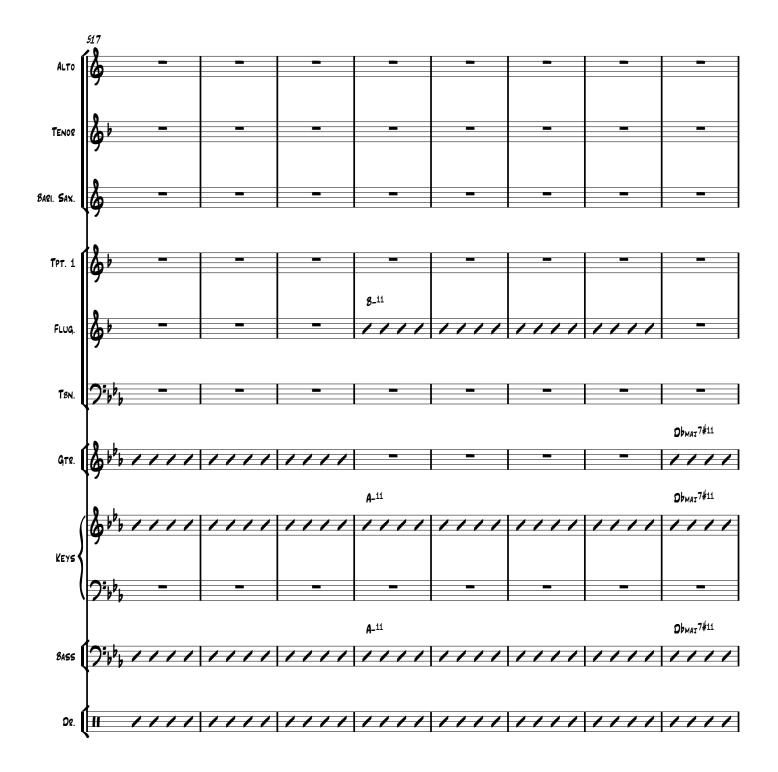






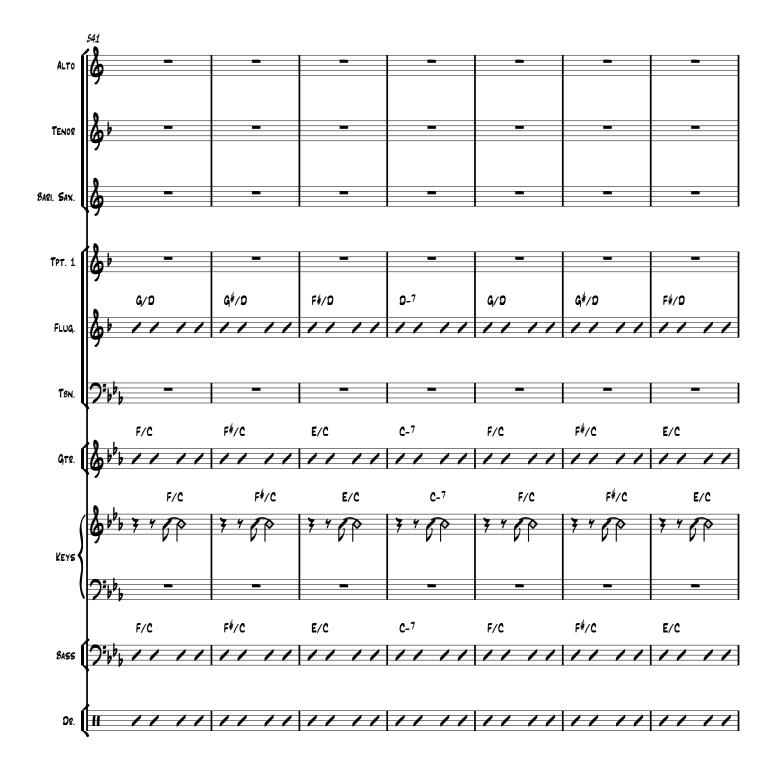




























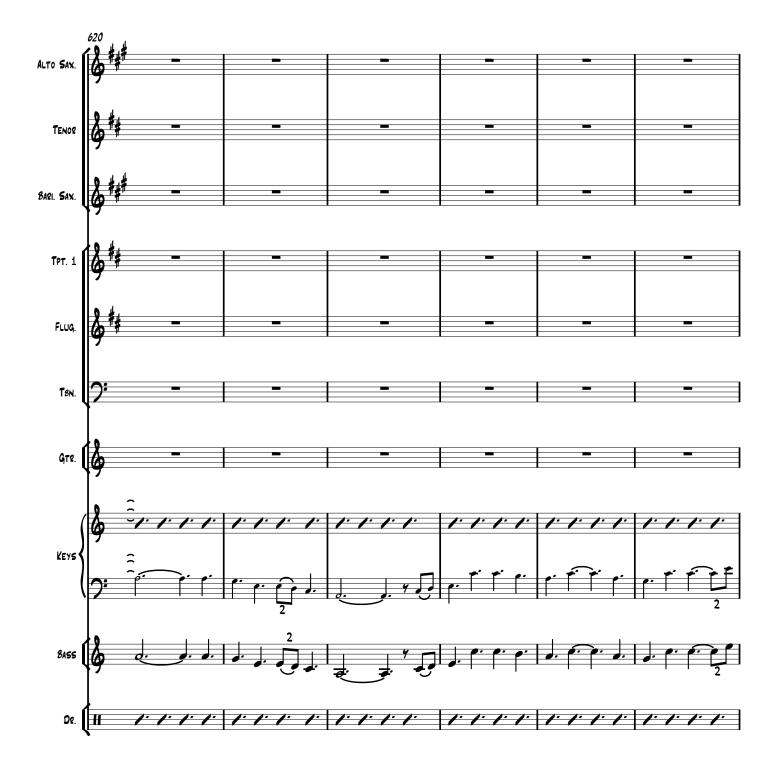




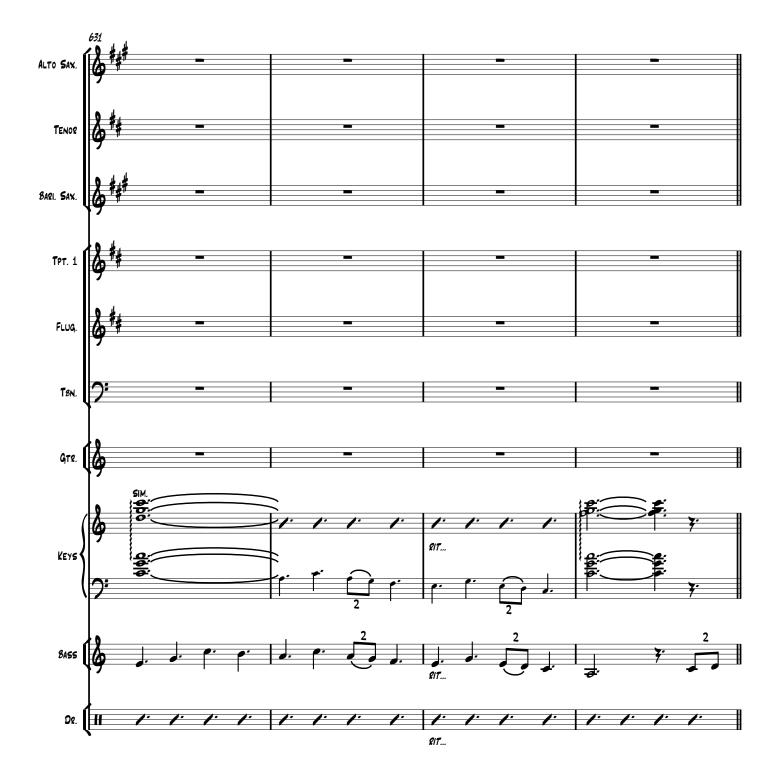














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VITA

Conor Lane Brace was born in Houston, Texas. After graduating from Jack C. Hays High School, Buda, Texas, he entered the School of Architecture at the University of Texas at Austin, but quickly realized his mistake and transferred to the School of Music. Conor received the degree of Bachelor of Music in Jazz Composition as well as the degree of Bachelor of Arts in Plan II from the University in December 2006. In January 2007, he entered the Graduate School at the University of Texas at Austin. Studying under Dr. John Mills and Dr. Bruce Pennycook, Conor developed a passion for writing music for media that carried him into the world of film and video game production and inspired the creation of *A Hero's Journey*.

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This thesis was typed by the author.