The Rise and Development of Contemporary European Big Band Writing: An Analysis of Composers Peter Herbolzheimer, George Gruntz, Kenny Wheeler, Helge Sunde, and Florian Ross

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THE RISE AND DEVELOPMENT OF CONTEMPORARY EUROPEAN BIG BAND WRITING: AN ANALYSIS OF COMPOSERS PETER HERBOLZHEIMER, GEORGE GRUNTZ, KENNY WHEELER, HELGE SUNDE, AND FLORIAN ROSS

By

Russell Adam Spiegel

A DOCTORAL ESSAY

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THE RISE AND DEVELOPMENT OF CONTEMPORARY EUROPEAN BIG BAND
WRITING: AN ANALYSIS OF COMPOSERS PETER HERBOLZHEIMER, GEORGE
GRUNTZ, KENNY WHEELER, HELGE SUNDE, AND FLORIAN ROSS

Russell Adam Spiegel

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It has been argued that a distinctive European big band sound began to emerge in the second half of the 20\textsuperscript{th} century and has continued to develop over the following decades. As of this writing, however, only one book – in German – attempts to address the idea of a contemporary European big band approach, and no known publications are extant in the English language that specifically analyze works solely of contemporary European big band composers. With this in mind, this essay explores the music, compositions, and arranging styles of the following influential contemporary European composers: Peter Herbolzheimer, George Gruntz, Kenny Wheeler, Helge Sunde, and Florian Ross. The author identifies specific techniques, compositional trends, and influences that make these writers unique to the European continent. These findings are then applied in the creation of three extended jazz compositions totaling approximately 35 minutes in length and the author enumerates how these techniques and concepts were incorporated.
Acknowledgements

In spite of all the time, effort, and expense that went into this paper, it was and is a labor of love. However, it would never have come to fruition without the selfless assistance I received from the many incredibly helpful and knowledgeable people I came into contact with in the pursuance of this project. A few of the most important are listed below.

For my research on Peter Herbolzheimer, I am deeply indebted to Peter’s widow, Gisela Herbolzheimer, who graciously put up with all my emails, and was still able to answer all my questions and more, and was even willing to make available for me Peter’s score of “Blues in Latin.” I am also most grateful to Jörg Achim Kauffmann for his insights into Peter’s writing and his own experiences with him, Jürgen Schwab for providing me with his insightful article about jazz in Germany, and Wolfram Knauer from the Jazzinstitut Darmstadt who not only took the time to answer all my queries both via email and in person, but who was able to steer me into deeper historical waters by introducing me to the father figure of German – and even European – big band jazz, Kurt Edelhagen.

In looking into the music and background of George Gruntz a propitious meeting in Tel Aviv brought me into contact with bassist Arie Volinez, who had performed with Gruntz for many years. Arie put me in touch with Gruntz’s son Felix, who not only provided answers to my queries, but was able to provide invaluable information regarding George’s entire musical output and historical timeline, as well as a copy of the score to “General Cluster.” Felix in turn suggested I also speak with Gruntz friend and fan Dr. Harry Smallenburg, who filled in many gaps.
A number of years ago saw the start of a longstanding friendship with a London-based Scot named Charles Alexander, who at the time was the publisher of Great Britain’s most popular and established jazz magazine *Jazzwise*. What I was to learn later was that not only is Charles an avid jazz guitarist and writer, but that for a time he was Director of the Jazz Centre Society in Great Britain, and has for decades been involved with European jazz at all levels, including organizing concerts and tours for a band called Azimuth (whose personnel were John Taylor, Norma Winstone, and Kenny Wheeler).

When I told Charles of my research and plans to come to England, he not only promptly put me in contact with Norma (who we were able to visit at her lovely house on the English seaside), but also Wheeler alumni Nick Smart (who now heads the Jazz Department at the Royal Academy of Music in London), Stan Sulzmann, and John Parricelli. Charles organized my entire itinerary and even put me up in his house during my time there. No word of thanks can suffice for this selfless behavior, so he will have to accept my gratitude here, as well as my thanks to Norma, Stan, Nick, and John for taking the time to meet and speak to me about Kenny. Nick also organized me getting a copy of Kenny’s “Four, Five, Six” via the Kenny Wheeler archives located at the RAM, for which I will remain ever grateful.

For my chapter on Helge Sunde, here I have Helge himself to thank for his gracious answering of my queries and for providing me a copy of “The Speedcouch.”

During my travels in Germany in the summer of 2015, I took a train up from Frankfurt to Cologne where I met and spent an afternoon with Florian Ross. Florian took me to his favorite restaurant for lunch and we then proceeded to the Hochschule für Musik in Cologne, where I was able to conduct an interview with him. Florian was not
only willing to answer all my questions, he also gave me a box containing all his CD
releases, as well as sending me a copy of “Prickly Pear.”

For my work on this paper and for the compositions that ensued, I am forever
grateful to my professor Gary Lindsay, who guided me throughout the process and
prodded me to always look deeper into the music. I also am thankful to have such
eminent members on my committee, Dr. John Daversa, Dr. Charles Mason, and guitarist
extraordinaire John Hart, and for the recording of my compositions I am deeply indebted
to fellow jazz writing students Andy Stermer, Neil Carson, and Lucas Apostoleris.
Preface

After having studied at the Berklee College of Music, in 1988 an opportunity arose for me to relocate to Germany. As I began to establish myself musically in a new location I found myself involved with a number of big bands, from the more official bands of the Frankfurt Music Conservatorium and the Youth Big Band of the State of Hesse (Jugendjazzorchester Hessen) to more local bands in the smaller towns around Frankfurt. There I found myself often playing big band charts by European writers whose names I didn’t recognize.

Years later I found myself in Trieste, Italy, where I was preparing for a series of concerts and workshops culminating with a performance at the local jazz festival, aptly named, “Trieste Loves Jazz.” I had been in attendance at the press conference for the festival and met there a number of local musicians. One of these people was the bandleader of a local hot jazz big band who subsequently invited me to accompany him to a big band festival that was being held in the village of Marezige, Slovenia.

A big band festival? In Slovenia? Incredibly, for over ten years this small locality located on the hills overlooking the port city of Capodistria has been hosting what may be the world’s first and only big band festival. This is no small event, either. The festival is two days long, featuring five big bands per day and is covered both by the Slovenian press and on Slovenian national television, with big bands from all over Slovenia and Italy performing there, for little or no fee.

I began asking myself whether the big band – something we often associate with American high schools, colleges, and professional groups – has actually been for many years a worldwide phenomenon and not solely an object of American provenance. This
paper takes a deeper look into this trend by introducing the reader to the general historical background of big band jazz in Europe and how that led to the development of five composer/arrangers the reader may or may not be familiar with: Germany’s Peter Herbolzheimer, Switzerland’s George Gruntz, the Canadian-born, but known for his work in British jazz, Kenny Wheeler, Helge Sunde of Norway, and perhaps the most contemporary of them all, Florian Ross, who, though German, can claim his musical roots right across Europe and beyond.
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CHAPTER 1 – INTRODUCTION

The globalization of jazz is seldom written about, yet its effects are profound and far reaching. – Stuart Nicholson, *Is Jazz Dead?*¹

Jazz has become as German as spaetzle – or as Jewish as matzoh, or as Japanese as sushi or as French as steak and frites. – Berndt Ostendorf²

**Background**

The history of jazz in Europe dates back to the release of the *Original Dixieland Jazz Band*’s million-selling record “Livery Stable Blues” in 1917³ and subsequent European tours,⁴ but American involvement and direct influence on the development of European jazz is believed to coincide with the advent of the deployment of groups such as Lieutenant James Reese Europe’s 369th infantry “Hellfighter” band that performed for both the American military and French civilians during World War I.⁵ As the white-ruled American Army did not know what to do with this cadre of African-American soldiers,

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¹ Nicholson, Stuart. *Is Jazz Dead?: (or Has It Moved to a New Address).* New York: Routledge, 2005, p. xii.


³ “…when the first jazz recording was made in 1917, an aurally transmitted heritage of an otherwise inaccessible milieu was suddenly opened up for global appreciation – and crucially imitation – by recordings that passed unhindered through national borders and political and social barriers around the world.” Nicholson, p. 169.


⁵ There were in all 27 new black regiments able to establish regimental bands and saw action in Europe. See Peter M. Lefferts, “Black US Army Bands and Their Bandmasters in World War I” (2012), Faculty Publications, University of Nebraska Lincoln, Paper 25. Also, Reid Badger, *A Life in Ragtime: A Biography of James Reese Europe*. Oxford University Press, 2007, pp. 190-201.
they had placed many of them under French command.⁶ The French, used to having African soldiers in their ranks due to their colonial past, were far more accepting of their new American troops. Once in this unique situation, these African-American soldiers experienced for the first time acceptance as human beings without the stigma of race and the weight of American history and slavery.⁷ After returning to America, these soldiers told stories about their encounters of life away from Jim Crow.

On account of these experiences, as well as a growing demand for the new craze of American hot jazz, at the end of the war a number of African-American jazz bands embarked on tours to the European continent. Quite a few of these musicians decided to escape the segregation and racism rampant in America at that time and resettle in Europe, such as Josephine Baker and Arthur Briggs settled in Paris, while many others chose other European cities.⁸ Others soon followed these first émigrés and were able to gain renown and success unimaginable in the United States. Artists such as Alberta Hunter, Ben Webster, Doc Cheatham, Dave Tough, and Benny Carter⁹ became staples on the European jazz scene, while the clarinetist and soprano saxophonist virtuoso Sidney Bechet became an idolized and revered public figure in France.¹⁰

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⁶ Badger, p. 171.

⁷ “The French people knew no color line.” Arthur Briggs, quoted in Badger, p. 167. Also, “Among the bandmasters and bandsmen, a significant few, familiarized during wartime with life among foreigners, went back abroad as civilians to enjoy the enthusiasm for their music and the relative lack of racism that they had experienced as soldiers” Lefferts pp. 39-40.

⁸ Moody, p. 17.

⁹ “I liked Europe professionally, musically, and socially. I’ve met many black musicians who speak of a special kind of freedom they feel there, escaping racial discrimination in America.” Benny Carter, quoted in Moody, p.28.

¹⁰ Moody, pp. 13-17, Zwerin, p. 537.
With the rise of Hitler and fascism starting in the early 1930s, most of these American “jazz exiles” were given the hard choice of leaving Europe or getting caught up in the impending conflict. By the beginning of World War II, most if not all American jazz artists had left the continent.\(^{11}\) Yet, as the war progressed and the Allies gained a foothold in Europe with the concomitant contact with the local inhabitants, a new generation of African-Americans, including jazz musicians\(^ {12}\) experienced for themselves the lack of the burden of American racial history and the relative freedom of European attitudes and prejudices,\(^ {13}\) as well as a more general embrace of culture amongst the European populace. After the war, as in the earlier period, again many opted to remain in Europe, at least for a time. These first few pioneers became the forerunners of a trend that was to become a choice for many jazz musicians, especially those of African-American background who hoped to escape the still full-fledged racism of the United States, as well as pursuing what they believed to be better economic and performance opportunities than they were able to find at home.\(^ {14}\)

At the same time, the end of the war prompted a reorganization of the media in Europe.\(^ {15}\) Groups across the continent such as the German “Tanz- und

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\(^{11}\) “During the thirties few American musicians held on to employment in Germany, and the onset of the Second World War effectively stopped the activity of American musicians in Europe as transmitters of jazz.” Ostendorf, p.9.

\(^{12}\) Many well-known African-American jazz musicians such as Thad Jones, James Moody, Jaki Byard, and “Philly” Joe Jones served in World War II.

\(^{13}\) Germany and its allies excepted. However, after the war was concluded and Americans were stationed overseas, there was a wide acceptance of non-white musicians and persons generally throughout Europe. See Zwerin, pp. 540-541.

\(^{14}\) Moody, *The Jazz Exiles*, p. xvii. Moody continually points to these reasons for many jazz musicians’ self-imposed exile throughout his book. See also Ostendorf, pp.10.

Unterhaltungsorchester” (dance and entertainment orchestras), forerunners of the modern radio big bands, became the first source of contact with jazz music for many European listening audiences who had not had access to this kind of music during the conflict.\textsuperscript{16} As jazz began to be disseminated across Western Europe and more American musicians relocated there, a new cultural exchange began to take place.\textsuperscript{17}

In the following years, the integration of European and American jazz continued apace\textsuperscript{18} beginning with the Kurt Edellhagen All Stars in Germany. A high point was reached with the establishment of the European-American group, the Kenny Clarke-Francy Boland Big Band in 1961.\textsuperscript{19} The Paris-based Clarke-Boland ensemble consisted not only of long-time American expatriate and bebop drumming legend Kenny “Klook” Clarke, but also a number of other American and jazz musicians from throughout Western Europe.\textsuperscript{20} This set the stage for the later development of contemporary European big band aggregations such as Peter Herbolzheimer’s Rhythm Combination & Brass (founded 1969)\textsuperscript{21} in Germany and the George Gruntz Concert Jazz Band (founded 1972) based in Switzerland.


\textsuperscript{17} William Kirk Bares, “Eternal Triangle: American Jazz in European Postmodern” (Ph.D. diss., Harvard University, 2009). “…a variety of European cities became the favored place for black and white jazz expatriates”, Ostendorf, p. 11.

\textsuperscript{18} For example, “German musicians found their first employment in G.I. clubs and German jazz fans found in the American Forces Network [AFN] a new jazz friend” Ostendorf, p. 11.


A further development that helped to set European jazz apart from its American counterparts was the much wider acceptance of free jazz and its call for “Emanzipation”\(^{22}\) from the prevalent American aesthetic. This led to a new approach being applied in predominantly Western European large ensembles such as Germany’s highly influential Peter Brötzmann\(^{23}\) and Alexander von Schlippenbach’s *Globe Unity Orchestra*,\(^{24}\) Holland’s *Willem Breuker Kollektif*,\(^{25}\) Mathias Rüegg’s *Vienna Art Ensemble*, Italy’s Giorgio Gaslini and his work with Carlo Actis Dato's *Italian Instabile Orchestra*, and the various projects by the British composer/arrangers Mike Westbrook, Neil Ardley and Django Bates, among others.

**Problem Statement and Need for Study**

From these beginnings a new European big band sound began to emerge in the second half of the 20\(^{th}\) century and develop over the following decades.\(^{26}\) However, as of this writing, only Daniel Lindenblatt’s book attempts to address the idea of a contemporary European big band approach,\(^{27}\) and no known publications are extant in English that specifically analyze works solely of contemporary European big band composers.


\(^{22}\) Lindenblatt, p.22, and Bares, p. 7.

\(^{23}\) Brötzmann’s *Machine Gun* from 1968 remains to this day one of the most influential European free jazz recordings. (*The Complete Machine Gun Sessions Bonus Tracks, Remastered Atavistic /ALP262CD*, 2007).

\(^{24}\) Berendt, p. 338.

\(^{25}\) Zwerin, p. 542.

\(^{26}\) Lindenblatt, p. 21.

\(^{27}\) Lindenblatt, as mentioned in footnote 10.
This paper thus explores the music, compositions, and arranging styles of the following influential contemporary European composers: Peter Herbolzheimer, George Gruntz, Kenny Wheeler, Helge Sunde, and Florian Ross. It is the author’s intention to identify specific techniques, compositional trends, and influences that make these writers unique to the European continent. These findings will then be applied in the creation of an three extended jazz compositions and the author will enumerate how these techniques and concepts were incorporated.

**Purpose and Research Questions**

The purpose of this study is to uncover the listed composers’ compositional techniques and apply them to writing large jazz ensemble pieces and to serve as a reference for other composers.

1. What aspects of each composer’s background and influences helped shape his musical choices?

2. What specific elements of melody, harmony, rhythm and orchestration, etc., makes these composers unique and to what extent does the application of these techniques differentiate these European composers from their American counterparts?

3. How might the author incorporate this research into new extended compositions for large jazz ensemble?
CHAPTER 2 – LITERATURE REVIEW

Historical Overview of Big Band Composition in Europe

As noted in the Introduction, there are no known extant works in the English language detailing the rise of the contemporary European big band. The only up-to-date reference is Daniel Lindenblatt’s recently published, *Das zeitgenössische Jazzorchester in Europa. Einblick in Tendenzen, Strömungen und musikalische Einflüsse des großorchestralen Jazz*, (The Contemporary Jazz Orchestra in Europe: A View of Tendencies, Currents and Musical Influences of Large Jazz Ensembles)\(^\text{28}\) which examines the works of contemporary writers Geir Lysne, Rainer Tempel, Monika Roscher, and the composers of the Backyard Jazzorchester. However, as intriguing as these writers may be, with the exception of perhaps Lysne, they are not generally considered influential European jazz composers. Furthermore, in his work, Lindenblatt only cursorily addresses the important question of why these writers write as they do and thus leaves open the question as to why contemporary European big bands sound the way they do. Lindenblatt does however manage to take up some of the antecedents in the development of a contemporary European approach to composing for big bands in general, though the essential link of American influences and especially the importance of the Clarke-Boland Big Band is left out of his discussion.

There are a number of works about particular bands that contain references to one or more antecedents and/or a general overview of big band activity in Europe. Foremost among these is the book, *A Life in Ragtime: A Biography of James Reese Europe*, by

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Reid Badger,\textsuperscript{29} which details the life, experiences, and African-American musicians’ first contact with the European lifestyle and subsequent beginnings of the relocation of many musicians to Paris. The Jazz Exiles\textsuperscript{30} by Bill Moody provides an excellent overview of the history and experiences of American expatriate jazz musicians. Mike Hennessey’s, Klook. The Story of Kenny Clarke\textsuperscript{31} gives a very nuanced account of the development and activities of the Kenny Clarke-Francy Boland big band.

More general studies that touch on this topic are Joachim Berendt’s, The Jazz Book: From Ragtime to Fusion and Beyond,\textsuperscript{32} and the chapter “Jazz in Europe: The Real World Music…or the Full Circle” by Mike Zwerin in The Oxford Companion to Jazz, edited by Bill Kirchner.\textsuperscript{33} Mike Heffley’s excellent, Northern Sun/Southern Moon\textsuperscript{34} concentrates specifically on the rise of European free jazz and the Emanzipation movement. A work that delves deeply into the nexus of the meeting between American, European, and African-American jazz is the invaluable Ph.D. dissertation by William Kirk Bares, “Eternal Triangle: American Jazz in European Postmodern”.\textsuperscript{35}


\textsuperscript{31} Mike Hennessey, Klook: The Story of Kenny Clarke, University of Pittsburgh Press, 1994.


\textsuperscript{33} Bill Kirchner, Editor. The Oxford Companion to Jazz. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000, 534-547.

\textsuperscript{34} Mike Heffley, Northern Sun, Southern Moon: Europe's Reinvention of Jazz. New Haven: Yale UP, 2005. Print.

\textsuperscript{35} William Kirk Bares, “Eternal Triangle: American Jazz in European Postmodern” (Ph.D. diss., Harvard University, 2009).
**The Craft of Jazz Composition and Arranging**

In terms of analytical works, there are two main types: (1) books that concentrate on jazz arranging and composition as a craft; and, (2) DMA essays that pertain to the topic at hand.

**Publications on Jazz Composition and Arranging**

The first category is divided by which emphasis the author chooses to take. Gary Lindsay’s *Jazz Arranging Techniques: from Quartet to Big Band*, Don Sebesky’s *The Contemporary Arranger*, and Rayburn Wright’s *Inside the Score* look mostly at the activity of arranging with Lindsay and Sebesky enumerating the various techniques they employ to this end, while Wright concentrates on an analysis of the big band arrangement styles of composers Sammy Nestico, Thad Jones and Bob Brookmeyer. Russell Garcia in both books of *The Professional Composer Arranger* looks specifically into the art of composition as well as arranging, and, while all the abovementioned volumes spend some time on the subject matter of orchestration, both Henry Mancini’s, *Sounds and Scores: A practical guide to professional orchestration* and Nelson Riddle’s *arranged by Nelson Riddle*, are almost completely dedicated to this topic. One of the few books that examines the modern elements and developments in jazz writing and improvisation is

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Roger Dean’s excellent *New Structures in Jazz and Improvised Music Since 1960*, and, for an alternative approach to jazz harmony, there is George Russell’s seminal *Lydian Chromatic Concept of Tonal Organization*.

**Previous Doctoral Research**

In the relatively new area of doctoral research in Jazz Composition, there are four important essay dissertations by former University of Miami graduates. The first is Christopher Jentsch’s, “Miami Suite”, which details the development and history of Jentsch’s original songs and his investigation and application of the suite format in works for large jazz orchestra. The second doctoral essay, “The Aslan Suite: A Doctoral Essay” by Scott Marlow Cowan, further develops the idea of the suite. In “*Quo Vadis-* Exploring Musical Forms in Jazz”, Jesse Milliner seeks to expand the perspective of jazz composers in their use of form and compositional techniques. This broadened perspective is illustrated in the author’s extended composition, which explores new or seldom used forms in jazz. The fourth doctoral essay is Jeremy Fox’s, “Six Arrangements for Vocalist and Large Ensemble Informed by Compositional Styles of Selected Studio Orchestra and Big Band Arrangers”. In this work, Fox has analyzed the compositional

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and arranging styles of six important jazz arrangers to examine the techniques used to create an ideal accompaniment for the human voice, and then applied the knowledge gleaned from this study to create six arrangements for vocalist and large ensemble.

**Works on the Composers for This Study**

At present, there are no books or articles extant that specifically examine the compositional techniques of the five selected writers. As such, preference will be given to primary sources, mostly scores and transcriptions, which allow the writer to delve deeper into the arranging, compositional style, and techniques used by each composer. This does not exclude biographical sources, as well as personal websites belonging to the writers themselves, inasmuch as they might offer insights on these topics.

48 The closest may be *kenny wheeler: collected works on ECM*, Fred Sturm, Ed. UE Publishing Musikverlags GmbH, 1997. This book is a collection of many of Wheeler’s compositions for both small and large ensembles released on the ECM label, along with a short interview with Wheeler conducted by Fred Sturm.
CHAPTER 3 - METHOD

In order to pursue the twin objects of analysis of extant works by the cited composers and to create entirely new compositions for large jazz ensemble informed by these findings, the author has examined musical passages by each writer, noting the compositional techniques. After providing an analysis for each transcription, the author has then composed three pieces informed by those techniques.

Data Collection

The author examines the scores of a number of big band compositions from each of the five chosen composer/arrangers. From this research, the writer has chosen one piece deemed indicative of each composer’s style. In these works, passages that merit special consideration are discussed as to how they demonstrate a technique or techniques in one or more of the following compositional areas: melody, harmony, voicing techniques, passing harmonies, countermelody, solo forms, foreshadowing, call and response, rhythm, orchestrational color, density, special effects, overall form, introductions and endings, and methods of accompaniment.

Further information into each composer’s compositional process is augmented via in-person interviews and emailed questionnaires with some of the composers (when living) and/or musicians who worked with the composer, jazz academicians, critics, and journalists, and family members of the composers who are able to offer insights into the particular composer’s processes.
Conception of the Original Pieces and Compositional Process

After analyzing the above information, the author has taken into consideration the various results in the conception and writing of three compositions for large jazz ensemble together whose duration is approximately 35 minutes in length.

Discussion and Summary of the Original Work

The author then provides a short discussion of his approach to the original works enumerating his compositional concepts, orchestral choices, and formal considerations. A final summary examines how the pieces influenced his composition and provide information as to what other composers may also explore in future works.
CHAPTER 4 – GROOVE MAN OF GERMANY: PETER HERBOLZHEIMER

It is impossible to speak about the music of Peter Herbolzheimer (b. 31 December, 1935 – d. 27 March, 2010) without a thorough understanding of the history and background of jazz orchestras in Germany and of Herbolzheimer’s personal biography. Above all, the story of the European radio big bands, and especially the German ones, are essential to any discussion concerning the rise and development of the modern big bands in Continental Europe. This chapter thus begins with a short examination of the history of the radio big bands in Germany before and directly after World War II.

The Rise of the German Radio Big Band

The very first regular music programs with jazz elements and featuring a consistent group of musicians was instituted at the Südwestdeutsche Rundfunktienst AG in April, 1924, though little actual jazz was played at the time.\textsuperscript{49} The first notable American musician to perform jazz on the German airwaves was none other than Sidney Bechet, who was residing in Frankfurt for a number of months in 1927. By the beginning of the 1930s, however, due to both an apparent lagging interest in the music and with the rise of the National Socialists and their prohibition of jazz in 1935, the early era for this music on the German airwaves came to an end.\textsuperscript{50}

After the end of the Second World War, German radio stations were reconstituted

\textsuperscript{49}Jürgen Schwab, “Die hr-Bigband und der Jazz in Frankfurt”. In Musik in Frankfurt am Main, edited by Evelyn Brockhoff. Frankfurt am Main, Verlag Waldemar Kramer, 2008, p.165. The original manuscript was given to the author for use in this paper. Schwab’s essay provides much of the information used in this paragraph.

\textsuperscript{50}Schwab.
under a regional system, and jazz was there from the start. Starting in 1946, various radio *Tanz und Unterhaltungsorchester* (dance and entertainment orchestras) were formed, with the idea of playing popular music and jazz for the listening audiences. These bands were on staff with the radio stations funded by a tax on the number of radio receivers in a household. Not all survived over the years, but those that did were able to do so by making the transition from entertainment orchestras with a jazz flavor to versatile jazz ensembles that could still fulfill the necessities of a radio orchestra by playing on a TV show or recording a jingle for the station as needed. The most famous and successful of these became what we know today as the NDR, WDR, HR, SWR and RIAS Big Bands (though the latter became defunct in 2001), with probably the most important and well known of these bands being the WDR Big Band.

**Kurt Edelhagen**

In 1957 a man named Kurt Edelhagen was under contract at the *Westdeutscher Rundfunk* (WDR). Edelhagen, a trained pianist and clarinetist, began his career in the

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51 Schwab, 166.


53 Lindenblatt.

54 Jörg Achim Keller, emailed to author, Frankfurt am Main, Germany, Nov. 14, 2015.

55 Lindenblatt. Also, “…there existed the odd situation that post-war Germany and Austria had more publicly funded big bands than the U.S. and [many professional] orchestras were only too glad to hire well-trained, expatriate Americans”, Ostendorf, p.12.

British and American jazz clubs that sprang up around Germany after the war. He quickly established himself as a bandleader and led ensembles at the radio stations of Stuttgart and Nuremberg before landing a steady engagement at the Südwestfunk (SWF) in Baden-Baden in 1952. That year he rose to international prominence through his work with the singer Caterina Valente, and further established his bona fides with the premiere of the work, “Concerto for Jazz-Band and Symphony Orchestra” by the composer Rolf Liebermann in 1955.

With the demise of the SWF band (later re-established as the SWR Big Band), Edelhagen was given the responsibility of creating and running a jazz orchestra to give concerts and record for the radio station. There, though not a composer or arranger, he established a big band called “The Edelhagen-All-Stars” which he populated with top international jazz musicians (among which were future arrangers and bandleaders Francy Boland and Peter Herbolzheimer). In 1972 the WDR chose not to renew Edelhagen’s contract even though he was a revered national figure in Germany. Ironically, it was the same year that under Edelhagen, composer/arrangers Dieter Rieth, Jerry van Rooyen, and Peter Herbolzheimer were awarded the Bundesverdienstkreuz Erster Klasse – one of the highest honors for a German citizen – for their work composing the music for the 1972 Olympic Games. The music was performed by Edelhagen’s band. Edelhagen remained active in music until his death in 1982.

**Peter Herbolzheimer**

Peter Herbolzheimer’s musical roots began in his birthplace of Bucharest, Romania, where he “was always listening to the gypsy musicians in the restaurants when
he was out to dinner with his parents." In 1951 Peter emigrated to West Germany, settling in the city of Nuremberg. Knowing of his love of music, his aunt made a present to him of a guitar on which, after studying on his own, he began playing jazz with friends and at jam sessions.

In 1952 Herbolzheimer traveled to Detroit, Michigan as an exchange student and ended up working for a while at General Motors and giving guitar lessons as a side job. In 1957, he returned to Germany to pursue studies in music. While there, a lack of reliable amplification for his electric guitar led to him to switch to trombone. Regarding his formal training, his widow, Gisela Herbolzheimer notes,

He went to the conservatory for trombone and arrangement courses but at that time there were no competent teachers for jazz in Germany so he listened to American recordings and met every American musician who came to Nuremberg as a soldier and he bought sheet music to study.58

Soon after completing his studies, Herbolzheimer began arranging for the radio big band in Nuremberg, conducting the band as well as playing trombone on many of their recordings. In time, he was asked to write arrangements for other big bands, including Edelhagen’s, who was by this time established in Cologne.

Rhythm Combination and Brass and the New Big Band Sound

As the 1960s came along, popular music styles began to change, and with them, new styles and electrified instruments acquired popularity. Suddenly, there was an influx of electric keyboards, guitars, and basses. Drum sets became larger and various percussion instruments were added to rhythm sections. At first, the blues-based rock

57 Gisela Herbolzheimer, emailed to author, Cologne, Germany, August 12, 2015. Most of the biographical material about Herbolzheimer’s personal background are based on this interview.

58 Gisela Herbolzheimer.
sounds were quite disparate to jazz, but over time the two styles blended to form what came to be known as Fusion or Jazz Rock. Groups like Blood, Sweat and Tears, Chicago, Tower of Power, Sly and the Family Stone, and Frank Zappa led the way to more jazz-influenced bands such as Return to Forever and Weather Report.

Herbolzheimer was not immune to these developments. Influenced by these new sonic possibilities, he began adapting his big band repertoire, incorporating both these new instruments and new rhythms. But this was not without its challenges:

Given that in a big band there are a number of instruments with similar sounds and/or similar functions that need to be combined in order to play the same or combinable figures, this has to be exactly defined.

After years of writing for other bands, during the Christmas holidays of 1970 Herbolzheimer took advantage of the moment and got together his favorite musicians (many of whom worked for the various radio big bands) and recorded a live concert of his new-sounding arrangements at the Domicile Jazzclub in Munich, Germany. This and a subsequent session the following year led to the LP, “My Kind of Sunshine”, with the band being listed as The MPS Rhythm Combination and Brass. The recording featured such American and international jazz notables as Herb Geller, Jiggs Whigham, Art Farmer, Jimmy Woode, Jr., Niels Henning Orsted Pedersen, Palle Mikkleborg, Ack

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60 Herbolzheimer, 112-113.

61 “He was influenced by the SOUND of the day – it was just a few years after the Beatles had hit the market…he was looking for a way to combine this new feel with his love for big bands” Composer and arranger Jörg Achim Keller, emailed to author, Frankfurt am Main, Germany, May 10, 2015.

62 “Da in der Bigband aber mehrere gleichartige oder von der Funktion her ähnliche Instrumente zu Gruppen zusammengefasst werden, die Gleiches oder Zusammenpassendes spielen müssen, muß dieses genau definiert werden.” Herbolzheimer, 114.

63 Gisela Herbolzheimer.

64 Vinyl LP MPS / 33 21331-5, 1972.
van Rooyen, Dusko Goykovich, and Dieter Reith. Apart from the aforementioned use of electric instruments and percussion, Herbolzheimer eschewed the typical big band saxophone section, opting for a single reed instrument, so as to avoid the “…softness of [a typical] sax section…” The following decades saw Herbolzheimer continue to develop and expand his band, with him enlarging his group up to and including a full sax section and an expanded brass section. In later years, Herbolzheimer also expanded his activities into music education, founding and running the Bundesjugend Jazzorchester National Youth Jazz Orchestra of Germany (fondly referred to as the Bujazzo) starting in 1987 until a few years before his death at age 74 in 2010.

“Blues in Latin”

Two characteristics typify Herbolzheimer’s compositions: a sense of “groove” and that all of Herbolzheimer’s pieces have an identifiable sound. After examining a number of works by this composer I have chosen to analyze Herbolzheimer’s highly popular original composition, “Blues in Latin.” Here I will examine how this piece encapsulates both groove and the Herbolzheimer sound.

As to the importance of groove to Herbolzheimer, this is easy to discover in the

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65 Gisela Herbolzheimer.

66 According to Jörg Achim Keller, in his final years Herbolzheimer was involved in founding and leading a new European youth band. Emailed to author, Frankfurt am Main, Germany, Nov. 14, 2015.

67 This opinion was offered by various people I spoke to and interviewed, including Jörg Achim Keller and Wolfram Knauer, whose interviews were used as research in this paper. I also had the opportunity to attend a concert May 9, 2015 by the HR Bigband in Frankfurt entitled, Hommage an Peter Herbolzheimer. The band, led by Herbolzheimer protégé J.A. Keller, performed fourteen Herbolzheimer pieces. The show was sold-out, which attests to Herbolzheimer’s enduring popularity, and in informal conversations with a number of concert guests and the musicians, all affirmed the idea that Herbolzheimer’s music had an identifiable “sound”.

performance notes of “Blues in Latin” (this version composed in 1987). There, he writes,

Please make sure that the entire piece stays in a Latin groove, drums and bass sometimes have the tendency to slide into a sort of disco feel, which would be a pity.

As to what that means, in general, is that a consistency in tempo and stylistic approach was tantamount to Herbolzheimer’s method of writing. All the pieces of his I examined establish a particular and consistent approach to both groove and sound.

**Instrumentation:** As mentioned above, Herbolzheimer began writing for a streamlined big band, using only a single reed instrument. There was a sound reason for this.

[T]he individual voices in the band were very important to him, and quite a few times, a unison section playing melody was dropped in favour of 1 guy playing the thing as a “solo freely” – he did that a lot of times when he felt that something sounded a bit “stiff” or “corny” – He wanted the “loose” feeling and would get rid of anything that seemed to be in the way of that.

Interestingly enough, in this chart Herbolzheimer approaches his aesthetic with an expanded instrumentation. Here he adds extra members to each section – “Blues in Latin” features five trumpets, five trombones, an extra added piccolo to a full five-member saxophone section, and two electric guitars plus electric keyboards and bass, along with drums and percussion.

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69 According to Keller, this piece was originally composed in 1970 under the title, “12 in 8”. As to this version, Keller notes, “The original (which is basically the same chart) was for 1 sax, 4 trpts, 3 trbs and rhythm. After expanding his band to the “regular format” in 1980, Peter added saxes and additional brass instruments to his earlier scores, whenever he wanted to play one of these earlier numbers with the now full band. Normally, these parts were just added to the existing arrangement.” Email Nov. 14, 2015.

70 Performance notes from a copy of the original score provided by Gisela Herbolzheimer.

71 Jörg Achim Keller.

72 This kind of brass section is especially unusual, it is associated only with the Stan Kenton bands of later years.
Overview with Examples: “Blues in Latin” follows a fairly standard song form. There is a powerful eight-bar introduction that establishes the groove – a 12/8 Afro-Cuban beat – and the blues-based melodic material to be developed in the piece. The last four bars of the introduction are especially interesting (Fig. 1):

As can be seen in Fig.1 the blue notes #9, b5, and b7 are both played in the melody and are harmonized as dom7#9 and altered chords in the saxophones and trombones. Notice the alternating perfect 5ths and octaves in the bottom two trombones, which is reminiscent of the five-trombone styling of the Stan Kenton Orchestra.

This is followed by a second introduction of two bars by the piano alone, which introduces the basic key of F-minor and reintroduces the groove the rest of the piece will follow (Fig. 2). After these two bars, bass and electric guitar join in, followed by another four bars of drums and finally percussion in the last two measures.
Form and Organization: The body of the song is a twelve-bar minor blues. The first time the melody is stated by flute, saxophones, one trumpet, and one electric guitar. The melody on the repeat is played by the flute and saxophones with accompanying figures in the brass section (see Fig. 3.) supporting the melody and ending with the restatement of the introduction including four bars of the vamp figure. This is followed by a three chorus guitar solo. On the third chorus, Herbolzheimer introduces short triplet backing figures using min9/min13th chords. Note the usage of minor 2\textsuperscript{nd} intervals, taking advantage of the proximity of the 9 and minor 3\textsuperscript{rd} of the chord by all the horns, this “rub” creating an increase in intensity. Herbolzheimer is obviously deriving these from the introductory figure of the piccolos and trumpets from m. 5.
Starting at m. 45 there are two choruses of tutti playing. In the first chorus, the reed section plays unison/octave melody supported by the brass. To avoid too much obvious repetition on the second chorus the trumpets and first trombone take over the melody again in unison/octaves with hits and pads in the trombones and reeds, which increases the musical tension, releasing it via an extended percussion group solo.

At this point one perceives one of Herbolzheimer’s prime directives in action – to avoid needless repetition. As Jörg Achim Keller points out,

Peter tried to avoid any boredom in the charts – if something could be said with fewer bars, or could be tightened up the 2nd time it appeared, he would go for it.\(^{73}\)

Herbolzheimer accomplishes this in many ways in this piece; for example, after the solos by shortening the second introduction and stating the melody and harmony only once more. Again, at the D.S., the original four-bar vamp in F-minor is played by the piano alone but without repeat, followed immediately by the restatement of the original twelve-bar blues melody complete with backgrounds, i.e., the second time through, avoiding needless repetition. This is followed by a repeat of the final four bars of the body of the tune leading to the introduction one last time ending on a single tutti unison/octave F to finish the piece.

**Specific Arranging Techniques:** Herbolzheimer’s protégé composer/arranger Jörg Achim Keller observed that,

\[T]o keep the whole picture transparent, by using quite a lot of unisons in the saxes and the bones…THAT was his thing, he ALWAYS…[would look] for “lines” rather than block off or voice out things, in the saxes in particular.\(^ {74}\)

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\(^{73}\) Keller.

\(^{74}\) Keller.
As mentioned above, a great deal of Herbolzheimer’s writing contains unison/octave lines. This approach has two important advantages: it allows for a clear statement of melody without obfuscation by other instruments and harmonies; and, when harmony does appear, it adds interest and contrast, as well as helping the development of the piece.

Another technique Herbolzheimer applies are changes in orchestrational density. During the introductory vamp and percussion solo section the contrast between full ensemble and either one or several instruments creates a sense of drama. This concept of “drama” can be understood as the creation and manipulation of expectations: After creating a full big band sound, the dropping out of all instruments except the piano and bass leads to an expectation that something will follow. Herbolzheimer does exactly this by slowly adding instruments in mm. 9-12, and by having the melody at mm. 13-24 played by saxes, two trumpets, and one guitar (the other guitar is doubling the bass throughout the majority of the piece) the first time through, and then adding the brass hits on the repeat, thereby increasing orchestrational density. Having arrived at this high point, the horns then drop out and there follows a guitar solo supported only by the rhythm section. This kind of effect occurs numerous times in “Blues in Latin”, e.g., the percussion solo section mm. 69-80, and the second piano intro at the D.S. The constant changing of orchestrational color (i.e., the use of different instruments) to maintain interest is further exemplified by the fact that when both the melody and tutti sections are played a second time (i.e., mm. 13-25 and mm. 57-68), Herbolzheimer changes the orchestration – the first time via the addition of the horn parts, and the second time with the changing of voice assignation (discussed below).
Usage of orchestrational color: It is of interest to note Herbolzheimer’s method of assigning voices among the instruments in this arrangement. Though he begins the piece with the melody in the piccolo and trumpets and the harmony in the saxophones and top three trombones while the bottom two trombones double the bass, the actual theme at mm. 13-24 is stated by the flute, saxophones, and trumpets 4 and 5. When the theme is played a second time, the top three trumpets and trombones are employed to support it, without the tenor saxophones and remaining trumpets. Here Herbolzheimer voices the top four trombones in close position 2\textsuperscript{nd} inversion major 7\textsuperscript{th} chords to take advantage of the minor 2\textsuperscript{nd} between the 9\textsuperscript{th} and minor 3\textsuperscript{rd} of the Fm9 chord and 13\textsuperscript{th} and b7 of the C7\textsuperscript{(sus13)} chord by moving the trombone voicing up a major 2\textsuperscript{nd}, while the 5\textsuperscript{th} trombone is playing roots. At the same time, the top three trumpets are playing upper structure triads in a descending pattern Cm-Bb-Ab (the V-IV-III of F-natural minor), emphasizing the tensions 9, 11, and 13 of the two alternating chords.

Figure 4 - Melody & Harmony mm.13-16

Another technique employed in this chart by Herbolzheimer is the twofold pyramid found at mm. 67-68 leading into the percussion solo. As can be seen in Fig. 5, the trombones and saxophones voice the notes of the F\textsuperscript{7}(sus4) chord on successive strong
beats leading to the chord being held at m. 68. While this is happening, trumpets 2-4 begin playing an upward diatonic scalar unison line on the 2nd and 3rd eighth notes breaking into diatonic 3rds on the fourth to sixth eighth notes, and then, via alternating Ab and F-minor triads the rest of the measure, increase the melodic energy supplied by the saxophone/trombone pyramid in m. 68. The following measure sees this upward motion continue with introduction of the C-minor triad with the top note G creating a 9th against the F root, and, with the addition of the 1st trumpet entering at beat 6, the triads become 7th chords, alternating between Abmaj7 and Cmin7 culminating with the 1st trumpet finishing on high C of the Fminor\(^{(9/11)}\) chord at m. 69.

Figure 5 - Pyramid mm.67-68

**Conclusion:** “Blues in Latin” exemplifies Peter Herbolzheimer’s sound and approach to big band writing. It is a true “fusion” music, integrating blues structure over the more Afro-Cuban 12/8 rhythmic feel (perhaps with a nod to the Mongo Santamaria song “Afro Blue” played so famously by John Coltrane).\(^{75}\) In this composition and arrangement one finds clear unison/octet lines, straightforward harmonies, application of varying

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orchestrational densities, and changing orchestrational colors, along with a strong groove with clear direction.

As this piece is a fairly typical example of Herbolzheimer’s writing style, it is possible to make some generalizations about what constitutes his aforementioned sound. First of all, as noted above, when stating melodies Herbolzheimer tends to favor unisons and octaves. In correspondence with both Keller and Herbolzheimer’s widow, Gisela, it was stressed that Peter Herbolzheimer required that each player’s part be singable, so that the music could be played effortlessly.\(^\text{76}\) One also notes a general regularity of four and eight bar phrases as opposed to odd-number groupings of measures, and a tendency to use standard song forms as opposed to extended or through-composed forms. Unlike the other writers we will examine later in this paper, his harmonic language tends to be based in more standard jazz and rock voicings, eschewing hybrid harmonies (see especially the discussion of the work of Kenny Wheeler in Chapter 5) and more recent contemporary developments taken from the world of contemporary classical music (see the following discussion of George Gruntz). This idea is seconded by Keller, who writes,

> Peter once stated, that for him, making music (i.e., playing or performing) always had to be “linked to” enjoyment. He loved good grooves, soulful players and a rather direct approach towards music in general. He did not see any value in the theoretical aspect for its own good. [H]e was, on the opposite, very pragmatic about the whole thing – I saw him change things in his own charts until THE FEEL was right where he thought it should be – if that meant, that bigger parts of his written music would go to waste, he would not care at all….I don`t think that complicated music had any meaning to him, unless he could detect some kind of deeply meant feeling or message in it.\(^\text{77}\)

\(^{76}\) Gisela Herbolzheimer: “In Peters Arrangements sollte man jede Stimme singen können, das war ihm wichtig, damit man die Musik unangestrengt spielen konnte.”

\(^{77}\) Keller, Email Nov. 14, 2015.
CHAPTER 5 – SWITZERLAND'S MUSICAL POLYGLOT: GEORGE GRUNTZ

A Short History of the Beginnings of Jazz in Switzerland

The roots of Swiss jazz appear to lie in the formation of the band “The Swinging Teddies,” which was formed by violinist, saxophonist, and bandleader Teddy Stauffer in 1939.\(^78\) Though Stauffer’s blend of big-band swing was greatly popular, the band had already begun to feel the weight of German Nazi oppression in 1936.\(^79\) In spite of his success back in his home country, in 1941 Stauffer opted to leave Switzerland for Acapulco, Mexico, ceding the leadership of the band to trumpeter and vibraphonist Rolf “Hazy” Osterwald (1922-2012).\(^80\)

During his long career Osterwald traveled the European continent with his own group, the Hazy Osterwald Sextett, and played with many well-known American and European jazz musicians. Osterwald, who is credited by many, including Felix Gruntz, as being the true “Father of Swiss Jazz”\(^81\) had a profound influence on the Swiss jazz scene, and George Gruntz in particular. More on this below.

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\(^81\) This chronology and subsequent biographical information was provided by George’s son, Felix Gruntz, emailed to the author, Basel, Switzerland, September 16, 2015.
Starting in the mid-1950’s, saxophonist Flavio Ambrosetti was very active in the European scene, but it was difficult for jazz musicians from this small country in the middle of Europe to get much notice. It was only with the formation of the Newport International Band (NIB) that a musician of George Gruntz’s stature began to be noticed. This group, built from the best musicians found in Europe, performed at the Newport Jazz Festival in 1958, opening new doors for both Gruntz and Swiss musicians in general.

Over the following years, Gruntz, along with fellow Swiss jazz musicians Flavio Ambrosetti, Flavio’s son trumpeter Franco Ambrosetti, and drummer Daniel Humair were able to increase international visibility of the Swiss jazz scene. The importance of jazz to Switzerland as a whole was finally established with the introduction of regular funding of jazz projects by the national Swiss organization Pro Helvetia in 1989.82

**George Gruntz**

The Swiss composer, arranger, pianist, and bandleader George Gruntz (1932-2013) traveled many musical roads. Gruntz grew up and spent the majority of his life in the town of Basel, which lies situated in an area known as the *Dreiländereck* – where the Swiss, German, and French borders meet. There, in this German-speaking Swiss canton, Gruntz began his musical career, starting piano lessons at age six.83 Although his parents were very interested in music, introducing George to both jazz and classical forms of the art from a young age, they forbade him further study until he had acquired a trade outside of music. So, in 1947 the fifteen year-old Gruntz began a four-year course as an electro-mechanical draftsman.

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82 Bares. p.262.

83 Felix Gruntz.
During the late 1940’s and early 1950’s, Gruntz began seeking out performance opportunities while also commencing private piano study. In 1950, he came into contact with Hazy Osterwald in Basel, who invited Gruntz to take part in the regular Saturday afternoon jam sessions he was organizing. Soon, Gruntz was playing in various jazz groups in the city. In 1951, however, Gruntz’s “normal” career as a mechanical draftsman was in full swing, requiring him to relocate to Zurich. Once ensconced there, he enrolled in a course in music theory at the Zurich Conservatory and began to establish contacts with local jazz musicians. By 1952, Gruntz had recorded with his band, the Cool Star Octet. Various attempts to establish himself in the European scene, however, did not pan out until he met with the Swiss Bebop pioneer saxophonist Flavio Ambrosetti in 1955. By 1958 he was representing Switzerland in the Newport International Band (NIB), which brought him to New York and into contact with the great American jazz stars of the time.

While Gruntz continued performing with Ambrosetti, his skills as a composer and arranger were becoming apparent. In 1962 he wrote the music for the film, *Mental Cruelty (Seelische Grausamkeiten)*, and in 1963 his skill as an accompanist landed him a gig touring with Rahsaan Roland Kirk. As his career continued apace, Gruntz found himself writing music for stage and screen, as well as more formal concert music.

During this time he began his lifelong experimentation with unusual instrumentation and musical forms. He initiated some of the earliest Ethno-Jazz productions, starting with his integrating Tunisian Beduin music in his successful recording, *Noon in Tunisia*[^84] in 1967, but he was also experimenting with Third Stream

[^84]: Originally released in 1967, CD Universal Distribution 9239, 2006. “George Gruntz organized this studio recording as an opportunity for blending the worlds of jazz and Arabian music, though utilizing
music both with his Jazz Goes Baroque$^{85}$ recording, featuring Gruntz on both piano and cembalo, and his collaborations with the influential composer and concert organizer Rolf Liebermann.$^{86}$ In the late 1960’s he was constantly on tour with Phil Woods’ European Rhythm Machine, and throughout the ‘60s and ‘70s he performed with a number of important jazz stars, including Dexter Gordon, Donald Byrd, Lee Konitz, Chet Baker, Johnny Griffin, Gerry Mulligan, and Art Farmer.

In 1970 Gruntz became the musical director for the Schauspielhaus Zurich (Zurich Theater), and in 1969 began working with the NDR Big Band in Germany. From 1972 to 1994 he was the artistic director for JazzFest Berlin. Most importantly for this paper, though not the last of his many projects, Gruntz founded the George Gruntz Concert Jazz Band (GGCJB) in 1972.

**The George Gruntz Concert Jazz Band**

In 1972, Gruntz, along with Flavio and Franco Ambrosetti, Daniel Humair, and Gerard Lull founded a big band. At first, it just went under the name, “The Band”, until in 1978 it was finally christened the George Gruntz Concert Jazz Band (GGCJB)$^{87}$. Though Gruntz was responsible for the majority of the arrangements, in the beginning

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original music of his own. With Sahib Shihab (soprano sax, flute, and tambourine), violinist Jean-Luc Ponty, bassist Eberhard Weber, and drummer Daniel Humair, plus four Bedouin musicians playing traditional Arabian reed, string, and percussion instruments, Gruntz conceived the nearly 31-minute six-part "Maghreb Cantata" as the centerpiece of the date. The composer's themes are essentially brief modal statements utilized as jumping-off points for the musicians' improvisations.” Ken Dryden, http://www.allmusic.com/album/noon-in-tunisia-mw0000449853. Web 14 Nov. 2015.

$^{85}$ Philips 840 476 PY, LP 1964.

$^{86}$ Liebermann, among other highlights in his illustrious career, had established his Third Stream credentials when he premiered his aforementioned Concerto for Jazzband and Symphony Orchestra in Donaueschingen in 1954.

$^{87}$ This and subsequent information comes from a discography compiled by Gruntz’s son, Felix Gruntz, entitled, The 40 Years of George Gruntz Concert Band, presently unpublished.
composing responsibilities were divided up between Gruntz, Humair, and both
Ambrosetis.

Throughout its 40-year history from 1972-2012 the GGCJB was to remain an
international project – one which over the years tended to feature increasingly more
American musicians. The original band, which only made two records between 1972 and
1976, is noteworthy as it consisted mostly of musicians from the recently defunct Clarke-
Boland band. Over the years, an impressive number of international jazz stars recorded
with Gruntz on this project, including Peter Herbolzheimer and Kenny Wheeler. In all,
the band released eight LPs, twenty-one CDs, and went on forty-eight international tours.

“General Cluster”

Unlike Peter Herbolzheimer, George Gruntz did not appear to develop a particular
“sound” or approach to his writing. Having wide-ranging musical interests – from jazz to
classical (including contemporary classical) to opera to Third Stream to World Music,
and everything in between – Gruntz’s music is characterized by its great diversity. The
piece I have chosen to examine, “General Cluster,” was one among many big band
compositions rich in variety from his CD, Blues ‘N Dues Et Cetera. On this one album
alone, the nine pieces range from two rather unique takes on the blues (Ray Anderson’s

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88 The first two albums feature Clarke-Boland alumni Phil Woods, Eddie Daniels, Dexter Gordon, Shahib
Shihab, Benny Baily, Woody Shaw, Dusko Guykovitch, Jiggs Whigham, Ake Person, Niels Henning
Oested Pedersen, and Palle Mikkelborg.

89 Herbolzheimer appears on the recording, The Band: Live at Zurich Schauspielhaus, MPS LP, 15475,

90 Enja Records: ENJA 6072 2 CD, 1991. Recorded in New York City, this recording features some of the
elite jazz musicians of the day: George Gruntz (piano); John Scofield (guitar); Chris Hunter, David Mann
(alto saxophone); Jerry Bergonzi, Alex Foster, Bob Malach, Bob Mintzer (tenor saxophone); Roger
Rosenberg (baritone saxophone); Jon Faddis, Marvin Stamm, Randy Brecker, Wallace Roney, Bob
Millikan, Michael Philip Mossman (trumpet); Jerry Peel, John Clark (French horn); Ray Anderson, Art
Baron, David Taylor (trombone); Dave Bargeron, Jim Pugh (euphonium); Howard Johnson (tuba); Mike
Richmond (bass); Adam Nussbaum (drums).
“Datune” and Gruntz’s title track), a hip-hop rap number complete with record-scratching DJ (“Q-Base”), a second funky jazz rap (“Rap for Nap”), a 12/8 Afro-Cuban (“Giuseppe”) to the dark, poetic, (“Forest Cathedral”) – each piece reflecting the composer’s eclectic musical aesthetic.

Another reason for choosing a piece from this particular CD is that on virtually all other GGCJB recordings, Gruntz had a tendency to share the compositional duties with the various members of his band and/or to rearrange jazz standards. *Blues ‘N Dues Et Cetera* is one the very few recordings by the GGCJB in which virtually all the numbers are composed by Gruntz, excepting one piece by trombonist Ray Anderson, and a reimagining of Duke Ellington’s “In a Sentimental Mood.” This album thus represents one of Gruntz’s most complete musical statements in the big band idiom.

**Instrumentation:** At first glance, “General Cluster” seems to be one more chart featuring the standard big band format: five saxophones (two altos, two tenors, baritone), four Bb trumpets, four trombones (three tenors and one bass), piano, bass, and drums. However, this piece is anything but typical. In m. 11 trombonist Art Baron switches to a most unusual instrument – the bass recorder, and is featured on this all the way until m. 69. At this point, Gruntz inserts a “choral bridge,” which was added as an overdub featuring an almost entirely new instrumentation. Apart from one Bb trumpet and jazz rhythm section of piano, bass, and drums, here Gruntz employs a flugelhorn, two French horns, two euphoniums, a tuba, and features bass trombonist Dave Taylor, who is asked to “talk/sing/pray/chant”. Though only thirty-two bars long, this choral bridge is graphically mapped out by Gruntz to last exactly two minutes and six seconds (discussed below). The
finale of the piece returns to the original big band formation. At the D.S., with Baron
switches to conch shell and is the last voice heard.

Form: “General Cluster,” apart from its 8-measure D.S., is through-composed. For the
purposes of this analysis it will be helpful to have a sense of Gruntz’s organization of the
various sections, which the writer has broken down as follows:

A. Introduction and First Theme comprising:

1. The “Cluster Intro” mm. 1-11: Introduction of slow rhythmic (8\textsuperscript{th} note) clusters in the
winds and piano punctuated by aleatoric effects in the alto saxophone, bass recorder
(played by 3\textsuperscript{rd} trombonist Art Baron), double-stop glisses on bass, and drum cymbal fills,
all slowly decreasing in dynamics.

2. mm. 11-30 (mm. 11-20 with repetition): The clusters are transformed into a repetitive
pattern in the piano as the bass recorder plays a melody with countermelody on the bass
and response by the piano in the last four measures.

3. mm. 31-37: The winds return using clusters reaching a high point at m. 35. The bass
recorder then plays an open solo, with the drums gradually entering and interacting. In m.
37 the drums set up a 4/4 shuffle feel.

B. Second section – change of mood/feel:

1. mm. 38-55: Saxophones and trumpets play a six-measure constant structure chordal
passage, repeated three times. The second and third time is enhanced with the trombones
playing offset perfect fifths with glissandi. At mm. 56-60 the band drops out as the
trombones “mock” the previous saxophone/trumpet passage, using the same rhythms, but
on indeterminate pitches.
2. mm. 61-69: Two-measure band glisses lead to the bass trombone soloing freely without accompaniment. In m. 68 Gruntz has the band re-enter playing “ragged staccato triplets” conducted by Gruntz accompanying the bass trombone leading up to a full attack on beat 1 of m. 69.

C. Choral Bridge. The aformentioned bridge was graphically composed by Gruntz and appears in the score as follows:

Figure 6 - Gruntz's graphic representation of the Choral Bridge

Bass trombonist Dave Taylor dominates this section, creating a unique effect by combining a poem on General George Custer with various extended trombone techniques. After a few introductory lines, the band begins the slow 32-bar dirge-like bridge beginning with the melody in piano. After four measures the piano melody is slowly joined by the brass, which adds harmonies and countermelody. The intensity increases as the band crescendoes while Taylor continues leading to a fermata on the second beat on the 25th measure. At mm. 26-32 there is a slowing down of the harmonic rhythm while Taylor continues his improvisation through to the conclusion of the section.
D. Finale (labeled mm. 1-86): This is a very fast 12-bar blues (Gruntz writes, “as fast as possible”), beginning with Taylor playing a written bass line supporting a trumpet solo. After 12 measures piano, bass, and drums enter with “informal changes,” but no real blues progression is readily ascertainable. At m. 49 in the background the horns play an elongated form of the constant structure first heard in m. 38 leading to a final free “low shake” by the entire band.

E. The composition does an 8-bar D.S. (mm. 3-10) with Baron now playing a conch shell instead of bass recorder. As the band drops out, Baron plays a few last notes before finishing the piece.

Specific Arranging Techniques:
As mentioned above, in regards to big band composing and arranging, this piece is anything but usual, beginning with the title. “General Cluster” shows Gruntz’s predilection for wordplay – working off of the story of the ill-fated military man of the Little Big Horn debacle and the fact that he is working with actual tonal clusters. In all, the writer was able to identify a number of compositional and arranging techniques employed by Gruntz in this work.

Clusters: Seeing how, based on the title, the idea of the tonal cluster is important to this piece, it comes as no surprise that Gruntz uses this idea as his starting point. Gruntz employs clusters combined with different types of moving lines from the beginning through to m. 38., except for the six measures mm. 11-16 where the piano takes over the top line of the altos (major 3rds intervals alternating down in minor 2nds) from the horn clusters. Contrary to the alto saxophones, the 1st and 2nd trumpets move in upwards alternating minor 2nd clusters while the 3rd and 4th trumpets move in upwards alternating
minor 3\textsuperscript{rd} clusters, together forming the chords Amin6 and Bbmin6, which are completely obscured by the notes of the other instruments. As can be observed in Figure 7 though the alto saxophones and trumpet figures can be viewed as static structures, the tenor and baritone saxophones and trombones behave differently, greatly adding to the cluster effect.

Figure 7 - Gruntz's use of both static and moving clusters

From the Figure 7 one can see that the lower saxophones are playing a chromatic figure contrary to the altos in a sequence that transposes up a major 2\textsuperscript{nd} each measure. The trombones are moving in various chromatic motions, which also change in unpredictable ways in each measure. The effect of all this movement creates a non-static, ebb-and-flow of harmonic density.

Usage of Unusual Instruments, and Unusual Usage (Extended Techniques) of Standard Instruments: Another effect that Gruntz likes to employ is a combination of extended techniques and the aforementioned dramatic usage of unusual instruments. Beginning at the second bar, the acoustic bass is encouraged to play double-stop glissandi
and arco effects while the lead alto saxophone plays “cries” (notated as “ad lib. bluesy outbursts”). From m. 11 through to m. 37 we hear a rare instrument – the bass recorder, playing both melody and shrieks. On the 2\textsuperscript{nd} and 3\textsuperscript{rd} repeats mm. 43-55 the trombones are employed playing offset perfect 5\textsuperscript{th} glissandi and falls intensifying a new harmonic texture in the saxophones and trumpets. In the choral bridge, Gruntz has Dave Taylor perform spoken word/poetry and improvisation while at the same time using various open and closed mute techniques on the bass trombone. In the Finale, the solo trumpet is encouraged to begin with squeaks and other sounds, and on the D.S. the bass recorder is replaced with conch shell. Other similar effects are to be found throughout the composition.

**Serialism and Set Theory:** In a number of places, Gruntz uses an abbreviated form of serialism by his incorporation of large, incomplete (less than 12-note) tone rows in many parts of this composition. For example, in the piano figure at mm. 17-20 and mm. 27-30 Gruntz employs a 10-note row (with some pitches repeated), which he then transposes (in terms of pitch class) a tritone away.

Figure 8 - Tone-Row mm.17-20

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Original 10-note row</th>
<th>Transposed by tritone</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(\text{Original 10-note row})</td>
<td>(\text{Transposed by tritone})</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(\text{Original 10-note row})</td>
<td>(\text{Transposed by tritone})</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Immediately following this, at mm. 39-40 the lead alto plays a new set (G-F#-B- Bb-Eb-D-F) (0134578)\(^{91}\) and in the choral bridge, the repeated melody is a fairly chromatic

\(^{91}\) This is the prime form organization for Pitch-Class sets using the note value C=0. For more on the use of pitch class sets and other modern forms of pitch organization, see Joseph N. Strauss, *Introduction to Post-Tonal Theory* (3\textsuperscript{rd} Ed.), Upper Saddle River: Pearson/Prentice Hall, 2005, pp. 33-78.
seven-note row (0123467) with upwardly chromatic thirds and 10ths in the piano and bass.

Figure 9 - Choral Bridge with (0123467) set plus upwardly chromatic 3rds and 10ths in piano and bass

Both septachords are rich in chromaticism and contain numerous interval combinations – (0134578) has an interval vector of 434541 and (0123467) not surprisingly has even more minor 2nds with an interval vector of 544332.\(^\text{92}\)

Whether Gruntz was purposely applying modern set theory techniques in this composition, or was following some other compositional approach is difficult to ascertain. However, seeing as he was a studied composer adept in many different genres, it is not far-fetched to assume he could have been using a form of set theory here. In all, there is a decided predilection and consistency by Gruntz in the use of minor and major 2nds, as well as minor and major 3rds in this composition.

**Textual Change, Different Harmonic and Rhythmic Usage, Constant Structure:** The portion of the transitional section in mm. 38-56 helps the piece reach the choral bridge via a number of techniques: change of rhythmical beat and pulse; change of texture; and change of harmonic and melodic materials. To accomplish the change of rhythmical beat and pulse, the drums begin the section at mm. 37-38 playing a shuffle beat, setting up an

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\(^{92}\) The interval vector refers to the number of each interval in a pitch-class set, from minor 2nds to tritones (Post-tonal theory posits the notion of octave equivalence. As such, any interval above a tritone is considered an inversion, i.e, a perfect 5th is an inversion of a perfect 4th, a minor 6th an inversion of a major 3rd, etc.). In the above example, the interval vector 434541 thus contains four minor 2nds, three major 2nds, four minor 3rds, five major thirds, four perfect 4ths and one tritone. See Strauss, pp.14-15.
interplay between bass and baritone saxophone with the rest of the saxophones and trumpets in semi-tutti. Another technique Gruntz employs is the use of constant structures\textsuperscript{93} in the saxes and trumpets, using chords built on a four-note whole-tone cluster with an added minor 2\textsuperscript{nd} on the lowest note. These chords also introduce a new harmonic palette, having an abundance of major 2nds – an (01357) pentachord with interval vector 131221.

Figure 10 - Cluster constant structures (01357) excerpt at mm.38-42

As can be seen from the excerpt in Fig. 10, Gruntz moves these chordal clusters predominantly in minor 2\textsuperscript{nd}, major 7\textsuperscript{th}, and minor 9\textsuperscript{th} intervals to achieve chromatic movement of these structures.

\textsuperscript{93} Constant structure pertains to the concept that the intervallic structure of a chord remains unchanging for the duration of its application, and alteration is only accomplished via transposition. For example, in Fig. 10 the intervallic structure of each of the chords is the same, and is thus an application of constant structure. See William G Andrews and Molly Selater (2000). \textit{Materials of Western Music Part 1}. Toronto, Thompson, 1987, p.227.
**Imitation and Expansion:** One of the most interesting moments in this piece occurs at mm. 56-60. Here the rest of the band stops playing while the trombones play a solo imitating the above constant structure section using the exact rhythms, but with indeterminate pitches. Gruntz makes further use of the constant structure of m.38 when he uses these structures in expanded form at mm. 49-84 in the Finale (see excerpt Fig. 11).

Figure 11 - Constant structure expansion excerpt mm.49-52

**Free/Improvisatory Elements:** Throughout this piece it seems Gruntz is giving free reign to his musicians. There are many parts that include free interaction and/or the use of indeterminate notes (e.g., mm. 56-67) and indeterminate rhythms and dynamics (see especially m. 68 of the first section). Of particular note is m. 68 of the first section, where not only is the band as an entity given freedom to play and interact with the bass trombone (which is also playing freely). Upon repeating listenings it seems fairly clear that Gruntz is also giving the band dynamic and activity cues ca. 5:19-5:30 of the piece.\(^{94}\)

**Jazz & Blues Elements:** The Finale is the most conventional jazz-like section of the composition. The bass trombone here begins playing a written bass line on an “informal”

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\(^{94}\)This seems to be a form of “Conduction”, in Butch Morris’ sense of the term, where he defines a usage of gestures. Morris explains his concept of Conduction as: “The practice of conveying and interpreting a lexicon of directives to construct or modify sonic arrangement or composition; a structure-content exchange between composer/conductor and instrumentalists that provides the immediate possibility of initiating or altering harmony, melody, rhythm, tempo, progression, articulation, phrasing or form through the manipulation of pitch, dynamics (volume/intensity/density), timbre, duration, silence, and organization in real-time.” See [http://www.conduction.us/](http://www.conduction.us/) Accessed 30 Jan., 2016.
12-bar blues with implied (but not followed) changes. This is further underlined with the drums playing a swing pattern, albeit very freely. The trumpet enters and begins to solo, but, as he is under no compulsion to follow the changes, the resulting solo is very free.

**Conclusion:** “General Cluster” is a very contemporary work, combining a number of techniques that help create a unique musical environment. Gruntz has here chosen a rather specific harmonic palette, characterized by his usage of minor and major 2nds, and major 3rds and their inversions. Though the differing sections suggest strongly but inconclusively that Gruntz may have been composing a tone poem about General Custer’s last stand, what seems clear is his application of various modern aleatoric elements from modern classical music combined creatively with free jazz elements. What further aids the performance of this piece are his chosen musicians, who are highly skilled musical interpreters able to give Gruntz’s musical concept full expression. In sum, all these seemingly disparate elements and techniques combine to create a layered, complex, but complete artistic work.
CHAPTER 6 – NEW SOUNDS FROM GREAT BRITAIN: KENNY WHEELER

Of all the persons examined in this study, Kenny Wheeler (1930-2014) is likely the most well known, popular, studied, and written-about of the contemporary European composer/arrangers. What makes this an even more intriguing situation is that, technically, Wheeler is not even European.

Born of British and Scottish stock, trumpeter and flugelhorn specialist Wheeler hails from Toronto, Canada. However, having moved to Great Britain in his early 20’s, he became such a force and influence that it is almost impossible to speak of contemporary British jazz without including Wheeler in the discussion.

An Overview of the Development of Contemporary Jazz in Great Britain

The United Kingdom is closest to the United States in term of linguistic and historical background, as well as being the next nearest large European nation. As such, with the advent of jazz recordings, this new musical style was quickly and successfully exported to the island nation. This was followed by numerous tours and residencies by such jazz luminaries as Louis Armstrong, Duke Ellington, and Sidney Bechet. Local musicians soon began following in these Americans’ footsteps, and many British jazz bands were formed.

In spite of the start of World War II there would have been a good chance that Great Britain and the United States would have remained in lockstep in terms of jazz development except for one major hindrance: The Transatlantic Music Ban. For twenty-one years, from 1935-1956, at the behest of the British musician’s union no American

\footnote{For this and much of the information in this section, see George McKay, *Circular Breathing: The Cultural Politics of Jazz in Britain*. Duke University Press, London: 2005.}
bands were allowed to perform in Britain unless an equal number of musicians were
given the same opportunity in the U.S.\textsuperscript{96} As there was no great demand for British jazz
musicians in America, the number of tours by American musicians to the UK were few
and far between. Even Benny Carter, who spent the years 1936-38 as a staff arranger for
the BBC, barely performed in the UK due to these drastic provisions. It seems the only
American who managed to find regular work in England was tenor giant Coleman
Hawkins, who played with the Jack Hylton Orchestra for five years, 1934-39.\textsuperscript{97}

Partially for this reason, British jazz developed more slowly. As the 1950s rolled
around, instead of bebop, Britain found itself in the midst of a traditional Dixieland jazz
craze.\textsuperscript{98} In 1956 the government’s ban on American musicians performing in the UK was
finally eased. Stan Kenton and Louis Armstrong played in London that year, with others
to follow. As the demand for jazz grew, Ronnie Scott’s Jazz Club opened its doors in
1959, while other clubs flourished across London and the UK. Though there were a few
exponents of the American styles of bebop and hard bop – the great Jamaican-born
saxophonist Joe Harriott comes to mind\textsuperscript{99} – in general, though these styles were quickly
adopted by many British musicians, they were not genres that acquired much popularity
amongst the general public.

\textsuperscript{96} This is explained and explored in many places in McKay’s book. See for example p. 147. See also, “The

\textsuperscript{97} McKay, p.27.

\textsuperscript{98} McKay pp.47-55.

\textsuperscript{99} The story of Harriott is an interesting one. Though at his peak he was at the forefront of American-
influenced modern jazz in Britain, he was also associated from everything from free jazz to the first Indo-
Jazz Fusion project to African high-life during his career. See McKay, pp.134-144.
In the mid-1960’s British artists started becoming influenced by recordings by black American artists such as Ornette Coleman, Cecil Taylor, Anthony Braxton, not to mention the later free jazz recordings of John Coltrane. At the same time, with the escalation of the cold war, there was a rise in anti-American sentiment and British musicians, like those on the European continent, began looking inward for other sources of musical inspiration. These developments led to a growing interest in free jazz and improvisational music.\textsuperscript{100} Jazz in Britain also began incorporating the new sounds of the rock revolution, with big band leaders and composers such as Neil Ardley, Michael Gibbs, and Mike Westbrook being some of the first musicians to respond to the demands and challenges of these influences.\textsuperscript{101} As these movements developed and began to thrive, trumpeter and composer Kenny Wheeler was in England launching his career.

**Kenny Wheeler**

Kenny (as he became referred to) attended the Royal Conservatory in Toronto in 1950, and moved to Britain in 1952.\textsuperscript{102} There he worked with various bands while also establishing himself as a studio musician. As bebop started becoming the language of jazz in Britain in the early 1960s, Wheeler felt he was not up to the demands and found himself drifting into the London free music scene.\textsuperscript{103} There he established his credentials with groups such as the Spontaneous Music Ensemble and Mike Westbrook’s large


\textsuperscript{101} McKay, 215 and elsewhere in his book. See also Heffley, p. 90.


\textsuperscript{103} Lees, p. 30.
ensembles. His first big band recording under his own name occurred in 1969 for a radio show after he received an offer from the BBC to perform some of his music live.

In 1973 Kenny recorded his first big band album, *Song for Someone*, featuring Norma Winstone on voice and his colleagues from the free scene Evan Parker and Tony Oxley. His profile continued to rise mostly through his small-ensemble recordings on the ECM label. Probably his single most important work remains *Music for Large and Small Ensembles*, but Kenny continued writing and leading his big band throughout his career, with his final big band recording, *The Long Waiting* being released in 2012, two years before his death.

Though work with his big band was always sporadic – often in conjunction with a project for the BBC – his large ensemble writing remains unique and highly valued.

“Four, Five Six”

This engaging piece from *The Long Waiting* displays many attributes of Kenny Wheeler’s distinctive compositional and writing style. The basis of “Four, Five, Six” is a rather standard ABC song form whose character Wheeler continually alters as the piece progresses. Below is a lead sheet I have created based on the first chorus of the composition (Fig. 12).

As can be seen in Fig. 12, the piece is in three sections. The A section is eight measures of a melody based in the diatonic key of D major, even if the harmonies are not. The following B section is exactly the same, only transposed up a major 3rd to the key of

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F♯ major. The final C section transposes up a major 3rd once again to the diatonic key of Bb major, but undergoes a change as the melody becomes truncated while the harmonic rhythm escalates, with an extra measure added at the end to achieve a full statement of the theme. As each chorus starts again in the key of D, it is clear that Wheeler is composing in a circular form.¹⁰⁷

Figure 12 - Lead sheet for Wheeler's tune "Four, Five, Six"

¹⁰⁷ The concept of circular form here refers to a piece of music segmented so that by virtue of the consistent relation of its non-diatonic key centers (generally equidistant from one another) the piece returns to its starting key center at the next iteration. Florian Ross, in an interview with the author, pointed out this approach in many of Wheeler’s compositions. See also discussion below p.84.
Organization: In Wheeler’s arrangement, each iteration of the song changes in subtle ways to help the piece move forward. In order to understand Wheeler’s organization of his material here is a breakdown of the arrangement:

Iteration 1:  

*Form:* As above in 3/4 time.

*Melody:* In the A section the 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> trombones play the melody with saxophone backgrounds. Starting in the B section the melody is then played by Kenny on flugelhorn and voice, with the trombones joining the saxophones on backgrounds.

*Interlude:* Four-measure interlude on D<sup>(add9)</sup> harmony in 4/4 time.

Iteration 2:

*Form:* All three sections expanded to 10 measures each.

*Melody:* For the A and B sections the melody is in voice and trumpets 1 & 2, with the introduction of a mostly downward-motion countermelody played by trumpets 3 & 4 while Kenny, saxophones, and trombones play backgrounds. At the 21<sup>st</sup> measure all the trumpets plus the voice and Kenny play the melody while the last six measures return to 3/4 time.

*Interlude:* Four-measure interlude on Dadd9 harmony in 4/4 time.

Iteration 3:

*Form:* Original form in 4/4 time.

*Melody:* Alto saxophones, voice, and guitar play an altered version of the melody, trombones play the countermelody and the tenor and baritone saxophones play backgrounds.

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108 I am using term “iteration” to stand for either single or multiple choruses.
Interlude: None.

Iteration 4:

Form: A and B sections have an extra bar added at the beginning of each section before the melody begins, totaling 9 measures each, while the C section is also 9 measures.

Melody: In the first 9 measures the trumpets and guitar play the melody while trombones and voice play countermelody and the saxophones play backgrounds. In the B section the only difference being the guitar joins the countermelody.

Interlude: Two-measure interlude on Dadd9 harmony in 4/4 time.

Iterations 5 & 6:

Form: These are the solo sections of the piece. Harmonically, they are exactly like the lead sheet except for the fact that the first nineteen measures are in 4/4 time and the last six are in 3/4 time. Each solo is two times through the form.

Solo Order: Iteration 5 is Kenny’s solo with trombone backgrounds the second time through the form, trumpets are added in the last six measures.

Iteration 6 features solos by the bass, baritone saxophone and guitar. On the final chorus, backgrounds are played by the saxophones, with the brass joining in at the final six measures.

Interlude: After the final solo chorus there is a four-measure interlude on Dadd9 harmony in 4/4 time.

Iteration 7:

Form: This is the original 25-measure form again in 4/4 time, with the final four bars in 3/4 time.

Melody: All the saxophones play the original form of the melody, with the brass playing
backgrounds and the guitar playing an interlocking figure with repetitive rhythm.

**Interlude:** None.

**Iteration 8:**

**Form:** The final melodic statement is the original form returned to 3/4 time. To complete the composition, Kenny repeats the final four bars three times and ends the piece on a Gmin\(^{maj7}\) chord.

**Melody:** The saxophones continue to play the melody, accompanied by the voice and Kenny. The trombones play a simpler rhythmic background – mostly dotted half notes – as the 1\(^{st}\) and 2\(^{nd}\) trumpets alternate short melodic responses. The guitar joins in on the melody starting in the B section. Rhythmically, the melody of the final thirteen measures of the piece settles into mostly dotted half notes with dotted quarter notes at the end of each four-bar phrase. Here the 1\(^{st}\) and 2\(^{nd}\) trumpets are the only instruments with more activity in their parts leading to the final five-measure climax of the piece with the lead trumpet ending the composition on a double high-G.

**Specific Compositional and Arranging Techniques:**

**Mutability of Form and Time:** Examining the above information it becomes clear that Wheeler is doing two rather disparate things: he is maintaining the form of his piece while at the same time playing with phrase lengths through his clever use of time by mixing 3/4 and 4/4 meters and the lengthening or shortening of the number of measures and interludes. This “breathing” of form, time, and orchestration allows for the rather simple, diatonic melodies and static form to escape what would be the monotony of repetition.
Usage of Melodies and Themes: One aspect that typifies Wheeler’s composition is the juxtaposition of these diatonic melodies against the song’s decidedly non-diatonic harmonic framework. Apart from the static short interludes on a $D^{\text{add9}}$ chord (which appears in Kenny’s score as both D5,9 and A/D), the chord progression is in continuous movement, only coming to rest on a D pedal at the beginning and ending of each chorus.

Wheeler also makes use of primary and secondary themes and countermelodies. In the third iteration of the form (Fig. 13), Kenny abandons the original theme entirely and embarks on a call-and-response melody and countermelody, both melodies rich in quarter-note triplets in contrast with the predominantly 8th-note oriented original melody and countermelody of the first two iterations.

Orchestrational Choices: In examining this section, I made an interesting find: if one were to play the lines in Fig. 13 on a piano these two consistently two-measure melodies appear to wander rather aimlessly in a constant back-and-forth. It is only on hearing the recording that one recognizes the genius of Kenny’s orchestrational choices. By giving the primary melody to the two altos, voice, and guitar, and the countermelody to the four trombones, a strange thing happens: through this inspired use of orchestration, these two melodic lines become an engaging musical conversation, for no other apparent reason than timbre! Even the 14th measure where both notes and rhythms overlap creates no difficulties in hearing the separate lines. The overall effect of these secondary themes (occurring again in the following iteration) is the creation of a melodic contrast to the original motive presented in the first two iterations.
Background Textures: In his usage of background material, Kenny tends to treat these textures homogenously: saxophones play with saxophones, trumpets with trumpets, and
trombones with trombones. When he does combine sections, they tend to work together, with limited rhythmic and melodic activity (for example, Fig. 14).

Figure 14 - Typical Wheeler Background Texture

**Rhythmic Approach to Background Texture:** The chord voicings themselves tend to be static, consisting of one voicing per chord and following a repetitive rhythmic pattern. Also of interest in Fig. 14 is the rhythmic offset of the first four measures and the otherwise consistent application of the rhythmic structure which continues throughout the majority of this composition when it is in 4/4 time.

**Chordal Construction:** The voicings themselves are a typical example of Kenny’s harmonic language. The D\(^{(\text{add}9)}\) chord is constructed with two consecutive perfects 5\(^{\text{th}}\)s from the bass and contains no 3\(^{\text{rd}}\). The Gm\(^{(\text{maj}7)}\) chord is dense and dark, with the inclusion of both the 6\(^{\text{th}}\) and the 9\(^{\text{th}}\) of the chord and a minor 2\(^{\text{nd}}\) interval from the 9\(^{\text{th}}\) to
the minor 3\textsuperscript{rd} (notes A-Bb) in both the trombones and saxophones. Even darker is the Lydian harmony of the Ebmaj7\#11 with the minor 2\textsuperscript{nd} being placed at the notes D-Eb (major 7\textsuperscript{th}-root) in the tenor saxophones. Throughout the composition, Wheeler does not shy away from seconds in the top two voices (e.g., alto saxophones, m. 34), nor of taking advantage of minor 2\textsuperscript{nd} intervals in the middle voices.

**Conclusion:** What sets Kenny’s work apart from his contemporaries is a tendency towards diatonic melodies juxtaposed against non-diatonic chord structures and harmonic progressions, uneven, unusual, and circular forms, the changing of form lengths and time signatures, and the emphasis on both melody and contrapuntal activity. His harmonic language tends to consist of Lydian and especially Lydian augmented fifth chordal structures, which, due to their construction using major thirds, lend themselves well to these circular forms. Furthermore, Kenny is known for his original textural palette, which includes the incorporation of wordless vocals, the eschewing of doubling in the reed section, and a predilection for using the same band members for each project, thereby ensuring the creation of a sound that one immediately recognizes as his.
CHAPTER 7 - NORWAY’S VISIONARY: HELGE SUNDE

A Short History of Jazz in Norway

“Jazz” arrived relatively quickly after World War I to this somewhat remote nation on the Western edge of Scandinavia. The word in use as early as 1919, however, was a catchall, meaning anything new and tended to be associated with dancing in Norway. Norwegians first experienced jazz through recordings and radio broadcasts from England, with the omnipresent Sidney Bechet being the first American jazz star to perform in the country in 1926. Although the music gained popularity and a few efforts to form homegrown bands were successful, the music did not really begin to develop until American artists began visiting the country more regularly beginning with tours by Louis Armstrong, Coleman Hawkins, and Jimmy Lunceford beginning in 1935.

World War II came to Norway mid-1940. Though technically a neutral nation, the country was forced to experience Nazi occupation. As in Germany, jazz and swing music underwent censorship and by 1941 listening to the radio became a proscribed activity, permitted only to Nazi party members. Nevertheless, a form of the music survived with a number of big bands forming in the early 1940’s. The 12-piece Bergen Rhythm Orchestra became at this time the first nationally touring Norwegian jazz ensemble, though they, too suffered with the initiation of a 1942 ban on all public dances.

After the war, as the country was slowly recovering from the Nazi occupation and five years of lack of access to current developments in jazz, Norway experienced what was termed a “hot club period,” where, as in Great Britain, Dixieland-style jazz became hugely popular. The year 1946 was a turning point in things jazz-related: the first radio program featuring hot jazz was featured on the Norwegian Broadcasting Network, bands from Denmark, Sweden, Great Britain began touring the country, and a special trip by American bandleader Don Redman was the highlight of the decade. Stylistically, as the 40’s came to an end, and the 1950’s ensued, Norwegians began to get a taste of the new music styles of both bebop and cool jazz via Voice of America broadcasts from Germany.

As the 1960’s approached, Norwegians were introduced to new, more experimental developments in jazz with the establishment of the show “Jazzklubben” on the national (and only) public radio station in the country. In the early 60’s visits by composer/performers George Russell, Cecil Taylor, John Coltrane, Charles Mingus, and Don Ellis proved influential for a number of upcoming Norwegian jazz artists. In 1964 Thorleif Østereng started the first radio big band in Norway.110

However, it was not until 1970 that one could begin to speak of a truly Norwegian approach towards this art form. The meeting of four Norwegian jazz musicians – Jan Garbarek, Arild Andersen, Jon Christensen, and Terje Rypdal – with record producer and head of the newly founded ECM records, Manfred Eicher. Afric Pepperbird111 hailed the beginning of a long association of Norwegian musicians with the new label. The fact that the majority of ECM releases were recorded in Oslo also helped to define not only a new

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110 This band unfortunately lost its contract in 1990 due to budget cuts.

sound, but, as the label’s output and success of its releases slowly built around the world, helped to propel saxophonist Jan Garbarek to international fame as a jazz artist with a definable, Norwegian “sound.”\textsuperscript{112} Along with the development of jazz in Norway, interest in big bands also increased. By 1970 a number of national big bands such as the Bergen Big Band, Trondheim Kunstorkester, and the Thorleif Østereng/Helge Hurum Big Band had been established.

\textbf{Helge Sunde}

Trombonist and composer Helge Sunde (b. 1965) grew up in Stryn, located in the Western fjords of central Norway.\textsuperscript{113} In the 1980’s the entire area was under the sway of what Sunde refers to as a “schoolband tradition [sic]”, where just about every child was expected to play an instrument. Aided by the fact that his own entire family were musicians, at the age of eight Sunde opted to learn the trombone. By age 16 he began to study seriously, learning not only trombone, but also piano and violin, as well as playing in the school big band. Also during this time Sunde developed an interest in composition and began studying scores from composers such as Beethoven, Stravinsky, Tchaikovsky, and Mahler. Later, while continuing his studies in Oslo, Sunde formed the 20-piece Fusion-oriented big band Oslo Groove Company and promptly won the Norwegian jazz Grammy for his debut record. Over the length of his career, Sunde has written for many different ensembles, from contemporary orchestra, chamber music, brass band, and various jazz projects, including his work with his present big band, Ensemble Denada.

\textsuperscript{112} See also Heffley, pp. 74-75.

\textsuperscript{113} The biographical material for this section comes from questionnaire responses by Sunde. For the complete responses, please refer to Appendix C.
“The Speedcouch”

“The Speedcouch” is the first track on Ensemble Denada’s 2013 release Windfall. The ensemble itself is very modern in its makeup. The 15-member group consists of four woodwinds, six brass (three each of trumpets and trombones), rhythm section, and one person playing real-time sampling, rhythmic, and harmonic electronics (as well as adding visuals at live performances). For this particular composition, Sunde has his woodwind players on soprano, alto, tenor, and bass saxophone, and both electric guitar and acoustic bass take full advantage of electronic effects. All of the musicians possess virtuosic skill levels on their chosen instruments, a fact that Sunde employs to great effect.

Form and Concept: “The Speedcouch” is another piece of music that, like seen in Gruntz’s “General Cluster”, is through-composed. The piece consists of three main gestures that Sunde manipulates throughout the composition. What a speedcouch exactly is, Sunde does not divulge, but there is some overt humor involved, as the tempo direction is given as, “Fast and funny.” Though entertaining, the piece itself requires a high degree of musical ability and interpretation from the musicians to work. Another overall aspect of the song is the fact that it never diverges from its rather groovy 4/4 feel except in the free jazz passages, which will be discussed below.

Content – Gestures/Motifs: The three gestures that Sunde employs here are the following:

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115 Interestingly, the electronics are not notated in the score.
1. **Displaced major 7th leaps:** These humorous figures appear at the beginning and end of the composition and are interspersed throughout and seem to suggest a tone row (Fig. 15).

![Figure 15 - Gesture 1: First measure, soprano saxophone](image)

The leaps move both upward and downward. Sunde only employs the figure in the upper three saxophones, trumpets, piano, and guitar. The figure appears often, sometimes in its original form (m. 18, m. 60), in retrograde (m. 9), transposed up a perfect 5th (mm. 97, 103, 108, 119), or another transposition a minor 2nd away from these main forms. It never appears for more than one measure until the coda-like ending (see Fig. 16) and it becomes clear that this gesture is part of a twelve-note row with one note missing – the Ab/G#.

2. **Bass Motif:** In the final measure in Fig. 16 is a bass motif first introduced in m. 7 that recurs throughout the piece. As the piece develops it occurs more and more frequently and begins to appear in the other instruments in various transpositions and is subject to more frequent repetitions. Also, as this is occurring, it begins to elongate to what can only be termed a ridiculously long and musically challenging extension which greatly adds to the humor of the composition (Fig. 17).
These elongations appear in both shorter and full versions at numerous places in the composition, such as at mm. 26, 38 (above), 47, and a final one at m. 126. The motif is further often played by the bass, both in 8th note and 16th note versions throughout!
3. Offset Rhythmic Application of Constant Structure:

The third element that ties this piece together is the application of the three-note chord based on the intervals perfect 4th-diminished 5th (i.e., a major 7th between bottom and top notes). This chord, also known as an (016) trichord with the unique interval vector 100011, is common in many jazz voicings. Here, Sunde finds a unique application by moving it around predominantly in minor 2nds and major 7ths, mirroring the displaced major 7ths leaps discussed above (Fig. 18).

Figure 18 - Gesture 3: Offset (016) Trichords

As can be seen, the comic effect is enhanced by the offsetting of the short 8th-note chords by dividing the groupings between saxophones, trumpets, and trombones, with the bass saxophone and bass filling in the open 8th-note spaces. The guitar and piano are also added with the guitar predominantly supporting the trombones and the piano supporting the saxophones. As with the other gestures, Sunde repeatedly returns to this motif, splitting the composition rather evenly between the three gestures.
Other Techniques: Sunde is using a number of techniques in addition to developing the gestures mentioned. Both the trumpets and trombones often use mutes – frequently the more “old-fashioned” sound of the straight mute, but also wah-wah and harmon mutes. Dynamics vary widely and there are often swells amongst the various instruments. The bass gesture travels up and down between and within instrumental groups (see for example mm. 19-21), and, as previously mentioned, both electric guitar and bass make full use of electronic effects, as well as the usage of electronic sounds by a musician performing real-time sampling and using rhythmic and harmonic electronics.

Another technique that Sunde uses in the piece is having the piano play constant 16\textsuperscript{th} notes on the note A, which is then repeated among all the horns before dropping off. This occurs twice – at mm. 32-34, and again at mm. 121-123. (See Fig. 19).

Figure 19 - Unison Effect

Like the example found in Gruntz’s piece, Sunde also employs here a free jazz element. First in mm. 71-82 the electronics, bass, and drums are alone and interacting freely, albeit in time. Starting in m. 83 the soprano saxophone begins soloing (not notated in the score – there the solo is notated as commencing at m. 109). Thereafter, until m.
118, the solo is absolutely free, with no chord changes or bass line given. The feel is akin to a Ornette Colemanesque free-jazz swing that maintains the pulse of the piece, but is further altered via the presence of electronic sounds. Sunde has also written in short cues for the band are interspersed within the solo: Cue 1 at m. 110 uses the 7th leap motif; Cue 2 at mm. 113-114 uses the rhythmic constant structure motif; Cue 3 at mm. 116-118 is an extension of the constant structure motif that appears only at mm. 21-22; and Cue 4 at m. 119-124 begins with the 7th leaps motif and quickly moves to an extended bass motif with the activity culminating in a bass solo.

Sunde concludes the solo section with the extended bass motif (Fig. 17) and continues with short versions of it placed throughout the ensemble (mm. 131-136). This culminates in what appears to be the end, but then there is the final coda-like sequence of major 7th leaps, with the piece concluding on the bass motif (Fig. 16).

**Conclusion:** Helge Sunde’s, “The Speedcouch” makes use of minimal material in a unique and entertaining manner. The interspersion and development of three main gestures/motifs and open improvisational sections provides enough musical information and contrast to create a humorous and interesting composition.
Chapter 8 – Europe and Beyond: Florian Ross

Florian Ross (b. 1972) can be seen as a representative of present-day developments in European big band writing. Even more specifically, Ross, like a number of his contemporaries, benefits from the work and examples of his European forebears, especially that of Peter Herbolzheimer, who helped create the system of federally supported state-run big bands in which Ross was able to gain valuable experience in this genre of music.

**Florian Ross**

Florian Ross was born and raised in the city of Pforzheim, located roughly between Stuttgart and Karlsruhe in the German state of Baden-Württemberg. As a child, Ross was exposed to Dixieland jazz by his father, who was an amateur banjoist himself. Though over time he came to dislike this genre of music, his father was instrumental in the fact that he encouraged his son to improvise on the piano, a skill that Ross has continued to develop and refine over his career. As a teenager Ross studied classical piano for a time while also leading a local rock-fusion ensemble.

A significant life-altering event in his subsequent musical career came with an opportunity at age sixteen to go as an exchange student to the United States. Once there, Ross found himself in the rural town of Broken Arrow, Oklahoma. Devoid of friends and social opportunities, Ross availed himself to the radio and discovered the vast varieties of jazz music via the local college radio station. On his return to Germany, he auditioned for and was accepted into the State Youth Jazz Orchestra of Baden-Württemberg. Here Ross

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116 The biographical information in this section was obtained via an interview with Florian Ross conducted by the author May 7, 2015 in Cologne, Germany. The entire interview can be viewed in Appendix D.
was confronted for the first time with the challenges of reading chord changes and jazz and rock rhythms. This was also his first contact with the world of written jazz arrangements, and he found that he enjoyed creating and being part of the big band sound. On account of these experiences, Ross decided his next move was to study jazz seriously. He applied to the few jazz schools that were at that time established in Germany and was accepted into the Hochschule für Musik in Cologne.

It was at the Hochschule that a second life-altering event occurred for Ross. There, his assigned teacher was the eminent British jazz pianist and composer John Taylor. Taylor, a widely known and respected veteran who had already recorded a number of ECM recordings under his own name, was also a close colleague with none other than Kenny Wheeler. From their first lesson on, Taylor taught Ross the music of Kenny Wheeler, as well as introducing him to the music of his British contemporaries, musicians whom Ross was not aware of while listening to the radio in Oklahoma. Ross became immediately enamored with this music, feeling he had finally found an approach that came closest to his musical ideals.

Completing his studies in Cologne, Ross opted for further studies; first at the Guildhall School of Music and Dance in Great Britain, where he also studied privately with British iconoclast Django Bates, and later under a scholarship at New York University (NYU) in New York City, under the tutelage of Jim McNeely. Since that time, Ross has released a number of acclaimed jazz records, and is highly prized for his work, having written and been commissioned to write for big bands and artists such as Kurt Elling, John Scofield, George Duke, and Mike Stern within Europe and around the world. Ross often travels giving workshops and master classes.
“Prickly Pear”

Though he has composed and arranged hundreds of pieces during his career, until recently Ross had neglected to make a recording of his own big band compositions and arrangements. His 2013 CD, *Ties & Loose Ends*, is thus Ross’s first big band album. The composition “Prickly Pear” is the sixth song on this CD.

**Form and Organization:** The first five measures encapsulate the majority of the melodic, harmonic, and rhythmic information used and developed in this piece. Melodically and harmonically, Ross uses melodies that can be created from hexatonic and diminished scales or parts thereof against a similar series in the bass with the addition of perfect fifths above the bass notes in the piano greatly adding to the weight of this section through to m. 48.

Rhythmically, Ross, though working with what appears to be a straight 8th-note feel, terms this a fast swing with a half note equal to 130bpm. Be that as it may, the composer is very interested in placing notes and chords in unusual places, keeping the music both from being static and greatly adding to the energy of the piece (see Fig. 20).

![Figure 20 - Ross: Introductory Material](image-url)

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118 This information was provided by the composer.
This information is then developed and enhanced by a gradual thickening of orchestrational texture culminating in the change to a half-time feel for the first solo section at m. 82. The solos are over four 8-bar partitions for a total of 32 measures with the entire section repeated three times. The first two solo choruses are played by the soprano saxophone and include backgrounds on the first chorus. The guitar then solos over one chorus with backgrounds only on the final 8 bars of the solo. This section concludes with a short 2-bar setup at mm. 114-115, and Ross then interpolates a 5-bar double-time swing section (a fore-shadowing of the actual double-time swing feel starting at m. 134) before returning to the original material, now elongated via drum fills between melodic statements.

This section concludes with an interesting effect: starting on beat 4 of m. 133 the saxophones, trombones, 2nd trumpet, and guitar hold out the notes of a Gm7(b13) chord for a full eight measures as a double-time swing feel ensues. At the end of this chord the piano then begins an open solo over the same harmony. After the piano solo, at m. 146 the original melody and orchestration returns, but now altered, with extra notes added after the first three-note statement, the remaining phrases transposed as shown (Fig. 21 – compare with Fig. 20).

Figure 21 - Return mm.146-150

At m. 158 there appears a second theme that is an adaptation of the first using longer note values in alternate phrases, as opposed to the original 8th-note melody. This secondary
melodic development reaches full expression at m. 194 (Fig. 22) and is then developed for the duration of the piece, with a gradual thinning of orchestration leading to the final statement of this second idea mm. 235-240.

Figure 22 - Second theme

Use of Orchestration: One technique Ross uses to great effect is the use of orchestration to aid in the development of his composition. As noted above, the piece begins in the rhythm section with the guitar and the right hand of the piano playing the melody, while the rhythmic propulsion is given by the bass coupled with perfect fifths in the left hand of the piano and supported by kicks in the drums. At the second statement of the melody at m. 22 the 4th trumpet is added, providing a new color. After the 5-bar melody is stated, the timbre and texture is altered with the addition at m. 28 of the two tenor saxophones and baritone saxophone on the melody and the bass trombone joining the bass part. This also helps develop the intensity and drive the activity forward. At m. 34 the two tenors break off and play a short counter-line, only to rejoin the melody again at m. 41 with the rest of the saxophones and trombones 2 & 3 entering as well. At m. 48 the band proceeds in tutti style, with the piano playing full chords for the first time (Fig. 23).
The actual harmonies (the notes of which are distributed in the horn section with the melody in soprano and alto saxophones, 4\textsuperscript{th} trumpet, guitar, and piano right hand) are for the most part diatonic to the key of F major. Of note is the continuation of perfect fifths in the bass and the close textures of the chords, as well as the constant structure of two perfect fifths plus a second in the bass in the majority of chords in this example. Most striking of all is that the entire excerpt is defined by a pedal C in the top voice, adding both tension and unifying the harmonic movement via common tones.

At mm. 59–67 Ross thins out the density, with only the soprano saxophone and the 4\textsuperscript{th} trumpet playing melody along with the rhythm section and the piano back again in perfect fifths as a form of interlude and foreshadowing of the entrances of both solo sections, only to return to full tutti (exactly the same both times in the piano and with a variation in the melody) at mm. 69–82 through to the first two measures of the solo section mm. 82–83. The effect of the tutti sections is powerful, as they create the feeling of arrival, being high points in the composition while providing an effective contrast to the smaller ensemble sections preceding them.

A number of orchestrational techniques employed by Ross are quite illuminating. For example, for the backgrounds in the solo section mm. 82–113, Ross begins with the four trombones being joined by the two tenor saxophones. Due to range blending, and the fact that the first soloist is the soprano saxophone, this seems an excellent choice to create
a texture underneath this instrument, as they stay out of the range of the soprano. Another interesting aspect of this section is that on the first and third voicings Ross pairs the 1st tenor saxophone in lead with the 1st trombone while the 2nd tenor saxophone and 2nd trombone play a unison line resulting in their final note being under the trombones 3 and 4 (Fig. 24 mm. 84-85, and 88-89).

Another notable technique occurs in the third 8-bar section of the solo when the bass and piano play two consecutive perfect 5ths from the root (forming a major 9th) underneath chromatically descending major7(#11) chords. This alone would make a nice effect, but Ross further underlines this section by adding the trumpets in harmon mutes voiced from bottom to top 3,#11,7,9,) which adds a “shimmering” sound to the harmony (Fig. 25).

Figure 24 - Voice Crossing mm. 84-85

Figure 25 - Trumpet structure mm.98-99
Before entering the final section of the piece, Ross has the band play a very interesting structure containing minor 2nds at the top of the voicing mm. 219-222 (Fig. 26).

Figure 26 - Structure mm.219-222

This is an intriguing structure, as it is built again from two consecutive major fifths in the bass (Eb-Bb-F) but on the top the four notes in the trumpets and saxophones form what could be an Fmaj7 without a 5th. The exact structure is thus more a sound than a chord, due to the fact that the notes Eb, E, and F exist concurrently.

After this remarkable musical moment, Ross begins to pare the orchestration and change the timbre. Mm. 227-232 is a repeat of the second musical theme from mm. 194-199 minus the 3rd and 4th trumpets and 1st trombone, with the remaining trumpets in cup mutes. After a 2-bar drum interlude, the melody is repeated one last time by all four trumpets in cup mute supported only by the left hand of the piano in unison with the bass, and the drums. In all, this technique of reducing weight and lightening of timbre makes an interesting effect that I hope to someday employ.

**Conclusion:** “Prickly Pear” is a decidedly contemporary big band composition and arrangement. It has a unified melodic and harmonic palette underscored by a single dominant melodic idea. Though present to some extent in some sections, overall Ross
makes little use of secondary themes or counter-lines. Interest is instead created and
maintained by the masterful application of orchestrational textures, but further
underscored by a constantly changing rhythmic accents. A rather compelling technique
that Ross employs – at least in terms of the pieces examined in this essay – is the use of
foreshadowing (as discussed above – mm. 59-67 and at mm.114-115) which aids in
creating a feeling of arrival when the intimated sections finally appear.
CHAPTER 9 – THE COMPOSITIONS

While researching and examining the previous big band arrangements I was concurrently composing and arranging my own pieces for big band. Three very different compositions thus resulted: “The Turn,” “Poinsettia,” and “Cadence.”

“The Turn”

“The Turn” in its present form came about through a number of circumstances. The original version was the direct result of a composition assignment given by Prof. John Daversa in his graduate Jazz Composition course at the Frost School of Music at the University of Miami in the Fall of 2014. The students were asked to create a number of motifs and then choose from them the material to construct a composition that moves from tonic to subdominant to dominant. The piece was then performed as a sextet (trumpet, alto saxophone, guitar, piano, bass, and drums) for the class. The second iteration was created when I performed at the school’s jazz forum at the start of the school year in the Fall of 2015. There, given an additional orchestrational palette of voice, tenor saxophone and trombone, the basis of the present arrangement was created. The piece as it is here is the result of long, continued listening and examination not only of the composers studied, but also many other European writers not discussed in these pages.

Organizational Elements: The piece begins on a pedal D that, through the presence of neighbor notes C and Eb, suggests the Phrygian mode. At a certain point the song goes to the IV, which in this case is G minor. Finally the piece arrives at the V, which here comprises various chord structures incorporating A in the bass.
Harmonically, for most of the composition one type of constant chord structure: that of a 2\textsuperscript{nd} inversion major triad with the addition of the 4th in the bass (e.g., from bottom to top the notes F-G-C-E). Due to both its sonic character (it includes a major 7th between its highest and lowest note) and its malleability of being able to be used with a variety of bass notes, this particular structure is often heard in modern compositions (for example, it can be found in Florian Ross’s “Prickly Pear”. See e.g., mm. 84-85). The harmonies in the section based on the bass note D move downwards thusly: minor 3rd-minor 2nd-minor 3rd, inferring the augmented scale (i.e., the symmetric hexatonic scale). The melody is directly derived from this scalar activity and furthermore each of the three tonal centers is also given its own melody that helps define them.

**Orchestrational Choices:** The process of orchestrating this piece and was very much influenced especially by my examination of Florian Ross’s composition, though it does not necessarily reflect the same choices. As the tonic, subdominant, dominant movement is about creating tension and eventual release (assuming the tonic reappears), I was looking for ways to delay the inevitable resolution to maximum effect. Furthermore, I was looking to create a slow development similar to the model of Ross’s piece. For the above reasons the composition begins with an open drum solo. The bass then sets the tone for the piece starting with the aforementioned bass line at m. 2. The first melody at rehearsal mark A is then played by guitar and flugelhorn, again influenced by Ross’s use of guitar and trumpet. The first tenor saxophone is added at letter B to add both a different timbre and also to fill out the third note of the harmonies at the end of each phrase (see the paragraph above regarding the prevalent harmonies used in this piece). Letter C consists of 16 bars of unspecified piano solo, reflecting the open solo sections of
both Gruntz’s and Sunde’s open solo ideas. The activity at letter D signals both a return to the melody the addition of voice, alto saxophone, and trumpet doubling the melody with the chords now being voiced by the second alto and tenor saxophones, second trumpet and second and third trombones. The choice of including the female voice in this piece was very much influenced by Kenny Wheeler’s use of this as an instrument in his writing. By the fourth iteration at letter E the tension reaches its height with the addition of the remainder of the ensemble, again reflecting Ross’s approach to his work.

Letter F features both the arrival of the IV chord and an orchestrational change as the voice is featured carrying the melody alone. At m. 60 not only does the voice solo, but the density and activity around it is also increased as the saxophones and trumpets play (as a nod to Gruntz’s writing) indeterminate trills on the Gm7 chord. At the same time, the trombones become more active, with the 2nd and 3rd trombones first joining the voice in unison at m. 56 but then playing a harmonized four-part melody in the second half of the section in order to build up more tension and set up the final arrival at the V chord tonality at letter G (Fig. 27).

Figure 27 - Trombone voicings mm.60-67

The chords I chose take advantage of major and minor seconds in the voicings and are all variations on the G-minor tonality, i.e., they make use of the following available tensions: major sixths, major and minor sevenths, and major ninths.

As letter G features the arrival of the dominant, I felt that this area should also have the most activity and tension. The chord sequence is as follows: Dmaj7(#5)/A-A7(b9)-
A7(b9#11)-Amaj7(b13). One challenge was to find a melody that fits this chordal sequence (it is not really a progression as all the chords are based on the bass note A. See Fig. 28).

Here the combined melodic timbres of voice, 2\textsuperscript{nd} tenor saxophone, flugelhorn, 1\textsuperscript{st} trombone, and guitar are united on the melody while the altos and 1\textsuperscript{st} tenor saxophone play a counter-line, with the remaining trombones playing supporting chordal kicks (joined by the trumpets after four measures) during each chord change. Further counterpoint is provided as the bass and baritone saxophone play an intricate bass line against this activity. All this is devised to lead up to the guitar solo on the tonic at letter H. Both the guitar and tenor saxophone solos are conceived to commence with minimal activity and, like the larger form, develop slowly. Another formal concept is that the guitar solo is predominantly on the tonic, and the tenor solo is on the subdominant. With a nod to Herbolzheimer’s concept of avoiding needless repetition, when the melody returns it does so on the IV chord.

**Other Techniques Used:** In mm. 107-111 I employed a rhythmic layering of a unison idea both like and unlike that found in Sunde’s composition (Fig. 29, compare with Fig.
19). This unison effect reflects the repetition of notes and the tension of offset entrances as found in Sunde’s work.

Figure 29 - Rhythmically layered unison idea

The idea of layering happens in numerous places in this composition as variations of this idea recur at mm. 138-145, mm. 198-212, and again at letters V and W. However, the high point of this composition is the combination of three ideas that represent the three tonal centers at mm. 206-213. This is a kind of “playing out” of the melodic and harmonic ideas of the piece and represents my extrapolation of the composition’s I-IV-V concept (Fig. 30):
The trombones, voice, and piano play the chordal idea of the IV area while the trumpets play an elongated form of the tonic melody – which is inspired by Gruntz’s elongation of his constant structure idea (Fig. 11). The saxophones at the same time play a “speeded up” version reminiscent of the dominant idea, even if the notes are not exactly the same. The composer also uses this as a bridge back to the subdominant area stating the previously absent subdominant melody (the one missing element above) at letter T. This sets up the final buildup on the V chord section, which is repeated three times with added activity and dynamics each iteration to build up the trajectory to the sudden end of the piece.

“Poinsettia”

“Poinsettia” is, like all of my compositions written for this paper in that it is very much influenced by the writing of Kenny Wheeler. The basis for composition here lies in the utilization of common tones, unusual chord types, odd meters, and the employment of flugelhorn and vibraphone as soloists. This piece first saw light while I was studying jazz composition with Prof. John Daversa in the spring semester of 2015, and had its first iteration as a dectet for Prof. Gary Lindsay’s Recording Ensemble class in the spring semester of 2016.
**Form and Organization:** To set up the rather somber mood of the piece, the piano plays an open intro based around the chord Emaj7(#5) before beginning a downward-moving arpeggio built on the chord a tritone away – Bbmaj7(#5). This sound was chosen as it leads away from the original tonicity and is the first of many surprising textures in this piece. The arpeggio then leads into a vamp starting m.4 on the chord Bb7(b9sus). I chose this chord for its rather jarring, unstable, and unusual qualities, being conceived from the less-common harmonic major scale. It his here also that the piece establishes a tempo and waltz-like swing feel, using an 11/4 figure of 3-3-3-2 beats, before finally settling into a 3/4 pattern at letter A. The choice of this unusual rhythm seemed to balance well with qualities of the chord. To counteract this strange setting, the melody when it appears is simply the repeated note G over the alternating chords Dm11 and Dbmaj7#11. After eight measures, the melody transposes down a minor 3rd to the note E over the alternating chords Fmaj7(#5)/Bb and Amaj7(b13) before coming to a small resting interlude of the chords Gbmin(maj7) and Fmaj9. One important aspect to note about this composition is that both this melody and these particular chords were chosen as a study in common-tones. In the harmonies the upper notes remain constant and the bass notes move down by a half step, creating a bass motion suggesting the harmonic minor or the augmented scale (Fig. 31). The Amaj7(b6) structure waas chosen for its unusual qualities of being a major 7th chord with both a perfect 5th and minor 6th. This chord is also derived from the harmonic major scale, and hence the bass motion suggests the downward motion of root-major 7th-minor 6th -5th that appears in this scale with the root on the note D.
The B section of the piece begins on the melody note B over the harmony G/A and is the only place in the statement of the melody where neither vibraphone nor flugelhorn are playing. This was a conscious decision to give the ear a rest from these two timbres. It also is a place of rest from the constant back-and-forth motion of the chords in the A section. This rest is shortlived, however, with a series of maj\textsuperscript{(b9)} chords (i.e., triads with an added note a half step up from the root derived from the 4\textsuperscript{th} degree of the harmonic major scale) moving from Bb to B before a downwards motion to the chord G\textsuperscript{(b9)} which is held for seven beats. The first four measures of letter E hearken back to the original motive and melody seen at letter A. Here the common tones include the bass notes and only the change of chord quality (Db\textsuperscript{(sus9)} and Db\textsuperscript{9(#11)}) and rhythmic feel differentiate these four measures. The next four bars again share a soprano pedal note against a downwards bass motion D-B-G-F\# which increases tension and the expectation of some kind of resolution, which only occurs after the final four measures mm. 88-92.

Here the composer employs two upwards-moving whole-tone/half-tone diminished scales are employed in the melody against the chords Fmaj\textsuperscript{7(#11)}-Db/D-G/Db-E/B, which were derived as harmonizations of a downward moving diminished scale in the bass increasing the tension further, finally resolving back to the Bb7\textsuperscript{(b9)sus} chord and 11/4 vamp.
As can be seen from the bass notes in the A sections, when including the 4-bar interludes, a hexatonic scale (enharmonically the downwards motion D-C#-Bb-A-Gb-F) is employed. As with all symmetric scales, this creates a sense of floating, as there is no one note or tonic that will feel like it is home base, which precisely fits the character of this piece. Another notable sonic concept employed here is the use of the maj\(^7\)(b13) chord. This structure is derived from less common harmonic major scale and creates, with the confluence of both natural 5\(^{th}\) and augmented 5\(^{th}\), a rather jarring, but also interesting effect.

“Poinsettia” is also a study in form. Keeping in mind the dictates of Peter Herbolzheimer, careful consideration was given to the organization of the entire composition. The Bbmaj\(^7\)(#5) arpeggio from the introduction, for example, never returns in its entirety, but is often alluded to by the short four-note interjections in the 11/4 vamp sections (e.g., m. 43) The four note interjection is also modified at the very end of the piece, consisting of the notes of a Bmin\(^{(maj7)}\) arpeggio. After the statement of the melody, the vamp returns and the second part of the composition is played. However, in the solo sections, only the 16-bar A section is used, interspersed with the 4-bar interlude and the two solo sections are separated by the 11/4 vamp. Again, keeping in mind Herbolzheimer’s concept of avoiding needless repetition, the B section only returns after the last solo and the piece ends on the Bb\(^7\)(b9sus) chord without returning to the vamp.

**Orchestration:** The challenge was to have activity in the horn section without interfering with the melodic development stated by first the vibraphone and then the flugelhorn. As such, during the second half of the melodic statement by the sound of the vibraphone starting at m.28, it is supported by quiet swells in the woodwinds. The melodic statement
by flugelhorn is likewise supported first by the soft, homogenous brass texture of the trombones in bucket mutes and guitar working quietly in tandem with the piano, and in the second half by the clarinets putting emphasis on the second dotted quarter note in the 3/4 time feel. As noted, the B section that begins with pickups into letter D is the one place where the saxophones take the lead, in part to give respite to the sound of vibraphone and flugelhorn. Letter E then signals the buildup of activity, with all the woodwinds and trombones supporting the flugelhorn again underlining the dotted quarter note rhythms of the melody leading into the release at the vamp and beginning of the solos at letter F.

For the last chorus of the vibraphone solo at letter G the clarinets are reintroduced in the backgrounds featuring the first clarinet playing the lead line for the first eight bars, then transferring the lead activity to the bass clarinet for the next eight measures. Only three clarinets are playing here in order to maintain clarity against the vibraphone. Harmonically, the three clarinets are playing an interesting texture, as the middle clarinet alternates between second intervals from the top note and the bottom note (Fig. 29).

![Figure 32 - Clarinet texture mm.108-109](image-url)

For variety, a change in timbre is then achieved at letter H by a background figure featuring the top three trombones with flugelhorn in the lead, followed by all five clarinets at letter I.

As this is a Kenny Wheeler-inspired piece, the flugelhorn – Kenny’s instrument of choice – is essential here. Much space is given to the soloist up to the cue at letter L.
where activity increases with the entrance of the saxophones playing a background line. Letter M marks an adding of the tension as the alto and tenor saxophones play a melody against a countermelody by the bottom three trombones and baritone saxophone (see excerpt Fig. 33).

Figure 33 - Saxophone and Trombone Background Countermelodies mm.200-203

Letter M also marks the solo’s conclusion as well as being the most forceful and active part of the composition. Thus, when the vibraphone enters with pickup to letter O it marks an immediate change in feel and timbre leading to the conclusion of the piece with the flugelhorn again predominant at letter P, the final Bb7(sus4) chord looking backwards to the 11/4 vamp, and the final four-note figure as discussed above tying the disparate ideas together.

“Cadence”

As its title suggests, “Cadence” concerns itself with the idea of tonic, subdominant, dominant, and resolution. Inspired firstly by Kenny Wheeler’s influential “Part I: Opening” from his *Sweet Time Suite*, I was looking for a way to incorporate a chorale-style texture into my work. A second important event in the development of this composition was my receiving the unexpected happy news that New York-based

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chromatic harmonica player Hendrik Meurkens\textsuperscript{120} would be available for my doctoral concert, which was held on March 3\textsuperscript{rd} at the University of Miami, thus allowing me to incorporate this unique instrument into my sonic palette. A further inspiration was my interest in using Kenny Wheeler’s idea of circular form as a basis for the composition. As such, after the four introductory sections, “Cadence” follows a regular, albeit circular form for the majority of the composition.\textsuperscript{121}

**Form and Organization:** The four introductory statements (through to letter D) offer differing views of the cadence that is the basis of the composition. This is accomplished first and foremost through orchestration: the initial cadence is stated solely by harmonica, clarinet, and bass clarinet, which together make a delicate, homogenous sound. At letter A the entire horn section plays the cadence with the clarinet now in the lead, but the cadence does not resolve to the tonic Bb, but rather on the bII Bmaj7\textsuperscript{(#11)}, thereby suspending the cadential resolution, which is a recurring theme of this piece (Fig. 34).

Figure 34 - Horns Letter A (Clarinet 8va)

\begin{center}
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{figure34.png}
\end{center}

This leads to an extended solo piano exposition on the chords of the cadence (now elongated to seven measures) ending on the tonic and then to the final statement with the horns plus harmonica in the lead once more leading to the tonic. One aspect of the

\textsuperscript{120} An interesting side note - Meurkens is a European of Dutch descent and was born and raised in Germany before settling in the U.S.

\textsuperscript{121} See example and discussion of circular form pp.46-47.
chorale sections is to note the use of close voicings with each pair of trumpets (1&2 and 3&4) often in unison (Fig. 32). This technique was often employed by Kenny Wheeler.

Figure 35 - Chorale Intro mm.17-20

At the conclusion of the fourth cadential statement, the composition begins. This begins with a vamp in 5/4 moving between the aforementioned Bmaj7(♯11) (bIImaj7(♯11)) down a whole step to the completely non-diatonic chord of Amaj7(♯11). These two chords were chosen as they break up the feeling of cadential movement, delaying the arrival of the V chord (F7(♭9)) on the final two beats of the section. At the conclusion of these four measures the melody commences (see Lead Sheet Fig. 36).
One challenge was how to write a composition that sounds simple but has a complex harmonic schema. After having examined many pieces by Kenny Wheeler, I opted for a concept similar to “Four, Five, Six” by Kenny Wheeler, wherein in an ABC form both the melody and harmonies transpose up a major third for the first two sections and third section begins a major 3rd higher again, only to work its way back to the first key. Also of interest is the C section, as after starting on F# major the keys move upwards
in minor thirds D-F-Ab while the melody moves upwards using a half tone-whole tone diminished scale, before the final unconventional cadential motion mm. 13-14 brings the form back to the V chord in m. 15. One other aspect where this piece differs from Kenny’s is that with the 5/4 time signature there are two chords per bar. Thus, what might have been 8-bar phrases in 3/4 time are condensed into 4-measure phrases. In all, including the 4-bar vamp the entire form is nineteen measures long.

Other notable formal concepts include the plan to incorporate a chorale elsewhere in the piece, which occurs after the backgrounds of the alto solo at letter K and the return of the four-bar introductory cadential idea for the final four measures, here using the combination of only harmonica and piano (Fig. 37).

**Orchestration:** The addition of the chromatic harmonica was inspirational, as this instrument with its unique sound tends to stand out even in a large orchestral setting.
With this in mind, I looked for ways to weave this instrument in and out of the sonic activity of this composition.

Thus, the harmonica is introduced at the beginning of the piece, then is absent for the first chorale. When it makes its return at the second chorale at letter C it stands above the rest of the winds both to recall the original melodic statement and to signify a change in sonic character. For the second melodic statement at letter G, in order to create a change in texture and give respite to the sound of the harmonica the first trombone is given the melody with a development via backing harmonies by the other trombones and flugelhorn. The harmonica reappears to join the backgrounds with a low, independent line at m. 47 as a set up to retaking the melody at letter H. This idea also helps launch the first harmonica solo.

**Chorale:** The 8-measure chorale at letter K is the centerpiece of the composition as it recalls the beginning of the piece, with the difference that it is now twice as long and over the two 4-bar A and B sections. This sets up the return of the rhythm section and the last C section and final statement. The organization of the chorale is also of interest, as it combines numerous melodic ideas (Fig. 38).

For the entire section the soprano saxophone and first trumpet are playing the original melody unchanged. Apart from that, there are various shifting combinations of instruments. For example, in the first four measures the second alto and tenor saxophones join with the first trombone on the main countermelody, the second and third trumpets have another countermelody while first tenor and baritone saxophones are joined with flugelhorn and bass trombone on a more static supporting line using half notes. As one can observe, some instrument groupings and melodic assignments change as the melodic
activity increases in the second four measures. Here the main countermelody is maintained by the second tenor saxophone as the second alto saxophone and first trombone play another countermelody with the trombone (m. 105).

**Conclusion:** Having another instrument at my disposal was an idea first generated by examination of Gruntz’s use of the unusual instruments bass recorder and conch shell in his piece “General Cluster”. As noted, “Cadence” is the result of marrying the seldom-heard harmonica with the large jazz ensemble. An interesting side-note: the other main voice heard on this instrument in jazz is Toots Thielemans, who himself is a European from Belgium.
Figure 38 - Chorale letter K
CONCLUSION

The process of working on this dissertation has been enlightening on a number of levels; first, in terms of learning much about the history and development of big band jazz in Western Europe. By virtue of this activity, many gaps have been filled in, with the end result that I am now much more familiar with not only many names and places in regards to this history, but also I have come into contact with many important recordings and made connections with a number of important living contemporary European big band composers.

Secondly – and equally important – I have been able to glean a number of important concepts to apply in my future work as a composer and arranger. I have garnered new ideas about form, orchestration, pacing, techniques, and much more. It is my hope this paper can enrich the reader and inspire him or her to delve further into this fascinating subject.
BIBLIOGRAPHY


APPENDIX A – QUESTIONNAIRE AND RESPONSES

Doctoral Research Questionnaire

1. What was your musical background (familial, school, friends, etc.)?

2. What was your first instrument or instruments and how did you get introduced to jazz?

3. What was your formal musical training?

4. How and/or what led you or the subject to begin composing and arranging for large jazz ensembles?

5. How much do you believe having a European background affects your or the subject’s compositional approach?

6. Do you or the subject have any particular approach or approaches to composition and instrumentation?

7. Is there anything you would like to add that is pertinent to the subject matter?

Respondees:

A. Gisela Herbolzheimer
B. Jörg Achim Keller
C. Felix Gruntz
D. Arie Volinez
E. Harry Smallenburg
F. Stan Sulzmann
G. Helge Sunde
Gisela Herbolzheimer

1. What was your musical background (familial, school, friends, etc.)?

Peter Herbolzheimer died on March 27th, 2010.

I am his wife Gisela and I shall answer your questions as good as possible.

Peter was born in Bucharest/Rumania and was always listening to the gipsy musicians in the restaurants when he was out for dinner with his parents. The parents never realized that he was so interested in music and did not support him with an instrument or lessons.

2. What was your first instrument or instruments and how did get introduced to jazz?

When he came to Germany in 1951 his aunt gave him a guitar and he played that self taught for many years. He played jazz with friends and in jam sessions. But the amplifiers and speakers of that time were disturbing him so he changed to trombone where he could control the sound himself.

3. What was your formal musical training?

He went to the conservatory for trombone and arrangement courses but at that time there were no competent teachers for jazz in Germany so he listened to American recordings and met every American musician who came to Nuremberg as a soldier and he bought sheet music to study.

4. How and/or what led you to begin performing in large jazz ensembles?

He started arranging for the radio big band in Nuremberg and conducted the recordings and also played himself. Soon other big bands asked him for arrangements, he wrote a lot for the orchestra of Kurt Edelhagen in Cologne and then he started his own big band, the RHYTHM COMBINATION & BRASS. In the beginning he had only one saxophone as he did not want the softness from the sax section and he had the same number of rhythm and of melody instruments in his band and always the best musicians in Europe. He could not pay much but
they all came because they loved to meet each other and to play together and they loved to
play his music.

5. How much do you believe having a European background affect Peter
Herbolzheimer’s compositional approach?

I do not know.

6. Were you aware of any particular approach or approaches by Peter Herbolzheimer
to composition and instrumentation?

Alle Musiker in Peters Umfeld kannten mittlerweile seine Arrangements und hatten sie in
verschiedenen Orchestern gerne gespielt. Peter hat nie vertikal, sondern immer horizontal
 arrangiert, er wollte, dass man jede Stimme auch singen kann. Deshalb konnte er sich leisten,
1970 über die Weihnachtsfeiertage, wo sie normalerweise frei hatten (sie spielten
überwiegend in Rundfunkorchestern), seine Wunschmusiker zu einer Session im Jazzclub
Domicile in München zu holen. Das Konzert wurde mitgeschnitten und daraus plus einer
weiteren Session zu Weihnachten 1971 entstand dann die LP "MY KIND OF SUNSHINE".

Das war der Beginn der RC&B (Rhythm Combination and Brass). Falls Sie dazu
musikalische Fragen haben, könnte sie jeder der Musiker beantworten, der damals dabei war.

7. Is there anything you would like to add that is pertinent to the subject matter?

Peter hat für das Orchester Kurt Edelhagen arrangiert und seine Arrangements wurden so
gespielt, wie er es sich vorgestellt hatte, denn es waren sehr gute Musiker im Orchester.

Anders als im Orchester des Bayerischen Rundfunks, Studio Nürnberg (wir wohnten damals
in Nürnberg), für das er vorher auch arrangiert hatte, aber immer Rücksicht nehmen musste
auf das Können der Musiker und Tonleute. Peter mochte Kurt Edelhagen und vice versa, aber
Edelhagen hatte keinen speziellen Einfluss auf Peter. Im Orchester war er am meisten
befreundet mit Kurt Drewo und Jiggs Whigham, auch später, als er nicht mehr für Edelhagen
schrieb. Sie waren dann auch wichtig in der RC&B.


eine Woche in Baden-Baden die Radiomusik für das SWR-Programm - daraus entstanden
dann die CDs "Music for Swinging Dancers".

Übrigens hat Peter zwei Bundesverdienstkreuze, das erste für die Einmarschmusik
zur Olympiade 1972 (geschrieben zusammen mit Dieter Reith und Jerry van Rooyen), das
zweite für sein Lebenswerk. Dies nur nebenbei!
Ich glaube, ich habe alle Fragen beantwortet!
1. What was your musical background (familial, school, friends, etc.)?

My Dad was an amateur (sometimes semipro) piano player and arranger. Led a dance and swing band round his hometown, Münster. When I grew up, there always was, to various degrees, music at my home. Records, mainly, then later on, when time would allow it again, bands – This was one of my first experiences with live music – My Dad’s pals meeting in our living room and trying to play his latest charts – or just jam along. And finding the drumset the next morning there, because nobody had had the desire to pack up after the session…

Later on, round 13, music became increasingly important. My younger cousin was into music, too, and we hung every day, playing and listening to all kinds of stuff, from Big Bands to Heavy Metal. Round 15, I had a very good trumpet teacher, who showed a lot of musical important stuff to me. And, also very important, my music teacher in the last 3 years of “Gymnasium” was just fantastic in leading his class thru the history of classical music, everything from before Bach to the latest modern composing techniques. He really turned me on to the classics…

2. What was your first instrument or instruments and how did you get introduced to jazz.

Drums was my first, I picked that up with 5 or 6 - slowly (over various birthdays and X Christmases) got a whole SONOR set! I got piano lessons for some 3 years around 10, and picked up the instrument later again when I got into arranging. Played trumpet between 15 and 20 (I still have one…) Started writing (arranging, mainly) with 13. Jazz was at my home. Basie, Ella, Oscar Peterson and Frank Sinatra were top of the list.
There was my dad’s record collection, I had free access to that (I started with Ray Conniff, though, but I was much younger then…)

When I was 13, I had that magic moment that a Basie record completely knocked me out…It was like a dream…everything I had enjoyed most on Sinatra’s recordings (the instrumental parts!!) was here, but now ALL THE WAY!!! A lot of other great experiences came later, but the initial start happened with that one moment.

3. What was your formal musical training?

3 times a 10 lesson group-course in drums, around 8 years old. A few years with the Solo percussionist from our hometown’s Theatre around 18, in preparation for auditions.

3 years of piano as a kid (with almost unmeasurable success). 5 years of trumpet as a teenager with the great Wilhelm Kammerer, now Member of the NDR Hannover Symphony Orchestra – a fantastic musician, trained in Russia, who also introduced me to a lot of great music – and showed me a few tricks in arranging and the basics in conducting. 3 holiday courses at the Hamburg Hochschule (Kontaktstudiengang Popularmusik) as a Drummer and Writer. 5 years of studies at Hilversums Conservatorium with arranger Kenny Napper a few workshops and single lessons in trumpet & conducting

Having said all that, I still feel that – apart from the trumpet – I am basically just self-taught! And I also very much believe in that method, especially for writers!!

4. How and/or what led you to begin performing in large jazz ensembles?

My dad had this 8 piece band (5 horns, 3 rhythm) which we sometimes extended to 7 horns, kind of a small big band. This started when I was 13, and I slowly got into it as a drummer first, then later tried to write charts.
At the same time (a little later) a school big band started in my home town (a rarity in the early 80’s !!!) drums & charts, again, later I did a bit of trumpet and md-ing there, as well as in our university Big Band. I also played in a funk band, a heavy metal band and a musical band – and founded my own Münster based Big Band when I was 17 - so, by that time, I normally had 4 or 5 rehearsals a week, and also did a bit of writing for some of the ensembles. I started to gig around when I had just left school, with 19 - A lot of dixieland, but also other stuff – I was a member of Herb Geller’s Quintet for a while and around ’90, started to play more with Big Bands – Glenn Miller, rehearsal Bands, sometimes the radio bands etc.

Actually, I was a late starter as far as playing and especially touring is concerned – Apart from Dixie-weekends (sometimes up to 6 gigs in 2 1/2 days), I had been working as a professional arranger from 20 on, my first gigs had been (via Herb Geller): The NDR BigBand (for e.g. the Chet Baker BB recording) and Peter Herbolzheimer’s SWF Band, which was the “commercial branch” of his RC&B. Did that from 1986 to its end in late ’90, plus a lot of other stuff that came in, based on these two credits… It was around that time when I decided that I would take any reasonable opportunity to go out and play – it just felt to early to only be behind the desk writing…

5. How much do you believe having a European background affect Peter Herbolzheimer’s compositional approach?

I do not really see this – Peter had been in the States for a while, and what he brought for e.g. to his commercial gigs was an American approach, as opposed to the German Dance Band Style of the day…He hated that, from all that I understood. He was influenced by the SOUND of the day – it was just a few years after the Beatles had hit the market, and I
think he was looking for a way to combine this new feel with his love for Big Bands. 

Of course, he was also inspired by his soloists, but his band was a mix of Europeans and Americans – I think, he was just looking for individual voices, and the quality they brought to his music - …I’ll never forget that one of the few pictures in his writing room was a portrait of Duke Ellington. It was about the players, it was about certain qualities in the music, but I don’t think about a European approach vs the American way…

6. Were you aware of any particular approach or approaches by Peter Herbolzheimer to composition and instrumentation?

When I started to write for Peter, end of ’86, most of what I did were commercial, melody oriented 2 – 3 chorus arrangements for his SWF recordings. Some with Big Band, some with the old RC&B set up + strings, some for Symphony Orchestra with Rhythm section and Ack van Rooyen as a soloist. The stuff that we did there was much more commercial than anything I had done before or that I had thought I would ever have to do being a professional arranger. Anyway, I tried to do it as good as possible and was able to keep the job.

Being there, I learned about Peters approaches towards music, very often by having things changed in - or cut out - of my charts…Peter felt a very big importance in rhythmic variety – especially in music that was a bit dull…this need for variation was always there and he would let you know right away if you had messed up on that one… Also, he tried to have his phrasings as “natural” as possible – He basically wanted them to sound like a jazz player had just made them up…As mentioned before, the individual voices in the band were very important to him, and quite a few times, a unison section playing melody was dropped in favour of 1 guy playing the thing as a “solo freely” – he
did that a lot of times when he felt that something sounded a bit “stiff” or “corny” – He wanted the “loose” feeling and would get rid of anything that seemed to be in the way of that.

Peter’s original instrumentation of the RC&B was SO original…He started with 4 trumpets (3 for the commercial recordings), 3 trombones, 1 sax, + Hammond, Gtr, Bass (el and/or AC) perc, Drums …plus there was his old arranging colleague, Horst Mühlbradt, sometimes playing add perc, sometimes playing Rhodes. Later on, the trombone section grew to 4, than, a few years into it, the saxes became 2 instead of 1 (sometimes even 3…) – But the big change came, when Peter got his SWF Baden-Baden gig, around ’80. He changed the band into the regular 5-4-4-4(5) format. I never asked him for his reasons for that, but I have to confess that, to this day, I still just LOVE his original plan…

WHAT was interesting, after that change of set up, was the fact, that Peter still, a lot of times, went for a similar FEEL OR SOUND that the old band had. Basically, he would allow the rhythm section a lot of space in the middle and he manged to keep the whole picture transparent, by using quite a lot of unisons in the saxes and the bones…THAT was his thing, he ALWAYS “encouraged” me to look for “lines” rather than block of or voice out things, in the Saxes in particular. More than 1 time, he emphasized that he felt the importance of this, to get away from what he called an “old-fashioned” sound. Also, Peter tried to avoid any boredom in the charts – if something could be said with fewer bars, or could be tightened up the 2nd time it appeared, he would go for it.

It was also very interesting to see how he would develop his charts with the band
– not every note was set to stone – but he KNEW exactly WHAT he wanted – even though it could take some time until he arrived there in a rehearsal…Looking at the “jazz side” of Peters ouvre, most of the above would be valid, too.

In addition, I should mention, that his jazz charts always provided a lot of room for blowing, without loosing an overall feel for the form and the basic message of the chart. Especially on my recent hr production with music from the early RC&B days, I sensed that Peter was also a very emotional writer – the music can grab you right away, also because Peter seemed to have had a very natural feeling for dramaturgy in concert situations – He always knew how to get in and out of a chart most effectively, and all that we played at hr had a great balance of written parts and open sections, of a basic feel or outline and the little details that count so much.

Last but not least, Peters compositions always had “a face” – even though he had a couple of certain basic approaches, each and any chart has a special vibe to it, a certain message and a few elements that made it memorable…

7. Is there anything you would like to add that is pertinent to the subject matter?

I think that the early RC&B is one of the most important bands in BB history – a milestone when it started in the early 70’s with a totally unique sound and approach.

I have to say that I feel quite honored that I was able to work for the man, and this experience, though rough in times, made it possible for me to work in basically any other surroundings for the last 25+ years…
1. What was yours and George Gruntz’s musical background (familial, school, friends, etc.)?

Musical background: family—as a kid, around George’s jazz—George had him listening to Count Basie, teaching him Charlie Parker be-bop licks—learned quickly; school—learned solfege at school, note values as part of general ed, took piano lessons—learned basics of music—parents sent him to music school, lessons—parents wanted kids to learn music more in the past—now seem more interested in Iphones and computer games; friends, around 15 or 16—had a bass player friend, got involved with amplifiers, electronics, goofing around with pedals, but tended not to learn basics, practice—was talented but not interested in working on basics

2. What was George’s first instrument or instruments and how did he get introduced to jazz?

first instrument: piano (see #1)

3. What was your and George’s formal musical training?

formal musical training: solfege, piano lessons; George considered it important to do regular homework; preferred to be outside rather than practicing after doing his school homework 1976 went to Berklee College of Music—played keyboards in fusion bands; stuck to the white keys; 6 week summer course

4. How and/or what led George to begin performing in large jazz ensembles?

always performed in small groups—didn’t get into large ensembles

5. How much do you believe having a European background affect George Gruntz’s compositional approach?
not sure the European background in and of itself made a difference—music education
the same in Europe and America—same basics; George always said “I have European
roots,” but who knows what Europe is, what is American

6. Were you aware of any particular approach or approaches by George Gruntz to
composition and instrumentation?

any particular approach by George to composition and instrumentation? Fusion times—
1970-82—electronic keyboards; after that acoustic instruments

7. Is there anything you would like to add that is pertinent to the subject matter?

anything helpful/pertinent to add? GG’s evolution over 60 years has to continue to live
with the new generation—hope new generations discover George’s music and continue
his traditions.
Arie Vollnez

1. What was your musical background (familial, school, friends, etc.)?

From age 4 to 9 I studied piano and violin, from age 10 to 18 I studied classical guitar all that time I was studying music theory, harmony, composition, ear training, and so on. And from age 14 I started playing electric bass, and at the same time I was introduced to Jazz, and shifted from my classical/pop activities to playing mostly Jazz.

I studied at "Telma Yalin High School for Arts." In The Army I served at the "Israeli Air Force Big Band" as a Bass player/Arranger, studied "Music Conducting" at the "Tel Aviv Rubin Music Academy", I am a "Mannes College of Music" (NY) Graduate (’94) and I have a Master Degree from the "Jerusalem Music Academy" (2013). I also studied at "Berklee College of Music" (‘88-’89). After my studies I came back to Israel, and since: I teach/perform/arrange/produce, and from 2005 until George's passing, was the bass player for George Gruntz's various projects in Europe and the USA. (Jazz Opera: "The Magic of a Flute-")

2. What was your first instrument or instruments and how did you get introduced to jazz?

My first Instruments were: accordion, xylophone, and baroque flute. I was introduced to Jazz during my first year in "Telma Yalin High School of Arts," at the age of 15 by Michael Neronsky, who was a very talented 17 year-old piano player.

3. What was your formal musical training?

From age 4 to 9 I studied piano and violin, from age 10 to 18 I studied classical guitar. All that time I was studying music theory, harmony, composition, ear training, and so on. From age 14-15 I started playing electric bass, and at the same time I was introduced to
Jazz and shifted from my classical/pop activities to playing mostly Jazz. I studied at "Talma Yalin High School for Arts." In The Army I served at the "Israeli Air Force Big Band" as a Bass player/Arranger, Studied "Music Conducting" at the "Tel Aviv Rubin Music Academy".

4. **How and/or what led you to begin performing in large jazz ensembles?**

Since a young age I was always interested in writing/arranging for small/medium/large ensembles and did so any opportunity I had. Complex Polyphony/Counterpoint is always interesting to me and large Jazz/Classical ensembles are the perfect enviroment to experience it.

5. **How much do you believe having a European background affect George Gruntz’s compositional approach?**

George was extremely well educated. Classical and Jazz Pianist/Arranger/Composer with endless knowledge. In his work George was definitely influenced by composers such as Claude Debussy, Maurice Ravel, Igor Stravinsky and much more....at the same time, one can hear influences by: Duke Ellington, Count Basie, Gil Evans, Toshiko Akioshi and all the great American Jazz Composers. George also loved Opera, and new a lot about vocal music from all eras.

6. **Were you aware of any particular approach or approaches by George Gruntz to composition and instrumentation? If so, what were they?**

The only thing I can say is: George can take a tune to the "Edge." His Harmonic approach is very advanced. On the other hand, in his work you can hear a lot of respect to tradition, both European and American, both Classical and Jazz, from Dixieland to 21st Century Music, George covered it all ....some times at the same tune !!!
7. Is there anything you would like to add that is pertinent to the subject matter?

Listening to George’s albums and looking at George's scores, will open a magical world to any Jazz Composer/Arranger.
1. **What was your musical background (familial, school, friends, etc.)?**

   Early music lessons on trombone, drums, vibes (from about 8yrs old), playing in school, college ensembles, playing in both jazz and orchestral ensembles; started as a music major in college (UC Santa Barbara) but changed to English major because the music department in the early 1960s had no jazz program, and the professors were generally disinterested in jazz, and actually advised that if I wanted a career in jazz, I shouldn’t be a music major in college. Both parents had played instruments in the past, but neither was actively playing when I was growing up.

2. **What was your first instrument or instruments and how did get introduced to jazz?**

   First instrument was trombone, then drums and vibes in middle school. Got introduced to jazz by a friend in school (late ‘50s) who knew a lot, listened a lot, and was much more knowledgeable than me. He brought a Dixieland book to school, and we played from every morning before orchestra rehearsal in middle school. In high school had other friends who talked about and listened to jazz. I used to listen to swing band radio programs, watched the Jackie Gleason summer season when he had the big bands on each week (especially the Tommy/Jimmy Dorsey band with Buddy Rich). Started buying a record here and there when I had a little money.

3. **What was your formal musical training?**

   Private music lessons, private lessons in arranging/composing through middle and high school. Some music in college, but after that studying privately, asking a lot of questions, keeping my ears open.
4. How and/or what led you to begin performing in large jazz ensembles?

School ensembles—especially high school—but then hunted up big bands to play with through college, and always managed to find a big band wherever I was after college. I just liked playing.

5. How much do you believe having a European background affect George Gruntz’s compositional approach?

From the very beginning, I thought George’s approach was “European,” though I can think of other European big band writers who are much more traditional in their approach to harmony and arranging than George is. (It’s likely that “European,” without more explanation, is not going to be a very useful characterization.) He is much more willing to be like a European modernist—dissonant--sometimes polytonal—while staying within a jazz idiom with a ferociously swinging band. I’ve been working with his scores, and they’re all without a key signature—Sibelius labels that “atonal.” I think perhaps not being in a specific “key” lent itself to more harmonic adventurousness, though it’s common to write substitute changes for arrangements of standard tunes. “My One and Only Love” is a good example—it’s at times all over the place harmonically. I once asked him about his treatment of tunes like that, and he said, “Oh, you have to make it your own.” That is, do something unique and individual with it—take it to places it’s never been, and no one would ever expect it to go. During his last recording session (“Newsreel Matters”) the band did two takes of “On the Sunny Side of the Street.” That meant two chances for Lew Soloff to solo. After the first solo, in which Lew had more or less tried to sound like Louis Armstrong (who was on George’s original version), George told him, you don’t need to try to sound like Louis—“this is our music now.” He was
very bold about integrating musical modes into jazz (he had a project that included Turkish/Arabic music and what sound like Arabic meters—really tough to count), and he did an African project with Don Cherry. There’s a recording somewhere—the Tunisian project is in a multi-CD collection called “Radio Days,” which also includes concert projects with the WDR Big Band on Chicago Blues, Charles Mingus, Thelonious Monk, pop music.

This is a long answer to a short question, and not everything here pertains to “European,” but George was immensely eclectic.

6. **Were you aware of any particular approach or approaches by George Gruntz to composition and instrumentation? If so, what were they?**

1. Willingness to use concert jazz instruments (tuba, euphonium, French horn—not just run-of-the-mill Nestico/Basic big band instrumentation)

2. George liked bandoneon and accordion—Dino Saluzzi (bandoneon) played with the band, and later George had an accordion player who toured with him a couple of times; the accordion player told me George had an unerring knack for writing for his instrument. He used the accordion with the trombone section; he also had Howard Johnson on tuba as a fourth trombone and/or doubling bari and tuba from the sax section.

3. He wasn’t afraid to write very high at times—tenor is in the altissimo range on “Everlasting Night” (“Newsreel Matters”), euphonium had an extremely high note on one chart in the “Matterhorn Matters” album (when they were rehearsing that before the concert in Lucerne (I think, or Zurich), Dave Bargeron (who was playing euphonium) and Arie Volinez (bass) were fiddling around trying to locate the note on their instruments and laughing about it. On the album, they nail it.
4. George often doubles voices in the saxes—the tenors together, the altos together—often a fourth apart; I think this is how he gets what seems like a rather cutting sound; he also (on many charts) puts trumpets and saxes on the melody in the same octave (arranging books tell you to put the saxes an octave below to reinforce the trumpets)

5. George’s occasional use of clarinet as a voice above the sax section (sometimes above the band) reminds me of Duke Ellington, though I don’t recall George ever mentioning Duke explicitly. A closer influence might have been Gil Evans—some of the people who became regulars (especially Howard Johnson) in the Concert Jazz Band were also in the Gil Evans ensemble; Jack Walrath had been with Mingus. But George had all “A” level, world-class players.

7. **Is there anything you would like to add that is pertinent to the subject matter?**

For the best introduction to George at his most inventive, get the “Ray Anderson Big Band Album” (I’ve seen it on Ebay and Amazon—I’m not sure it’s in print otherwise). To me, the combination of George’s writing and Ray’s compositions yielded one of the most inventive, comical, swinging, outrageous, individual big band albums you can find. Probably not to everyone’s taste—but it also represents George’s constant inventiveness—harmonic and tonal effects—as well as his fearlessness (and Ray Anderson’s) with changing meters, and in the tune “Seven Monsters” what sounds like polymetric writing.
1. What was your musical background (familial, school, friends, etc.)?

Father played accordion and piano as an amateur in London (mid 1940’s) and was a fan of George Shearing and jazz. In early 1960’s as a kid I heard Voice Of America US forces prog from Tangier on the radio (very crackly) and a little jazz on BBC radio, e.g., Modern Jazz Quartet and Dave Brubeck and some UK players like Ronnie Scott and Tubby Hayes and a Saturday am BBC radio program of Ted Heath and His Orchestra (great band but more show band than jazz -- a la, Les Brown and his Band Of Renown).

In fact I was on some big band sessions for Les Brown in London 1980s maybe - very nice man and music enthusiast.

Wasn’t allowed to take music in secondary school!! It was the time of Rock, Elvis Beatles, Stones and Jazz was mostly hated by young people. My dad sold his accordion and bought me a Selmer saxophone and found me a private teacher (good teacher but no jazz theory knowledge - he was a swing fan Benny Goodman but also played me Rollins, Getz records as well as Illinois Jacquet and Flip Phillips which is the style he liked). Left school age 15 having joined the National Youth Jazz Orchestra in London and met other jazz enthusiasts. In 1967 age 18 took a job on the old Queen Mary P&O liner making regular trips to NY. Heard Basie Band at the Rainbow Grill, Lionel Hampton Band at The Metropole Bar, but most memorable were the 6 or so visits to The Vanguard to hear the ‘original’ Mel Lewis/Thad Jones Band which was stunning!! Even heard Herbie Hancock depping on piano - Wonderful memories of Miles Davis/Dizzy Gillespie double Bill at the Village Gate, Charles Mingus Quintet at Pookies pub, Joe Henderson with Kenny Baron, Louis Hayes, Herbie Lewis in a ‘deserted’ uptown club (Freddie Hubbard
didn’t show) Elvin Jones group with Frank Foster at The Blue Note (sadly Elvin was very messed up!). Bill Evans trio, John Handy Band, Gary Burton with Roy Haynes, Les McCann with Leroy Vinegar to name but a few all at The Village Vanguard. A very lovely memory of Gene Krupa trio with Don Goldie (beautiful trumpet player) and UK pianist Ronnie Ball at The Metropole bar. Our regular starting place was get off the boat which docked on 52nd St and go to the Hickory House to hear Billy Taylor trio with Grady Tate and blind UK pianist Eddie Thompson, then decide where to go. That was my Jazz education !!!!

Went to the Royal academy as a ‘mature’ student about 1969 studying sax and flute (but before there was a Jazz course).

2. **What was your first instrument or instruments and how did get introduced to jazz?**

**SEE ABOVE !**

3. **What was your formal musical training?**

**SEE ABOVE !**

4. **How and/or what led you to begin performing in large jazz ensembles?**

From having played with National Youth Jazz Orchestra I got to do some work with John Dankworth at Ronnie Scott’s. It was the last version of his famous UK big band and then he formed a ten-piece Band that I was in and he started using electronic instruments in the rhythm section and toying with some current music. Through this I played a lot for Mike Gibbs, a wonderful writer. I loved that band and we did tours with Bob Moses playing drums and Steve Swallow - and a very young Bill Frisell. I also met great Charlie Mariano in this band. Ken Wheeler was also in the band and we were playing together in
John Taylor’s wonderful and legendary sextet. I did a lot of BBC big band broadcasts with Kenny’s Big band. - -

While I was with Dankworth I got a midnight call to go to Germany next morning as a sub to play with Kenny Clarke/Francy Boland Band which was recording a record with Stan Getz as featured soloist. I was completely in awe of everybody. The music was a little odd as Francy was trying to write more freeish open music that didn’t really suit the band maybe, but it was a good record nevertheless (*Change Of Scene* reissued on CD)

5. How much do you believe having a European background affect Kenny Wheeler’s compositional approach?

I don’t think Kenny thought in that way. I know he struggled to feel that his ‘style’ fitted in with the established players 50/60’ as he wasn’t a post bebop player and his time feel was different, lots of use of odd note groupings, etc., etc. He gravitated to the newer players and free musicians because they invited him in!! I believe he loved the contrapuntal way of writing (rather than say Maria Schneider with focus on texture) and his knowledge through Bach/Palestrina etc., etc., was thorough and vast. He developed this into his music as well as establishing a palette of harmony chord types (colours) that I suppose was quite modal but coming from his absolute love of ‘Tunes’ (the great American Songbook) right up till his passing. This was a sound that was becoming quite ‘European/Scandinavian.’ So mix all this up and you get - - - !

I believe in general at that time there was a ‘political’ element in that Americans were perceived as gods, and this side of the water second best maybe. Although a lot of great US players settled in Europe and Scandinavia and directly influencing the music they weren’t allowed to stay here in UK because our Musicians Union was so strong and
they were to all intents and purposes not allowed to work here freely. Local musicians were paid badly to accompany US greats. There was a huge backlash in 70/80s and on, because a lot of Euro/Scanda festivals were financially cleaned out by one or two top artists leaving little in the pot for natives. SO I’m sure this contributed towards having to find some kind of original identity in order to bridge this uncomfortable gap. THEN ECM arrived which really changed everything in terms of Artists profile across the continents. But this is only my take on it - !!!!!!!

6. Were you aware of any particular approach or approaches by Kenny Wheeler to composition and instrumentation?

He wanted to break down the 5 saxes sound at one point early on and like Dankworth he had a small frontline ‘band within a band’ type section with voice (Norma Winstone) and alto sax. He did of course write for conventional 5 saxes but also liked the idea of soprano lead at one point. Contrapuntal writing I believe was his love and no matter which part you played in Ken’s band you always felt like you were playing a melody line as opposed to some of those dreadful 2nd tenor sax parts with all the odd randomly placed notes. SO Musicians LOVED to play his music !!

7. Is there anything you would like to add that is pertinent to the subject matter?

Not really - his music speaks for itself and much more than any words I could think of.
1. What was your musical background (familial, school, friends, etc.)?

I grew up in Stryn on the Westcoast of Norway in a family full of school band-tradition which were at a peak in the early eighties. A few fjords north of Stryn lived a bunch of brothers called the “BrazzBrothers” who had a great impact on young musicians all over the area. In Stryn my father, who still plays the Euphonium at age 82 conducted the band and trumpeter Arve Henriksens father took care of the rest. At the time almost every kid in the village played in the school band, my brother played cornet, my sisters clarinet and alto saxophone, my mother sang in the choir. At the age of 15 I was already writing music for the band so my father handed me the conductor pin and a few years later I left the West coast to study composition in Oslo, the Capitol of Norway.

2. What was your first instrument or instruments and how did you get introduced to jazz?

At the age of eight my father asked me what instrument I thought was the coolest. All the boys in the house next door played Trombone so I said “the thing that goes booooo” and did a slidegliss gesture. The next day he brought home a Yamaha trombone in a green case from the storage room since one of the guys just quit, and he already had been thinking this could be a good match 😊. To study music I had to move 80 kilometers to the “next fjord” at age of 16 and guess what: they had a bigband and let me borrow a Trombone so I could join them. I also played keyboards in a rock band (we still play together every summer) and I had also been playing the violin for some years, but quit (sold the violin back to my teacher and bought a Volvo 😊) because there were almost no one to play with. Before entering the Academy I took one year at Toneheim
Folkehøgskole. This is a one-year kind of in-between or preparing for audition year were you live at Campus and there I met other young Jazzmusicians like e.g., Geir Lysne who I still work and play with. Most people who did this year this refer to it as one of the best times of their lives.

3. What was your formal musical training?

I started writing music at early age and ate anything I could find about music theory or scores, so when I showed up at the Gymnasium [N.B. Norwegian for high school] I “knew too much” so I was given books in arranging and composing and was sent to the bomb shelter in the basement to practice trombone and study on my own. After the following year at Toneheim I moved down to Oslo to study contemporary composition at the Norwegian Academy of Music. (Masters Degree) There was no Jazz-education in Oslo those days, it was just starting but it took years to get it on the road, (now I work there) however the composition class was perfect and the teachers very good and inspiring. Jazzwise I had a trombone teacher who just came back from MOM [I believe he means Manhattan School of Music] and a piano teacher educated from the New England Conservatory in addition to the composition classes.

4. How and/or what led you to begin composing and arranging for large jazz ensembles?

I have always liked writing music for large ensembles. Since I found the scores of Beethoven’s and Tchaikovsky’s 5th Symphonies among the LP records at home in my fathers record-collection and went on to study “The Rite of Spring” and Mahler it was point of no return. As I mentioned I started out with a 60-piece local schoolband and at the Academy in Oslo we instantly formed our own fusion-oriented 20-piece big band
(Oslo Groove Company) and surprised everyone by winning the Norwegian Jazz Grammy for our debut-record. I also managed to get the Norwegian Radio S.O. to play my Bachelor exam orchestra piece.

5. How much do you believe having a European background affects your compositional approach?

I would like to take that one step further and write about the importance of my Norwegian background. Even inside Scandinavia (or Norway) there are significant differences, especially in the amount of American influence. From the sixties and up till today many American musicians have settled in Europe and have had important impact on the Jazz scenes of cities like Stockholm and Copenhagen in our neighbourhood. However, this was not the situation in Norway. We seemed to be a little too far away from Central Europe and our first big international stars in Jazz were some guys that didn’t sound like any traditional American-influenced jazz at all. I am thinking of Jan Garbarek in particular, but also Terje Rypdal, Arild Andersen and of course Jon Christensen. In the hands of Manfred Eicher and ECM they managed to state Norway as “Annerledeslandet” an attempt to translate that would be “The-different-country”, also used in politics since we also rejected to be part of the European Union. This generation of musicians had greater impact on Norwegian Jazz than any other source, not in terms of epigonery, but in their sense of insisting on own identity and thinking out of the box, showing the rest of us that there’s room for different voices and dialects of Jazz and improvised music out there. I just heard an old interview with Jan Garbarek on the radio from when he was 17 years old and he was talking about Stockhausen and Penderecki, not so much Coltrane and Miles… I often use the comparison of the Norwegian speciality
of “Lutefisk” which is a strange way of making fish not taste like fish by preparing it in acid: On my behalf I use more or less the lineup of a traditional big band but try to tweak it away from the traditional sound with electronics, cross-section writing and line-writing all over the rhythm section leading towards a language with roots both in Norwegian Fjords, European Contemporary Music, and International Jazz. For instance Germany still has 4 big Radio Stations with professional Big Bands, we have never had that. Our Radio Big Band was part time, one production a month, and was closed down/strangled by budgets in 1990.

On the contrary we have a Culture Council who is aware of the fact that its more valuable to give fundings to initiatives from ensembles/composers than putting money into institutional Jazz orchestras. That’s one of the reasons why high quality large ensembles keeps popping out of Norway like Geir Lysne Listening Ensemble, Trygve Seim Orchestra, Jon Balke Magnetic North, Trondheim Jazz Orchestra, Friensemblet and Ensemble Denada. The funding is not good enough, rather lousy compared to what money is spent on Classical orchestras, but it can keep a project like mine alive for some years, and you just have to be stubborn and insiting (like many Norwegians are) and in the end you will get there. I was 40 when my first “own” album was released. So any myths about rich Norway throwing oil-money after anyone who can sing a superlocrian scale is highly exagerated 😊

6. Do you have any particular approach or approaches to composition and instrumentation?
Composition and Instrumentation is to me one thing. I always write music with instrumentation in mind, and unlike many other Jazz musicians I almost never compose with my main instrument (trombone) in focus. I normally sketch everything in Logic, then comes a period of rehearsing, playing and editing new versions, which is a huge benefit of working with the same ensemble over a longer stretch of time. Since my musical education is 90% Contemporary Composition I have also had two parallel careers, one as a Composer of Contemporary Orchestra and Chamber Music and one of Jazz writing and playing. In addition to this I have been writing hundreds of arrangements for Symphony Orchestras, the Norwegian Radio Orchestra in particular, in whatever genre they would try to fit into and through that I have learned not only a lot about orchestration but also about music from all over the world, and in the end, what I like the best is the situation where I can sit here under the roof of my yellow garage and write music for Ensemble Denada, then rehearse it and travel all over the world playing it for people.

7. Is there anything you would like to add that is pertinent to the subject matter?

Talking of parallel careers, you also asked me if there is a particular piece that shows what I’m into these days, and I have to chose “The Speedcouch”, the opening track on “Windfall” because it represent a crossroad of those careers: It is a piece commissioned by a Brass Band. West Norway have an insane tradition of extremely good Brass Bands. I grew up in the outskirts of this and was challenged by them to write something, and revised the piece later for a Sinfonietta and then transferred it into the world of Denada. So from keeping these “worlds” apart, what I want to do now is to melt everything more or less into one.
Since I turned 50 last week I think this is about time 😊

My next projects are writing more music for Denada, we will premier some of it at Kongsberg Jazz Festival in a few weeks, then there is a big fantastic commission from the Oslo Philharmonic Orchestra who wants me to write a piece featuring their Percussion section.
APPENDIX B - INTERVIEWS

1. Nick Smart
2. Norma Winstone
3. Florian Ross
4. Wolfram Knauer
Nick Smart

Present at this interview:

NS: Nick Smart
CA: Charles Alexander
RS: Russ Spiegel

Conducted May 1, 2015 at the Royal Academy of Music, London

RS: As far as European contemporary writing, Kenny is up there with all the greats from Europe.

NS: Yes.

RS: And the acceptance of his music and writing by everyone who has worked with him is incredible, [is] the impression I have been getting. And I know you were with him later – I was listening to *The Long Waiting* recently. I don’t know, was he doing any more recordings after that because that was when he was beginning to get a little frail.

NS: Yes, he did one, he did his last recording, I mean nine months before he died. It was the 22nd and 23rd of December in 2013. So right at the end of 2013 is when he recorded his *Songs for Quintet* album. At Abbey Road [Studios]. And then he didn’t…I’m not sure that he ever played again. [Be]cause there was a Vortex [club] gig he was supposed to do in January and he had to pull out because he just wasn’t well enough but he did go to watch the first half but they did the gig without him. And then things got worse. [So] I don’t think he played again after that recording.

CA: He did one track for Giorgio Serci. [To NS:] Do you know Giorgio? [A] guitar player.
NS: So maybe there is one. Where is he from?

CA: From Sardinia. He did an album with Filomena Campus.

NS: Yes? And he did that in 2014?

CA: I’m not sure. Giorgio thought it was possibly his last recording.

NS: And if that was 2014 then it was.

CA: He went to Kenny’s and Kenny actually recorded it at [his] home in the end.

NS: Then it was.

CA: Originally they were going to do it in the studio but there wasn’t sufficient access, so he did that in the end.

NS: Yes.

RS: But I’m thinking more about large ensemble.

NS: And so, yes, *The Long Waiting* was the last in large ensemble.

RS: And he was still at the top of his form?

NS: Yes. He was stunning there.

RS: His range even on flugelhorn is scary…

NS: Yes. Are you a trumpet player?

RS: I started on trumpet. I’m a guitar player now, but I’ve always been interested in orchestration. I always talk with all the instrumentalists I work with. You know, I say, “Can you do this?” “Does this lie well on the instrument?” “Does this combination of sharps and flats going to work for you?” Etc., etc., and, being based in New York I’ve had the wonderful opportunity to work with some really amazing trumpet players. So that combined has made it easy for me to appreciate incredible technique.

NS: Yes. He’s unbelievable, Yes. Right.
RS: And from what I can gather, because I’ve also got the Fred Sturm book, of his…

NS: (Pointing to a book) This one here.

RS: Yes, the ECM one where he talks a lot about how he would get up in the morning
and he would just compose for a few hours.

NS: Yes, he used to warm up by playing a piano, like, Ravel things, or Bach things, often
classical things he’d play at the piano, so he said. And I think what he felt he was doing
there was just kind of getting everything open to ideas, you know, so you didn’t start by
trying to force anything. Because he often spoke, this is about his melodic ideas and
compositions, rather than the orchestration, which is a skill that, rather than an inspiration
thing, if you know what I mean.

RS: Well, it can depend, because a great orchestration can be pretty inspired.

NS: You know that. Obviously that’s the case. But I mean the craft involved in framing
the piece is like a different thing to composing it originally, you know.

RS: Would he generally start creating a lead sheet and then…

NS: Exactly. That’s what I mean. Exactly. I’m not aware…well, I think almost all the
pieces were small band pieces. I don’t know about For Jan, for instance. If that was
ever…but certainly even the opening of the Sweet Time Suite was originally, that thing
was originally arranged for saxophone quartet for a BBC broadcast. And then Kind Folk,
the second movement, which was called For H. But it’s Kind Folk. Even that we found
really early sketches in the archive of that tune – one as a ballad, one in 3/4 and then of
course it ended up in 9/8 for Angel’s Song. (Sings the bass riff). That version. But they
were all the same with even The Long Waiting tunes. There was a lot of…it was very
small band-driven, and then blown up for large ensemble.
RS: A lot of that does sound like that to me when I listen to it. I was wondering about his orchestrational approach. I mean, do you know how he would start, go about writing, writing that way?

NS: In all honesty, no. Because we can look at what the end product was and make a guess. He didn’t, to me, ever talked about that explicitly. We know things through analysis. There’s a clear, kind of mastery of counterpoint and countermelodies. You only have to look at the beginning of *Four, Five, Six*. Do you know that?

And you hear the way…this is something our composition teacher, Pete Churchill, who knows a lot about Kenny’s music. He’s someone you should probably speak to.

RS: Yes, that sounds good.

NS: Well he has talked about this way, I mean, in a class. That just (plays excerpt from *Four, Five, Six*) that melody, you know, going from (listening) being in 3/4 and to trumpets, and here.

RS: Right. And he really didn’t have people doubling.

NS: Not woodwinds and all that, no.

RS: Did he have you guys [trumpets] much in flugels?

NS: Yes. We would do flugel. (Listening)...and then into four [4/4]...

RS: Right. He did that quite a lot.

NS: Yes. (Sings along). But, he’s just re-taking one bit of material and just re-framing it over and over again so you get that (slaps hands together) kind…I suppose it’s like an efficiency with his melodies, where he gets [a] massive amount of mileage, musical mileage, out of an idea. And I think that’s part of his …it’s like a simplicity of his orchestration, I think, you know.
RS: Well, one of the things everybody who’s played with him [has] mentioned is just how much they enjoyed playing his music. And was, I know this is maybe a silly question, but was it just because of the songs itself, or how they lied on the instrument as well?

NS: It was just the melodicism in it. And he would care about each section and there was always something to do. I mean, when you speak to Henry Lowther, if you do, he will tell that this isn’t so much about the orchestration, but this is about the history of Kenny’s music, that Henry felt, and Kenny did, I know for a fact. Nobody played his music as they did over here [United Kingdom] because the British guys grew up playing it with him. And the thing that struck me as particularly extraordinary and kind of profound being in his big band was suddenly realizing I’ve never sat in a big band before where basically everybody loves and adores the bandleader, who is also the composer of the music. And, they love his playing so much, they in turn copy it a bit, and they are inspired by it. So you basically get this mirror of the entire band playing your music like you, because they are such admirers of your style. And what an amazing relationship for a bandleader to have. All from this quiet guy [who] didn’t ask for that, or demand it. And I thought that was, that’s quietly amazing in it’s own way, you know. So the trumpets, when we all got melodies, it was like Derrick Watkins, Henry, me, John Bartley, we all love him [Kenny] to death and want to play like that, so the phrasing is like, sort of like him in the section because, because of that connection.

RS: Would you do sectionals?

NS: No. No, it wasn’t a lot of rehearsal. No, as Norma Winstone said in one of the Radio 3 kind of tribute things, when a lot of people asked, “Did he say much in rehearsals?”
and, he didn’t, and Norma’s response to that, which I can’t think of a better one, was, “The fact you’re there meant he didn’t have to say a lot.”

RS: He trusted you to do what needed to be done.

NS: Yes, because he knew you were [able to perform his music correctly]. So it wasn’t like, really pernickity bandleading, like that, you know. “Can you guys come off on ‘4’?” it was never, ever [like that].

RS: Interesting. How did you get started with him?

NS: I was a fan [be]cause my teacher was Richard Aisles, who was a Manchester-based trumpet player and he knew Kenny a bit because they’d done projects up with a band called The Creative Jazz Orchestra, which was run by Nick Purnell, and Nick Purnell was also the guy who put together the *Sweet Time Suite* big band and the quintet which [John] Abercrombie and [Peter] Erskine and which became the rhythm section for that big band. Nick was kind of managing Kenny at that time. And through the Creative Jazz Orchestra Richard knew him and I was a student and he introduced me to Kenny’s music and then I came down to London in ’97 to go to the Guildhall [School of Music] for their post-grad. So I saw Kenny for the first time at Pizza Express in about 90?, I can’t remember, but it was like late ’97 or early ’98 the first time I met him. And then in London if you’re into that music, those people are here, you know, Stan Sulzmann and John Taylor, Norma [Winston], Evan [Parker], Henry [Lowther] – they’re here. So, inevitably if you show an interest in it, you’d, you would meet him in the end. And then we lived close and I used to drive him to gigs and go ‘round his house and play, and he was always very happy talking about anything – life, and music, and trumpet, that you didn’t want to be…he wasn’t anti-it, but he didn’t want to be questioned about composition and harmony.
RS: In that book, that ECM book, he talks about it. He says, “I don’t want to know what’s going on.”

NS: Exactly.

RS: And actually I was reading in that Gene Lees book *Arranging the Score*, you know, Johnny Mandel felt the same way, and Les Brown they said, “I just do it.”

NS: Yes, “I would rather not,” because you don’t want to be self-conscious about your own processes. In the moment, you know.

RS: Right. The other thing I’m trying to get a handle on with this whole paper is, you know, besides introducing…because we don’t learn much about the European jazz scene, especially big band scene in the United States, which is very unfortunate. I was very fortunate because I was living in Germany.

NS: You were saying they don’t really get exposure to European [jazz] over there.

RS: No, they don’t really know the history, you know. We were talking about Ted Heath and the development of the English scene, and your scene suffered terribly from the Musicians’ Union situation. Which was…what was that? All the way from the 50’s or the 30’s all the way through the 50’s until Stan Kenton came over?

CA: It was certainly going on during the time we had the Jazz Centre Society because we had to fix up exchanges – they would get the Rolling Stones and we would get Dexter Gordon. It was that kind of thing, a one-for-one exchange. It actually wasn’t…in the ‘50’s or whenever it came in effect, it was a problem. That thereafter there was a system you had to work with.

NS: And you’re saying this was a problem because the guys here didn’t hear the guys, the visiting Americans?
RS: And also the Americans didn’t hear any British [jazz] bands coming over to the States. You know, this interchange of, which is so important in the arts, which on the one hand of course is a terrible thing, but on the other hand it led to especially here this unique development where…one of the most important things I think was how the more free jazz elements came over. I think it might have been helped…but…Art Ensemble of Chicago came over. They were resident in Paris for a number of years. But also because of Ornette Coleman and his records, because I’m sure everybody was checking out what was coming out. Which freed up some of the need to be so much straight-ahead, American, New York-style swing, West Coast Swing…

NS: Have you heard about Joe Harriott?

RS: No.

NS: West Indian alto player…

RS: Oh, I did! I’ve read a little about him.

NS: …and he was doing ‘time, no changes’ kind of playing. It was about the same time if not before.

CA: That was in the ‘60’s?

NS: I thought it was even earlier.

CA: Yes, it probably was, actually.

NS: So there were similar things going on there. And I’m never, not sure that the thing about we evolved like a kind of a monoculture or something is…

RS: But there was the interchange between here and the Continent, because there was a free movement. You had the Globe Unity Orchestra, for example, and one of the things I found out a little bit later – I’ve been in touch with Wolfram Knauer over at the
Jazzinstitut Darmstadt was about Kurt Edelhagen, who started bringing in people from all over, who was the genesis of the Clarke-Boland Big Band. And that was where a lot of people, you know, were started meeting up, and later, especially when Francy was being more adventurous in his arrangements. I think that also helped start the ball rolling. For a general European approach. You guys were mixing. And there was this one dissertation that I’ve been going through actually by a buddy of mine, William Bares. It’s called “The Eternal Triangle” and he’s talking about the triangle between American, Afro-American, and European approaches to [jazz] music. In terms of credibility, history, interaction, sort of a very dynamic connection between these three ideas of music, or concepts, or however you want look at it. Because there are what’s his name? The trombone player...Lewis…

NS: George?

RS: George Lewis who’s been, who has a great idea, really strong and good arguments about a more Afro-centric, but not necessarily exclusionary approach to jazz. But anyway, the point we are talking about is that there is a difference, there seems to be a difference between European approaches and American approaches and one of my theories – let’s call it a theory – and I’ll be happy to get it disproved, is just that with the advent of the more freer elements it just...because I know Kenny spent a lot of time, you know, in the free jazz scene.

NS: Yes.

RS: He was sort of straddling, people didn’t even know for a time that he could play over changes.

NS: You know why he deliberately looked out for the free thing. He told me this.
Because you know he always had this sense that he’d failed to play bebop. That’s the defining characteristic of his sense of how he played. I think that’s fair to say. [It] always feels a bit weird trying to speak authoritatively about someone else who’s now passed away. It’s a bit like, “Who are you to say what he felt?” But I’ve had this conversation [with Kenny] enough to feel confident that he would have agreed. That felt like he’d failed to play bebop and he was so upset and frustrated with this thing that he heard about the free music at the Little Theatre Club and he went to find it and, in his own words, he said, “I watched a couple of times, too scared to sit in, and then I played, I went beserk on it, on trumpet for about ten minutes.” And it was, I think, what he was saying was that it was an exorcising of all that frustration at something you felt you were supposed to do.

So he continued happily living this double life that he felt like the free playing supported the changes playing, but as you rightly say, people, particularly in the free scene, didn’t know he could do the more conventional thing. And then it was Booker Little, hearing Booker Little that made him feel…I always understood it…to him it was a kind of permission, like, you can be you, you know. And mix this sort of perfect match of freedom and order. That was why he was involved in the free scene, ‘cause he went for it, you know, and then it happened to be a big part of his career. But he never meant for that to happen.

RS: I’m wondering how much of that is an archetype for Europeans in general because there was always this pressure to be able to swing and play as hard as the Americans, and then you see, “Oh, we don’t have to do it this way, we can find our own voices.”

NS: Yes.

RS: That sort of opened up a new avenue for expression in jazz. Again, Global Unity,
Peter Brotzmann Kollektif, um, Art Ensemble when they were in Paris…

NS: I think there’s enough things going on in America as well, weren’t there? With [Anthony] Braxton, and…

RS: The thing was…and here’s my take of it. Which is that, yes, it was going on in America. You could even make an argument that’s where it started. However, it never seemed to be as popular as it was here and as widespread.

NS: Yes.

RS: There are…it’s kind of rare that you’ll find kids in jazz schools, I think at least in the States, the ones I have visited, who spend time with free playing. They’re busy trying to get their bebop scales down, you know, their harmonies, their piano chops, their jazz history, and all this stuff, which is all great stuff. But they don’t transcribe or do a lot of intensive listening necessarily to Braxton, for example. I guess another question would be how has the institutionalization of jazz in Europe changed the approach to what you guys talk about and do and write?

NS: I think I can only really speak for here [The Royal Academy of Music] with any accuracy, but the…approach to education is probably fairly American in the process but not necessarily the content. So, the fact that we’re here and the music we’re playing a lot of the time when visiting teachers bring in their charts to run a combo or whatever, the music we’re playing is from here and we do a lot of big band music that’s European or British writers, as well as having Dave Holland over or John Hollenbeck or whatever. But we do treasure this history of our own. And so I think that just feeds into the students’ sense of style and belonging, rather than a difference in the way you approach the teaching methods. Do you know what I mean?
RS: Right.

NS: And the harmony, definitely. Pete Churchill is in this field of kind of trying to articulate what a European harmonic jazz language is, you know.

RS: Right. Is there any sense of...is it more influenced by any of the more traditional musics or European classical tradition? Do you feel that has any impact at all?

NS: Well, yes. It does, but I think that impact is already imbedded into the sound, so we got that through Kenny and John Taylor, and they love, whether it’s Ravel or John Ireland, or some of those kinds of composers. Those influences have already been filtered and kind of integrated into what we now think of as that particularly European sound.

RS: Now here are a couple of tough questions for you. One may be a bit superfluous, but I’ll throw it out there anyway. How do you feel...Kenny grew up in Toronto, or near Toronto, and was basically Canadian, but he was basically accepted here in the British community. Did that set him apart at all, by him being Canadian?

NS: Here?

RS: Yes.

NS: No. I don’t think so. It might have different back home [in Toronto], but here, he was just Kenny. He was just Kenny, Yes.

CA: I would agree with that. Absolutely, yes.

NS: And anything that was different about him was because it was him, not because he was Canadian. Like, he was famously shy and self-deprecating, and all of those things. They were personality traits of his, rather than Canadian, you know. So I think that’s right.

RS: Alright, here’s a tough one for you. Is there any...or can you at least try, if it’s...
possible, to characterize a European or a British approach to jazz writing and composition, especially in larger jazz orchestral approaches? I know because we were talking about this, because Django Bates came up, and Loose Tubes and all that, and I would bet that, first of all, with Loose Tubes not a single American person would know who that was. I can pretty much put money on that.

NS: Well I know, but they would know who Django Bates is? ‘Cause I know…

RS: Yes, I think.

NS: I know the Colorado teach…that Django’s…you know that crazy version of “My Way”…

RS: And “New York, New York”.

NS: …“New York, New York”. So there’s definitely Django’s somewhere up there but I basically, ninety-nine per cent absolutely take your point, Yes.

RS: Right. Because for example my professor, he played almost a whole hour…we have seminar once a week for the jazz writing program…and he was playing Django’s music and you know, I knew some of it, I didn’t know all of it but everybody else said, “Who’s this? What’s this? This is crazy stuff!” And he said, “Django Bates,” and they said, “Who?” So his reach, I know he does the Proms and everything here but his reach is very limited in America, whereas Kenny Wheeler had the advantage of ECM. Which probably would be a topic for itself, the ECM thing. By the way, are you familiar with David Ake’s book, *Jazz Matters*?

NS: No. I know the book you mean but I don’t know it. I know I’ve heard of that *Jazz Matters*, Yes.

RS: And he has a chapter there. He talks about Keith Jarrett, Pat Metheny, the ECM
thing, and I think that that…he makes the argument that that also put European jazz on
the map, you know, because then we started hearing Jan Garbarek of course. He started
with Keith Jarrett and he started doing his own thing, you’re like, “Alright!” you know
and then a lot of more obscure groups playing on ECM. But anyways, to get back to my
question – would you…
NS: Would you, could you find any…could you say there was a similarity, like a British
or a European similarity between Django and Kenny?
RS: That’s a really good question! How about you? Can you?
NS: No.
CA: I couldn’t.
NS: They’re just individual people who could have grown up anywhere.
RS: Well the thing about Django - I still hear the influence because, you know, he’s also
doing a lot of, he was also involved in the free jazz scene later, of course than Kenny.
NS: Yes. He wasn’t so much in the free thing, it was that he did a lot with the South
African exiles that were here. But I’m not aware of him being…but you should check
with him, we have the privilege that these people are still alive but I’m not, I don’t mean
to say Django could have grown up anywhere because I think he’s, the sense of humor in
his music is very kind of Monty Python and English, but I don’t think there’s, you could
look at those two, or put into the mix there, like [John] Dankworth’s music, which was
very American, conventionally, like conventional big bands, you know. Or you’ve got
people who were, maybe John Surman, or John Warren or whatever that’s quite explicitly
European, you know. Mike Gibbs, who just sounds like contemporary big band writing.
I don’t know, but other people may have a view, people far better informed than me.
RS: It’s not a question of informed for me. I’m just interested in your take on all this.

NS: I don’t think so. I think one would have to look very hard and be selective in the things they cited to prove that, or demonstrate it. I think so. Because certainly Kenny, everything he loved was fairly traditional jazz, you know. At home the music they would listen to was Ella [Fitzgerald] and [he] loved [Frank] Sinatra and that was where his sort of ear lay. It kind of went through this mad filter that created his music, you know, but the phrasing, and the sense of tradition was all coming from the tradition.

CA: Also the quality of orchestrations? Because Sinatra had terrific orchestrations.

NS: Yes. And some of whom were English, of course, you know. There was Caulfield [?] did things for him, didn’t he?

RS: Did [Robert] Farnon ever work with him?

NS: Yes. Is he English?

RS: No, he’s actually Canadian.

NS: He’s Canadian? But he spent a lot of time here, Yes.

RS: He’s another one of those. During the war…

NS: He did a Sinatra with strings thing and Kenny was a big admirer of him, so, but yes, interesting. But Pete [Churchill] will be very, very particular, and have a lot of informed opinions about all that stuff, Yes.

RS: One of the things I think we can credit Kenny with is just his use of the voice, the human voice. I’m not familiar with any other examples of that before him doing that in a big band context. Usually the singer…

NS: Would be the singer.

RS: Yes, sing a lyric or something. Even though there were some really incredible
singers, you know, when Ella was singing with Ellington.

NS: But [Kenny] didn’t use it quite in that way. But did Dankworth with Cleo [Laine],
did he use Cleo in that way?

CA: They did a lot of settings…

NS: But I’m not sure. She never really sang it like an instrument, did she?

CA: I don’t think so.

NS: I don’t think so, either.

CA: Norma was really the first.

NS: Yes.

RS: And there was also the thing…there seems to be, maybe because Kenny loved his
melodies so much, a lot of unison and octave exposition of his melodies.

NS: Yes.

RS: Which is interesting.

NS: Yes. I think, I would have just put that down to, like a clarity of just wanting to
express the tune, because his writing was never cluttered, was it? Everything was quite
crystalline and you could hear if there was a countermelody, you could sing it and hear it,
you know, and if there was the tune, you could hear it. So I think that’s probably, but that
would develop, wouldn’t it? You would get a lot of the time in the trumpets there’d be
two parts. It would be like [trumpet] 1 and 3 together and 2 and 4 together. That kind of
thing. He was all about people, Kenny, I think. That when he, one of the big things he did
on Song for Someone, and it continued, was having free players in with studio players
and jazz players, because that was an honest reflection of him. He did sections, and
commercial trumpet playing, free playing, and jazz playing. So they were his friends, and
he wanted that person there, partly because of his shyness and his nervousness, that he wanted to be with friends, and it was people-driven rather than like a ruthless artistic [band] and I think people get that wrong, thinking of certain things, like, “Did he have that vision for his music?” No, no, he liked Tony [Oxley]. He was his mate, you know. He made him feel comfortable and he made him laugh down at the pub. It’s like it’s quite an honest, human motivation, coupled with proper genius of music, but there’s a massive human element in there. I feel confident in saying. [to CA] Do you think?

CA: Yes. He was a very shy man. It seemed to me, Nick, by the time he was quite physically disabled, by that time he was a lot happier as a person than he’d been earlier on, so I knew Kenny in the ‘70’s when I was running the Jazz Centre Society. As I said to you, when he rang us up, he’d say, “It’s Kenny Wheeler, the trumpet player.” And it was like, “Kenny, yes we know who you are!” [Laughs] Well he was one of the leading musicians there, he was one of the most important musicians, along with John Taylor, and we were always trying to book him, and we did, and sometimes we’d get a tour or a single gig, but then I got the impression that he was, sometimes he was really disappointed that there wasn’t enough acceptance or recognition of his music.

NS: And he’d get frustrated.

CA: And he was quite frustrated about it, angry about it as well. That was probably in the ‘80’s, I guess. [Indistinct…] I don’t know if this has any relevance at all – I took Azimuth to Budapest to do a concert. I was asked by the Bela Bartok Conservatory to do it. I was the president of the International Jazz Federation, which was a largely European-wide organization and Janusz Grondei [?], who was head of jazz at the Bela Bartok Conservatory said, “I’d like to bring a British group across,” so the budget was kind of
limited, but we got some British Council support but I thought, “Azimuth is the group I’d like to take.” And we did.

NS: What year was that?

CA: I think it was in about 1986. I think. ’85, ’86, round about there. Maybe later, but right around that period. And we took them there and they performed. On the way back, John and Norma were going off to Germany to do some work there so Kenny and I were going back and, the first thing was, at the airport, Kenny got very nervous and very worried. And I asked him, “What’s wrong, Kenny?” [Kenny said,] “I’m worried they might not let me out because I’ve got a Canadian passport.” [Laughs] So I said, “Kenny, if you’ve got a Canadian passport, they’re probably more than happy, really happy for you to go, rather than stay.” [Laughs] He thought he might get detained. Then, we were on the plane and I asked Kenny, “If there was a opportunity to do any project you wanted, what would you choose?” And he gave considerable thought to that and I remember when this was, in the mid-80’s, and he said to me, “I would really like to do a project with Tomasz Stanko.” That was it. I always remembered that.

RS: Did they ever?

CA: Not to my knowledge. At that time Stanko was very underecognized in Poland, you know he was…

RS: If that was ’86, this was still before the fall of the [Berlin] wall, probably.

CA: Oh, yes. It was. And I used to watch the Jazz Jamboree most years. It was a great festival. Musicians came from all over Eastern Europe as well as Western Europe, and from America. But, Thomas Stanko, was kind of, you felt he was given a spot under sufferance, and he was doing his own thing then. So it was great when Manfred Eicher
from ECM took Thomas on, signed him up for recordings and things like that. But I was so surprised and intrigued by [Kenny’s response]….

NS: That’s amazing. I think it’s important to remember if you’re looking at Kenny’s orchestration and composition, well, particularly the orchestration, which is particularly the thing you’re interested in, so it is really important, that you can’t, with Kenny, in this country, if you’re looking, like, a commission he did for overseas or something, people he didn’t know, it’s different. But when he’s writing for his own bands for all those years for the BBC broadcasts, at least part of the consideration is the people. You can’t separate that. So he, like, getting people like Evan Parker, I mean, a saxophone section, is, I mean, Evan wouldn’t do that for anybody else, you know, that’s a…

RS: Because he was a solo…

NS: Yes. And a free player and not a comfortable reader, you know. I mean, he says it on that video, half-joking, [Kenny] says, first time, “You won’t have to do anything, you just play the free solo, ok?” And next time, it’s, “Is it alright if I just give you some long notes?” [Parker replies.] “Alright, but I can’t read” So it’s just long notes and then next time it’s a few more notes and Evan said, “Before I knew it, I was playing triplets!” [Everybody laughs] as if it’s the benchmark of something, so he, so he said, “To what extent I can read music, it’s thanks to Kenny pushing me there.” But overall, it is important, it’s quite Ellingtonian, in a way, just writing for people, you know.

RS: Right. That’s another thing – I mean, stability of bands, like, Francy Boland band was totally stable. And actually, when Derek Humble died they said, “That’s it, we’re not going to have that sound anymore.” So that idea of consistency in groups is also a really important point.
RS: From you, as a trumpet player, I mean, I don’t think we need to say a lot about it, because he had phenomenal technique, but do you have any insights into his playing, how he was able to maintain that?

NS: Well it was just hard work. He was a diligent, really obsessive practicer. As we researched his biography, you know, there’s funny stories, all over the place. [There’s the story of] family parties where Kenny would suddenly disappear into the other room to do some practicing, you know…

RS: [Laughing] Seriously?

NS: And Ian Carr, the trumpet player, told me Kenny used to do three hours of practice a day on tour, even on a gig day. So he was a tremendously diligent practicer and he always said to me, “I’m not good enough to not do that.” You know, like, “I find the trumpet difficult,” which is such a typical Kenny thing, like one of the greatest players on earth to feel like, “I’m not good enough to not work this hard.” And I’m sure that there’s no doubt it was that foundation of just warming up carefully, everything about looking after his chops, that meant he could play into his eighties, like he did.

RS: Did he ever have any issues?

NS: Yes. He was getting lessons off Skype in his eighties from a trombone player in Canada. Mark [Weaver?] will be able to tell you who it was. Yes, but he was getting help with his breathing, he was always thinking about it and he was, like [imitating Kenny’s voice], “What do you do…how do you do this?” He would always ask these sort of questions about chops and breathing, and he was fascinated by it. But I can’t really describe in words what his technical thing was but his sound, the size of his sound was unbelievable and he never lost that. This video was the last time I ever saw him in July at
the old people’s home he was in, the care home he was in and there was some weird little afternoon where they opened a new bar…

RS: At the home?

NS: …at the home. And this was Kenny. But he didn’t understand they wanted to take a photo of him but he didn’t quite know, you know he kept playing…[shows video] And he was only doing about 20 minutes, a half-hour of practice a day, even in the old people’s care home. He was still worrying about playing and oil his valves and cleaning his trumpet up a bit, you know, so it was …

CA: He was a bit quite a worrier, actually, wasn’t he?

NS: Yes. Very much so. Yes, the technical foundation is just extraordinary. And yet there are technical things in there, like he was always interested in being able to slur large intervals.

RS: Which he did with amazing agility.

NS: Yes, and not catching things in between, you know. He was sort of interested in that.

RS: Really, when I hear him doing that stuff, I’m like, “Wow!”

NS: Yes. It’s pretty incredible.

RS: Okay. One last question: If you can summarize what you think Kenny’s legacy is?

NS: Well, I think it’s…for me, anyway for me, but I think it might be some naïveté or ignorance in it, but I think his legacy is a singularly unique musical vocabulary and sound, you know. Like, what more of an amazing legacy could you leave than something utterly identifiable as yourself that we can then learn from and try to understand, you know? So I think it’s quite a clear and wonderful legacy. Then beneath that, there’s things as a trumpet player, like maybe he did more to change the direction of that
instrument than many, many people since Miles [Davis].

RS: Right. Because one of the…Gnu High. Almost everybody I know listens to that.

NS: Yes. It’s a huge…Yes. I think in education I think, and Pete will talk about this here we will, not all the time, but often use some of his work as a model for composition, because the processes he used in the way he developed ideas, like that Four, Five Six thing, you can have that. Like, you can use that idea on your own music. It’s clear. What he did was tangible and, sort of mathematical in a way. I mean, Bobby Wellins, the saxophone player, he told me, which is hilarious, that back in the ‘50’s…was it ’58? Buddy Featherstonehaugh, was it? [To CA] Do you know that name?

CA: Yes.

NS: Well they did that band together and Bobby remembered Kenny doing a correspondence course by mail in advanced algebra, just because he thought it would help his composition. To be that meticulous with precision, you know. So, you know, he did that. And he studied all those Hindemith counterpoint things and a few people from the ‘80s, like Dave Holland and [John] Abercrombie remembering [Kenny] doing counterpoint exercises in his little notebook on the bus, you know, and stuff like that, so there is that kind of work ethic is also part of his legacy. And he’s loyal to you as a person is part of his legacy, you know. There’s many little trickle-down wonderful, lovely things, but [on] top of all that, he’s “Kenny.”

RS: Yes. And I think it leaves a huge wake of the things he started doing, for European music and beyond.

NS: Yes. He was always looking forward, you know, because he didn’t want to keep reliving the past or anything like that, you know. John Hollenbeck told me the other day
[that] he and Bob Brookmeyer used to laugh when they worked together in Europe once, Kenny asked [Brookmeyer] for lessons. And [Bob’s] like, “What? What am I going to teach you?” you know. And John was wondering whether it was [Kenny] felt like his, he was becoming in some way fixed on a certain sound or stuck with a certain sound so he was asking for lessons to try and expand this, but that’s purely speculation. We don’t know that, but he must have asked for a reason.

RS: Right. We could probably talk about this for quite a while, I mean, because there’s things like, I love his approach to harmony, with, you know, I don’t know if he was the first, but his obvious use of Maj7(#5)s, slash chords like the Maj7(#9) chords, and those kinds of sounds and the switching very effortlessly between time signatures.

NS: Yes. And the switching very effortlessly between tonalities. It used common [tones], there’s this thing Pete talks about, which Kenny said to him, which is about every chord has a tone center. So there’s like this melodic core thing, so the tune I always look at for this is On Mode, you know that one?

RS: I don’t believe so.

NS: It’s on Angel Song. But it’s so lovely because it…[searches for the music] it’s in here somewhere. But it’s just in two keys, but the thing in getting from one key to another, you’ve got [plays piano] but here he slips into a completely different tonality, from a whole bunch of flats into sharps.

RS: But he sort of lets it keep falling down.

NS: But if you look at that chord, F#7(alt), he meant G melodic minor, you know, so you’ve got G minor belongs to this bit of the composition, but the function of the chord belongs to this bit of the composition. So it’s perfect efficiency. It’s one chord that has a
life behind you and is preparing a life in front of you. Just that pivot function, is such a clever…and you get those things often, you know, this, I don’t know, but you know what I mean.

CA: And he was great at word play, wasn’t he?

NS: Yes, he loved that, Yes.

CA: His titles and all the rest of it.

NS: The cleverest one I ever heard was, *A Spire*, which was a wordplay, which was a dedication to Roland Kirk, because Kirk in German is “church.” And church, spire, and he called this tune. *A Spire*. As this kind of massively convoluted, sort of wordplay.
RS: When did you first meet Kenny Wheeler?

NW: There were musicians of all sorts coming into London and they used to play at the Little Theatre Club. It wasn’t all free music; often they played their own compositions and new stuff and it was there that I first saw Kenny, in the audience in the Little Theatre Club. Somebody pointed him out, “That’s Kenny Wheeler.” I’d heard of him of course, as that’s when The Windmill Tilter (1969) came out. I couldn’t believe this record, I just loved it! It was unlike any big band writing that I’d heard before. I don’t know what was different, but everything was to me was sing-able, melodies with wonderful little duos and trios within the music and lovely counterpoint melodies - just wonderful writing.

Later on, when [drummer] John Stevens asked if I would like to join in at one of his free sessions on a Saturday morning, and I thought, “I may as well.” So I went along and I think Kenny was there and possibly Dave Holland and trombonist Malcolm Griffiths. I didn’t know what you were supposed to do. I don’t think anybody knew. We weren’t supposed to do anything, really. Just supposed to play, and I guess to listen to each other. I don’t remember speaking to Kenny then; he didn’t really speak to anybody much - he...
just played. That was a great opportunity and I often recommend it to singers. Sometimes when teaching, I get them to improvise a little piece with a pianist, or else I put two singers together to improvise something. And nearly always they have never done it before. I really wanted to sing and I did it! I just sort of thought, “This is interesting!” I don’t how many of those I went to. Then John Stevens started the Spontaneous Music Ensemble and would sometimes ask me do gigs with them. Maggie Nichols was in the audience one time and ran up to me and said, “Oh, I want to sing this music!” So I introduced them: “Maggie, John; John, Maggie.” Then, when Kenny asked me if I’d sing on a big band broadcast with him, I backed off a bit from the SME.

RS: Is this when things kind of changed for you? Did Kenny just come up to you? Were you friendly at the time?

NW: Well, I’d just seen him around and seen him on these free sessions. I was working with Michael Garrick at the time and as he was the pianist with the New Jazz Orchestra, I started singing with them. I had known about Michael because he led a regular jazz session The Highwaymen pub at Camberley. Anyway, there he was on piano so after I’d done a couple of rehearsals with them, he said, “I’ve got these songs that I’ve written and written the words and the music. Would you like to have a look at them and learn them?” So I took them home and learnt them. Then I went along to a gig he was doing at The Phoenix, Cavendish Square, in central London, and sat in. After I sang one of the songs, he said, “Just stay on the stand and join in on the next piece.” I said what if don’t know it?” He said, “Well, you’ll hear it.” Then he played one of his compositions, possibly “Temple Dancer” or something that was in 10/4, but based on one chord. So, after listening to the others for a while, I did a wordless solo. The front line of the band at the
time was Jim Philip, Art Themen (saxophones) and Ian Carr (trumpet). However, Jim was leaving for some reason and Michael asked me, “Would you like to join the band?” I said, “Well yeah!” and he said, “We can do some songs with words, and do some wordless things.” And I joined it and then Ian left and Henry Lowther came in his place.

RS: Was anybody else doing wordless vocals at that time?

NW: No. I didn’t hear anybody. Jay Clayton was probably doing the same thing in the United States, but I didn’t hear anything. I remember hearing Jeanne Lee with Ran Blake, on a record, only a track of them, and I thought, “Wow! This is interesting!” But whether it was wordless, I can’t remember!

RS: So it is kind of an interesting thing, because it wasn’t really happening very much before you started doing it.

NW: No. Well, I hadn’t heard it. But I still had this idea of how a voice could be part of a group. I thought of *Kind of Blue*. “Wow! The voice could be in there somehow,” but I didn’t know; I only thought. “I could probably write words to tunes like *So What,*” but then what? Everybody does these solos and then the singer comes in with the tune again. I know this now. I’m quite happy for the singer to just come in with the tune, but at the time with, you know, the arrogance of youth, you think, “I’m going to do something here!” So I was already doing it with Michael Garrick and his band around the time that Kenny asked me if I’d do a broadcast with his big band. I didn’t really know that his big band didn’t exist and that it was just an outfit pulled together for a broadcast. It was the only way he could afford to do big bands, or to write anything for a big band was to have a broadcast. And so I agreed to do it. Kenny also liked Bobby Breen, a West Indian singer who sang with John Dankworth. I also liked Bobby. He used to sing at the Lily
Pot, where I also sang, but on a different night. Kenny said, “I’ll arrange a standard for you.” and so I think that I did “I’ll Never Be the Same” or something like that and that Bobby did “God Bless the Child”. So we did these arrangements and also Kenny’s Song H.

Sometime later, Ken got another broadcast and asked me, “Would you like to sing with the band again?” But this time he’d written me in as an instrument. I had already being doing this kind of singing with Mike Westbrook. In 1969 at the time of the first moon landing, he wrote a piece called “Earthrise” and asked me to join the band to play that. He was also recording his album Metropolis at the time and asked if I would sing on one track. That was wordless, I think, but I don’t remember what I sang. So there was all that going on, this wordless thing was in the air and I was doing it. Perhaps that was why Kenny thought, “Maybe she could sing with the band.” A lot of the time I was either in unison with him or in harmony with him. Sometimes it would be quite difficult because there were no keys. Kenny never wrote with a key signature. So there was no tonal center for you to work out your notes from and as I haven’t got perfect pitch, I had my own ways of working at this. I would ask, “What’s this note?” and “What’s that note” you’re playing there and they’d say, “That’s an A” so I’d put that in the part, “So-and-so is playing an A here” so I’d have something to relate to.

RS: So had you been reading a lot of music by that time?

NW: Well yes, a bit. I could only sight sing because of playing the piano. That’s how I learnt. I didn’t learn sight singing. I played the piano so I related everything to the keyboard as I was singing. Michael wrote all his own stuff - we didn’t do any standards with him – and so I would have to read. He didn’t write in unison in very much and so I
often had harmony parts. I would be a seventh away from somebody, which was
sometimes a workout, or a just second away [laughs]. He wrote really close, depending
on where it was on the voice, you know.
RS: And you just had notes written, you never had any vocalizations.
NW: No, just notes. Well, I would have hated that if they had written I’ve got to sing
“Ooh” here and “Blah” and “Blee” and whatever. I mean, I’m not Ella [Fitzgerald] doing
all that, doing the sounds that she made and the scat singers. I really like that, but it didn’t
feel right for me, and certainly not for the music I was singing, because Michael
Garrick’s music would have not have sounded right with bebop syllables. So I just tried
to sound as bland as possibly, so I’d have to sing a consonant, of course, like “Duh” or
“Buh” because the phrases, you couldn’t sing [uses vowels]. I’d try to make it sound
instrumental. With Kenny’s music you moved to that approach. It seemed to be so un-
bebop, so different and so much just like musical lines that the music was the important
thing and so I didn’t want to sing anything that got in the way or that was noticeable as a
voice. I wanted it to be simply the voice as an instrument. People would often say to me,
“Just try to sound like any instrument when you sing.” And the answer was always, “No!
I’m not trying to sound like any instrument, like a tenor sax or a trumpet or a clarinet.”
I’m trying to sound like a voice, a texture that’s adding something to the music. And that
was what I thought my role was. That was what I wanted to do soon as I heard the music.
I wanted to be part of the sound. And of course I realized in the end, that it must have
been something that I knew when I heard Kind of Blue - that a voice could be in there, in
the music somehow. I didn’t know how and I wasn’t consciously making steps to do it. It
just so happened that the people that I met and the things that were happening at that time
meant that it was open and acceptable. Certainly no one seemed to have any problems with it; musicians always seemed to accept it.

RS: The thing I noticed on all those records, first of all, the intonation is really spot-on and rhythmically it’s very clear. It’s like an instrument, like you would expect.

NW: Yes! I suppose so. I just loved singing it so much I never thought about it. I always loved singing Kenny’s music. I still do! I still get excited about singing the lines. They’re just so wonderful. Not always easy, but as (bassist) Chris Laurence once said about Kenny’s music, “He will write something and you look at it and think, ‘You’ve got to work at it to find out how you can play it, but then suddenly it all makes sense and it’s easy!’” But what it is, I don’t know. It’s a mystery, because I think Kenny really just wanted to write melodies.

RS: How often was he working with the smaller groups?

NW: Well, Kenny played trumpet with the John Taylor Sextet alongside Stan Sulzmann (saxophones), Chris Pyne (trombone), Chris Laurence (bass) and Tony Levin (drums), which was such a wonderful group. So I knew Kenny from all that and was on one track of an album that they did. And then I won the Melody Maker poll as “Jazz Singer of the Year” and I think Decca suddenly realized that I was already on one of their offshoot labels, because I had been recording with Michael Garrick on their label Argo. They specialized mainly in the spoken word, but Michael was friendly with the producer for Argo and so his albums were on Argo. And I guess Decca thought, “She’s already on our label, we better give her a recording.” I thought, “I’m going to get as many of my friends on this as possible!” [laughs] Some pieces on Edge of Time were 10-piece and from there they went all the way down to trio - just voice, saxophone and piano – and quintet. I
thought, “I can’t really do it as just a duo with Kenny, because it’s too close”. With that rhythm section, it had to be different.

After that lots of independent labels began to spring up. Evan Parker started a label and he got Kenny to record the first big band album that I was ever on, which was *Song for Someone* in 1973. It’s not a good recording because Tony Oxley wanted to be in the middle of the room and so his drums are in all the microphones [laughs]. What was the name of the label? Well, it was Evan Parker’s label *Incus*.

RS: And there’s even tuba on this! Stan Sulzmann was talking about this recording – there’s Derek Bailey, Evan Parker – was this the first time they played together, on this?

NW: Possibly, yes. I think so. I love this album. It was really early, the first one I ever did with him. Kenny asked me, “Could you write words? I’ve got this tune called *Eventually Yours*” and I said, “I’ll try.” I had never written words, not really, not seriously. It was so difficult because with the way he wrote, things often fell into phrases, into sentences. In the end the tune became *Nothing Changes*. But the melody went on and took ages before it resolved! So you couldn’t easily write words as it was all one sentence. So, it goes [sings the melody, which is very long]. Now that’s the first point where it seems to come to some kind of a conclusion! So it was just one sentence [sings the song with the lyrics]. One sentence!

CA: It’s a lovely line, isn’t it?

NW: It’s fantastic! Somebody had published it and he wanted to get it back. This happened sometimes with his tunes. So he said, “Well, write some words and we’ll change the title.” So I had *Eventually Yours* in my mind. As I was pregnant at the time, I was thinking about what we can leave to our children when I wrote the lyrics. And so
Kenny called it Nothing Changes from that, but it was Eventually Yours. There’s some wonderful tunes on that record. I was still finding out how to sing with the band at that point. And I sing quite differently really.

CA: This is January, 1973.

RS: So this was sort of the first coming together?

NW: Yes, this was after the broadcast with Kenny. After a couple of broadcasts I did with him where he had written me in as an instrument and then he said, “Would you write words to one of the pieces?”

RS: I saw the BBC special.

NW: Oh yeah, the Omnibus. Where he is getting on the train and is going to do sessions, studio work.

RS: Right! And then they have the performance with you and the group.

NW: 1977, I think. Because also at the end of that one it’s Azimuth just going off to make their first recording. I think it’s on that one, where we get on the plane, the three of us. They must have held people back to film us getting on the plane! Then they had us playing a little bit as Azimuth.

RS: It’s so 70’s, the whole thing. It’s wonderful.

NW: The way we look as well. I’ve got this rabbit fur coat on [laughs].

RS: Just for my interest, because I need to limit myself to the large orchestral stuff.

NW: Well this is large-ish, but not the biggest. The later band was bigger.

RS: Which was Music for Large and Small Ensembles.

NW: Yes. There were various broadcasts between that and Music for Large and Small Ensembles. They were usually the conventional size of big band, maybe 19-piece or
something. Occasionally though he wrote other things. I remember us doing a tour where he wrote for two pianos, Pat Smythe and John Taylor, and Steve Lacy (soprano saxophone) was also on it. So that was a bit hard. Yeah, it was the Arts Council in the good old days - the Arts Council’s Contemporary Music Network. Only with contemporary music can you have two grand pianos at every venue.

RS: Stan [Sulzmann] was of the opinion because you were both in the studio at the time and that’s where you met.

NW: Me and Kenny? No. I never saw him the studios. We definitely didn’t meet in the studios because I wasn’t doing studio work at the time. He was. That didn’t come until later for me, until about 1970, something like that. I did something with producer Denis Preston at Lansdowne Studios. Denis used to get these very weird things. He was obviously very interested in recording something rather experimental and so in 1973 we recorded the music of Mike Taylor who had died in 1969. It was finally released in 2007 in the Dusk Fire label. Neil Ardley [who supervised the music for this recording] was quite important, really for that time. It’s that bridge between the music of Tubby Hayes and John Dankworth and that of musicians Kenny Wheeler and [fellow Canadian jazz composer resident in England] John Warren and his band, which used conventional lineups but did not play conventional music. On Neil’s album *Symphony of Amaranths*, he had Ivor Cutler reciting “The Dong with the Luminous Nose” [laughs].

CA: You can’t describe Ivor. Ivor was truly eccentric. From Scotland originally, he was a one-off who would recite these rather absurd pieces of prose or poetry…

NW: …while playing the harmonium…
CA: …in a deadpan voice. But Neil Ardley was really, apart from Kenny, was the only person who was doing what I called “contemporary orchestral jazz”.

NW: And it is orchestral jazz on that album, with strings. And he also did Harmony of the Spheres.

RS: And Kenny’s harmonic and melodic approach - was anybody else doing something similar to that or was he coming out with a real original voice?

NW: I don’t know. His music was very different, to my ears anyway, from what anybody else was doing. There were people writing things for big band and even large ensembles, if you like. John Warren’s Perkin’s Landing is lovely writing. But Kenny, I don’t know, it was something…I don’t know how to describe it, it was harmonically very special. It had this sound.

CA: The Lydian mode. All the #11s…

NW: #11s, yeah…

RS: But he was also using #5s (major 7) and slash chords as well.

NW: Yes. I think it’s because he couldn’t really give conventional names to them in a way. He didn’t write in any key. Often his tunes modulated without you realizing it and the second half of the tune would be in a different key from the first half. I remember singing “Sea Lady” and I suddenly looked at the music and I thought, “Wait a minute, it’s a different key!” I hadn’t realized singing it!

RS: Because it modulated so effortlessly.

NW: Yes! It was just, “right”. Often his tunes are like that.

RS: With regard to what differentiates British and European jazz from American jazz, any thoughts? It doesn’t have to be definitive.
NW: It’s really difficult. People have played Kenny’s music and all this music. They’re probably all influenced by American jazz. We all were. But it’s really not a question of saying, “We don’t want to do that. We reject that.” It’s just a kind of a searching for a voice in a lot of cases, I think. John Taylor was very influenced by Herbie Hancock and his sextet, but John had his own sextet which was a very different voice, because of the way he wrote. And so I think it’s just a question of people trying to find their own voices; not deliberately saying “We’re not going to be influenced by American jazz”, because we all liked it. I don’t quite know with Kenny. I think he was also influenced by European classical music. Of course, when you think of Bill Evans or Herbie Hancock, his chords are like Debussy, Ravel, and Stravinsky, Bartok. It’s all in there. It’s seeped into the music. And Kenny listened to everything, all kinds of music. And I think that applies to the experiment with free jazz as well. That was just people expressing themselves, and I suppose your influences would come out in some way. But not having any real guidelines, no chord sequence, where you’ve got to do this, you’ve got to do that, I mean, with John Taylor’s thing sometimes it was, “Right, when I hit this gong, you’ll do this.” It was quite amusing at times. But really, I think that helped in a way to steer people through to somewhere else.

RS: How?

NW: This experimenting with free improvisation. It’s not necessarily jazz, is it? That can happen in classical music. It could sound like classical improvisation, I suppose. There’s no reason why you had to be a jazz musician to do it, it’s just that jazz musicians always improvise. They’re the people that are going to improvise, with or without a structure.

RS: Because they’re used to it.
NW: Yes!

RS: Even today most classical musicians when they have to improvise have that “deer in the headlights” look.

NW: Although I’m sure Mozart would have improvised. And Delius definitely improvised at the piano. Of course jazz isn’t just about improvisation; it’s also the rhythmic aspect. And so rhythmically, you have to say that Kenny’s stuff was jazz, wouldn’t you. It would have to be played by jazz musicians. It wouldn’t sound the same if it was played by classical musicians. It’s all written down, except for the parts that are improvised. The chord sequence and then you get the free section. He always liked that. He liked that chaos. Somebody interviewed me after Kenny died. He said Kenny liked to compose things and then get people to destroy them and asked me if I thought that. I replied, “No. I think he may have said that, but he wouldn’t let anybody destroy the music.” He chose the people he wanted to destroy the music because he knew they’d do it in a way that he would find acceptable and wonderful, and do something for his music. He loved Evan Parker, Derek Bailey, and Paul Rutherford and people who were into free playing. And it was quite interesting sometimes. It’s not always easy to find people nowadays that do that. There’s still a few left, but there was really a wildness that came from that free period. That was in Kenny’s music at times.

RS: Was there then sort of a compromise for more commercial reasons to bring in Peter Erskine and John Abercrombie?

NW: Well, no. I think that Kenny really wrote everything. The thing about *Windmill Tilter* is that there’s loads of writing. He didn’t just write a thing and then say, “Well, OK, improvise on it.” There was so much writing in there. I think he might have
continued with Tony Oxley, but Tony also went off to play just free music. He wasn’t really interested in playing time, although he was a fantastic time player. But I suppose he did experiment after Tony. There weren’t really many people playing like that and I suppose he must have met Peter Erskine somewhere. Also, I guess it always helped with the Arts Council’s Contemporary Music Network touring committee if you had an American or two in the project, because usually you had to do things that wouldn’t have been affordable otherwise for them to support you. So Dave Holland was an old friend of Kenny’s and it was natural that he was there. He wouldn’t have been part of an English band because he wasn’t here, he was living in America. But he was brought on board because Kenny went and played and joined him in one of his groups. Of course it’s more attractive if you’ve got someone like John Abercrombie.

CA: In Europe, they were all ECM artists: Abercrombie and Ralph Towner. Ralph is a great admirer of Kenny anyway, and I’m sure they met.

NW: Oh yes. I’m sure they would have met in Europe.

RS: Also because of the ECM connection?

NW: Yes. Azimuth did a thing in New York in *Fat Tuesdays* and we were opposite John Abercrombie, Peter Erskine, and Mark Johnson. So we kind of knew each other, really.

RS: That leads me to ask a question: This American/European divide, is it a false divide? Is it a more commercial/political divide to separate themselves.

NW: I don’t know. Who wants to separate? I don’t really want to separate anything from anything else. I suppose when you listen to the music, there is a difference and now I think there’s more of an influence from Europe in American music, American jazz, definitely. Well, at least I don’t know if there is, but I think people have strayed away in
America from what you think of as conventional jazz that we were all brought up with. For me, music is music and I just like good music and I don’t know why we have to put these dividing lines between everything. Is it good? Do you enjoy it? Does it make you feel anything?

RS: What do think is Kenny’s legacy?

NW: I haven’t really thought what his legacy is. For me, my whole life seems to have been from a certain age full of his music and influenced by his music, and I fell in love with his music. I will always be in love with his music. And I think a lot of people felt like that, musicians especially. As far as music generally is concerned, I would imagine his harmonic concept was very different from anything that had come before. Whether that’s influenced by European music, I don’t know. I would imagine there’s some European influence in there. He studied counterpoint and he was always very interested in classical or modern music. He also loved someone like Monk. He loved to sit and play the piano, just playing in a jazz way, what you would think of in a conventional jazz way. Some of his music would sound like film music, with the brass sounding like the entrance of gladiators or something like that. I don’t think he thought visually when he was writing but it definitely didn’t follow harmonically, it followed its own line. I mean, I got used to it. I would take his music to workshops and people would say, “It’s difficult music. It’s difficult to improvise over”. Not really. It’s easier than bebop! Because you haven’t got a chord every two beats for a start. I think it’s easier than bebop and it has this sort of modal feel, that you could run one chord for a while. Of course he did have very difficult pieces, but if you got used to them, if you got used to his way of writing, you could start to guess the options that might come next. And it was just melodic. I think he was a really
important voice, like an Ellington - as important as that. I think his legacy will endure for musicians. Wherever you go in the world, young musicians know about Kenny’s music and they’re interested in it. They’re studying it and want to play it and find out what he did. That’s his legacy, really.
RS: What was your first musical experiences and what led you to play an instrument?
FR: It was probably because of my father. As long as I could remember we had a piano at our home. It was just there.
RS: Didn’t anybody play it?
FR: Not really. I mean, my mom played a little bit but I can’t really remember. But my dad was a hobby banjo player.
RS: So, jazz banjo?
FR: Yes. Sort of dixieland, old-time. That thing. He could read a bit of chord changes. And he couldn’t read music, but he had this book with the changes of the tunes.
RS: I think I know that book. The one that starts with the first notes of the tune?
FR: Not even. I think it’s something they made up in the band or something. It’s like a hand written one, something they took off of records. It’s not like a published book but something they would take to the gigs. So that was always around. And I think how it started was he would start playing chords on the banjo and the tenor guitar, which is essentially a guitar with four strings and banjo tuning. So he was playing that and I was just pounding on the piano playing notes. And he would encourage me, like when I played a good note he would say, “Yeah! That was good! Keep going.” I think that was
the first sort of entry into improvisation first before anything else. Later on I started hating jazz. Also partly because of my dad, because he was playing on those street festivals. Those sort of gigs that are old-time jazz happens a lot in beer tents, and outside, and stuff like that. The entire family would have to wait hours for him to finish every Saturday and I was getting bored. So I began hating that music. And it also felt like that whenever he was playing with his band there was so much going on. There was a clarinet guy and a trombone guy and they were all playing all at once. It was just horrible. I really hated it. I said, “I don’t want to do the jazz-scheisse!” [laughs].

RS: But you wanted to play music?

FR: I still wanted to play music, I loved music. I just hated that unorganized shezamble [sic]. I just couldn’t deal with it. And he kept trying and he would play me records of Oscar Peterson. But first he would go to the swing era.

RS: That was his favorite music?

FR: No. His favorite would be the old-time [Dixieland]. But as far as his record collection went, the furthest it went was swing, the most modern. But I didn’t like that so I just played. I wouldn’t be able to describe what it was, I just improvised on the piano. And then my parents thought I had some talent and then they hired a classical piano teacher who happened to be the only piano teacher in the village I lived in. So he made his rounds. He visited maybe ten kids a day. He was the one who was supposed to teach me the really great music, but he didn’t, really. I have very good ears so I would make him play something for me and I would just go back and act like I was looking at the music, but I wasn’t [laughs]. So it was playing by ear and copying what he did. And he also let it go. I think he knew exactly what I was doing but he was ok with it. And then
maybe around 5th grade I changed teachers. I must have been around ten or so. More serious, but classical piano. And that’s where I played through repertoire like Debussy and Bach and sort of the beginner’s classical literature up to Italian concert or Shostakovich or something. That was sort of it.

RS: Did you also have to play recitals?

FR: Yes, I went to a school that offered a specialized music course where it was part of the deal where you have to take lessons and you have to do recitals every couple of months. And I did recitals as part of my piano lessons, but nothing obligatory. A big impact was that I was an exchange student in the States for a year.

RS: Where?

FR: Broken Arrow, Oklahoma. It was really bad. It was a bad year. At the time, of course I was sixteen and I just had a really nice band at that time, my first band. We started in 1987. I was playing keyboards, we had a saxophone and drums. We didn’t have a bass so I was playing keyboard bass in Germany.

RS: What kind of music was that?

FR: We played our own stuff. It was jazz rock fusiony stuff like that. We didn’t read music, we memorized the songs. We had a program of 35 tunes or something like that. And we played a lot and we were like regional heroes. We put on a lot of concerts and EPs, and played festivals, and stuff like that. I was 16. And then the drummer decided to move away, because the other two guys were much older. He moved away and that was for me that was like the end of the world because there was only one drummer who could actually play in that region. And I thought, fuck, there’s nothing left for me here. I didn’t have that many schoolfriends because I was always more interested in music than
hanging out, so I was like a loner. So at school there was nothing there that held me back. My band kind of dissolved, and I thought, ok, I’ll do an exchange year. I have nothing to lose.

RS: So that was your decision?
FR: That was sort of my decision. My parents always wanted me to do that, I don’t know why, and I always said, “No, no, no, I have my band here.” But once that was evaporated I thought that that was a good time to buzz off for awhile. And then I landed in Broken Arrow, Oklahoma, which is another whole, long, horrible story full of misunderstandings and pain [laughs]! But one really good thing was a bit of a musical breakthrough – both host families I stayed with didn’t have a piano so I suddenly couldn’t play piano any more on a regular basis and also I didn’t have my band any more. So it went for me from a lot of music to almost nothing. But funny enough, increased my need for it. And I was looking for ways to fill that hole and there was a university radio station, close to Tulsa, and they had this really fantastic scheme where every night – they would start at 8pm-midnight – they would play music. They wouldn’t talk about it, just say the titles and play music and every night is was the same scheme. At 8pm they would play non-rhythmical esoteric type soundy music, sort of ambient stuff. And then they would slowly move into a more rhythmical ambient stuff, with a little beat to it. And then from there it would go to things like Spyro Gyro, pop-jazz/easy listening type thing, and from there it would go into a more electric fusiony type thing like Chick Corea Electric Band. From there it would go into a more acoustic version of the jazz rock approach, more of a down-to-earth, earthy thing like Weather Report and stuff like that. And then they would go to bebop. So it was sort of backwards chronologically in a way, and also from a standpoint
of intensity and complexity, it would go from really simple and ambient to a more complex, rhythmically, melodically and harmonically, and at the end around midnight they’d play the really out shit like Eric Dolphy. And for me it was just really great. You couldn’t really watch television, it was horrible. The only thing I would do at night is listen to the radio.

RS: In your room?

FR: In my room, on a waterbed! [Laughs]. In Oklahoma. Classic! Just like “Twin Peaks”!

RS: What year was this?

FR: 1989-90. It was exactly that time, that vibe, the high-school vibe. Horrible. Anyway I found myself tuning in a little later to the radio. That way I took down all the names of the guys. They had this CD club where you could become a club member and then you have to order 10 CDs every two months or something. I had stockpiles of CDs I ordered, without having a player! So it was only after I had already 50 CDs or so that I bought a little discman on a visit to New York. That way made a lot of things clear where a lot of things come from and how they intertwine. It was really interesting.

RS: That puts you in good company. A lot of the great artists only had the radio to listen to and that’s how they learned all their music.

FR: It’s really old school, in a way, unintentionally. That was my only chance of survival.

RS: So you were always kind of drawn to jazz, because that wasn’t the “Scheiss-jazz”.

FR: It wasn’t the “Scheiss-jazz”. I liked it. I wasn’t really quite sure what to call it. I think it was only my year in the States that I learned, “Ok, THAT’s called jazz because of this and that” and the whole picture came into place a little bit more. But for years it was just the electric fusion, rock jazz, that area, with beats. No swing, nothing like that.
RS: Norma Winstone said she was just listening and didn’t know it was called “jazz” until much later.

FR: Yes. I thought jazz was just the stuff my dad does. Horrible stuff. I only found out later that most of the guys whose music I liked knew their way around jazz. And it’s all very connected and solos sound similar. It’s just a different approach and a different sound.

RS: So you did your year and your year. Still in Pforzheim, I’m guessing?

FR: Yes. Still there. I kind of did my last two years of high school. I came back to school and that’s where I joined my first jazz band, which was the State Youth Jazz Orchestra of Baden Wuerttemburg. Which was really a horrible experience. Because for me up to that time it was all playing by ear, not reading music. I mean, I knew how to read notes by that time, but I had no idea about chord symbols and all that. It was all Spanish to me. I had no clue about that. And I really wanted to play in the big band because I liked the sound but they had me audition like three times. They wouldn’t let in because I was really shitty at reading. And it really made me feel really bad. And I tried to catch up and learn the things as quickly as I could. But I really loved it. But as a pianist in a big band, you sit around a lot in the rehearsals. For me, I used the time to decipher the chord changes. But whenever I didn’t have to do that I just sat there and had a lot of time just to bathe in that sound. Also in the gigs you play a little comping stuff, but usually in that sort of youth orchestra setting you don’t have a lot to do as a rhythm section member. So I sat in this bug sound and the different kinds of sound, the soft, the loud, and the hits, and the lines, and I really loved that. I think that’s where the big band bug came from.

RS: How did it come about that you starting writing music? Were you always writing?
FR: I was always writing without “writing”, because I didn’t really know how. In my first band that was mostly my stuff that we played and we just jammed and work things out and memorized everything. I found some things I wrote down back then, some sketches, but it’s really basic. I think it was after the big band experience that I realized, “Shit, you can actually write everything down,” and you can have a mixture of written notes and chord changes and you can combine those things and you can leave it open where you think it’s ok to leave it open. You can sculpt it. There’s a language for that. I wasn’t clear about that before. So in that way it was really good, even though they made me feel shitty. It was a hard time.

RS: What did you do after that?

FR: For me there wasn’t an option. I thought I had to study jazz. At the time Cologne was sort of the place, maybe one of three or four places in Germany where you could do that. It was definitely the best place to do it, so I auditioned here [in Cologne] and in Hamburg and in Stuttgart and I got in in Hamburg and here. And then I decided to come here and my first day was also [British jazz pianist and composer] John Taylor’s first day. So we were both new and I was assigned to him. And I was totally lucky, because what happened then, because I hadn’t ever heard of Kenny Wheeler. I hadn’t heard of him. I wasn’t aware of the entire Euro/British jazz thing since the ‘70s. That was just not existing for me, because all my tracks for some reason led to American music and American jazz guys. It just didn’t exist for me.

RS: So who were you listening to up to that point?

FR: Chick Corea, Hancock. More the electric stuff and some modern mainstream – Blakey, late Jazz Messengers, and that hard bop/bost bop stuff. But just totally not British
end of things. So John and I were thrown together in one room and we just… I remember in our very first lesson he came in with this Kenny Wheeler tune called, “Mabel”. And this was a typical Wheeler tune, with a circular form and those unusual chords and also the way he writes them, he doesn’t a write “sus” chord, he always writes a minor triad with a different bass note. And it just took me ages to get it. I’d have John play it and my eyeballs would just pop out. “Jesus! This is exactly the music I want to play and write!” I didn’t even know it existed. This is my music! It was such an amazing experience. And then of course he fed me all those names and I just bought tons and tons of records. I was so happy because this was the mixture of the jazz thing and the even-8ths thing, but not as rock-y, and not as pop-y and not as simple, but with a twist but still sort of song-y. It was nice. Nice. I loved that. And I was also really lucky because John was a laid-back guy. He sort of understood where my shortcomings were and he also understood if he pushed too hard interest or be too frustrated, so he just said, “Yeah, as long as you are always working, and you are always progressing and doing something and I know what you are doing and I can help you with it, it’s fine. Don’t worry.” So I was lucky to be assigned to him. Because at the time there was also other guys teaching and they had their methods, like, “You have to know Rhythm Changes in all keys,” and that would have killed me. That definitely would not have been the right thing for me at that time. Now I see myself in the position to tell people they should learn Rhythm Changes! [Laughs]. Now I find myself a little more in that direction, also because I made the experience myself how bad it can be to be under pressure from the “Jazz Police”. I feel I know now how much you need and how much room you need. It’s all about the mix of things.
RS: Did they have classes in composition at the school, or were you studying this for yourself?

FR: No. I was doing it by myself. Playing with people here. And then after when I came back from the States in 1990-91, I did my last year of high school. I had my finals in school in ’92, moved to Cologne in the same year, and then going to school here for two years, having discovered that new music for me. I got frustrated because at that time in Cologne it was totally divided. Either you would play “jazz”, play standards, or “free”. Nothing in between. There was nobody who would make that sort of music that I loved, exactly that stuff in between. So I talked to John about it. He told me about Kenny Wheeler, Stan Sulzmann, Julian Arguelles, and John Surman and Norma Winstone, and all those people, and I thought, “England! That must be heaven. I must go to England.” So I asked John where should I go? I wanted to go away, I wanted to go to England for awhile. And then he recommended the Guildhall School of Music. So I applied and went. It was only then that I realized, I am in the right place, but in the wrong time! [Laughs] I didn’t figure that out myself. If I had looked at the dates when all those records I loved were recorded, I would have figured out they were made in the ‘70s until mid-‘80s. And that period was gone, so coming to London, being full of expecatations, “Oh yeah, everybody’s going to play Kenny Wheeler tunes.” And it was my in imagination. And it turned out it was even worse than in Cologne. The division between free jazz and experimental and shit and really old-school bebop and not beyond was even worse. And I thought, “Oh my God, this can’t be!” Everybody knew Kenny Wheeler and John Taylor and all the tunes and pianists knew the shit. That was all great. But in real life there were practically no gigs to watch that were playing that sort of music. And I realized I was ten
or fifteen years too late. And then out of that, I sort of gave up my original idea of being a pianist. I’m a jazz piano player and I write tunes like everyone else. And then this whole idea of going to London and playing there with bands and starting to be part of the scene, that sort of just crumbled because the stuff that was played there didn’t really interest me that much. And then that’s when I went back inside and started thinking more about the composition thing and then I was really lucky. At the Guildhall they had a weekly big band, a school big band. And they actually rehearsed. I mean, there was supposedly a big band at the school in Cologne but there were always people missing. There were maybe two trumpets and the next week there wouldn’t be a bass player. And they were playing Thad Jones, which is great, which I love, but there was no room for maybe bringing in your own chart or anything. Bill Dobbins was running the course at that time here. But those guys in England would play anything. They didn’t give a shit. You could just bring stuff in. I thought, “Oh my God! This is unbelievable,” and they would just play my things. So I thought I’d write something and bring it in, and so that’s where I wrote my first big band arrangement. During that year I wrote four or five big band charts. I wrote everything by hand. I copied all the parts. It was hell, because I had no clue. I made tons of mistakes. All the parts were horrible. But they were so good about it. They were really into the music and they were giving a try and they would rehearse it and play it on the gig. Extremely supportive. Very, very great experience. And that’s also where I learned to differentiate the fact that if it sounds like shit, how much of it is my fault, or the band’s fault, which is also something you have to learn. Sometimes it could be both.

RS: Sometimes when it’s the band’s fault then it’s your fault.

FR: Sometimes also not! I was so used to that idea of, “You can’t do that, and you can’t
do that,” a 2nd next to the lead trumpet, it doesn’t work, and all those things, those old-school rules, which are there for a reason. But sometimes it actually does work if they play right, and it’s a new sound and it’s a sound you might not have heard before. Or something you like, and if you have sounds like that in your piece, it’s going to sound like you. And if you just followed the rules, you would have never have gotten there. And maybe it sounds like shit the first time they play through it because they can’t get the pitches right, that doesn’t necessarily mean it’s the music’s fault. Actually, now, being much older and having written shitloads of stuff, I more and more realize how much actually I am thinking about that something could be my fault if it doesn’t work. And I get rid of an idea before I write it down because I think it might not work. I think there’s not enough for rehearsal, so I have to relearn the more adventurous ways of writing. I had to learn there’s one rehearsal and the gig, or there are three days and then the recording for ten tunes or something, and I just made the experience that if you write too hard for no reason, usually, or if it’s too cross-sectioned and people can’t hear themselves and it’s just going to sound like shit. So what do you do? Naturally you take all of that stuff out and what’s left, it sounds good, but maybe it’s not even half as interesting as it could have been if they were the right people with the right attitude and the interest and they were quick enough and they could actually play. And now when I listen some things that I like, I think, “That’s exactly what’s happening here.” This bit in McNeely’s music or this bit in Mendoza’s music, he does what exactly what everyone tells you not to do, and it sounds because he had damn good players and they can have a C# next to a C. They know how to play their instrument really well and they’re into playing the music right. I think it’s a dangerous path both ways. So you also again, it’s a matter of dosage. There’s
this concept in German called, *Vorauseilender Gehorsam*. That’s a sort of fixed term that means that you’re…how do I translate this?

RS: Perhaps “Self-censorship?”

FR: Yes. Self-censorship. You’re doing what you think you’re being told to do, before you are actually told to do it. That’s it. That’s always there. It’s good that it’s there to a certain extent.

RS: Until it starts cramping creativity.

FR: It just alters the way you do things, not always to the better. So I have to watch it now when I have composition students and I tell them, “No, that’s not going to work.” Because you tend to become also quick to judgement. “Oh no, forget about that flute part. Nobody’s going to hear that, unless everybody plays really quiet, which they won’t.” But then you sit down and think, “Well, if they do play really quiet, it might be nice and interesting to have that flute part there. Why don’t you try and see for yourself it works.”

RS: Experience is the best teacher.

FR: Yes!

RS: Assuming you can learn from experience.

FR: Assuming you have people who can actually play. And you have a flutist who can play a note that sounds like a flute, and not a sax player that is holding the flute for the third time in his life. So it’s a difficult question. It’s always there. Everytime I write, and I sit there and I put something in the score I think about how are they going to feel about playing this? Are they going to like this, are they going to be ok playing this there? Is there enough space for them to breathe? Is this too much strain on the trumpets, or too little strain on the trumpets? Is this voicing too close for them, are they going to feel
uncomfortable for a long time, or is it ok to have that one little uncomfortable thing within a huge bath of comfort? [Laughs]. So these are the things that constantly go around with me when I write. All the time.

RS: Were there any particular writers you especially were inspired by? Obviously Kenny Wheeler, who you tried to emulate, or were you always trying to come up with your own way to get through things?

FR: No. I never really thought of “my way.” Like, on purpose. It turns out that some people say when I bring in a new tune to a big band, when I bring it in the first time, “Oh yeah, that totally sounds like you!” I go, “What” And they say, “That totally sounds like Florian. You do that all the time.” Okay. If you say so. So I’m not really thinking about my style or way of things so it’s just a combination of things that I love, bits and pieces. There’s Kenny Wheeler. Definitely, in terms of tunes. And now how he uses in his solos those large leaps and intervals and the squeaky, high trumpet. I really love that.

RS: Especially because he can do it so well.

FR: Oh, man! It’s so nice. And even when he fucks up. If you know him well and the recordings, you know he actually just gets lost. Or he can’t get the note. And it’s the way he turns it around, it has something so natural about it. Unbelievable. I really like in terms of piano I like Kenny Werner a lot. Also his big band stuff I find really amazing. With the Vanguard band. He’s written a lot of stuff for them. Unbelievable sheet. Some of the absolute nicest standards arrangements. And [Jim] McNeely of course. Brookmeyer was doing a composition workshop here, over a course of one or two years. And all the established big band cats would go there, and I would sometimes go to sit and listen, because it was way over my head at that time.
RS: Really?

FR: Totally. I thought they were all so proficient and they written for this band and this band and I’ve just written one piece for big band. And I liked his stuff, but I never really… I really kept coming back to McNeely in a way. Because I like the humor in his writing, because it seemed like he wasn’t taking himself so damned serious. Brookmeyer was always very serious and very aware about everything he did, and he could explain everything to you. [McNeely] was like a guru, almost. He had an answer for any question. He was always wise. He made you really quiet and humble, but not in a bad way, it’s just the way he was. Also his music, there’s so much in it, too. I really liked that, the fun aspect. [Vince] Mendoza – I like very much. I’ve been a little oversaturated for a time, because I listened to his stuff so much. Of course he has his sound and it keeps coming back. Same with McNeely. I hear two notes of a HR arrangement, and it’s obviously McNeely. It’s so obvious, the stuff he does. Yesterday I was at WDR and they were playing a McNeely arrangement of a Scofield tune and I just had to laugh! So typical! It’s great.

RS: Anybody else?

FR: Maria Schneider. I liked, although I was always I was always missing the humor part for me a little bit. And it is was a tiny bit too beautiful. And then I met her. I met her once at a workshop in Lake Placid and one somewhere else and then she was at BMI once so I met her a couple of times over the years. And her personality made sense along with the music. I think half the band fell in love with her, and that’s why her music sounds so good! [Laughs]. She has a way of making people [play] so it’s beautiful. And you know big bands. They don’t give a shit usually about things being beautiful. [Laughs]. That’s
usually the last thing they think about!

RS: How do you try to get your musicians to care about what they’re doing?

FR: You can’t. It’s as simple as that. [laughs]. No, seriously. Either they’re into it and they’re open to the music. Like being an orchestra musician. Most of the time, they’re not.

RS: Does it depend where you’re doing it?

FR: Not really. I feel there’s an average percentage of people in any band anywhere in the world, hopefully you’ve got those guys who are trying to make the best of it, and they’re interested. Even if they don’t like the music that much, they still think, “We have to make it alive somehow.” And then there’s the majority that try play right but they don’t really care. And then there’s a couple of guys who moan about everything. I try to feed the ones who want to be fed. And the ones who don’t want to be fed I try to ignore as much as I can. When I made my big band album, I chose people who not only were great musicians, but were also into this kind of thing and making it come alive.

RS: Do you have a working big band?

FR: No. It’s project to project.

RS: Do you think there is a European sound?

FR: A European sound?

RS: Or a European approach.

FR: There was. Sort of as a counteraction in many ways – in good and in bad ways. As in a bad way would be, “I hate that all those Americans who come to Europe and get all the well-paid gigs. Because I hate them I hate their music and I’ll do something different.” Like a negative impetus. And the positive way would be, “Oh yeah, they developed their
thing and why don’t we look at what we have here?” We have also a vast, even a bigger history of music. Not only Mozart and Bach, but we also have regional history. The Scandanavians have their song culture, there’s the Balkans with their 7/4 and 15/8, you know, and it’s all in a pretty cramped place and why not look at your roots, as it were. And that happened around the early ECM phase – early 70’s and 80’s up to the early 90’s. But now it seems like it’s not that much any more, because I feel like…I have this course here called “Listening Lab” once a week. The deal is that everyone who comes brings in a recording that they love and that has a high probability that the others won’t know it, and then they play it and they have all the data recorded, like when and where was it recorded, who played, a little bit of background information, a little history about it. And then we discuss it. We all ask questions. And I’ll ask questions, too. One of the questions I ask is, Which Country? And this question, which I found really interesting, is it’s getting harder. Stuff that was recorded maybe in the ‘70s or ‘80s you might even be able to say, “Ok, that’s Italy” or “That’s probably France,” “That’s England,” “That might be Germany,” “That’s probably Scandanavia”. And now often times they put something on and ask me what country and I have to say I don’t know. I say Norway and it turns out it’s New York. So it’s getting more mixed up.

RS: So it’s less national. Can you at least say European at this point?

FR: It also depends on the material. If it’s music that derives itself from some sort of Euro background, then you might be able to get it – like the Scandanavian stuff.

RS: So someone like Geir Lysne?

FR: I wouldn’t know where his music came from. It could even be some guy in Alaska.

RS: So you would say there are probably not any identifying factors at this point?
FR: It’s getting harder. There might be little clues now and then. Like French bass players tend to play a lot [laughs]. And some of the recordings, maybe drummers I still have in most cases I can pinpoint them whether they are European or American drummers, just because that I feel that Europeans, they’ve discovered their little bells and noises, and fine little things. They don’t want to be drummers anymore, they want to be percussion artists. Or they do like really super complicated stuff over another time signature. Sometimes I feel like it’s missing the point a little bit of being a drummer. It takes away a little bit of the machine that’s driving the band. And sometimes I have the feeling that American drummers, even if they are contemporary and are doing the little shit, they still have more of the machine thing going. The earthy, dirty type thing.

RS: Could that be because American drummers are more aware of the history?

FR: I’ve thought about this a lot. There’s no good reason for it, really. Why should it be like that? It doesn’t have to be. We’re all…Europe and America are not that far apart in terms of culture and upbringing and the music you listen to. But there’s one difference which I think might be part of the reason is that you have all the high school marching bands and the drum lines and all that, and that’s totally not happening in Europe.

RS: We also have high school big bands. Do you have that here?

FR: It’s starting. It’s getting more and more. But that’s a relatively new thing here. It started maybe ten-fifteen years ago.

RS: What do you think about the argument that, because of the Second World War especially, because of the break there was also a break in the continuity of the development of the music?

Even if they don’t utter it, it’s always there. It always comes back to somewhere in some decision making. You ask yourself why do the remaining radio big bands in Germany have American leaders? Still. I say, “Come on!” It’s totally ok to have them, and they’re doing a great job and I admire them, but there’s not really a reason why it has to be. But, it still has to be, it’s totally out of the question that the WDR band would have a French guy or even another guy out of Europe. It has to be an American.

RS: The [WDR] band was started by [Kurt] Edelhagen. The HR big band was started by, I forget the guy’s name, but that actually had German leaders up until recently.

FR: Kurt Bong.

RS: He was the last guy, but it was started by a German.

FR: But the soloists. If it wasn’t the leaders it was the soloists. The people they hired to write arrangements, it’s Americans, Americans, Americans. And even here now, the jobs are hard to come by. It’s not WDR said, “Hey Florian, would you like to write something for us?” It’s like, “Oh, we have this kids’ gig coming up and we need someone who writes”, or we have this band from Essen and they need to have this stuff arranged because they won some sort of prize. That stuff gets handed to the Germans. But whenever there’s a serious program they’re going to play at a festival, it’s always Americans, one after the other.

RS: Is that sort of a security, or lack of security issue, as you were pointing out?

FR: Yes. I think that’s totally low-esteem. I mean, “Jazz is American music, It has to be Americans. They know what they’re doing.” That’s what the people want.

RS: Is there anything else you would like to add?

FR: There’s tons going on here. There’s one thing I find really sad, is that the exchange
between European countries, is so little. For example, Cologne geographically has France right around the corner. There’s Belgium, too. You can take a train to Paris and get there faster than to Munich. Or Brussels is quicker to get to than Frankfurt. Everything is very close. There’s just no exchange. None of the Belgian guys playing in Germany. None of the Belgian arrangers would write for German bands. None of the German guys would go to Belgium and work there. No exchange.

RS: You do get people like Bert Joris from Belgium.

FR: Well people know of him, but not very many. Bert Joris is a good example. He is unbelievable. I love the Brussels Jazz Orchestra. That’s a band I regularly write for, by the way. This is one of my favorite bands of all time. They’re a great band and they’re all open and friendly and great guys, and there’s no bullcrap going on.
RS: Did you have any musical background yourself, did you play an instrument?
WK: I played the piano, I play, I used to play the clarinet. But, you know, I don’t consider myself a performing musician, so I’m basically just a musicologist, so you need to be able to play an instrument to actually know what you’re talking about.
RS: Did you ever play or perform professionally, or just for fun?
WK: Only just for fun.
RS: And what brought you to jazz?
WK: I fell in love…
RS: With the music or a woman?
WK: With a woman…with the music [laughs]. No, it’s, yeah, that’s probably it, so it’s a very emotional thing. And, with the music and [I] stayed with it.
RS: Was there one particular event or was there some concerts or recordings that you heard?
WK: I grew up in Kiel, which is, you know, not really a place to hear anything more modern than Chris Barber [laughs] at that time. And, I actually got into jazz with all of this traditional stuff so that I found that very interesting. So, I actually got into jazz, listening to traditional music to all that trad bands, British bands, some blues performers
– Champion Jack Dupree and so on an so forth, people who toured around there. And when I was fifteen I heard Oscar Peterson for the first time and when I was 16 or 17 I went to the jazz festival in Nice and afterwards to the jazz festival in Antibes, Juan les Pines, and there I heard everybody, from [unclear], through Eubie Blake through Earl Hines, through Dizzy Gillespie, through Charles Mingus, Sun Ra, Cecil Taylor. So basically it opened, it all opened up and I thought, “Okay!”

RS: Wow! What year was that?

WK: That was 1975, before you were born.

RS: Keep saying that [Laughing]. And your parents, were they supportive of that? Were they listening to music at all?

WK: My parents were listening to music but not to jazz. But they always supported whatever I did, so, I mean hitchhiked down [there] and they allowed that which to this day I don’t understand, but they allowed us everything and my parents are war generation, they simply, they lost their youth to the war so they said, “Our kids should have, should do whatever they want, and if they want to travel they should travel,” and I hitchhiked down to France and I stepped on the beach, I was not even of age, so, but, yeah, but they didn’t have a jazz background. Not all to this day, they’re probably wondering what I’m doing. My parents, they did go to concerts when I took them along and they liked it, but I’m not sure they really knew what all of this was about. But they were always interested. But no, this was a discovery of my own. Well that’s probably it, I mean jazz is, you know, an individual music and I was interested in at that point of my life, being an adolescent was to find something that nobody else was listening to so not stand out so much than to individualize myself, my aesthetic experience. It’s something
like that. I think that there are probably a lot of different biographical ways into jazz but that might be one of the typical ones. Others might be group affiliated, where you want to peer affiliate, just following peer taste. Or you want to just do the opposite. Mine was just doing the opposite so nobody was listening to jazz so, “Hey, that’s my music!” So that was, you know, looking back, that might have been a factor. But my first answer is a very valid one, when I said, “from love,” because that was what I felt. To this day, there are certain moments that I recall, and those moments are not necessarily visual moments, but they are actually aural memories, so I recall the first chord I heard at the Nice jazz festival played by Sammy Price. I will be still be able to play you that chord. It’s just, “there,” just this one chord, swung and it had the whole the history of the blues and it touched me so that it really blew me away. So there are those moments that I usually connected to the music that, yeah, I would say it was extremely emotional, so that why I said I fell in love, you know. You can’t really pick and truly say what it is, it is a very personal relationship.

RS: Right. I remember when I went to, I was living in Munich at the time, and I went to the Northsea Jazz Festival, 1980 and there was just so much music. I remember that I saw Steps Ahead, Art Blakey [I meant Max Roach], John Scofield Trio, Sun Ra, VSOP, I can’t remember all the people I saw.

WK: Well they were all at the Nice festival before and after. George Wein sent his musicians all to Europe. They did their European tour and he had a house near Nice and Provence. And so he made sure that all these musicians had a week of, well a kind of a work-vacation. He put them at a nice hotel in Nice for a week and they were supposed to play for five days and the other two days were free but they were staying there for a week
and they met everybody else there. And in between they had to go to Montreux or to the Hague or to, you know, this or that summer festival and they came back. So I always went to Nice for that reason. And that was the other thing – in Nice you actually met the musicians because they were not there just for one gig. They were there for a week so they were relaxed, they celebrated with their friends they hadn’t seen in a while. You met them at a café or at the beach, or, you know, they had after-hour sessions and so it was great.

RS: Were there many European bands at that time playing at any of those festivals?

WK: At that festival, no, but I never really went to Moers [Jazz Festival] that much. But of course the big German festivals always make sure to have German and European bands. The Berlin jazz fest did and Moers did. The French festivals had not yet started that policy of forcing the organizers to have an equal amount of French bands and American bands so, no, at the festivals I went to, not really.

RS: I’m sure you’ve read, Klook, the story of Kenny Clarke.

WK: Oh, yes. Mike Hennesey, yes.

RS: And he was talking about how in Paris they had started that policy of having French musicians and I think it was, was it the late 50’s or early 60’s? They had that already there.

WK: Well, the British were, you know, most adamant about it, because they had a strong musicians union so the American musicians were not allowed to work there unless the British musicians would play in America and nobody wanted to hear any British musicians over there.

RS: Yes. There’s 20, 30 years where there’s absolutely nothing going on. And, did you
come into contact with Peter Herbolzheimer at any point?

WK: Not really. We met two or three times. I’m not really a very good source. I was at a very late point. I was a member of the Advisory Committee, Advisory Group for the Deutschen Musikrat, for both. Both, well, all of their...Deutsche Musikrat projects which was basically Jugend Jazzt and the BuJazzo and [at] those meetings Peter was there so we talked but that’s about all so everyone knows him better than I do.

RS: Who would be some good people to talk to about Peter?

WK: Probably all the members of his band. I mean, let’s see. He had different functions: he had his own band – the *Rhythm Combination & Brass*; he was an educator doing all of these workshops so all the people who learned something from him would be helpful; somebody like Alfred Biolek, who has nothing to do with music whatsoever, but made sure that Peter Herbolzheimer was always on his shows and played his shows constantly and Herbolzheimer accompanied all of these stars who came through that TV show so he might be somebody to talk to because he specifically demanded that Peter Herbolzheimer play his show. So that would be...he’s still alive. Otherwise, yeah, well, just go through his discography. I mean, what has to be said about many of them [the composer/arrangers], Herbolzheimer comes out of the radio tradition, so he was able to do what he was doing because he had all of those musicians who worked for the WDR big band and some other big bands who, you know, were experienced in big band work but wanted to do something different and were open to his approach. Gruntz comes more out of a Kenny Clarke/Francy Boland approach of, you know, of having an international band and they put together mostly for tours and everybody, everybody was a great soloist in his band. I mean, not one musician was just a section player. Which always was, you
know, kind of made me feel a little sad when I heard that, but I always thought, "Oh, that’s kind of…", we say pearls before swine.

RS: Yes, we do say that.

WK: So, yes. And of course I mean that is probably the European element …is this modern big band sound was always studio oriented and was definitely not dance oriented, not so much, I was going to say, audience oriented, but that’s not right because it is, but it was more of a different art music, form of art music that they saw, they saw themselves in that tradition. Gruntz had all of those things, too. Rolf Liebermann, who he worked with – are you familiar with his opera that he did once?

RS: No!

WK: …Rolf Liebermann was a composer and he…who [Gruntz] actually met in ’53 [or] ’54. [He] Wrote a kind of pre-third stream composition, Concerto for Symphony Orchestra and Jazz Band.

RS: What year was this?

WK: ’53-’54.

RS: Wow!

WK: For basically it was like the Ebony Concerto, except that it really has a symphony orchestra, a jazz orchestra – a big band, I think, Edelhagen performed it.

RS: This is before the Innovations Orchestra, then of Kenton’s, or when did Kenton do his Innovations, I’m trying to remember.

WK: I don’t know.

RS: Because he was the only other person really trying to do something like that.

WK: So when he, but Liebermann is a classical composer so he comes from a classical
world, he was a big opera guy, he was the intendant of the opera in Zurich and then he
became the intendant of the opera in Hamburg and in Hamburg he staged George
Gruntz’s, what was it called? Cosmopolitan Greetings. An opera where, you know,
Gruntz and a couple of soloists, DeeDee Bridgewater, Mark Murphy, and, who’s the third
singer? There was three jazz singers and then they had some classical musicians in there.
What was the jazz opera? It was Liebermann…Liebermann was, had some fingers in the
staging of Gunter Schuller’s The Visitation at the Hamburg opera house in the 60’s but
I’m not sure of that. What I want to say is there’s a long tradition of musicians who come
from an art music background and see jazz in that tradition and Gruntz always was
somebody who was interested in that. Of course, on the other hand he was always a blues
person, so he was very clear that jazz is African American music, and that element should
always be present. Herbolzheimer is more of a groove person. Everything he does is
groove oriented and then the other cats, they come, you know, they came up, Florian
Ross came up at a time everybody could play everything. Have you heard the
Andromeda-Omega Express Orchestra?
RS: No, I haven’t heard of them.
WK: Daniel Glasser. It’s a young band from Berlin. I just heard them in Bremen. They
have jazz musicians and classical musicians in there and the artistic director Daniel
Glasser is a saxophone player, and he basically said, “You know, now basically we have
musicians who can play everything so I do not have to look out for what can they play
anymore.” And they do, it’s kind of a genre mix, so what I’m saying is nowadays the
professional level of musicians has changed so much that you can do things that
Herbolzheimer or Gruntz or some of the older cats would never have dreamt of.
RS: Like, the best example for that is maybe *Metropole*, which does everything.

WK: Right, but *Metropole* is still very much steeped in the traditions, so they will always be, like, doesn’t really have a…with *Metropole* I don’t really connect a sound.

Herbolzheimer has a sound. Gruntz…hmm, you know with Gruntz I never have a sound in my ear because…with him, it’s always the soloists who, you know, yes his composition, his arrangements connected everything but there was a lot of fun in there but I don’t really have a sound in my ear. With Peter Herbolzheimer [there is] definitely a sound. With Metropole I don’t have a sound at all because each of their projects sound completely different.

RS: Right, because they also use different composers and arrangers.

WK: So that’s more like…the Metropole is more like the radio big band concept.

RS: Right. Anyway my goal is to deal more with composer/arrangers, you know, particularly taking five people’s visions of music and however it developed…

WK: Well for me the interesting question about European orchestras is the question is that about European jazz in general – What is different about orchestras here that is different in orchestras in the United States? But the first thing that comes to mind has nothing to do with music but the organizational aspect. The fact that actually have radio big bands in a couple of countries that are professionally paid to play music and you don’t really have that over there [in the US]. On the other hand, I was in the Village Vanguard in February and heard the *Vanguard Orchestra*, that still blows me away every time I hear them. I mean, whenever they played a Thad Jones chart, I just think, “Okay!

So that’s what the European big bands miss, you know, all of this.

RS: I know you mentioned you disagreed with Bill Bares’ theory about the “Eternal
Triangle” concept, but I’d be interested though to hear what you think about it. I mean there’s some interesting stuff in his book, or his thesis.

WK: I never read it.

RS: Yes, it’s long, it’s almost 500 pages. It’s quite interesting and very well researched and he’s got a nice vernacular way of discussing the topics. A thing that always comes to my mind – in Europe, Culture is usually a cabinet level post. I don’t there’s anything close to that in America, for example. It’s just, culture has to survive on its own and it hardly does that, and they keep cutting back more and more support for the arts.

WK: Well, you know, I mean, the other side looks always greener. So, when I go to the States what I enjoy most is true for music and it’s true for a lot of other things, too. What I enjoy most is the fact because America doesn’t have all of those structures in their cultural, or social, or other forms of, levels of functioning, they still thrive on community in a very different way than we do. So, I have the feeling whenever I’m over there, I have this feeling of this community approach. You know, I live and I identify which groups do I belong to and those groups are, you know, they both identify but they are also support groups. So, they will support me and I will support the others in those groups, and that’s something that what I feel, you know. Here in Europe that system might still function in some southern countries, but in especially Germany, France, as well and England, or Scandinavian countries: we pay taxes for that. So we don’t…all of those community functions we outsourced to the State. So, and, the same holds true for Culture, in a way. You know, we outsourced a lot so we pay taxes for that. So we do not have to do that ourselves anymore. Why should we? Why should I, you know, why should I give money to a beggar on the street? Hey we are a social system, we have a social net, so I already
paid, already gave him money. It comes out of my paycheck every day, so why should I, you know, whereas in America, you’re in contact with somebody. You just give them your coins and the same holds true for, in a way, for music, or for all of these cultural activities where I sometimes wish there were more volunteers, were more of a community of feeling of support for the arts than I really feel is there, although while I’m saying that I’m not sure that’s actually true.

RS: One thing when I was talking with Florian [Ross] – he was bemoaning the fact that you have all these things you are talking about and he said, “When does a Belgian band come to Germany? How often is there an exchange of musics and bands going to different countries?” He said at the Musikhochschule [in Cologne] they have in the jazz program basically only German musicians coming to the Musikhochschule and the Hochschule itself doesn’t care where it doesn’t get its musicians because they’re set. They get their money like you said. They’re getting paid whoever comes. In the interest of mixing or having professors from other countries is not very interesting to them.

WK: Well, so, that’s especially so in recent years. I mean, in the 60’s and 70’s when European jazz came into its own, there were all of those cross-national, trans-European projects, especially in the free jazz idiom, you know, Schlippenbach and so on and so forth. So there was a lot of intermingling and after reunification, after the [Berlin] wall came down, there is much more of a cultural competition within Europe. So we all complain about Scandinavian countries just putting so much money into music export and they’re present everywhere and they play everywhere and, you know, it’s cheaper, so they say it’s cheaper to hire a Scandinavian band than a German band because the travel will already be covered by Scandinavian countries which isn’t true, but there is a certain
kernel of truth in it. So suddenly after the wall came down, after the Euro was introduced, it took a while and then cultural scenes, cultural politicians became aware of the fact that culture might be an important, value within the political/economic competition that you’re entering in the European market. I mean, we’re not all equals. There are power structures and culture always was a power instrument. Culture – you know, if you were a Count you hired the best orchestra or the best composer because you wanted to show off and that’s still the case. So, it’s only one element. It’s definitely not on the forefront but it’s still something that’s important and some countries are better at it and other countries are not as good at it. We are very good at it because we have a long tradition, you know, only sometimes we rely on that tradition and don’t see what’s going on in the moment. I was for many years in the Kunstlerbeirat and the Musikbeirat of the Goethe Institute. So what we did was basically approving of all of the projects that Goethe sent around the world, all the programming of all the different Goethe Institutes all around the world, and the discussion was always, you know, is it something, well, there was no discussion of the old heroes. But there were always very interesting discussions about what was going on at the moment, and what are people outside of Germany, how do people outside of Germany see Germany through the music? So, what are they interested in? And, jazz was always very important because jazz musicians were able to actually to enter into communication with musicians from other countries so it was a very communicative music, but the stuff that, especially in non-European countries, the audience was interesting in had nothing to do with jazz and classical music. It was techno, it was electronic music, it was electronic dance music. Stuff like that. And they really wanted to have the DJs over there. German DJs. Germany is the most innovative in that aspect. I
had no idea because I am much too old for that, and I don’t really know what your question was.

RS: I’m just sort of letting it flow, because this is all interesting. I mean, we can get to the subject, but this is also stuff I wanted to talk to you about anyway and get your impressions on.

WK: What we talked about what, where is the difference between the European big band and the American big band and I started to just ramble about, you know, the competition and the market, that it not only has to do with music but it also has to do with the structure. So, there. I’m trying to think. There was some American book that looked at the European, I forgot what it was…looked at European jazz and didn’t even get that the structures are different. You know, for a non-European, either for other Europeans to understand that France has a different political system than Germany. We, you know, being a federal state.

RS: Or how even politicians are elected, the whole process.

WK: Yes! Or that, you know, why we have radio big bands….

RS: And more than any other place.

WK: …and how the radio…that has to do with how the radio is financed in Germany, which is by a tax, which does not [happen in] other countries. So all of these things take part in the fact there is a big band tradition, a radio big band tradition, or how somebody like Dieter Glawischnig changed, what was it called? The _Unterhaltungs und Tanzorchester des NDR into the NDR Big Band._

RS: Or the [Kurt] Edelhagen [Band] into the WDR.

WK: Yes. And [they] had, you know, an orchestra that for decades only played for
dances or accompanied *Schlagersänger*...[to] have that orchestra perform with Anthony Braxton.

RS: One of the reasons why I’m doing this in the first place is because, having been here for a long time and being aware of the structures, at least some of the structures, the different kinds, different nations, being where the jazz festival scene and the musicians, and the groupings and the composers, and then being in America, and New York and, yes, now in Miami, you find how little people there know about what’s going on over here. And, I’m sure here people know much more what’s going on in the States than vice versa, and, you know, part of what this is about is also to inform people in America, “Hey! This is all going on.”

WK: We still are, but actually, I’m more prone to say we once were engaged in a book project which never really saw publication, on the history of jazz in Europe in English, in the English language, because otherwise nobody will even know that it’s there, so, and this…I just talked to Ekkard Jost the other day about this because he’s now, what he wrote probably the best book about European jazz coming into its own, *Europas Jazz 1960-1980*. It’s a wonderful book, you know, he analyzes exactly what’s happening. This book is not even quoted in the literature lists of American studies because people can’t read it because it’s in German. And so this is, you know, other musicologists...when I studied musicology, there was no excuse whatsoever. If a book was in Chinese and it was on the subject you were working on, you had to be able to read it. Even if you sat there for months translating it, you know, with a dictionary, that was mandatory, so the fact that even authors, even American, well, it’s not only American authors, but it’s mostly American authors, you know, not only don’t they have any interest in what’s going on
over here, but even if they write about it, they turn to cliché, to their cliché knowledge and they don’t even feel guilty, that they don’t even know, they don’t even say, “Oh, there’s something written out there but unfortunately I can’t read it.” They will not even acknowledge that there is anything written out there. So it’s …you got me going now…

RS: [Laughs] No problem.

WK: I did this, I had, well I had my gig at Columbia University. I did a course on Jazz in Europe, and what it was about was the diversity of European jazz and what it also was about was to explain that diversity means something very different in America than it means in Europe. Because whereas as an American you have diversity within one’s society; in Europe, diversity always reflects back to all of those nation states and the structures that are still alive.

RS: Again, I think the one piece that I found that really delves into that is Bill Bares’ doctoral work. And he deals also on the political elements and also on the dynamics – that it is not a static situation, that it’s constantly changing depending on who’s doing what. David Ake also has some insight into that as well. And, you know, the only other book, and it’s in German, was the Lindenblatt book, which starts trying to put German, just talking about German big band music in the context. There’s some stuff about the book that’s ok, and some stuff, trying to define jazz and trying to make a difference between a big band and a jazz orchestra is just a waste of time, in my opinion. And I think that has to do with whoever was his advisor, requiring that, that’s just, spinning your wheels for no good reason. At this point, you know, if you’re putting doctoral work out, some things you just have to take, you don’t have to explain everything to everybody. Yeah, but apart from that, there’s a huge divide still.
WK: So I mean it’s not always…I always bring this example up: it still happens to me to this day, that I talk to the States and talk to somebody and tell them, “Yeah, I work at the Jazzinstitut Darmstadt” and they say, “Yeah, I hear you have so much good jazz over there, and a couple of years ago I went on a, I was in Italy for vacation and I heard such a great jazz band. They played just like Chet Baker.” So, and what they think is, that they heard European jazz and it has nothing to do with it. They heard a European jazz band playing American jazz. The idea of jazz being this productive idiom that will allow you to bring in your own cultural identity, which might be completely different, and make something out of it, this idea is, and I think it is unfortunately lost on many Americans, for some reason. Well, let’s put it that way, on many of the American layman or fans. Musicians should know better. Musicians may be pissed about what’s going on here musicwise because it sounds so different, that they feel that, you know, some, well, the musicians not usually, but some of the European critics lose the respect of the African American tradition that’s behind the music. So you sometimes get that. But musicians should know better because they listen. But then I’ve also met a lot of musicians who simply say, “What’s being played there has no soul. It doesn’t talk to me, it doesn’t have the blues.” And of course it doesn’t. How should it? So, it will sound different, you might not be able to like it, and that’s cool. You know, I don’t like everything that’s being played out there but as long as I feel it’s serious…

RS: Well, not all American jazz is great.

WK: Well, definitely, no. So, yes it always boils down to a problem of terminology, that you think you say, “Jazz” and everybody knows what it is, and of course it isn’t, because it’s more an approach, a musical approach than it is a genre, but definitely not a stylistic
definition.

RS: Not any more. I think it might have been at one time.

WK: It never was a stylistic, it was always was a genre definition but it’s, very early on it became more of an approach. So if you play jazz that means you’re open to try things and you will, people says it’s about improvisation but it’s more about, today it’s more about experimentation, it’s about, “Let’s see where we can go if we come from [this place]”, it’s more of a conversation that’s going on, where you’re open enough to let the other person speak from time to time.

RS: Changing the subject for a second: there’s also perhaps one of things like this, it’s more of unifying pattern, or it could be depending on how it’s instituted – jazz education, has been becoming more and more formalized in Europe as it has been here in the States for a number of years. Do you think that might be leading to more homogenization of approaches to jazz?

WK: That’s a different world. Homogenization – you mean between global?

RS: Yes.

WK: I don’t know.

RS: For example, University of Mainz – the head…

WK: Jesse Milliner.

RS: Yes, Jesse Milliner got a doctorate from the University of Miami from Gary Lindsay. He teaches the Gary Lindsay approach. He emphasizes, jazz labs, history and all that.

And, you know, certain technical approaches were, we’re getting to a point of at least parity in terms of technical facility and knowledge over more and more diffuse harmonic and rhythmic approaches to the music.
WK: Well, yes and no. On the one hand what you’re saying is true and actually Mainz is a good example because it’s very different from the other Musikhochschulen here in Germany since Jesse’s there and Sebastian Sternal, he’s a pianist who’s a professor there and he also, I think he was at the Manhattan School of Music. And the same holds true for some of the Dutch, for the some of the Dutch schools where I have a feeling it’s not so different – the Hague, it’s not so different from how American schools probably would approach jazz education.

RS: Not only that, they employ a lot of Americans there.

WK: Yes, that’s true, yeah. And on the other hand what can a school do? They can teach you, they can teach you the trade. You can learn the tools of the trade but what happens if you’ve done it, you want to be an artist and you want to play and you want to make your mark? And you want to be different. So there you go. So the moment your artistic vision steps in, you will probably always have to rely on where you come from, on your cultural background, on the cultural idiom that you know best, that you were born into. And that for some would be the blues, and for others it will be folk music, and for others it will be contemporary composition, and for others it will be, you know, wherever they come from so there will always be a difference in thinking, even though you learn the same. I mean, I speak English and I can usually myself understood, but the thought process, you know, everything behind it of course is being informed by who I am, where I came from, what my parents did, you know…

RS: Cultural associations.

WK: …Yes. And another thing that I was thinking about earlier when you said one of the reasons why you’re doing what your doing is to also let Americans know about
It’s also always good to have an outsider look at...one of the best papers on the European free jazz development was a paper that George Lewis did, who knew a lot about, of course, that scene but who’s an outsider. I’m involved in an initiative to document the black music history of Charleston, South Carolina, of all places, so I’ve traveled there a couple of times and I always thought, “What am I going to do here? I don’t really know anything about that place.” And, until I learned that I’m actually able to give them a lot of good insights because I’m an outsider.

RS: And you’re not burdened by the history.

WK: I’m not at all burdened by the history, so, it’s, I know enough but I’m also able to look at what they want to do from an outside perspective, and not just from a Northerner perspective, but actually a European perspective, you know a different scholarly perspective. So the outsider might be able to see different connections. The outsider might be able to voice things that the insider might never be able to voice. This is part. There is this other example of Andrew Hurley. Have you ever heard of Andrew Hurley?

RS: No.

WK: He’s an Australian who wrote his Ph.D. about Jochen Ernst Berendt.

RS: Oh! Interesting.

WK: And this book came out, and I was like, “Shit! Why did no German write about it?” But that was not possible, because we are all, you know, in his shadow and he really analyzed all the different connections that Berendt had, you know, the different perspectives he took to music and his different involvements in the music, and how they connected to each other. And that was much easier for an outsider than it would have been for an insider.
RS: Yes! That makes sense. That’s what I’m trying to bring to this, because I’m both an insider and outsider to both cultures.

WK: Yes. You need to be an insider as well to actually understand the connotations.

RS: I think that might also be why David Ake and Bill Bares are successful, because they’re have their feet in both worlds as well. Bill Bares was in Berlin for quite a while. David Ake was in Paris for quite a while. You also know that book, I forget who wrote it, *The Jazz Exiles*?

WK: That was Bill Moody.

RS: Bill Moody, right.

WK: And he’s the one that I was talking about, he had no idea about Europe. Because [he says] everything wrong about structures. He does the worst mistake, I mean, blame it on his editor, the worst mistake that you could do as an American author writing about European jazz is to write Albert Mangelsdorff’s name wrong. To spell – he basically spelt every more difficult name wrong.

RS: That’s true in that book, yeah.

WK: And he doesn’t understand that a radio big band in Denmark is differently built than a radio big band in Germany.

RS: But, are you talking that book, or a different…

WK: Yes, I’m talking about that book…If you’re an American author and you want to write about European jazz, you want to make a point, and you’re ok and the focus is American exiles. But he didn’t do the basic work of looking at what structures are they actually moving in and how are these structures in these different countries are different, so he just thinks, “Yeah, these Americans…” I’m exaggerating, “…these American
musicians are moving to this country Europe.” No, that’s not a country!

RS: Most of the people he was talking with lived in Paris.

WK: But he also has this…Denmark…and then, you know, he starts to…I only remember this vaguely, it’s been a long time. But that was a book where I just thought, “This is wrong. You didn’t do your homework.” And if you didn’t understand that, how can you even talk about them living there, because you don’t even…if you only write about the exile community, but you don’t really know what they moved into, or what they are moving into, because they are not just living in exile, they are also living in another community.

RS: I think Hennesey did better with *Klook*, and putting him in perspective.

WK: Well his book is biography, so that was easier to do than…

RS: More analytical approach, yes. David Ake was also, he went over and he had some interesting talks about the American vs. European jazz as well. At the, I guess the Rhythm Changes conference, which is now completed.

WK: No, they still have one more to go, I believe.

RS: In my interview with Norma Winstone, she basically intimated it’s a false choice, it’s a political, as opposed to an actual divide. I mean, she was arguing basically that she never really even thought of the music she was doing was jazz, and, whoever was doing it, she did it, she enjoyed it out of the love of the music.

WK: I think you know the young musicians, it’s, that’s also a debate of the past. The young musicians are looking at the music completely different, they are, you know, they connect through the internet. There will always be a divide between what…to simplify – more blues influenced music and less blues-influenced music, and blues-influenced
music will always be American, and the less blues-influenced music will always be European. And that is simply because it’s a long tradition, so that is not something you just, you learn as a tradition, you learn the moves.

RS: Well, yes, the other thing that might make that slightly less a point of argument these days is, first of all, the huge influx of European musicians in, for example, New York, or, you know, coming into contact with this. A lot of them get to play with blues-based musicians on the one hand, and, secondly, because of internationalization, YouTube and all that, people here have access to that and can choose, choose to play that kind of music and do it so it sounds pretty, you know, I mean that then you get into an argument about…

WK: But that’s exactly what I meant. There’s a difference between, “Sounds pretty much” and you actually grew up in a community where this had a function. And I’m not even talking about black communities, but simply being American, you grew up in communities which function differently than over here. The music has a different function. I wouldn’t be able to define those functions, but there is a difference. The musicians, you’re absolutely right about European musicians in New York. But they are not European musicians anymore, most of them.

RS: Unless they come back here after a certain point.

WK: Yes. That’s kind of interesting. What do they do if they come back? And when I talk about blues-influenced, I would even consider somebody like Anthony Braxton to be blues-influenced. There is an African-American aesthetic that you, it’s very hard to pinpoint, but that is there in his approach to improvisation and in his approach to certain things. And that makes it different, so, yes. And, and but it’s difficult, because you start
to pigeonhole personal styles and you start, it’s so, you know, it’s the melody of

Schubladendenker.

RS: Right. The pigeonholing.

WK: You know, [about different people] he’s black, he’s American, he’s European, he’s German. I tried, and that never worked.

RS: Also it doesn’t really leave room for the individual to develop their own voice. You start getting too far into that.

WK: On the other hand, you know, it was…clichés are nice things, because clichés are usually the extremes. When I taught in New York, I think the first thing I asked my students was, “Well, do you know any European musicians, European jazz musicians?” and, I think one knew Django Reinhardt, and there was, basically nothing, and then a girl said, “Yeah, I know, I think he comes from Switzerland, he lives in the neighborhood and he’s a jazz musician.” So they were looking in New York, did they know anybody in New York who played, and then somebody came up, actually I forgot who it was, what is this clarinet player from Israel who lives in New York?


WK: Yes. Came up with her and so on and so forth. And then we tried to see what, what do they play? Would you consider them to be…and that’s the big thing about America, you would actually consider them to be American musicians, even American musicians consider them to be American musicians because America is a country of immigrants. So it’s much easier to blend in, and it’s about, “Do you want to blend in?” if as a European musician you come over and you say, “Okay, I want to be a part of this,” you will be accepted as that.
RS: Joe Zawinul is a great example. You know, he came in and nobody really said, “Oh, that Austrian guy.” They said, “Oh, the guy who plays with Cannonball,” or “with Weather Report”.

WK: Yes. And, you know, to look at a younger import – Ingrid Laubrock.

RS: I don’t know her.

WK: German musician who lived, who used to live in London, started a career in London. Then moved over to Brooklyn. Is married to Tom Rainey, drummer. And now plays with everybody but is mostly in the avant-garde scene. She was the big thing in England, she was part of the Fire Collective in England, and was considered an English musician, basically. She got the, I don’t know, British “blah-blah-blah” Prize, an award, and then she moved to the States and now she’s being considered an American musician, touring and playing with Anthony Braxton all the time. She’s basically in his quintet and, but you know, and I’m picking her as an example because she’s part of an avant-garde scene which is usually more transcontinental than the more straight-ahead, mainstream oriented musicians, where you very easily can say, “Okay, he’s American.” Florian Ross is doing more of a European approach, you know, but in these avant-garde circles, since the 1960’s it was always an international thing, but somehow, it isn’t. It’s, I don’t know.

RS: Well, one of my secondary theses is when the avant-garde came on the scene, you know, Ornette Coleman and Anthony Braxton and Art Ensemble of Chicago – it freed European musicians from having to stay in the American mold. It freed them from having to swing, freed them from having to have form.

WK: Absolutely.

RS: Even though there were European musicians who did that exceptionally well. And
we tend to forget that there were some really amazing European musicians who were working all the time with American musicians, you know, just for one example: you know the old Wes Montgomery recording, that video when he’s in Holland and Han Bennink is the drummer and that band’s great! That trio is great. That Europe, we tend to forget that European musicians could, or you know, the Francy Boland band. Okay, there were a lot of American musicians there, but there were French, well, I don’t how many French [musicians] there were, but there were all these British musicians, you know, Francy was Belgian, and all that. But it just made it easier for more musicians to find their way and find their own voice and be okay with not having to sound like an American.

WK: There was a precedent in that. About fifteen years earlier, in the early 1950’s, when a lot of young European musicians first started to, or tried to grasp the modern jazz idiom bebop. And there is a Swedish saxophonist who once said, “We embraced cool jazz when it came over, when we first heard Lennie Tristano and Lee Konitz and Warne Marsh.” We embraced that because it was easier for us than the bebop. Because it was linear and it had these counterpuntal things that we knew from the European traditions…

RS: Or Chet Baker and Gerry Mulligan?

WK: No. Mostly…because he specifically talks about Lennie Tristano. It was not as complex rhythmically – that was the hardest thing for them. It was not as complex rhythmically so they embraced that simply because it was mostly linear and melodically, melody-oriented. Mulligan, Baker, that’s a different story because that again is about, especially Baker is about sound, so that’s a completely different…that’s again something very American, you know, having your own sound on your instrument. European
musicians only learned that slowly.

RS: But they didn’t have a chordal instrument.

WK: Yes, that’s true. But, you know, especially because it also didn’t sound that modern. Tristano, that was like, ultra-modern. You have to be really fast. You have to play those lines and then this countrapuntal improvisation, and it really has to fit, it has to be improvisation. So, all of those things, so you feel like, you’re a young musician, you really want to play modern jazz, you listen to Charlie Parker records and, you know, “No way!” And it’s not only because he plays too fast, but it’s also because you don’t really know what’s going on with all of those inner rhythmic things within his melody, you know, and [with the Tristano school] you know exactly and this is not. And plus, it’s all, its everything is connected to the blues. And plus, it’s rhythmically so complex. And this and that and that. So, they were, I think they were, the guy, I think his name was Gustav Sevasius [?] who said that, he said, “We were really happy when we turned to meet Lennie Tristano when it came because we felt that we were in, we couldn’t master the bebop idiom.”

RS: How influential was that? Because at the end of the day, it has to do with who was able to influence who. Was that influential at that point or was it later that this approach became influential?

WK: Lennie Tristano was highly influential. In Germany, in Sweden, let’s see, who else, I mean Hans Koller, his son is called Lee.

RS: Oh, really?

WK: So, you know, Albert, Albert Mangelsdorff was influenced by that at the beginning and it took him a while, actually, to get rid of that. The Swedes did that a lot, so, that was
very influential. And for a lot of musicians. I mean, I’m trying to think, even Michael Norba’s [?] quintet in the 50’s. So 1950’s jazz because they all couldn’t play, you know, they didn’t have the drummers so they couldn’t really play hard bop and then some drummers came along. And a drummer came along who was actually able to play what you needed to play hard bop, and everybody was happy, because they could try something else. But it all lived and died with the drummers. So, yeah. It was kind of difficult is my guess.

RS: Talking about the influential guys on the drumming scene had to be Kenny Clarke because he started teaching, at least in France, all the drummers how to play properly, at least bebop.

WK: Yes. And here it probably was, I mean, here it was of course the American Army musicians, you know. There were so many that…Yeah, the avant-garde, of course that free musicians, the concept of free jazz and the conscious misunderstanding of the word, “Free” in there, you know, to say, “It’s not just about being free, but it’s also being free of tradition. Not only being free of jazz traditions, but also being free of American traditions and I can finally do something out of my own traditions.” That was at least, at least in the subconsciousness, definitely present for a lot of musicians. And then, that, to a lot of nonsense in thinking, where musicians at one point, this is the late 60’s-early 70’s, disassociated themselves from those traditions and called their music differently, so “let’s not call it jazz anymore because that just makes people expect something that we won’t be able to play, that we don’t want to play. But let’s call it ‘Improvised Music’” and the idea of somebody like Derrick Bailey, the guitar player, to talk about “non-idiomatic music” and get away from the burdens that any idiom that you are associated
with, could have what people expect you to play and what you expect you, yourself to play. So let’s try non-idiomatic music, let’s try to get away from those traditions. It was important, it sometimes gets a little ridiculous, but then, you know, parts of any history, but especially art history, needs to be ridiculous, you need to go those ways, you need to go those roads. Third-stream needed to be tried out in the 1960’s but [proved to] be a cul-de-sac, a Sackgasse.

RS: We say, a “cul-de-sac.”

WK: It needed to be so that the case later, when actually there were enough musicians from all sides who were able to play both could actually do something interesting with it. But you first have to think in those directions.

RS: As far as Third Stream goes, just again as a side, wasn’t Stan Kenton first with that with his Innovations [Orchestra]?

WK: I think…yes and no. I mean, then, you would say Paul Whiteman was first with it [Laughs] with his Concert of Modern Music in the 1920’s. So, yes and no because the real, you know, the moment when Third Stream came up, Stan Kenton never experimented with modern composition.

RS: Neophonic…

WK: Yeah, but that was not, that was not the discourse of the moment. That was the discourse of the 1920’s, composition-wise. That was a discourse of the 1920’s and earlier.

RS: Also “City of Glass?”

WK: Yes, that had nothing, that’s all harmonic music, that is not post-serial. So, the idea of Third Stream was, “Let’s see where we are standing at the moment, composition-wise,
what’s being discussed in the whole field of contemporary composition, what’s being discussed at the moment in the field of contemporary improvisation. Let’s see…” That’s more, not even John Lewis did that, so, but, Gunther Schuller did it and some other composers…

RS: George Russell, maybe did it?

WK: George Russell did it a little bit and…I just had the wonderful chance to dive into Eric Dolphy’s *Out to Lunch*, the voices that he actually wrote. It was a lot of fun. And the funny thing is, that’s kind of interesting, but the funny thing is he, in that Eric Dolphy collection, he really, he knew a lot of stuff! He knew a lot about, he was interested in the discourse that was taking place at the moment, and that discourse informed his playing, that discourse informed his way of composing. There’s in the Dolphy collection there’s a version of “Gazzeloni,” of this flute piece that he did for string quartet and flute and rhythm section!” And so you exactly know, okay, so this was not actually written for *Out to Lunch*, but was written for an event before, probably for some Third Stream concert in New York, where he did those things all the time. And Eric Dolphy could actually do it. He’s one of the first Third Stream musicians that there ever was, because he could play Bach suites and all the other stuff, which is also in that collection, you know. He has all those transcriptions. He could play everything. So, but there were very few musicians who were so versatile on their instruments, who could actually change genres just like that. And, but it’s not about being able to play, but being at home in the different discourses, and that’s happened. Today, you find a lot of musicians who are “bilingual” in the discourses of, you know, contemporary classical music, or whatever that is, and, jazz, and hip-hop, and, you know, whatever. You find that much more than you did in the
‘60’s, but, that was the beginning of it, where people actually tried it out and most of the results sound somewhat forced.

RS: Herbolzheimer? I mean, he spent time in Detroit. He was influenced by American music quite a bit. When he came [back] over, he was introducing rock rhythm-section instrumentation.

WK: I mean, he’s the, that’s what I said earlier. With Herbolzheimer, you will always, there will always be groove there. No matter what he does, it’s groove oriented. That’s why American musicians loved to play with him. I mean, I heard those “Jazz Gala” concerts that he did in the ‘70’s. That was in Hamburg and he played with Stan Getz and Bob Brookmeyer, and Blue Ashlip Phillips [?], and Gerry Mulligan and I think Clark Terry was on one, and it fit, because, and there was another, there also was another…more pop-oriented guy, I forgot, was it a guitarist. It was not George Benson but somebody…But it fit because he knew that he was able to provide that groove that fit behind them and…

RS: Even though he was using European musicians a lot?

WK: Yes.

RS: So he kind of trained them in an American approach?

WK: Well, those were the big bands’ musicians who knew how to do that. He knew how to write it and he knew, he, it…have you heard these “Jazz Gala” records?

RS: I’ve heard parts of them, yes. And as a, you know, I played in different big bands here and I played a number of Herbolzheimer charts. Although Rob Pronk wrote a lot later on.

WK: So they were pretty well, and, I’m trying to think…did I ever, when I went to those
concerts, was that for me a European band? I went to those concerts mostly because of the American stars, I admit. But I still remember the sound of, I actually mostly remember the sound of Peter Herbolzheimer’s arrangements. So I do remember Albert Mangelsdorff playing a solo, and otherwise I hear in my head, the memory I have, “Oh yeah, Gerry Mulligan played,” but I hear the Herbolzheimer arrangements, I hear those grooves. So, yes, that’s what he learned, what he probably learned in the States. And I never really listened to his, I’m...have you ever had the chance to listen to the music that he wrote for the Olympic Games in 1972?

RS: No.

WK: I would. I’m sure that that’s, I have the feeling somewhere in the back of my head, I have the feeling as if I listened to parts of it once and it sounds very odd. So he wrote something for the Olympic Games and Dieter Reith, and Kurt Edelhagen, those were the three arrangers. They wrote the big show at the beginning, the opening ceremony. They wrote the music for that. It sounds really, well it’s supposed to be very popular, and it is very popular. And it’s definitely not Herbolzheimer, it’s very different. He has to write very commercial there. But it’s kind of interesting to know that he…

RS: But he did write a lot of commercial stuff, didn’t he? He was kind of an arranger for everything.

WK: Yes. But with the other stuff I was never aware it was by Herbolzheimer, so I didn’t know about that.

RS: And then of course his creation of the Bujazzo.

WK: That’s just very, I mean, that was very fortunate. And somehow Herbolzheimer wasn’t really a German musician, in a way. He was always considered to be
somebody…he has more of an, I would say, an American jazz persona. So it’s like you would never consider Jiggs Whigham to be German because he isn’t, and (b) he makes sure to keep that American atmosphere, that American approach alive in whatever he does. If he does a workshop, if he leads the Bujazzo, and Herbolzheimer did that, too. He had…whereas, if, you know, whereas somebody like, of course it’s a completely different band, but Mathias Rüegg – that always was a European band! And that was a European approach and that was, you know, Jiggs, he…[Ruegg’s] Vienna Art Orchestra. So that was…you would never have the idea of him being not European.

RS: Right. Yeah, especially with a name like, Vienna Art Orchestra. By the way, the RCB – was that modeled after Rob McConnell’s group?

WK: I don’t really know why he did that. I don’t know what that was modeled on…plus he did have, whenever I heard them, they did have Herb Geller played in there a lot, so they had one or two saxophones in there.

RS: Well, Rob McConnell always brought in more and more reeds as he was going on. And you know, the brass, because he was a trombone player as well.
APPENDIX C – COMPOSITIONS

1. The Turn
2. Poinsettia
3. Cadence
CADENCE
CADENCE
CADENCE

[Musical notation image]
APPENDIX D - SCORES

1. Peter Herbolzheimer – “Blues in Latin”
2. George Gruntz – “General Cluster”
5. Florian Ross – “Prickly Pear”
BLUES
IN LATIN

MUSIC & ARR. P.H.
'BLUES IN LATIN

TEMPO ♩♩ = ህ 136

INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE HONORABLE CONDUCTOR

*Blues in Latin* has all throughout the chart a 12/8 latin feeling. C-flute/piccolo is an additional part. If there is no 6th woodwind available, which is probably the normal case, one of the tenor players should see, if he can include the part bei switching around. The piccolo part would sound good on intro (and all analog places), c-flute would add to the sound at D.

There are also two guitar parts, if there’s only one player, he should play the essential lines, for example the melody at A. At the same place 4th trumpet plays the theme definitly open, at least one alto sax should play along (all saxes come in at the repeat), so that the melody comes nice and strong. C is open for one or more soloists, giving cue each time for his last chorus. Since the following D is woodwind feature the last soloist in C shouldn’t be a saxophone.

F is drums or percussion solo, then back to segno (don’t repeat bars 9–12). Bar 9 and 10 only piano, 11 and 12 the entire rhythm section.

The one bar before last could be extended for four counts, should the horns have enough chops and sufficient air.

Please make sure that the entire piece stays in a latin groove, drums and bass sometimes have the tendency to slide into a sort of disco feel, which would be a pity. Everything else should be in the score and up to your personal taste.

Peter Herbolzheimer

*Recorded on Latin Groove and 20 Years RC & B*

composed and arranged by Peter Herbolzheimer
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GG Concert Jazz Band
produced by EURENUSIC-SWITZERLAND, CH-4106 Thenwil

GENERAL CLUSTER

COMPOSED BY:
GEORGE GRUNITZ

LYRICS BY:
(MAJORIZED)

ARRANGED BY:
GEORGE GRUNITZ

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**Piano:**
- Dm9(13)
- Eb11
- Gb9(13)
- C/E9
- Fb9
- Fb9
- Bb9(13)

**Cello:**
- Dm9(13)
- Eb11
- Gb9(13)
- C/E9
- Fb9
- Fb9
- Bb9(13)

**Bass:**
- Dm9(13)
- Eb11
- Gb9(13)
- C/E9
- Fb9
- Fb9
- Bb9(13)

**Drums:**
- C/E9
- Fb9
- Fb9
- Bb9(13)
Solos for gtr, and/or voice and/or bass
The Speedcouch
v1.3

Fast and funny

Komponistbingen 2001