# The Effect of Outside Genres on Techniques and Devices in Modern Jazz Composition (1988-2008)

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#### **Abstract**

This is a study involving research, analysis and performance of music composed by jazz artists in the last twenty years. The focus of this discussion will be on the influence of several outside genres on the music of these jazz composers. In particular it will examine transcriptions of works by composers including Dave Holland, John Scofield, Hiromi Uehara, Nils Wogram, Christian McBride, Bill Frisell, Kenny Garrett and Pat Metheny. The analysis of these transcriptions will examine the devices the composers have used such as counterpoint, harmony, rhythm, instrumentation, melody, time signatures, form et al. and assess how any outside genres may have affected these devices. Furthermore the analysed compositions will be performed in a recital setting, as well as a portfolio of compositions written by myself using the techniques gathered from my analysis.

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#### Chapter 1: History

Jazz has always been influenced by other genres; this is the nature of the music itself. First there was the amalgamation of African rhythms and melody, the blues and western European harmony that birthed the music. Since its conception, jazz has historically and categorically taken elements of other genres and mixed them with its own. Jazz took Broadway show tunes and made them into jazz standards. Juan Tizol inserted the 'Spanish tinge' into the Duke Ellington Orchestra with his compositions 'Caravan' and 'Perdido', thereby popularising an amicable relationship between jazz and 'Latin' music that continues to this day. The Modern Jazz Quartet took aspects of classical and baroque music and applied them to the jazz aesthetic. Charles Mingus further explored the African aspects of jazz and used elements of the music of western Africa in much of his work, culminating in the epic masterwork The Black Saint and the Sinner Lady. Chick Corea has often incorporated elements of Spanish music into his work, as can be observed in 'La Fiesta' or 'Spain'. Miles Davis was instrumental in bringing elements of rock music into the jazz mainstream and starting the jazzrock fusion craze. Herbie Hancock's Head Hunters group took ideas from soul, funk and rhythm and blues artists such as Sly and the Family Stone, Parliament-Funkadelic and James Brown and mixed them with jazz. John McLaughlin,

among others, managed to successfully create a fusion between jazz and Indian music.

These are just a few examples of the countless instances of outside influences in jazz music. Obviously jazz is a musical style that is particularly well suited to the incorporation of outside musical elements into its language. This is because of the improvisatorial aspects fundamental to the genre. There is an abundance of openness or 'space' in jazz rhythm, harmony, melody and texture that allows for the incorporation of outside genre elements. In this study we will analyse modern jazz compositions in an effort to discern ways in which elements of outside genres have been applied to the jazz genre.

There are two reasons for focusing on a specific period of 'modern jazz'. The first is obvious. In the last twenty years the world has undergone significant changes. The most important of these with regard to the amalgamation of different musical genres is the advent of the Internet. This amazing invention has opened the world up, communicatively speaking, and this has contributed no end to the blending of different musical genres. Everything is available to you at the click of a button; if you want to hear Chinese music, examples of it are instantly available to you online. If you want to collaborate on a recording with an Indonesian Gamelan player, it is possible to locate one online and email a recording. They can then record their part and send it back to you. Consequently,

there has recently been a rising influence of outside genres in jazz because they are so much more accessible than they were in the past.

The other reason for limiting the scope of this research to music from the last twenty years is how broad the subject matter would be if the entire history of jazz influences were studied.

Obviously, this branch of research is a massive one. It would be impossible to completely explore this avenue in one relatively small thesis. Hence this work should not be treated as a complete guide to the influence of outside genres on modern jazz composition; rather, it should be treated as an *introduction* to the effects of said genres on modern jazz compositions. There is certainly room for further research on the effects of each genre I have started researching, and also on genres that I haven't included in my research, many of which have had some impact on certain jazz compositions.

#### Chapter 2: Kenny Garrett

It would be incorrect to state that Kenny Garrett is the first jazz musician to incorporate Eastern influences into his compositional work. There have been several instances throughout the history of jazz of Eastern-influenced sounds and ideas being incorporated into the music. Duke Ellington's 1967 album The Far East Suite is a great example of this. Dewey Redman made use of the Chinese suomo, an oboe-like double-reeded traditional Chinese instrument. John Handy made much-lauded landmark recordings with the great tabla player Ali Akbar Khan. John Coltrane incorporated elements of both Indian music and Indian spirituality into his later work and was in the process of beginning a long period of tutorage with the famous sitar player and teacher Ravi Shankar. The Japanese American jazz-rock fusion band Hiroshima successfully blended elements of Japanese music, first with rhythm and blues and fusion, and later with a more 'smooth jazz' sound. Anthony Brown, whose father American/African American and mother was Japanese, is one of the musicians most associated with the so-called Asian American jazz movement. His crosscultural ensemble Anthony Brown's Asian American Orchestra blends traditional Japanese instruments and musical ideas with jazz, often reworking jazz standards into a more Eastern sound. In the year 2000 the Orchestra was nominated for a Grammy for Best Large Jazz Ensemble Performance for their incredible reworking of the aforementioned *Far East Suite*. John McLaughlin's pioneering work with both the Mahavishnu Orchestra and Shakti still stands as some of the most important and successful fusions of Eastern and Western musical traditions. Yusuf Lateef has often incorporated various Eastern influences into his music, from timbral choices such as bamboo flutes and shanai to eastern scales. Obviously the exotic aspects of the music of the east have caused it to become a popular choice of an outside genre to be applied to jazz. However, it *is* correct to state that Garrett has recently begun to incorporate the aforementioned influences into his work to an extent worthy of in depth study.

Garrett's interest in Asian music and culture began when he was eighteen, when the Duke Ellington Orchestra, of which Garrett was a member at the time, toured Japan. He was intrigued by the culture, an interest which was further enhanced when he later returned as a member of Miles Davis's band. The influence of Asian music in his compositional work has been steadily increasing ever since, culminating in 2006's *Beyond The Wall*.<sup>1</sup>

Garrett has been quoted as saying that on *Beyond The Wall* he wanted to make a spiritual connection between African and Chinese culture.<sup>2</sup> Garrett uses a variety of musical approaches to help create this connection. Because he tends to focus on one or two of these approaches per composition, it will be most

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Richard C. Anderson, 'Kenny Garrett Keeps Energy High', available from http://www.jazzreview.com/articledetails.cfm?ID=1426; accessed 26 May 2009.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> 'Kenny Garrett: Beyond The Wall', available from http://www.nonesuch.com/albums/beyond-the-wall; accessed 26 May 2009.

effective in this analysis to itemize the approaches and show examples of each as opposed to trying to find all the approaches in one work.

#### **Voicings and Harmony**

One technique Garrett employs to apply the influence of Asian music to his compositions is using voicings and harmony derived from and evoking Chinese folk music. For example in *Beyond The Wall*'s 'Kiss to the Skies' the Chinese influence is achieved by the way he voices both the piano part and the melody. The piece starts with the piano playing a 'bass' part in the left hand voiced in fifths. The melody is played by alto saxophone and the piano's right hand, which includes a lower harmony to the melody voiced in fourths.



Both fifths and fourths are common harmonies in Chinese music, as a result of its use of the major pentatonic scale. If you were to play, for example, the C major pentatonic ascending in thirds you would create the following intervals: Major third, Perfect fourth, Perfect fourth, Perfect fourth.



If you were to play the C major pentatonic ascending in fourths you would create the following intervals: Perfect fifth, Perfect fifth, Minor sixth, Perfect fifth, Perfect fifth.



The actual melody of 'Kiss to the Skies' itself, however, is built around the common western seven-note major scale (in this case, Db major). The implied harmony created by the above piano voicings is also typical of a western approach to harmony. The harmony in the 'A' section illustrates this point well. Here Garrett has written four bars of Bbmin9 followed by four bars of Gbmaj9#11. This is basically a fleshed out version of the Vlmin to IV chord sequence, a harmonic movement that is popular in western music, particularly in the pop genre. This chord sequence is obviously one of Garrett's favourites, and can be found in many of his compositions. For example, in the popular Garrett tune 'November 15' from 1997's *Songbook*, the first four bars not only feature this chord sequence, they also feature it in the same key.

#### Melody

A common way in which Kenny Garrett applies his love of Chinese folk music to the jazz aesthetic is by writing a Chinese-inspired melody and applying it to rhythm and harmony influenced by the hard-hitting rhythm section of the

John Coltrane Quartet (McCoy Tyner, Jimmy Garrison and Elvin Jones). The fusing of these different elements predates Beyond the Wall by many years. The influence of Coltrane's quartet-era approach to jazz has been evident in Garrett's writing since exploring it in-depth on his 1996 recording Pursuance: The Music of John Coltrane. In fact, the influence of Coltrane is felt constantly throughout Beyond The Wall, and it is interesting to note that Garrett had originally planned to fill the piano chair on the album with long-time Coltrane sideman McCoy Tyner (this was prevented by a scheduling conflict).3 Besides the obvious timbral similarities, there is a less tangible quality on this recording which is extremely reminiscent of Coltrane: a sense of 'spirituality'. Beyond The Wall is steeped in the type of 'spiritual unleashing' so exemplified on many of Coltrane's later era recordings including the seminal albums A Love Supreme and Ascension. It is difficult to define an element such as 'spirituality', but it is undoubtedly an aspect that is present both in the aforementioned Coltrane work and Garrett's Beyond the Wall album. This is especially evident in the first two tracks on Beyond the Wall, 'Calling' and 'Beyond the Wall'. Spirituality is also an aspect of Eastern culture that both Garrett and Coltrane have a devoted interest to.

Let us analyse an example of this melodic approach. The piece 'Qing Wen' on *Beyond The Wall* is a prime example. After the rubato introduction, the rhythm section starts a quasi-latin feel, then one and a half bars of stop-time is

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> John Kelman, 'Beyond The Wall', 25 August 2006, available from http://www.allaboutjazz.com/php/article.php?id=22849; accessed 26 May 2009.

played before the alto and tenor saxophones commence the melody. This melody is extremely Chinese sounding in its melodic and rhythmic structure and execution. Comprised entirely of notes from the C minor pentatonic scale, the melody line evokes the perceived 'sound of China' to great effect.



The track 'Tsunami Song', also from *Beyond The Wall*, features a slightly different approach to the technique of applying a pentatonic-based melody to more traditional jazz harmony. In this piece Garrett has chosen to write a melody comprised entirely of notes from the G major/E minor pentatonic scale.



Although there are no proper voiced chords as such, the harmony implied by the combination of the moving piano part and the melody is more complex than the melody alone would suggest. This is especially evident in bars 13 to 15. The previous 12 bars feature harmony derived from an E minor key centre. In bar 13, however, the bass note becomes an F natural, a radical departure from the previous diatonic harmony. After analysing the melody notes and the moving piano part we can see a G sus2 formed on top of an underlying F5 sound. Bar 14 contains a comparatively consonant G6/9 sound. Bar 15 again veers away from the diatonic key centre. It seems consonant until beat 2, where the piano plays an A major 3<sup>rd</sup> interval, or A and C#. If we put these three bars together in context we can see a pattern; the overall sound is one of major triads ascending in tones, starting from the minor 7<sup>th</sup> of the diatonic key centre.

#### **Timbre**

Another way in which we hear Chinese influence on *Beyond the Wall* is with timbre. An example of this is heard on the track 'Realisation: Marching Toward the Light'. This piece is built around a sample of a chant by a group of Tibetan Monks, instantly creating a timbral landscape of China on which to build the rest of the tune. The piece mostly consists of pianist Mulgrew Miller building an emotional and evocative solo around the sampled chant reminiscent of the

work of McCoy Tyner. Similarly, on 'Tsunami Song', Garrett employs the use of an Erhu (pronounced 'ar-hoo'), a bowed instrument that is considered to be one of the most prominent traditional Chinese instruments. Its timbre is very unique; it is similar in many respects to the violin but produces quite a different sound. This is due in part to the way the left hand fingers the two strings. Unlike the violin, the left hand of an erhu player does not pull the string to touch the neck; it merely touches the string to produce the sound. His use of the Erhu is accompanied in this tune by violin, cello and harp. The harp is especially important in this context as the sound of the plucking and the glissando flurries of notes are designed to imitate the traditional Chinese zither, the Qin or Guqin. Although traditionally the Qin was a solo instrument, being much too quiet to be performed in a group context, technological advances in sound amplification have meant that the Qin can now be performed not only in groups including other traditional Chinese instruments, but also as a solo instrument in large concert halls. This rising of the Qin from the studies of scholars to the forefront of traditional Chinese music has meant that the Qin's unique timbre is now, through its use in various media, one of the sounds we associate most with our idealised view of what Chinese music sounds like.

Garrett also uses wordless vocals on four of the tracks on *Beyond the Wall*. This technique is not typical of Chinese music per sé; but, placed in context with the aforementioned Tibetan chant, it has the effect of calling forth musical

images of China. On tracks three and four, 'Qing Wen' and 'Realisation (Marching Toward the Light)' respectively, Garrett employs just one of these vocalists, Nedelka Echols. On tracks six and eight, 'Kiss to the Skies' and 'Gwoka' respectively, he adds another five vocalists to Echols. These vocalists merely provide another sound and texture to the music; they never add a new particular melodic line or rhythmic idea, they just double lines that other instruments are already playing. They do, however, add yet another Chinese timbre to the music.

#### Chapter 3: Pat Metheny

Pat Metheny is arguably one of the most important jazz musicians of the last three decades. He has performed and recorded with an extremely diverse array of musicians including Gary Burton, Herbie Hancock, Milton Nascimento, Ornette Coleman and David Bowie. He has also won many awards including no less than 17 Grammy Awards. He has taught at the Berklee College of Music since the age of 19, making him the youngest teacher ever at the famous institution.<sup>4</sup>

Before we begin our analysis of the influence of outside genres on Metheny's composing, there are a few points to consider. The first regards Metheny's compositional relationship with Lyle Mays. Many of the pieces and examples we will be discussing are written in collaboration with Mays. For the ease of reading this chapter I will just refer to all compositions as being written by Metheny, whether or not they are co-written by Mays.

Another point to consider is the great influence of Ornette Coleman on Metheny's compositions. While Coleman's influence is definitely a valid and real one, and instrumental to understanding Metheny as a composer, for the purposes of *this* study we will not be dedicating a great deal of focus to it. This is because of the simple fact that Coleman operates within the jazz idiom; thus his

<sup>4 &#</sup>x27;Pat Metheny Biography', 2009, available from http://www.patmetheny.com/biography.cfm?artistid=1; accessed 2 June 2009.

influence cannot be said to be one of an outside genre. Nonetheless, there will likely be some discussion of his work and influence because of its importance in this context. It will be minimal, however, compared to the discussion of outside genres.

In this chapter we will analyse the way in which Metheny applies aspects of two influential genres to his compositions. The first section will focus on the influence of Brazilian music on Metheny's writing. The second section will focus on the influence of 'pop' music on Metheny's writing.

#### **Brazilian Music**

The connection between 'Latin' music and jazz has been a long and fruitful one. Its origins can be traced back as far as 1914, when the Jazz Band Sagua was founded in Sagua La Grande, Cuba.<sup>5</sup> In the following few decades many jazz bands were formed in Cuba but, for the most part, it seems these groups focused mainly on trying to recreate American-style jazz. It wasn't until the 1940s when the seminal bebop trumpeter Dizzy Gillespie met Cuban

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Giro Radamés, *Diccionario enciclopédico de la música en Cuba*, La Habana, 2007, vol. 2 p. 261.

trumpeter/saxophonist Mario Bauzá and percussionist Chano Pozo that a fusion of elements from Afro-Cuban and jazz music was born.<sup>6</sup>

The next important step in the history of 'Latin jazz' came in 1958 with João Gilberto's radical new approach to samba, first heard on his recording of *Chega de Saudade*, a work composed by Antonio Carlos Jobim with lyrics by Vinícius de Moraes. This new approach, later titled 'bossa nova', was about to turn the world on end. Bossa nova was 'a new type of samba in which the genre's rhythmic complexity had been pared down to its bare essentials, transformed into a different kind of beat'. It was 'full of unusual harmonies and syncopations, all expressed with a sophisticated simplicity'. Since the inception of this influential style, many jazz and Latin musicians have been striving to create new ways to fuse the two genres of music, with many interesting results.

To focus on Pat Metheny simply for including the influence of Brazilian music in his compositions would be foolish; many other composers have been doing this for decades, to great effect. However, it is worth devoting study to the way in which Metheny uses Brazilian elements in his compositions and the way in which he successfully fuses these elements, not just with the jazz aspects of his writing, but with the elements of popular or 'pop' music he also adds into his work.

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Ed Morales, *The Latin Beat: The Rhythms and Roots of Latin Music from Bossa Nova to Salsa and Beyond*, Da Capo Press, 2003, pp. 171-2.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> Chris McGowan and Ricardo Pessanha, *The Brazilian Sound: Samba, Bossa Nova, and the popular music of Brazil,* Philadelphia, Temple University Press, 1998, pp. 55-6.

#### **Timbre**

One technique Metheny has used to add Brazilian influences into his compositions is the use of Brazilian timbres in his recordings and performances. Take, for example, 'Better Days Ahead' from 1988's *Letter From Home*. One of the sounds first noticed is the very unique sound of the cuíca, a Brazilian percussion instrument. The cuíca is a drum with a membrane stretched across one end and a bamboo rod attached to the membrane at a perpendicular angle, running down the inside of the drum. Its unique sound is produced by the player rubbing the bamboo rod with a wet cloth with one hand while his other hand alters the pitch of the note by pressing against the membrane, adjusting the tension. The instrument is prevalent in a lot of Brazilian music, especially in samba, and is one of the most recognisable sounds associated with Brazil. 'Better Days Ahead' also features other typical Brazilian percussion instruments such as Agogô Bells, Pandiero and Caxixi.

Another timbre that Metheny uses to evoke Brazilian music is that of an acoustic guitar. Returning to 'Better Days Ahead', after the percussion introduction a nylon string acoustic guitar can be heard behind Metheny's electric guitar melody. The acoustic guitar is playing in the percussive style associated with João Gilberto's approach to samba and bossa nova.

#### **Rhythm**

Metheny's Brazilian music influence can also be identified by the use of Brazilian rhythms. Using the previous example of Letter From Home's 'Better Days Ahead', let us analyse its rhythmic feel. 'Better Days Ahead' borrows its rhythmic feel from one of Brazil's most famous and renowned types of music and dance, namely the samba. In the previous section we talked about some of the percussion instruments in 'Better Days Ahead' with regards to the timbral aspects they communicate. It is also relevant to discuss these instruments in this section as they are all integral parts of the overall rhythmic feel of samba. We can also see the influence of samba rhythm in the bass part. As with most Brazilian music. the accents in samba are on 1 and 3 in a double time feel. The bass player usually plays the root and fifth of the chord on 1 and 3 respectively, with an eighth note lead in to each. The eighth note is usually ghosted, being more of a rhythmic feature of the groove than a melodic feature. Another important rhythmic feature already discussed in the previous section is the acoustic guitar. This particular style of guitar is not typical of samba; rather it is a style of guitar generally credited to João Gilberto in an effort to recreate the samba groove as a whole entity on one instrument, the acoustic nylon string guitar. This is where Metheny starts to rhythmically blur the line between samba and bossa nova. While the percussion rhythms and the general feel of the bass line are indicative of samba, the style of guitar playing is more usual of the bossa nova genre. Another rhythmic aspect of the piece that is generally associated more with bossa nova than samba is the chord rhythms and 'hits'. If we analyse the relationship between the chord rhythms or hits and the melody rhythm we can see the way in which both aspects fit together. Again, this approach is more common in bossa nova than samba.

#### Harmony

Metheny has such widely varying approaches to harmony that it is difficult to pinpoint one approach and label it as being typical. His harmonic ideas vary from tune to tune; he is equally comfortable writing a blues based form as he is writing a modal work or a piece filled with many slash chords or polychords. However, in this section we are focusing on the influence of Brazilian and other latin American musical styles on Metheny's work, so we will look at pieces that exhibit harmonic ideas typical of these genres. As Metheny's main Brazilian composer influences are Antonio Carlos Jobim and Milton Nascimento, it stands to reason that when he applies Brazilian harmonic ideas to his work these ideas will be similar to the harmonic ideas in Jobim and Nascimento's work. What is interesting to note is that Jobim and Nascimento have both been heavily influenced by jazz harmony; this means that Metheny, a prominent jazz musician and composer, has been influenced by Brazilian composers who have in turn

been influenced by jazz composers. This begs the question: is Brazilian harmony that has been influenced by jazz harmony any different from jazz harmony? The key to the answer lies within the question itself; the fact that jazz harmony is only an influence on these Brazilian composers indicates that they will have a different approach to jazz harmony than a jazz musician would. One point in which jazz and jazz-influenced Brazilian music differ with regards to harmony is the relationship between melody and harmony. Jazz music tends to be composed with more of an emphasis on the chords. This is because when the jazz composer is writing a piece he is focusing on creating an interesting harmonic framework for improvisation. For this reason, in certain cases a jazz composer will create the chord sequence before the melody line. Creating a melody over the harmonic sequence is relatively simple from a jazz composer's point of view, in that a jazz composer is usually also a jazz performer and is therefore accustomed to creating melodies over chord changes because of the improvisational aspects of jazz. For the Brazilian composers, however, the reverse seems to be true; melody comes before harmony. This is especially true of Jobim and Nacimento, both of whom write songs as opposed to only instrumental works and therefore have a huge compositional focus on melody. As a result, certain harmonic movements in their works can seem strange or unusual from a jazz composers point of view, eschewing the typical jazz landmarks such as II-V-I's and cycle of 4ths bass movement. McGowan and Pessenha state:

Harmonically, bossa nova tunes included altered chords, inverted chords and unusual harmonic progressions, as well as unexpected melodic leaps and tonal shifts. Yet, as the bossa songwriters applied complex chords, they were also taking out extraneous notes. The effect was elegant and precise, deceptively simple, and low-key.8

This passage sums up beautifully the relationship between harmony and melody in the bossa nova genre.

#### **Pop Music**

Metheny's third main influence, after Coleman and Brazilian music, is pop music. This influence surfaces in Metheny's compositions in several ways.

#### Harmony

Much of the harmony in Metheny's compositions stems from pop music.

This is especially evident in his use of slash and polychords. The slash chord is a common technique in both pop music and the pop-influenced jazz typical of many

<sup>8</sup> Chris McGowan and Ricardo Pessanha, *The Brazilian Sound: Samba, Bossa Nova, and the popular music of Brazil,* Philadelphia, Temple University Press, 1998, p. 58

of the 'ECM style' recordings. Metheny is particularly influenced by the work of pop singer-songwriter James Taylor, for whom he wrote the piece 'James' from the Pat Metheny Group's 1983 album Offramp. The application of slash chords to jazz is not a new technique. In fact, there is an obvious use for slash chords that is extremely important in both jazz and pop music. This use relates to bass movement. This has been an important consideration of composers in both idioms since their conception. An example of this is the jazz technique of tritone substitutions. In its simplest form, this involves substituting the V dominant chord in a II-V-I for a dominant chord a tritone (augmented 4<sup>th</sup>/ Diminished 5<sup>th</sup>) away, thereby creating a descending chromatic bass movement from the II chord to the I chord, passing through the substituted chord, a bII dominant. Another example of this is the common pop music progression of a descending diatonic bass movement from the I chord to the minor VI chord. This involves adding a slash chord or inversion between the I and VI chords, usually a V chord in the upperstructure, to create the required descending diatonic bass movement. In the key of C, for example, the chord sequence would be as follows: C major, G/B, A minor. This type of progression is common in pop music.

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> Dore Steinberg, *KKSF Interview*, ca. 1995, available at http://hepcat1950.com/pmivkksf.html; accessed 2 June 2009.

#### Melody

Melody is an important aspect of Metheny's compositions and many of his melodies are pop-influenced. Take, for example, the melody of 'Have You Heard?' from *Letter From Home*. The melody, apart from the Db in the third bar, is comprised entirely of notes from the C natural minor (Aeolian) scale.



The extraordinary thing to note in this tune is how the listener may not realise the time signature is 7/4 because the melody is so pop-influenced, lyrical and easy to remember. This is a technique of Metheny's that is apparent in much of his work. Another great example from *Letter From Home* is the 0:57 long track '45/8'. The title reflects the most unique aspect of this tune. Apart from the introduction (which is seven bars of 3/4 followed by one bar of 4/4) it is a melodic section consisting of 45 eighth notes. Despite this most unorthodox of meters the tune is surprisingly accessible, thanks in a large part, again, to the melody.

#### Rhythm

Another way that we can see the influence of pop music in Metheny's writing is his use of rhythms derived from that genre. Often Metheny will write a piece in what is generally referred to in the jazz idiom as a 'straight eighths feel'. While that description may seem similar to that of a latin piece, the feels are quite different. This kind of rhythm has been explored in-depth on many of the landmark ECM records, to the point that the straight eighth feel we're discussing is often referred to as an 'ECM groove'. This feel has been influenced by pop music, and we can see similarities between the feel and many examples of pop music.

#### **Timbre**

One of the most obvious aspects of pop music that Metheny applies to his compositions is the use of pop sounds and timbres. There are many examples of this in his music throughout his recording career. It is most obvious in his work with the Pat Metheny Group. In this setting pianist Lyle Mays often uses keyboards and synthesizers, both of which are commonplace within the confines of the pop music genre. Also present in a lot of the Pat Metheny Group's work is electric bass, an instrument that is more commonly associated with pop, funk and

rock music than jazz. Metheny himself has explored in-depth the sonic possibilities of the guitar, including using synthesizer guitars.

## Chapter 4: The folk music of South-eastern Europe and its influence on Dave Holland and Nils Wogram

#### **Section 1: Dave Holland**

It is quite a difficult task to discern from where Dave Holland plies his compositional influences. This is because there are many types of music that have obviously influenced Holland, and many of these types of music have been in turn influenced by many other genres, so that, in analysing his body of work, we may trace his compositional lineage back to many far flung roots. For example, one of the defining qualities of Holland's composing is his use of odd-time meters, mixed meters and the rhythms he uses to navigate them. His use of these time signatures and rhythms can be traced through several avenues back to their source, which is the folk music of Eastern Europe or 'Balkan' folk music.

Apart from this direct influence, there are also many other Balkan-influenced musical styles that have had an obvious impact on his writing. One example is the influence of 20<sup>th</sup> century 'art' music composers such as Igor

Stravinsky and Béla Bartók. Bartók, in particular, has been much lauded for his application of the folk music of his native Hungary into his compositions. In fact, his dedication to analytical study of folk musics made him one of the first true ethnomusicologists.

Another example of a Balkan-influenced musical style that has had an effect on Holland's writing is the work of Dave Brubeck. Brubeck's many forays into odd-time signature writing, specifically 1959's *Time Out*, have had a profound effect on not only jazz, but also many other forms of music. *Time Out*'s 'Blue Rondo a la Turk' is a prime example of the influence of Balkan music on Brubeck's writing. This piece features a melody in 9/8 time that borrows its rhythmic structure from the Turkish *zeybek* dance. The *zeybek* is a traditional dance of Turkey that is based around various subdivisions of 9 (9/2, 9/4, 9/8, 9/16). The bar of nine is usually subdivided into groupings of either 2+2+2+3 or, alternatively, 3+2+2+2. In the case of 'Blue Rondo a la Turk', Brubeck chooses the first of these two subdivisions. The melody has three bars of the aforementioned subdivision followed by one bar of the subdivision 3+3+3. This subdivision is more typical of a western European approach to 9/8.

One of the most important aspects of Holland's compositional style is his use of counterpoint. For much of his composing career, Holland has eschewed the common approach to harmony within jazz in that he often forms groups

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> 'Zeybek dance', available from http://en.wikipidea.org/wiki/Zeybek\_dance; accessed 22 June 2009.

without chordal accompanying instruments. This approach can be observed throughout his career. Holland's first album as a leader, 1973's *Conference of the Birds* features an instrumental line-up of bass, drums, and two 'horns' (Sam Rivers and Anthony Braxton both switch between reed instruments and flute). He has also worked extensively within the chord-less trio format of bass, drums and saxophone. 1988's *Triplicate* is a fine example of this, with Holland collaborating with drummer Jack DeJohnette and alto saxophonist Steve Coleman. The Dave Holland Quintet and the Dave Holland Big Band, his most recent touring and recording groups, also feature a piano/guitar-less format. The sparing references to traditional jazz harmony are provided in both instances by vibraphonist Steve Nelson. So how does Holland manage to relate his conception of harmony to the audience? He uses counterpoint extensively. The technique of using counterpoint to imply harmony dates back to the baroque era of classical music and, most notably in the work of Johann Sebastian Bach.

Let us analyse one of Holland's works in order to observe the ways in which he inserts the influence of the folk music of south-eastern Europe into his jazz compositions.

### Analysis: 'Monterey Suite IV: Happy Jammy', *Overtime*2005

In this section we will analyse 'Monterey Suite IV: Happy Jammy' from the Dave Holland Big Band's 2005 album *Overtime*. This piece has been chosen because it is a well-rounded example of the way Holland applies the influence of outside genres to his music. As with the previous analyses, we will first focus objectively on individual compositional tools in the work. For the purposes of this study and the inherent space constraints, I have compressed the full big band into a smaller ensemble consisting of alto and tenor saxophones, trumpet, trombone, vibraphone, bass and drums.

#### **Rhythmic Feel**

As with many of Holland's more recent compositions, 'Happy Jammy' features a rhythmic feel derived from funk and jazz-rock fusion influences. This is most obvious in the drumming; for example, within the 'written sections' of the piece (i.e. not the solos) drummer Billy Kilson plays, for the most part, set written drum beats. This is very typical of funk and fusion genres, whereas most jazz

pieces have improvised drum parts. The influence of funk and jazz-rock fusion is also apparent in the manner in which Kilson plays the drums. It is obvious from the very sound of the drums that Kilson is striking the drum kit with a lot more force than would be common in a jazz performance. It *is* common, however, for this level of force and intensity to be applied to the drums in the funk and jazz-rock fusion genres.

#### **Time Signatures**

The first thing we notice when listening to 'Happy Jammy' is the irregular rhythm, the result of one of Holland's trademark odd meters. 'Happy Jammy', as with many of Holland's works, can be written in several different ways with regard to time signatures; in this case, the *implied* time signature is 11/4. I have chosen to write it in my transcription as a bar of 6/4 followed by a bar of 5/4, as this is the subdivision outlined by the bass ostinato that permeates most of the work. The bass figure consists of a six beat phrase that is then repeated with the omission of the last two eighth notes.



As the bass figure is a six beat phrase followed by an almost identical five beat phrase, we can surmise that Holland himself probably wrote the work as a bar of 6/4 followed by a bar of 5/4; as he is a bassist himself, it stands to reason that he

would base the rhythmic structure of the work around the phrasing of his bass ostinato.

It is interesting to note when analysing the rhythmic structure of 'Happy Jammy' the way in which the drum pattern works with the bass ostinato. Unlike the bass figure, the drum pattern divides the eleven beats of the implied 11/4 meter into two bars of 4/4 followed by one bar of 3/4. The dotted barlines in the example below outline this subdivision.



It can be seen here that the drum pattern consists of a four beat phrase that is repeated once. The groove is then modified into a three beat phrase by playing the bass and snare drum figure from the last two beats of the phrase twice as fast, thereby fitting the last two beats of the four beat phrase into one beat. Although both Holland and Kilson take liberties with these patterns, particularly in the solo section, the fundamental rhythmic structures above form the backbone of the entire work. Even in what we will refer to as section B, which occurs at 02:30, the basic rhythmic structure remains the same. The bass ostinato merely shifts with the chords and the bass and snare drums play the same pattern, the only change in the drum part being the replacement of the hi-hat on every eighth note with the bell of the ride cymbal on every second eighth note.



The only variance of this underpinning rhythmic structure is during the shout chorus, in which phrases are layered on top of a repeated four bar melody played in unison by bass and trombones while the drums fill around the melody hits.



# **Ostinato**

Ostinato figures are an important and definitive aspect of Holland's composing style. 'Happy Jammy' begins with a unison saxophone ostinato that permeates most of the work.



After the saxophone figure is repeated, Holland takes a lengthy open bass solo.

Near the end of the bass solo, the trombone section enters with a rhythmic ostinato pattern functioning here as a background figure.



This figure becomes a recurring pattern throughout the piece. After concluding his solo, Holland plays the ostinato bass figure we analysed in the 'Time Signatures' section.



Note that the trombones continue their ostinato behind the bass figure. After the bass figure is played twice, the saxophones enter, adding the introduction ostinato to the bass and trombone figures.



After these two bars have been played twice, the saxophones and trombones drop out and the melody is played over the continuing bass ostinato. We will examine the melody line in greater detail in the next section, as in this part we

are focused on the use of ostinato. On the original recording, the melody is played by trumpets, one trombone and vibraphone but for the purposes of this thesis I will show it played by the trumpets only in an effort to simplify the analysis. The melody phrase fits over two bars of the implied 11/4 or two cycles of the 6/4-5/4 subdivision and in this first exposition is played twice.



These 8 bars (or 4 bars of the implied 11/4) are then repeated with the addition of both the saxophone and trombone ostinati.



It is interesting to note how uncluttered Holland is able to make these four separate parts sound, especially considering each part's intricacies. We will examine the specific relationships between the different parts in the 'Counterpoint' section.

# Melody

Melody is an extremely important aspect of Holland's compositional style. He realises that, for many listeners, the unusual rhythms and odd meters he favours are so far removed from their aural experience that they can be too complex to handle. For this reason, Holland strives to create memorable 'catchy'

melodic pathways through the intricate meters, and he succeeds wonderfully. A good example of this is the saxophone ostinato in 'Happy Jammy'. This is the first phrase the listener hears and the repeated angular phrase effortlessly navigates the odd meter and gives us a reference point throughout the work.



Another good example of Holland's melodic strength is the trumpet melody in what we will refer to as section A.



Here Holland uses repetition of phrase shapes and a melodic shape that descends for two bars and rises in the next two bars to create a memorable melody to draw the listener in. This melody is played four times before section B, twice by itself and twice with the aforementioned saxophone and trombone ostinati. This repetition of the melody helps to further ingrain it in the listener's ears.

We can observe another instance of Holland's attention to melody in section B. This section is based around a two bar saxophone melody.



If we analyse these two bars we can see they have an almost identical rhythmic structure, the only differences occurring in the last two beats of the first bar and the last beat of the second. These two bars are repeated, then transposed down a major 2<sup>nd</sup> (while the harmony is transposed up a minor 3<sup>rd</sup>), and then repeated once more in their original form. Following this Holland inserts two bars of new material, but even here the second bar replicates almost exactly the first, taking the first bar and transposing it down a tone while dispensing with the last two beats of the melody.



The original two bars follow this, ending section B. This continued use of repetition of melody, rhythm and phrase shapes helps to draw the listener into the work and creates anchor points for the ear within the odd meter and contrapuntal ostinati.

# Counterpoint

As stated earlier, Holland makes frequent and effective use of counterpoint in his work. In 'Happy Jammy' we can see many instances of this technique, the first of which occurs at 02:09. Here, after the initial exposition of the section A

trumpet melody, the introductory saxophone ostinato is played alongside the trumpet phrase.



If we take a closer look at these four bars, we can see the way in which the two melodies interweave. Almost the entire first saxophone phrase occurs during a long note from the trumpets, as do the next two instances of the phrase. The next two bars of the trumpet melody are a bit busier, yet Holland still manages to make the two parts interlace instead of getting in the way of each other. The first four notes of the first saxophone phrase occur during a long note from the trumpets. The next part of the phrase occurs in tandem with a trumpet phrase, but as they are both sixteenth note based melodies, they manage to work together. The second half of this bar is almost exactly the same although the long trumpet note is replaced with a rest. In the next bar, the first four notes of the saxophone ostinato take place against the sixteenth note based part of the trumpet melody. The next part of the saxophone phrase happens during a long

note in the trumpet part, making this bar almost opposite to the previous one but still creating an effective and uncluttered counterpoint.

It should also be noted the way the trombone ostinato fits with these two contrapuntal melodies. Firstly, all the notes in the two bar phrase apart from one are staccato. The short articulation combined with the fairly static note choice helps keep this figure out of the way of the saxophone and trumpet melodies.



If we look closer we can observe the way the trombone figure interacts with the other two phrases. First we will examine the relationship between the saxophone ostinato and the trombone figure. The first trombone note occurs jointly with the third note of the saxophone ostinato. As mentioned above, the short articulation allows the trombone note to stay out of the way of the busier saxophone line. The next trombone note occurs in the gap between the first two saxophone phrases, and the third in the gap directly after the second saxophone phrase. In the next

bar the first trombone note is placed at the same time as the start of the saxophone phrase, the staccato articulation again giving the saxophone line room to breathe. The next trombone note occurs between the last two notes of the saxophone ostinato, concluding the (then repeated) two bar phrase.

Similarly, most of the notes in the trombone figure occur during rests or long notes in the trumpet melody. There are a few exceptions, as in the end of the first and third bars and the middle of bar two, but these either work alongside the trumpet notes or are articulated short enough to not be in the way.

#### Ties to 'Free' Jazz music

In analysing examples of Holland's compositions, ties to the 'free jazz' genre can be found. Holland was one of the leading voices of this genre early in his career. In fact, 'Conference of the Birds' is generally considered to be one of the masterworks of the jazz avant-garde. Although the more recent works in Holland's catalogue are of a much more 'commercial' jazz style, he still incorporates avant-garde elements in his work. In 'Happy Jammy' the influence of a free approach to jazz is most obvious in the solo sections. Because Holland's big band line-up does not include a traditional chordal instrument, the solo sections are much more open than usual. Many of the solo sections in Holland's recorded works border on free form; the only aspect of the tune that remains

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consistent is the meter. It is difficult to discern Holland's written intentions without

copies of his original scores, but the most obvious approach would be that

Holland writes a tonality for the solo to be based around and then opens up the

harmony and form as the rhythm section and soloist see fit.

**Section 2: Nils Wogram** 

Another jazz composer who has been influenced heavily by Balkan folk

music is German trombonist Nils Wogram. The author feels it is important to

include at least some analysis of Wogram's work in this area because of its many

similarities to Holland's work, indicating similar compositional influences. Let us

analyse one of Wogram's works.

Analysis: 'The Myth', Fahvergnügen, Nils Wogram

**Odd Meters** 

Upon listening to the first few bars the listener is immediately struck by the

off-kilter rhythm and time signature. The first section, which is played four times,

is in 11/4 but is written as two bars of 4/4 and one bar of 3/4. As we have seen in

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our earlier analyses of complex time signatures, sometimes it is easier for performance purposes to write said time signatures as several bars of alternating, more usual, time signatures. As you can see in the below example, the eighth note groupings within what will hereafter be called the 'big 11' (this indicates that the two bars of 4/4 and the single bar of 3/4 imply one 'big bar' of 11/4) are quite unique.



If we ignore the ties and reduce the melody to its most basic subdivision (in this case eighth notes) and consider the 'groups' to be the sections of same notes, we will come up with the following groupings: 3,4,5,3,4,3. This indicates a true 11/4 and not two bars of 11/8 because of the way the eighth notes are grouped; if you were to write the 'big 11' as two bars of 11/8, the third group of eighth notes would cross the bar line and, while crossing the bar line is fairly common in western music, it is uncommon in the Balkan approach to complex time signatures (more common, for instance, would be the time signature 22/8). After four bars of the 'big 11', Wogram changes time signature, as well as the eighth note groupings, and changes the figure to two bars of 11/8. These two bars of 11/8, as with the 'big 11', are played four times.



Now the eighth note groupings (ignoring ties) are as follows: 3,4,4 in both bars of 11/8. The rhythm in these two bars represents a very advanced application of Balkan folk music elements to jazz. Often the tendency is to play Balkan groupings with *every* eighth note in the bar (as seen in Brubeck's 'Blue Rondo a la Turk'); here, Wogram uses the tied notes to create a more intricate group of rhythms. Following the (all together) 8 bars of 11/8 there is a drum break in what Wogram has called on the score a 'half time feel', meaning that he really wants the drum break to be played in 11/4 rather than 11/8. Drummer Jochen Rueckert outlines this with the following brilliantly simple drum break:



The above drum break can be grouped into quarter notes and quarter note rests thus: I 1 2 3 4 I R 2 3 4 I R 2 3 I where 'R' denotes a rest and 'I' denotes an implied barline. As we can see, Rueckert has subdivided the half-time 'big 11' into two bars of 4/4 and one bar of 3/4 in the same manner as the introductory phrase analysed earlier. Naturally, Rueckert could play a more complex drum break, but given the context of the piece being in 11/8 time he has opted for a

more simplistic approach, thereby easily setting the rest of the band up to come in with the next melody section.

# **Ostinato**

The use of ostinato patterns is another way in which Wogram's writing echoes Holland's. The first two sections (A1 and A2, respectively) are certainly comprised of an ostinato pattern, even considering the aforementioned slight rhythmic adjustments in A2.

In the next section Wogram has returned to 11/8 again. This section features an Alto Saxophone and Trombone melody over a Bass ostinato voiced in fifths.



Although this section sounds extremely rhythmically difficult, upon closer examination we can find that Wogram has based both the bass ostinato and the melody line around the rhythmic grouping of the eighth notes in the previous section of 11/8 (3,4,4). For example the bass ostinato rhythm consists of a dotted quarter note followed by two lots of eighth notes tied to dotted quarter notes. This rhythm outlines exactly the 3, 4, 4 eighth note grouping. Similarly, the Alto and Trombone melody, although slightly more involved rhythmically and melodically speaking, still outlines the aforementioned 3, 4, 4 eighth note grouping.

The next section, section C, also features an ostinato pattern. Here Wogram returns again to the 11/4 meter and has created what appears to be a new rhythmic ostinato played by the entire band.



On closer inspection, however, we can see that the rhythm at figure C is not new at all; rather, it is just a half time rendering of the rhythmic structure from A2 (and also the same as the drum break between A2 and B).

At figure D we can see one of Wogram's trademark compositional devices.

Here he inverts the voices from figure B, taking what was the bass ostinato and

rewriting it for saxophone and trombone (albeit changed slightly harmonically) and rewriting the melody from section B for bass.



This technique shows that ostinato patterns do not have to be relegated to bass instruments alone.

# Ties to 'Free' Jazz music

Wogram's compositions, like Holland's, often exhibit aspects of 'free' jazz music. In 'The Myth' this influence is most prominent in the solo section; here

Wogram has elected to write a free form solo in 11. This technique of opening the soloist and rhythm section from harmony but keeping the rhythmic structure the same is common in free jazz and free jazz influenced music.

# Harmony

Although Wogram and Holland have very similar approaches towards rhythm, their approaches to harmony differ dramatically. As stated previously, both Wogram and Holland work extensively in chordless group formats, which, for obvious reasons, require a radical approach to harmony. In the previous section it was shown how Holland often uses counterpoint to outline harmonic ideas. Wogram, however, uses counterpoint rarely. Instead, he outlines harmonic ideas through guide tones and stacked intervals across the instruments. Because there are only three melodic instruments (in his Root70 group at least) to create stacked intervals with Wogram must use a less polyphonic approach to writing than Holland, who has four melodic instruments at his disposal in his quintet and many more in his big band, not to mention his use of the vibraphone which is capable of playing four notes at once and is therefore more capable of conveying harmonic ideas.

# Chapter 5: The influence of Electronic and Rock music on Hiromi Uehara and Christian McBride

In this chapter we will examine the effects of some more popular and mainstream genres on jazz music. Pianist Hiromi Uehara and bassist Christian McBride have been pioneering work in this field which is worthy of analysis.

# **Section 1: Hiromi Uehara**

Japanese pianist Hiromi Uehara was 'discovered' by Chick Corea at the age of 17 at a workshop Corea was conducting for Yamaha in Tokyo. After hearing Uehara play, Corea invited her to perform some improvisations with him at his concert the next night. In 1999 she moved to the United States of America to study at Boston's prestigious Berklee College of Music. By the time she graduated, Uehara was already signed to Telarc Records, and she released her debut album, *Another Mind*, in 2003. Uehara's music is almost exclusively characterised by an incredible level of technical virtuosity. The aspect of her music that this chapter will focus on is her use of electronic music devices and her application of these to the jazz idiom.

# Analysis: 'Return of Kung-Fu World Champion', Spiral.

Here we will examine the piece 'Return of Kung-Fu World Champion' from Uehara's 2006 album *Spiral*, a fine example of the way Uehara applies elements of electronic music and any other outside genres to her work in the jazz idiom. The instrumentation for this work is as follows: Piano and synthesizer (both played by Uehara), 6-string Bass Guitar (Tony Grey) and Drums (Martin Valihora).

# **Rhythm**

One way in which Uehara applies electronic music devices to her work is through the use of rhythmic ideas associated with or derived from electronic music. An example of an electronic music rhythm in 'Return of Kung-Fu World Champion' can be found in the synth solo at 6:42. Here Uehara has instructed drummer Grey to play a typical 'drum'n'bass' drum groove, based around the much-sampled breakbeat, the 'amen break' (more about this in the Christian McBride section), the most widely used break in electronic music history. Here is the basic drum groove that Grey plays, which is augmented as the solo lengthens.



This syncopated drum beat is a simplified version of the last two bars of the fourbar amen break, as illustrated in this example:



As you can see, all of the notes in Grey's drum groove are present in the slightly busier original amen break. As this is one of the most sampled breaks in the history of electronic music, and is even responsible for birthing several subgenres including jungle and drum'n'bass, we can see a direct correlation between this aspect of Uehara's work and electronic music.

Another way in which Uehara applies rhythmic elements of electronic music to her work can be found when examining the interplay between her left and right hands. Let us examine the synthesizer part at 1:10.



Although upon first examination the two hands appear to be playing completely different figures, they are actually working together to play almost every sixteenth

note in the bar (the only sixteenth note not played being the second). This interwoven effect creates a sixteenth note rhythmic pulse that is very similar to rhythms found in electronic music and is used extensively by Uehara in may of her works.

#### **Timbre**

'Return of Kung-Fu World Champion' exhibits the use of synthesizers right from the outset. The piece opens with Uehara playing eight rubato chords on her synthesizer.



Synthesizers are prevalent in much electronic music and have become an integral part of the genre's sound, and the use of them in this context immediately connects Uehara's music with the electronic music genre.

Another aspect of Uehara's music that reflects the influence of electronic music is the use of very low bass notes. Uehara is able to write bass parts that are lower than most because Grey makes use of a six-string electric bass. Very low bass notes are a common aspect of many types of electronic music, and subbass 'drops' have even spread into more mainstream music. The term sub-bass

refers to sounds from 90 Hz down to the lowest frequency able to be heard by the human ear, which is around 20 Hz. The addition of a low B string to a bass guitar, as is the case with six-string basses such as Grey's, extends the low range of the instrument down to about 31 Hz as opposed to the usual lowest note being around 41 Hz. On top of this extra range Grey also makes use of a Boss octave pedal which 'has a certain setting that gives you that good sub bass and you can get sort of a synthy sound...I use that for drum and bass kind of stuff'.<sup>11</sup>

Another way in which Grey's bass timbre helps to create a connection between Uehara's work and electronic music is with the use of tone altering effects pedals. During the bass solo in 'Return of Kung-Fu World Champion' Grey uses a delay pedal. Delay is an effect present in many types of electronic music, showing yet another connection between this music and Uehara's work.

# Harmony

One of the methods that Uehara employs to apply elements of electronic music to her work is the application of electronic music approaches to harmony. Electronic music typically eschews any traditional approaches to harmony in that it does not often feature chords. Rather, harmony is often only implied by the

<sup>11</sup> Keith White, 'Interview With Hiromi's Bassist, Tony Grey', August 2006, available from http://www.basssessions.com/aug06/Interview.html; accessed 14 July 2009.

notes in the repeated riffs and figures. In fact, throughout the entire 9 minutes and 43 seconds of 'Return of Kung-Fu World Champion' Uehara plays chords in only four places: the introduction, the drum solo, the synth solo and the last note. Considering that Uehara still operates within the jazz idiom, this is a radical departure from the harmonic language normally associated with jazz and especially with jazz pianists. This clearly exhibits the influence that electronic music has had on Uehara's writing and playing.

# Melody

The melodic language of electronic music consists mostly of simple riffs derived from the minor pentatonic and blues scales. Uehara makes uses of this approach to melody extensively in her writing. For example, the first melody break in 'Return of Kung-Fu World Champion' is made up of notes from the C minor pentatonic scale.



This approach to melody also helps Uehara to convey an Asian influence to the listener, an aspect of her life and work that she often utilises to great effect.

#### **Section 2: Christian McBride**

Christian McBride is a rare breed of musician indeed. There are few artists as chameleonic as he: artists able to blend so many influences, some of them new and radical, with so much history of the music. Equally prolific on both the upright and electric basses, McBride's amazing musical journey began at age 9 when he began learning the electric bass. The acoustic bass followed two years later. By the age of 18 McBride was invited to join Freddie Hubbard's band, where he stayed for three years. McBride is now many artists' first call for engagements and has worked with many great musicians including Roy Hargrove, Chick Corea, Sting, Carly Simon, Milt Jackson, George Duke, Uri Caine and Pat Metheny. As well as being one of the world's greatest bassists, McBride is also an accomplished composer and has released seven albums as a leader.

# Analysis: 'Technicolour Nightmare', *Vertical Vision,*Christian McBride Band.

This piece exhibits many of the influences on Christian McBride's writing. I will divide the analysis into two parts, the first section looking at the influence of

rock and jazz-rock fusion and the second examining the influence of electronic music.

# **Rock and Jazz-Rock Fusion**

'Technicolour Nightmare' features many techniques derived from aspects of rock and jazz-rock fusion music. We will look at a few ways in which McBride applies this influence to the work.

# 'Riffs'

The first eight bars of 'Technicolour Nightmare' are made up of a repeated 'riff' that is extremely reminiscent of rock music.



This riff bears a resemblance to many rock music riffs. Let us examine, by way of a comparison, the guitar and bass riff from 'Freedom' by prominent rock group Rage Against The Machine.



By comparing these two riffs we can see certain similarities. In both cases the riff is made up of notes from the D blues scale. There are also similarities between the riffs with regards to form. In both examples the first bar contains the main riff idea. The second bar features an extension of the first idea. The third bar repeats the first idea and the fourth bar features another extension of the main idea.

#### Feel

Here we will continue to compare 'Technicolour Nightmare' to 'Freedom'. When listening to the introductions of both works a similarity in 'feel' can be heard. This is partly due to the drum grooves. On both tunes the drummers play a half-time feel drum beat typical of hard rock music. The basic idea of this groove is shown below.



The half-time feel is created by placing the snare drum accents, or 'backbeat', on beat 3 of each bar. If this were a regular 4/4 drum groove there would be bass drum accents on beats 1 and 3 and snare drum accents on beats 2 and 4. Both

drummers make adjustments to this basic groove, adding bass drum accents that lock in with certain accents within the riff. This technique is widely used in rock music to help lock the instruments together and form a solid rhythmic pulse. Let us examine the way in which both drummers add accents and how those accents fit in with the respective riffs.

#### Technicolour Nightmare:



In this excerpt drummer Terreon Gully keeps the snare drum backbeat on beat 3 of each bar but augments the bass drum pattern to accent important parts of the riff such as the hits on the last eighth note of the anacrusis and bars 2 and 4.

#### Freedom:



In this excerpt drummer Brad Wilk, like Gully, keeps the snare drum backbeat on beat 3 of each bar and adds bass drum notes to important riff accents.

# **Melody and Harmony**

The melody line in 'Technicolour Nightmare' is typical of the jazz-rock fusion genre. The tenor saxophone plays the melody, but the line is also present in the keyboard part. The keyboard is playing a descending parallel chord voicing with the same rhythm as the melody. In the first two bars the melody notes are present at the top of the chord structure, while in the second two bars the melody line can be found at the bottom of the chord structure. If we examine, for example, the keyboard line in the melody, we immediately see the chromatic parallelism of the chord shape; i.e. the same chord shape is moved up and down in pitch.



This kind of chord movement plays against the more static harmony of the bass line, creating new 'implied chords' with every movement. This technique is often used in jazz-rock fusion, and shows the influence that genre has had on McBride's writing.

#### **Timbre**

There are certain timbral similarities between 'Technicolour Nightmare' and rock music. The most obvious of these is the way in which Terreon Gully is playing the drums. For this analysis two versions of 'Technicolour Nightmare' (the original recording from the album *Vertical Vision* and a live version from the album *Live at Tonic.*) were studied. Although the drumming is different on both recordings, the opening sequences both use techniques common in rock music. On the original recording Gully plays the introduction with open hi-hats, a common technique in loud rock music. On the live recording Gully plays the hi-hat part on a crash cymbal, another common rock drumming technique. In both cases it is obvious that Gully is striking the drums and cymbals with a lot more force than is common in jazz music, and this volume and power is another connection between McBride's work and rock music.

Another timbral similarity between 'Technicolour Nightmare' and rock music can be found in the guitar part of the *Vertical Vision* version and the keyboard part of the *Live at Tonic* version. In both cases the instruments use distortion, whether via an amp or an effects pedal. This distorted sound has become one of the most recognisable attributes of rock music ever since seminal guitarist Jimi Hendrix began using it in his work in the 1960's. Using this effect in a jazz context creates a very definite connection between the two genres.

# **Electronic Music**

After the tenor saxophone solo, 'Technicolour Nightmare' undergoes a radical change in rhythmic feel for the guitar solo. Specifically, the rhythm section feel is typical of 'drum'n'bass', a sub-genre of electronic music. Drummer Terreon Gully plays what is known within electronic music circles as a 'breakbeat'. The term breakbeat refers to a technique that began in the late 70s where DJs would take drum breaks from old jazz and funk records and play them in a continuous row or 'loop'. The style of breakbeat that Gully plays is based around one of the most popular and widely used breaks, the 'amen break'. The term 'amen break' refers to a four bar drum break from The Winstons' 1969 recording of 'Amen, Brother' which has become one of the most widely used samples of all time. In the drum'n'bass genre, a common approach to sampling the amen break is to split the break up into its individual elements, such as bass drum, snare drum and hi-hats. This allows the producer or DJ to play around with the rhythms and change the placement of beats. Usually, the tempo will be increased substantially as well. The sound of an up-tempo amen break is one of the most common sounds associated with electronic music and is instantly recognisable; it is upon this legacy that McBride builds the feel for the guitar solo in 'Technicolour Nightmare'. Of course, this isn't a strict example of drum'n'bass because the performance is by a live band rather than sampled drum breaks. It is, however, a fine example of a drum'n'bass influence in a jazz composition, and also of a jazz performer's approach to playing drum'n'bass. This is demonstrated in the way that Gully plays his amen break-influenced drum beat. Gully plays the much-sampled beat in a manner in which you would expect a jazz musician to; with a lot of emphasis on improvisation. Gully is constantly changing the groove, putting accents in different places, playing drum fills, playing around with the rhythms and so forth. These are similar ways in which we would expect a jazz drummer to approach a funk-influenced tune or a latin-influenced tune.

# Chapter 6: American Roots Music

The connection between the guitar and many of the native musics of the United States of America is an extremely important one. The guitar has been a key instrument in many styles of American roots music, including the blues, country and zydeco. This popularity was further increased by the invention of the electric guitar and the guitar has since become one of the most popular instruments in the entire world. In this chapter I will examine the influence of American roots music on the compositional style of two of the most prominent jazz guitarists in the world, John Scofield and Bill Frisell.

# **Section 1: John Scofield**

There is a tendency within the jazz bourgeois to overlook John Scofield as a composer; perhaps this is because his most popular works are also the most commercial. It is all too easy to just listen to his soul and jazz-funk-influenced work and dismiss it as derivative, yet there is much more to Scofield as a composer. Scofield's work consistently reflects the influence of American music genres.

#### **Blues**

Although historically jazz was formed from the blues, there has been occurring in recent times a second wave of blues influence in jazz, especially with regards to guitar players. This is because of the electric guitar's roots in the blues tradition. Scofield certainly falls into this category; his improvising, sound and composition each exhibit certain stylistic elements derived from the blues. In his compositions this influence is manifested in a few different ways. One is the use of the dominant 7 #9 chord, one of the most common chords in blues music. He also often writes melodies that include the #9 and b5 intervals, which are particularly bluesy sounding as a result of their derivation from the blues scale.

# R'n'B, Soul and Funk

The influence of 'soul' music on John Scofield's compositions is one of the more obvious and widely acknowledged genres visible in his work. The influence of soul music on Scofield has been important enough for him to dedicate an entire record to the music of Ray Charles: 2005's *That's What I Say: John Scofield Plays the Music of Ray Charles*.

# Country/American Folk Song

Country or American folk music is another genre of American roots music that has had a large influence on Scofield's composing and playing. It can be heard in his treatment of the acoustic guitar and harmonic structure of the tune 'Lazy' from 1995's *Groove Elation*. The influence of American folk music can also be found in work as recent as 2005's *This Meets That*. The work 'Down D' shows much evidence of this influence, as does Scofield's choice to include the popular traditional American folk song 'The House of the Rising Sun'.

# Gospel

There is much evidence in Scofield's body of work to suggest the influence of spiritual music on his composing, specifically African American gospel music. This influence is most obvious in Scofield's most recent album, March 2009's *Piety Street.* As the album title suggests, this recording is a compilation of various gospel pieces, some old and some new but all based in the gospel tradition.

#### **New Orleans**

In many of John Scofield's works we can see a very discernible influence of the music of New Orleans. Let us examine the piece 'Twang' from 1992's *Grace Under Pressure*. 'Twang' features a rhythmic feel derived from the New Orleans parade music dubbed 'second line'. The term second line refers to a type of parade unique to New Orleans. The second line parade is a descendant of the city's traditional jazz funeral parade. The 'first line' in the jazz funerals refers to the people who are part of the hosting organisation, which would include members of the deceased's family, the hearse and a New Orleans brass band. The second line is the group of people that follow; in the funerals they would be mourning, in the Second Line parades they are the participants in what was called a block party, which revelled in dancing and singing.

Because the music for these parades is provided by a brass marching band, one of the most obvious aspects of the rhythmic feel is that there is no drum kit as such. Instead there will be players for the individual instruments, the marching snare drum and the marching bass drum. Consequently, there is a very different approach to rhythm within the marching bands. The snare drum is a lot busier than in music with a drum kit, and plays at least every eighth note in a bar, usually with many double stroke rolls. A typical New Orleans second line-style march rhythm lasts for two bars. The snare drum will typically 'ghost' all the eighth notes, with major accents on beat one, the 'and' of two, beat four, and

beats two and three of the second bar. The tuba and bass drum will usually either play the snare drum accents or every quarter note (sometimes called 'four on the floor'). In 'Twang' Scofield borrows this second line rhythm, although he changes it slightly. 'Twang' is in the time signature 6/4, so to fit the 8 beat New Orleans march rhythm into 6 beats, he simply removes the last two beats of the rhythmic phrase. There are many other tunes by Scofield that use the second line feel. 'Chariots' from 1991's *Meant To Be* is a good example, as is '7<sup>th</sup> Floor' from 1994's *Hand Jive*, which is similar to 'Twang' in that Scofield applies the Second Line feel to an odd meter, in this case 7/4.

# **Section 2: Bill Frisell**

Bill Frisell is one of the most unique guitarists in the world. Possessed of an extremely original sound and approach, Frisell's work shows an affinity with American music in all its many forms. His love of American music can be felt as much in his own work as a composer as his many tributes to great American composers, such as the album *Have a Little Faith*, in which Frisell tackles the work of American composers including Aaron Copland, Charles Ives, John Philip Sousa, Sonny Rollins, Bob Dylan and Madonna. In this section we will examine some of the ways in which Frisell applies the influence of American roots music to his work.

#### **Blues**

As stated in the previous section, in recent times there has been a second wave of blues influence in jazz. This is extremely evident in the work of Frisell, and especially on his album *Blues Dream*. A tribute to the blues, country and other American roots music, *Blues Dream* features many techniques and stylistic devices derived from the blues. The title track, for example, features the use of 'slide' guitar, a popular technique in blues music. Frisell also uses the musical technique of call and response throughout *Blues Dream*, a device that is one of the foundations of blues music.

#### Country/American Folk Song

Frisell's music is heavily influenced by country music. Timbrally speaking, Frisell uses a lot of sounds that relate to country music. For example, on the *Blues Dream* album he enlists the help of multi-instrumentalist Greg Leisz who plays steel guitar and mandolin, both of which are instruments commonly heard in and associated with country music. Another way in which Frisell applies a country music timbre to his work is his personal choice of guitars and effects pedals. Frisell often uses a Fender Telecaster guitar, a guitar type that has an association with country music, and also the blues, dating back to its first

incarnation in 1949. Another way in which Frisell applies timbral qualities of country music to his work is through the use of effects pedals. One sound he uses to great effect is tremolo. The tremolo effect is a common sound in country music, whether it is caused by a pedal or by a device fitted to the guitar itself. An example of the latter is the 'B-bender', available on some models of the telecaster, which 'puts those great pedal steel licks at your fingertips'. 12

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup> 'American Nashville B-bender Telecaster', available from http://www.fender.com/products/search.php?partno=0118342706; accessed 9<sup>th</sup> July 2009.

# Chapter 7: Original Compositions

To make sure that the techniques and devices I have discovered through my analyses are valid, I have endeavoured to use them in my own compositions to prove their effectiveness.

# Mosgiel

With this tune I have tried to recreate the composing style of Dave Holland. There are several methods that I have used to achieve this.

#### **Ostinato**

As has been observed in chapter 4, ostinato patterns, especially bass lines, are an indispensable aspect of Holland's composing style. He uses these patterns to give accessibility to odd rhythms and meters. I have applied this technique to this work. The tune begins with a 4-bar unison ostinato pattern played by bass and trombone.



Holland often doubles his bass ostinatos in the trombone part, as was seen in the analysis of 'Happy Jammy'. The four-bar ostinato is played twice and is then joined by alto saxophone, which, apart from the last note, plays the same rhythmic pattern a fifth above the existing ostinato.



#### Instrumentation

With this tune I opted to follow Holland's model of a two-horn quintet with vibraphone replacing the usual chordal instruments, piano or guitar. The only adjustment I made to Holland's quintet line-up was to replace the tenor saxophone with alto saxophone as I wished to have the higher note range at my disposal.

# Rhythm

When analysing 'Happy Jammy' in chapter 4 it was seen that Holland often uses contemporary funk or fusion-type rhythmic ideas and drum beats in his works. I have also opted to use this approach.

#### Counterpoint

One of the most noticeable and important parts of Holland's approach to composition is his incorporation of the baroque idea of counterpoint into his work. As this is a technique at the forefront of his art I decided to make use of it in my composition also. At bar 13 the 'melody' begins. This is a simple four bar phrase based around the A Phrygian tonality that permeates most of the tune.



The phrase is then repeated, with the addition of a contrapuntal phrase played by the trombone.



As with Holland's approach to counterpoint, there are instances where the phrases line up with each other rhythmically and other instances where the lines are playing against each other. Four bars later both phrases are played again with the audition of a new phrase played by the vibraphone.



As with Holland's work, in an effort to keep four independent phrases (including the bass ostinato) uncluttered, the vibraphone part is a simpler rhythmic pattern designed to keep out of the way of the other parts. All of these parts are laid over the bass ostinato, which is also independent from the other parts, although similar rhythmically to the alto saxophone melody.



### Melody

As was observed in chapter 4, a large part of the inspiration for Holland's melodic ideas comes from folk music. He tends to write simple, singable melodies, often based around one scale or mode. I have used the same approach in this tune. All of the melodic phrases in the A section are based around an A Phrygian tonality. The phrases are simple and folk-influenced.

#### **Meters**

While on this particular tune I have opted not to use an odd meter, I have instead used an odd rhythm within the common time signature of 4/4. For the opening ostinato rhythm I have created a phrase based around dotted eighth note values. This creates an implied 4 over 3 rhythmic idea and because of this a feeling of two bars of 3/4 followed by one bar of 2/4 is created.

#### Ties to 'Free' Jazz music

With this tune I also tried to make use of some of Holland's free jazz inspired techniques. This tune features a free form collective improvisation section based around the tonality of A Phrygian. This section is intended to start off quite diatonic and gradually disperse into atonality and free rhythm until the next section is cued, which starts with a contrastingly diatonic F major pause chord.

# The Hollyford

With this composition I have tried to insert the influence of Chinese folk music into a modern jazz feel. I have opted for a less direct approach to exhibiting this influence than the works analysed in chapter 2.

#### Melody

The main theme is (apart from one note) derived from the F minor pentatonic.



As was seen in chapter 2, even a technique as simple as creating a pentatonicbased melody can be very effective in evoking the sound of Chinese folk music.

#### Harmony

'The Hollyford' is based around a piano and bass motif consisting of a unison ostinato between the bass and the piano's left hand and a repeated three-note chord in the pianos right hand consisting of intervals stacked in fourths.



In chapter 2 it was observed that the two most common intervals in Chinese folk music are the perfect fourth and the perfect fifth because of their prominence within the major (and minor) pentatonic scales. This is why the right hand chord is voiced in fourths. If we examine the bass and left hand ostinato we can see that it is based around the perfect fifth interval, albeit in a staggered form. The perfect fifths are moved up a minor triad, broadening the harmony while continuing to evoke China.

#### **Timbre**

As stated earlier, with this particular composition I have opted for a subtle approach to adding the influence of Chinese folk music. Therefore the only timbral tie to the music of China that I have included is the incorporation of flute into the work. Although the flute as we know it is vastly different to the bamboo flutes used by Chinese folk musicians, the timbral aspects are similar enough to create a similar effect in this context.

#### **Three Streams**

With this composition I have attempted to recreate the compositional style of Pat Metheny. Because Metheny has had a long and varied composing career I have chosen to focus on the style of writing prevalent in the work of the Pat Metheny Group.

#### Harmony

As was observed in chapter 3, many of Metheny's harmonic ideas are derived from pop music. This is most obvious in his usage of slash chords and triads. It was with this in mind that I created the harmony for 'Three Streams'. This is already evident within the first four bars of the tune. The tune starts with a two-chord rhythm section vamp. The first chord is a standard jazz chord, a Bbmaj7. The second chord, however, is very unusual from a jazz viewpoint. The chord is Eb5#11/Bb and would be voiced thus:



There are several reasons why this chord is strange to jazz harmony. One is because of the intervals present in the voicing. The chord is essentially a Bbmaj7

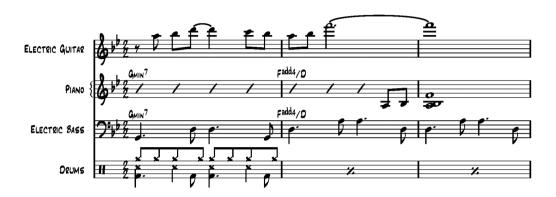
chord with a natural 4<sup>th</sup> or 11<sup>th</sup>. The natural 4<sup>th</sup> is generally considered to be an avoid tone over a major 7<sup>th</sup> chord because of the clash the harmonic overtones create. The reason I have chosen to use this chord and the reason it works in the context of this tune can be seen at the start of the melody.



If we examine the guitar line in bar two we can see that it plays the upper structure of the aforementioned voicing, which is echoed by the piano three beats later. Because this is such a strong statement melodically I felt it would be appropriate to create a chord using these three notes and to use that chord in the opening vamp.

The pop music influence can also be seen in the harmony in bar 16 of the melody. This bar features two simple triads, an Eb major triad for two beats and an Fsus4 chord for two beats. As was discussed in chapter 3, triads are a common way in which Metheny inserts pop music sounds into jazz works.

In bar 22 we can see another slash chord. This time the chord is an Fadd4/D, another unconventional chord by jazz standards.



As with the Eb5#11/Bb chord, this chord is again derived from the melody line and its piano echo.

In bar 25 a more common slash chord can be seen. This time it is a Bb/C, a slash chord that denotes a sus9 sound (in this case a Csus9).



This slash chord is one of Metheny's favourites and can be found in many of his works, including 'Bright Size Life' and 'Omaha Celebration', both from 1976's

*Bright Size Life.*<sup>13</sup> The same slash chord shape can be seen three bars later in bar 28, transposed down a tone.



# **Rhythm**

For the piece 'Three Streams' I borrowed a rhythmic feel that can be found in many Metheny works. It is an on-beat quasi-samba feel and can be found in the tunes 'Have You Heard?' and as recently as throughout much of 2005's Grammy award-winning album *The Way Up*. The feel is definitely derived from samba rhythm but is more modern and jazz-influenced. It is a much less obvious application of Brazilian rhythms than a piece like 'Better Days Ahead' for example. The feel typically features cross-stick snare drum on all four quarter notes (if in 4/4 time) with a basically eighth note ride cymbal pattern and bass drum accents that often line up with bass or melodic figures. In 'Three Streams', I

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup> These examples are especially notable because *Bright Size Life* was Metheny's debut album and the advent of these chords at such an early point in his composing career is quite remarkable.

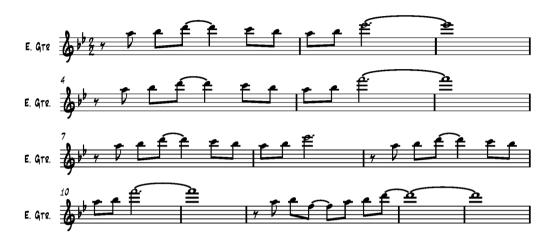
have created an example bass line based around a typical samba groove. The example drum part reflects this in the bass drum accents.



Obviously, this is still primarily a jazz work and both the bassist and drummer would be expected to make alterations to these rhythms as appropriate.

#### Melody

As was observed in the analysis of 'Have You Heard' in chapter 3, Metheny places a great importance on melody in his compositions. In 'Three Streams' I have based the melody around one repeated melodic figure diatonic to the key centre of Bb major.



This method of taking a diatonic figure and repeating it with variations is common in Metheny's work and is effective in drawing the listener into the work and establishing a melodic idea that will root itself in their mind.

# Glenorchy

As with 'Mosgiel', in this piece I have tried to recreate parts of the compositional style of Dave Holland.

#### Instrumentation

One way in which I have managed to recreate Holland's compositional style is by writing 'Glenorchy' for a similar instrumentation to some of his groups. This piece features a line-up of Alto Saxophone, Trumpet, Trombone, Vibraphone, Double Bass and Drums. This line-up can be thought of either as an augmented version of Holland's Quintet or a diminished version of his Big Band. The addition of a third horn to the quintet line-up allows for more possibilities with regard to counterpoint. The use of vibraphone helps to recreate Holland's group sound in two fundamental ways. The first is the most obvious; Holland uses vibraphone in his quintet and big band so using them in my piece is immediately reminiscent of Holland. The second is the freedom, harmonically speaking, that having a vibraphone as the only 'chordal' instrument allows.

#### **Rhythmic Feel**

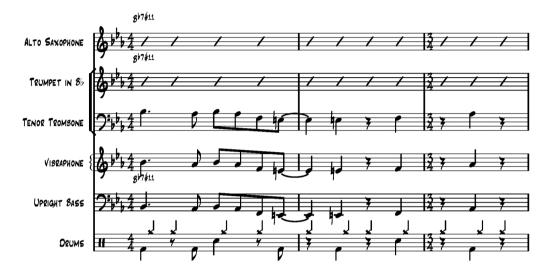
As was discovered in chapter 4, Holland often borrows the rhythmic backbone of his work from funk and jazz-rock fusion. I have chosen to use this technique in 'Glenorchy'.

#### **Time Signatures**

In chapter 4 we discussed at length the influence of south-eastern European folk music on Holland's writing, specifically on his approach to rhythm and time signatures. For 'Glenorchy', I have chosen to write two contrasting sections in two different complex time signatures. The first section is in 13/4, written for ease of reading as a bar of 7/4 followed by a bar of 6/4.



The second section is in 11/4, written as two bars of 4/4 followed by one bar of 3/4, again for ease of reading.



#### **Ostinato**

In both of the above time signatures the odd meter is anchored by a bass ostinato figure. This is a technique that Holland employs almost exclusively in his odd meter work. The first bass ostinato is this:





In both cases the bass line is a relatively simple line designed to provide a solid rhythmic foundation for the rest of the instruments to work over.

#### Counterpoint

Counterpoint is one of the signature techniques of Holland's composing style and the way in which he creates many interweaving melodies over odd meters is without parallel. In the piece 'Glenorchy' I have endeavoured to recreate this method of melodic writing. The first melody is played by alto saxophone and is heavily influenced by folk music as with Holland's work. The melody is layered over the already existing bass ostinato and vibraphone chordal figure.



These four bars are played twice and are then joined by the second melody, played by the trumpet.



The four bar figure is again played twice and then joined by the rhythmic trombone figure from the introduction.

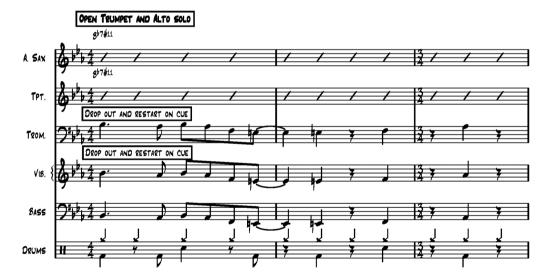


When creating a section of music such as this, where there are no less than five independent rhythms happening at once, it is important to make sure the parts keep out of each others way. If you observe carefully the interaction between the alto saxophone and trumpet parts you can see that most of the eighth note figures in each line occur when there is a longer note in the other line.



#### Ties to 'Free' Jazz music

As stated earlier, there is a certain freedom that is given harmonically to a group by using a vibraphone instead of piano or guitar. This is one way in which 'Glenorchy' has ties to 'free' jazz music. Another can be seen at bar 26.



As you can see, I have chosen to create a solo section wherein both trumpet and alto solo together. Collective improvisation such as this is a much used technique within the 'free' jazz genre and indeed can be heard on much of Holland's work including 'Last Minute Man' and 'Free For All', both from 2005's *Overtime*.

#### **Elevation**

As discussed earlier in the chapter, with the tune 'The Hollyford' I wanted to exhibit the influence of Chinese folk music on jazz in a more subtle way than on Kenny Garrett's *Beyond The Wall* album. With the piece 'Elevation' I wanted to create a work closer to Garrett's, with a much more direct and obvious Chinese folk music influence. This was achieved with many different techniques.

#### Harmony

The influence of Chinese folk music can be heard from the very beginning of 'Elevation'. The piece starts with a rhythmic piano figure featuring fifths in the left hand and stacked fourths in the right hand.



As we have already seen, this technique is common in Garrett's work and is very effective in recreating the sound of China. A more intricate expansion of this idea can be found in the piano part at bar 48.



The left hand is still voiced in fifths, but is moving around instead of staying static.

The right hand is no longer voiced in fourths, but the shapes have all (apart from a few D naturals) been derived from the Ab major pentatonic scale.

# Melody

As was noted in chapter 2, Garrett often makes use of the major and minor pentatonic scales in his melodies. I have chosen to use this approach in 'Elevation' as well. All the notes in the melody and its harmony part are from the C minor pentatonic.



As well as the main theme, there is a bass and alto saxophone background figure behind the tenor saxophone solo that is also made up of notes from the C minor pentatonic.



#### **Coltrane Influence**

When I was composing 'Elevation' I was endeavouring to not only exhibit the influence of Chinese folk music, but also to also recreate some of the Coltrane influence that so permeates Garrett's work. I achieved this by following the melody, which is based around a half-time fusion feel, with an alto solo in a double time swing feel. This section is an open solo based around a Cminor tonality with the option to go anywhere harmonically speaking. This freedom and the driving swing feel allow the soloist to reach for the 'spiritual unleashing' elements of Coltrane's later work.

# **Nightcaps**

With this piece I have tried to insert elements of Electronic music and Rock into the jazz idiom in a manner similar to the analysed works by both Hiromi Uehara and Christian McBride. I have used several of the techniques discovered in my analyses of both artists to achieve this.

#### Timbre

As we discovered in our analysis of the work of Uehara, the use of synthesizers in her pieces is integral to the incorporation of stylistic elements of electronic music into the jazz idiom. In an effort to recreate Uehara's compositional style, I have chosen to use Synthesizer in 'Nightcaps'.

# **Rhythm**

There are two main rhythmic feels in 'Nightcaps'. The first is a sixteenth note funk feel. Funk has been an enormous influence on electronic music and is prevalent in much of Uehara and McBride's work. The piece starts with a left hand synthesizer rhythmic idea based around a grouping of three sixteenth notes. The bass and bass drum are added the second time the four bar section is played.



After these four bars the drumbeat comes in full and a synthesizer right hand figure is added in the gaps between the bass notes, creating the 'interweaving' effect discussed in chapter 5. This further enhances the sixteenth note pulse.



The sixteenth note idea is expanded again eight bars later with the addition of a more intricately rhythmic bass figure.



The second rhythmic feel in 'Nightcaps' is created from the basis of the three sixteenth note grouping. The time signature changes to 3/4 with the three sixteenth idea continuing, creating a 4 over 3 feel.



The 4 created from the 4 over 3 feel becomes the 4 quarter note pulse in the next section, which is a Drum'n'bass feel.



Eventually the feel returns to the original sixteenth note groove. This change is achieved by dividing the new quarter note pulse into three (eighth note triplets) and eventually adding the last two beats of the original sixteenth note groove to lead back into it. The synthesizer plays the same interweaving part from the first feel, only this time in triplets.



After eight bars of the above groove a 2/4 bar is added which contains the last two beats of the original groove and then the piece returns to the original feel and tempo.



This kind of metric modulation is common in Uehara's work and can be observed in the analysed work 'Return Of Kung-Fu World Champion'.

#### Harmony

As we observed in our analysis of Uehara's work, the presence of electronic music means that a traditional jazz approach to harmony is more or less nonexistent. Instead, the music is based around riffs and rhythms, as in much rock music, including the analysed McBride work 'Technicolour Nightmare'. I have utilised this same approach in 'Nightcaps'. The only chords are in the solo sections and these are just implied chords derived from the riffs and are there purely to give the soloist a point of reference.

#### **Electronic music rhythms**

The second section of 'Nightcaps', as previously discussed, is based around a 'drum'n'bass' feel. Specifically, the drumbeat is derived from the much sampled 'amen break' discussed in detail in chapter 5.



The bass line follows the rhythms of the drum'n'bass groove.



The effect is certainly one reminiscent of electronic music and definitely reminiscent of the drum'n'bass genre.

#### **Erewhon**

With this piece I have attempted to insert elements of American roots music into the jazz idiom, recreating stylistic elements of the compositions of John Scofield and Bill Frisell.

#### **Rhythm**

For the rhythmic feel of 'Erewhon' I have borrowed the basic idea of the New Orleans second line feel and made some slight adjustments. As discussed in chapter 6, the basic second line feel involves the following accents:



For this piece I have taken this basic idea and moved a few of the accents slightly.



The effect is much the same, but more syncopated, giving a more rolling effect to the rhythm.

#### Harmony

'Erewhon' consists of two contrasting sections. The first is a repeated vamp section based around the above rhythm and features blues-influenced dominant 7<sup>th</sup> chords.



The second section features harmony reminiscent of gospel and country music.

The chords are all diatonic to the key centre of E major, as can be observed in the melody section below.

# Melody

The melody of 'Erewhon', as with the harmony, is heavily influenced by country and gospel music. Both chords and melody are entirely diatonic to the key centre and are easily remembered as the melodies in these genres often are.



Of course, much of the influence of American roots music must be achieved by the individual performer and his use of stylistic elements on the guitar such as bends, open strings, effects pedals and vibrato.

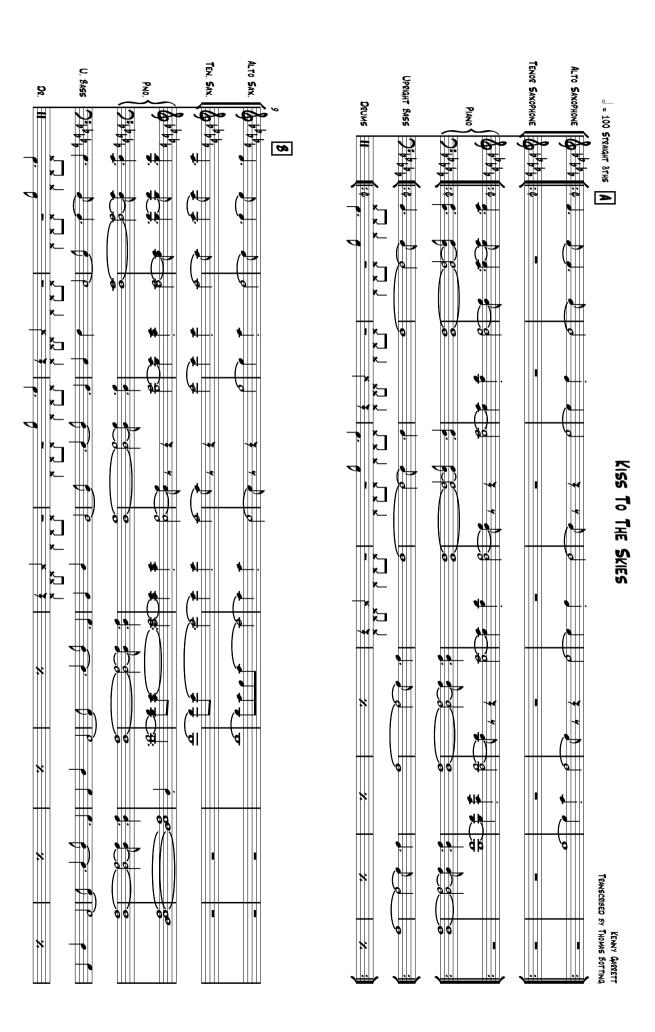
# **Conclusions**

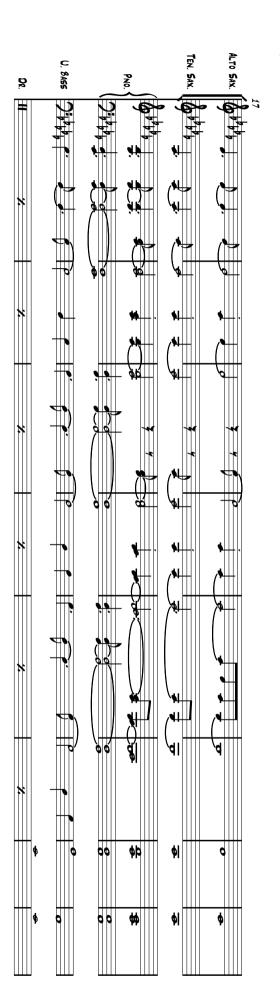
The object of this study has been to analyse the effect of outside genres on modern jazz composition. The analysis has certainly been successful in this respect. I have learned much about the impact outside genres can have on jazz composition and the ways in which aspects of these genres can be applied. This is evidenced in the way I was able to apply the same techniques and devices effectively to my own compositions.

The research shows that there has been an increase in the instances of jazz works influenced by outside genres in the last two decades. There has also been an increase in the level of influence outside genres have been having on these works, almost to the point where one could question whether the works can be defined as 'jazz' at all. Nevertheless, the musicians are unmistakably jazz musicians and the work is unmistakably 'jazz' in origin, rooted in the traditions yet exploring new horizons.

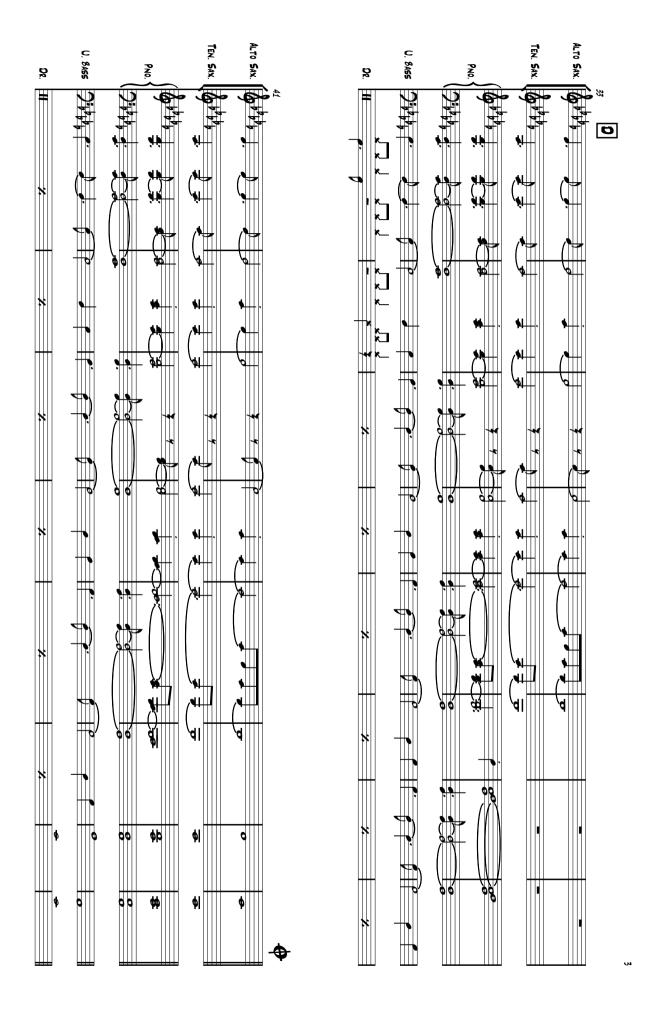
This music is arguably some of the most interesting to be produced in the last two decades and will hopefully continue to evolve and redefine the boundaries of what is considered jazz for many years to come.

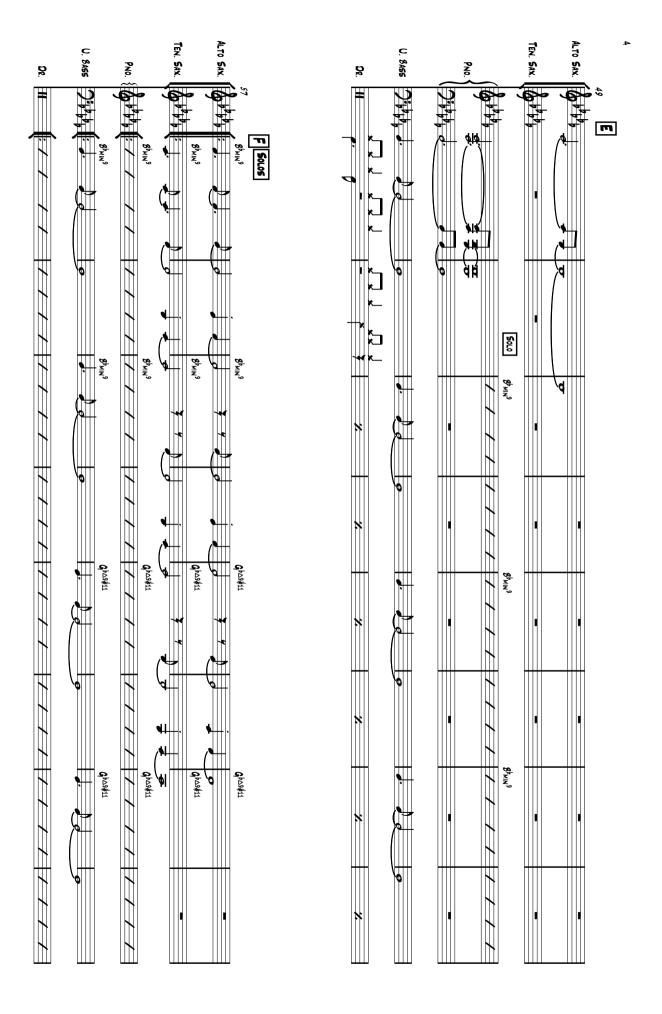
# Appendix 1: Transcriptions

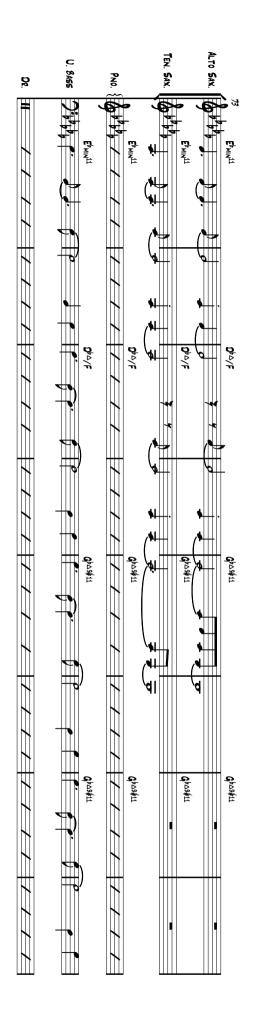


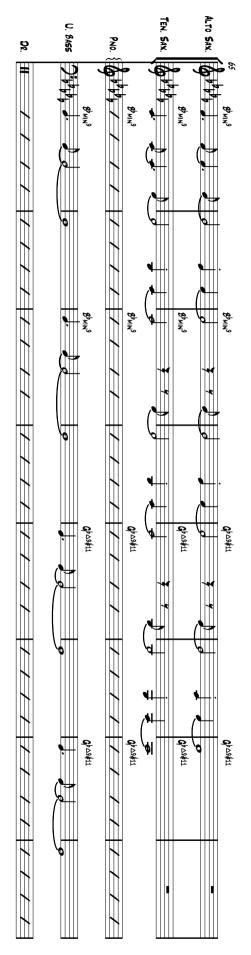


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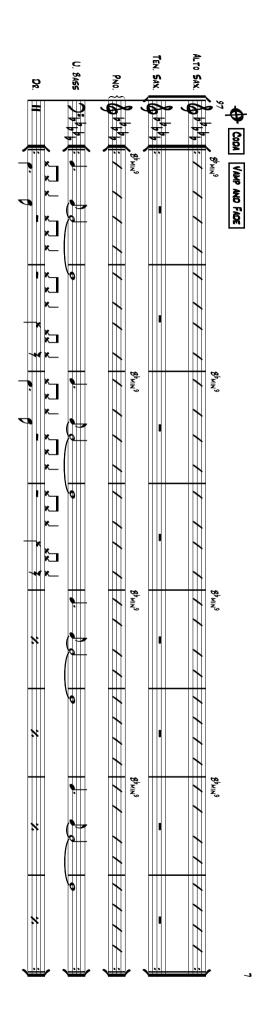




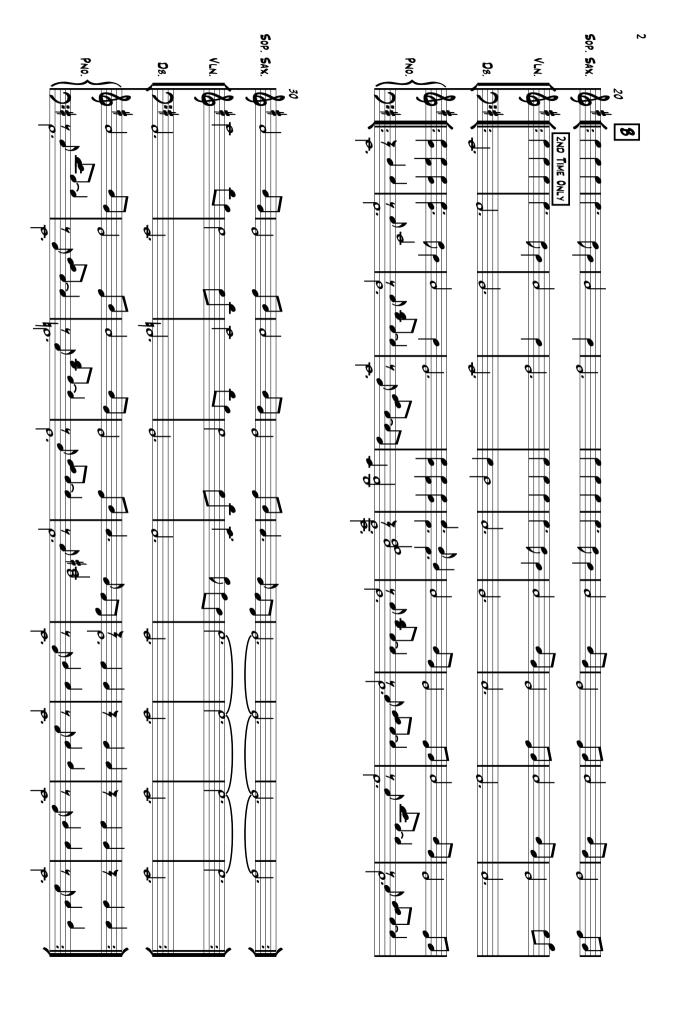


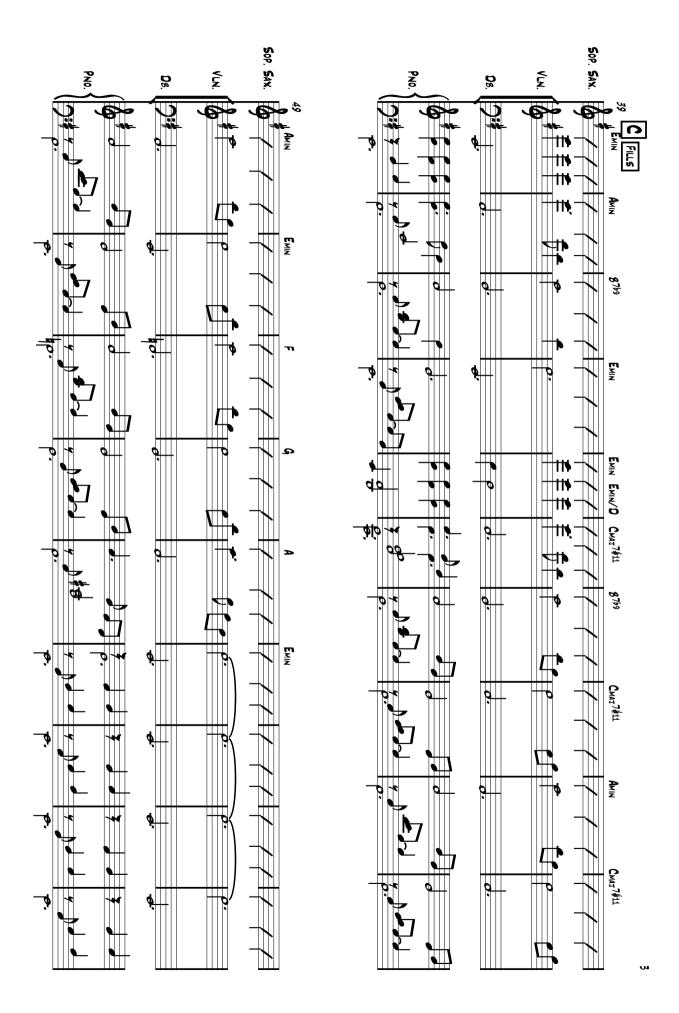
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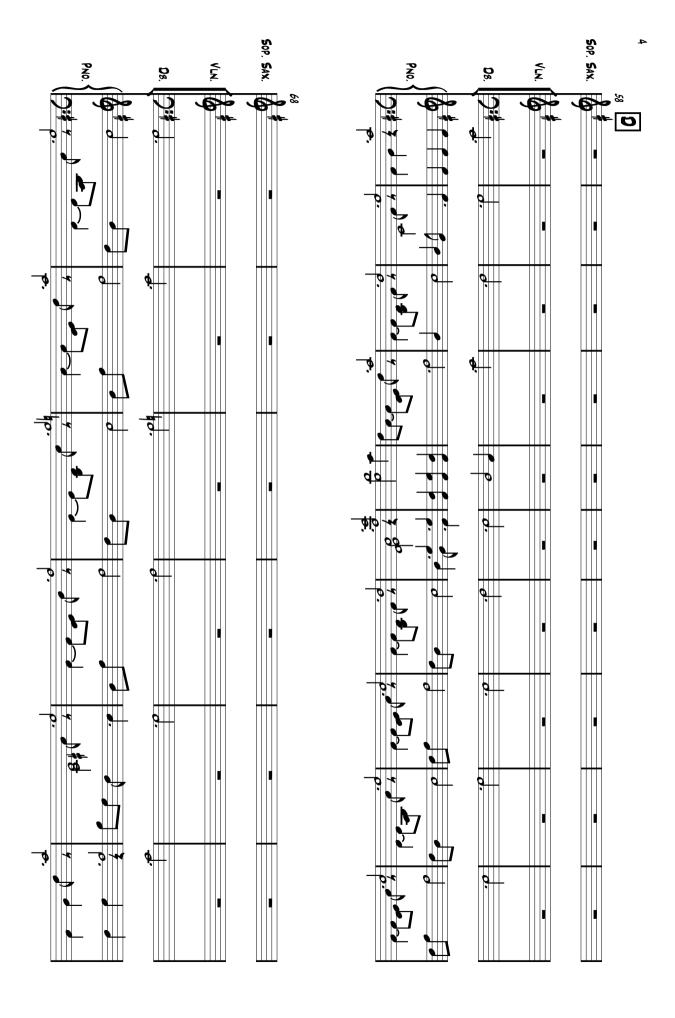
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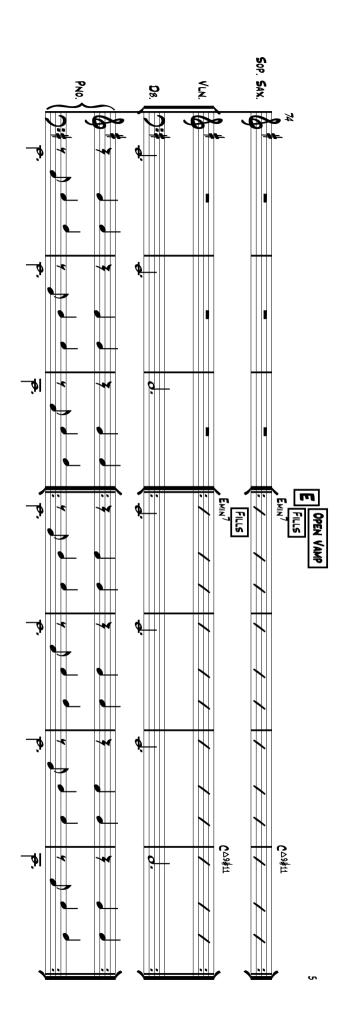








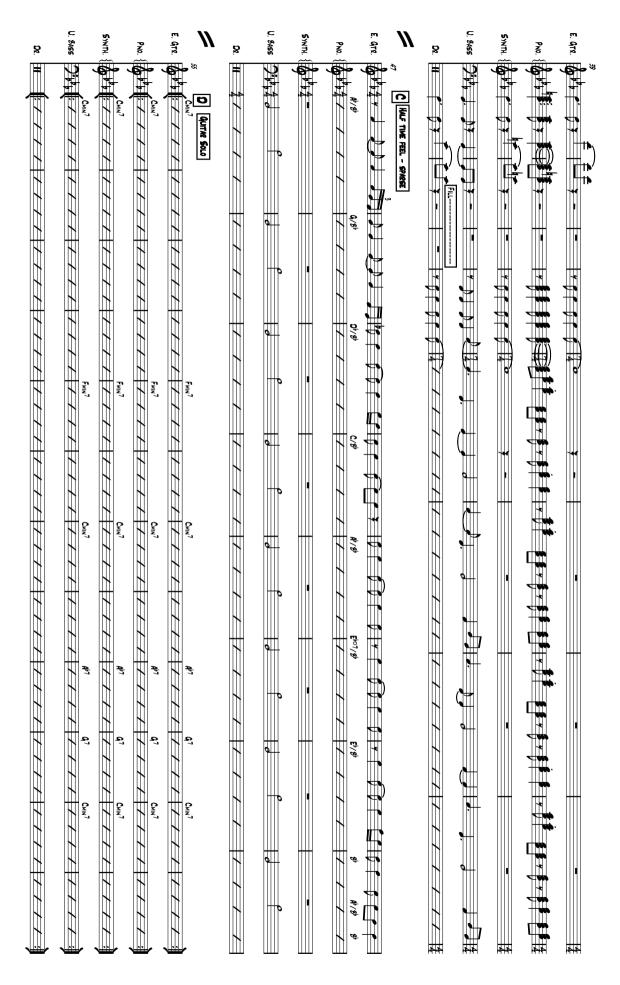




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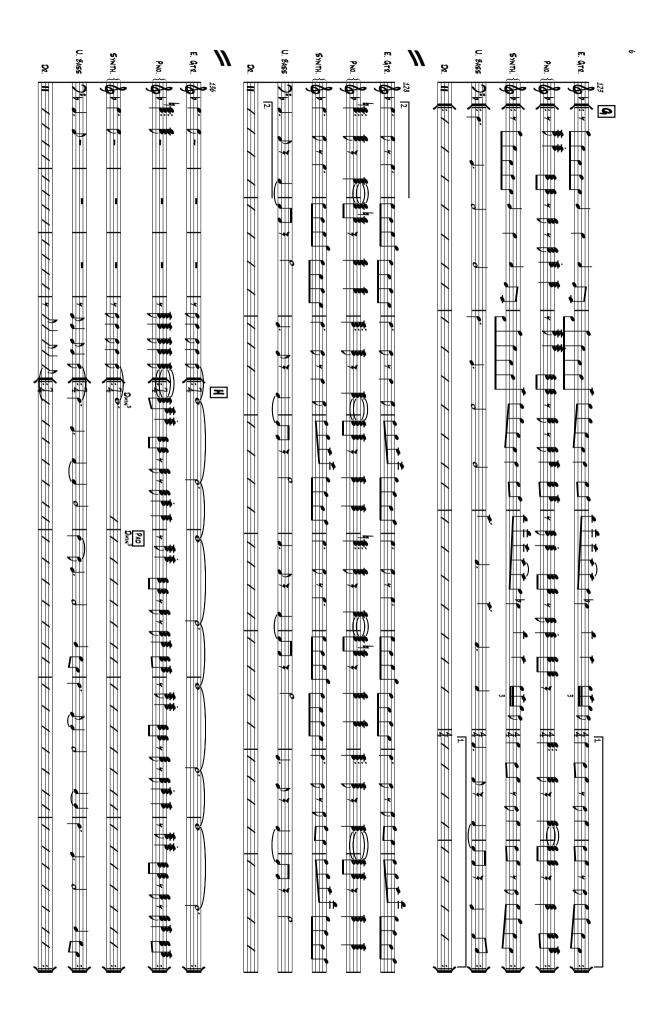
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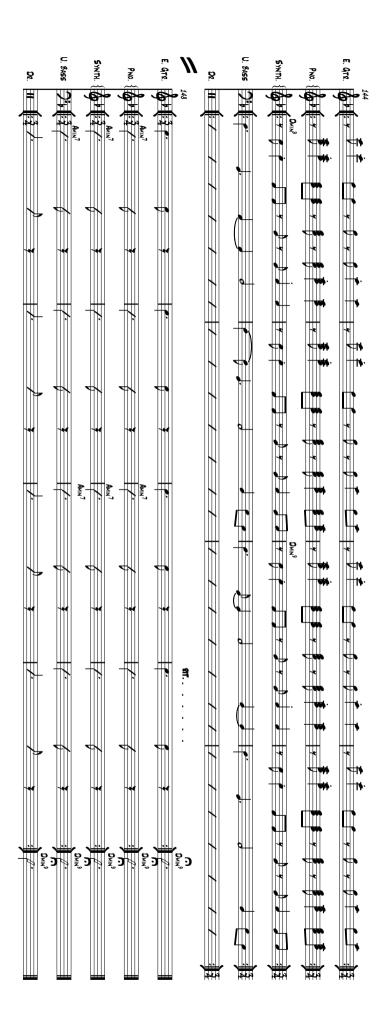
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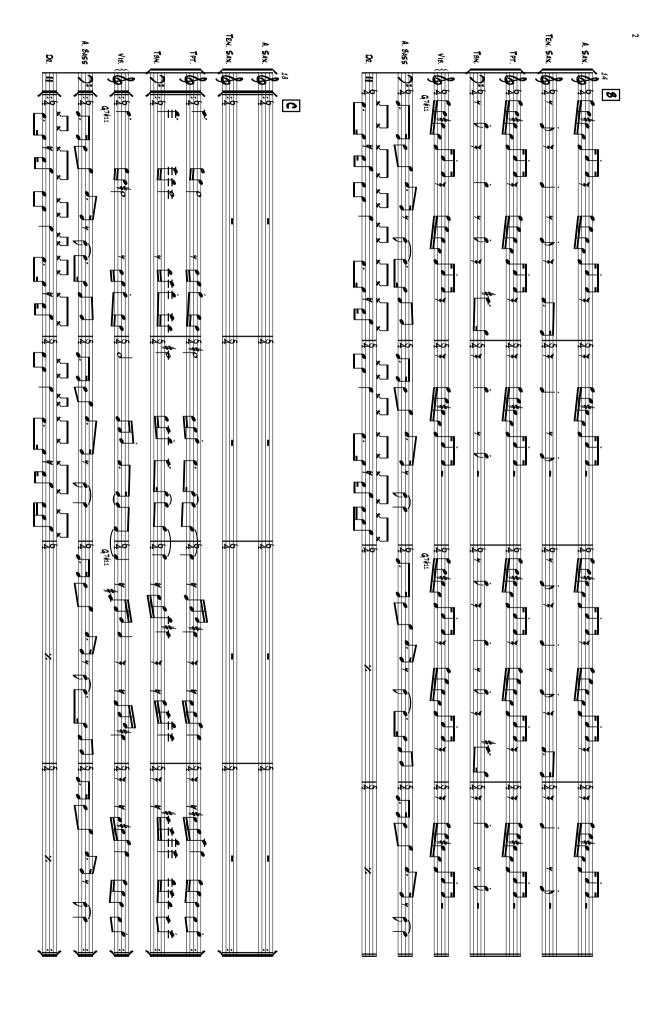
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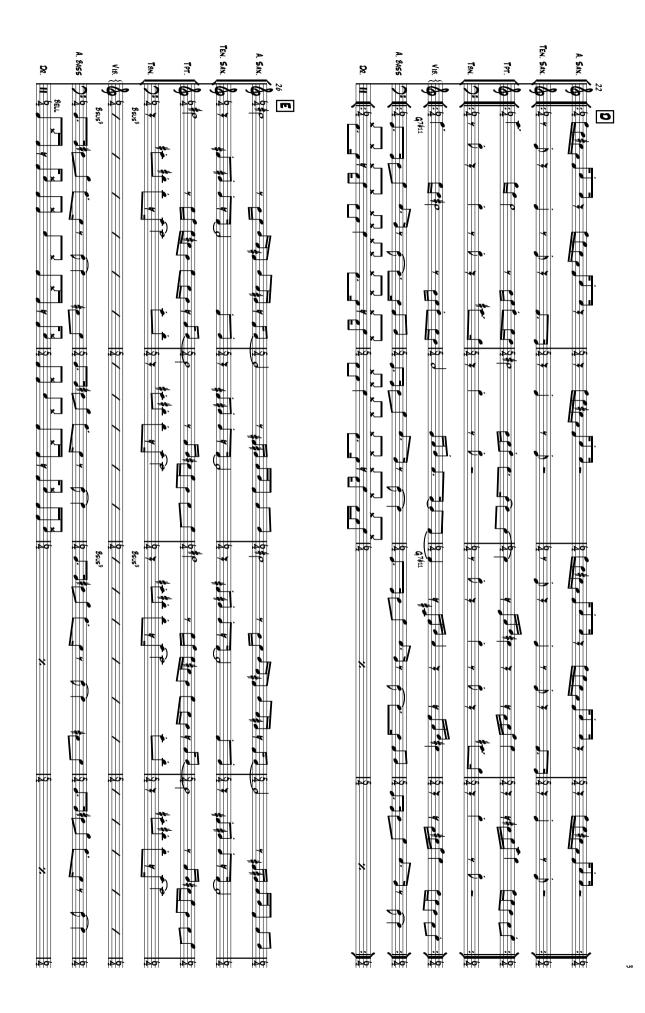
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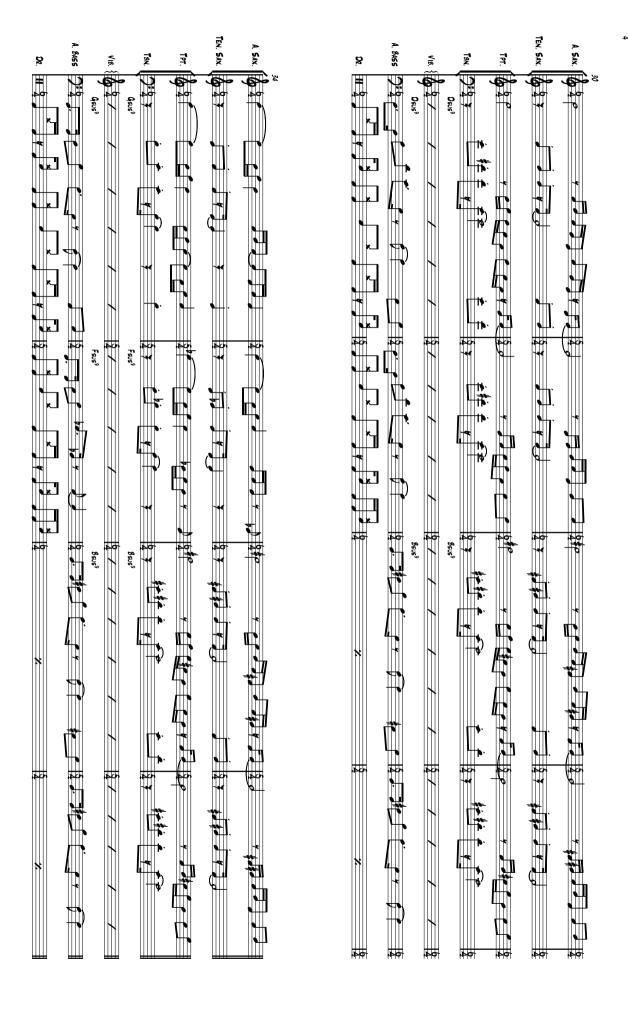


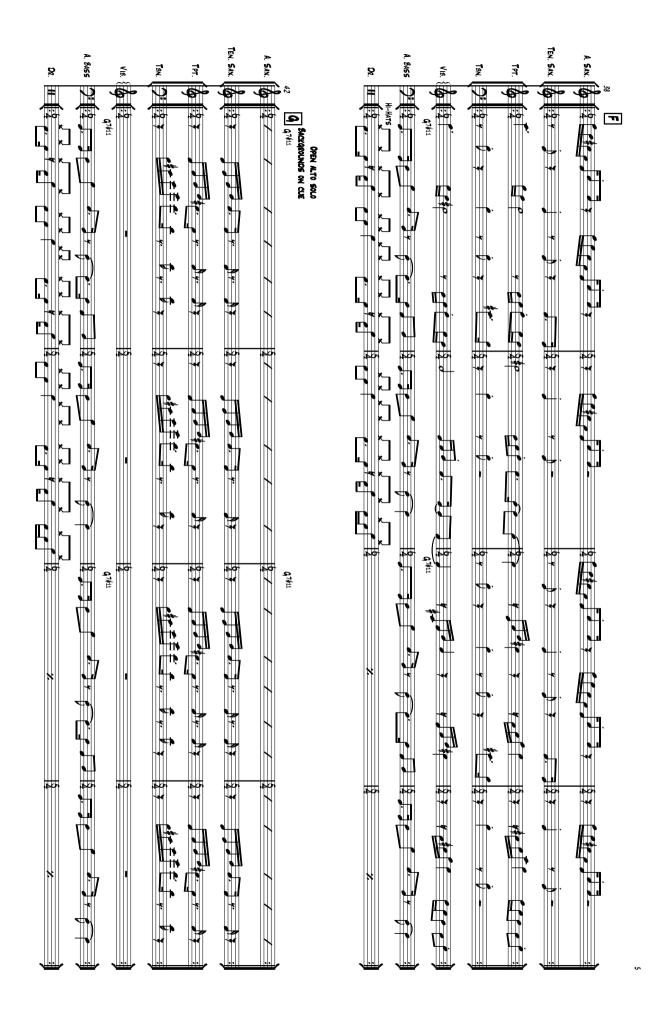


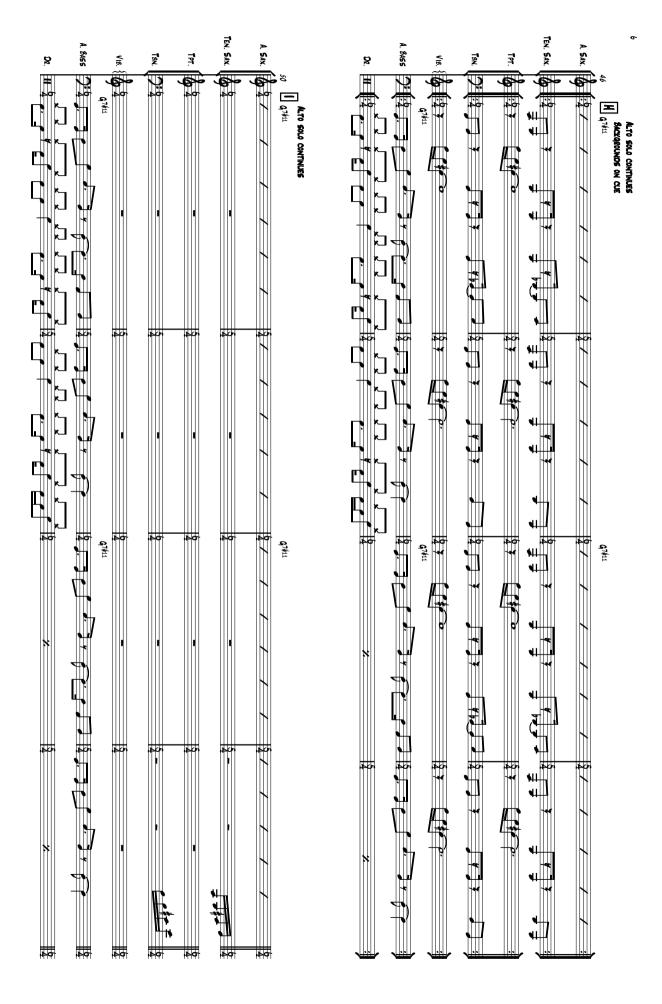
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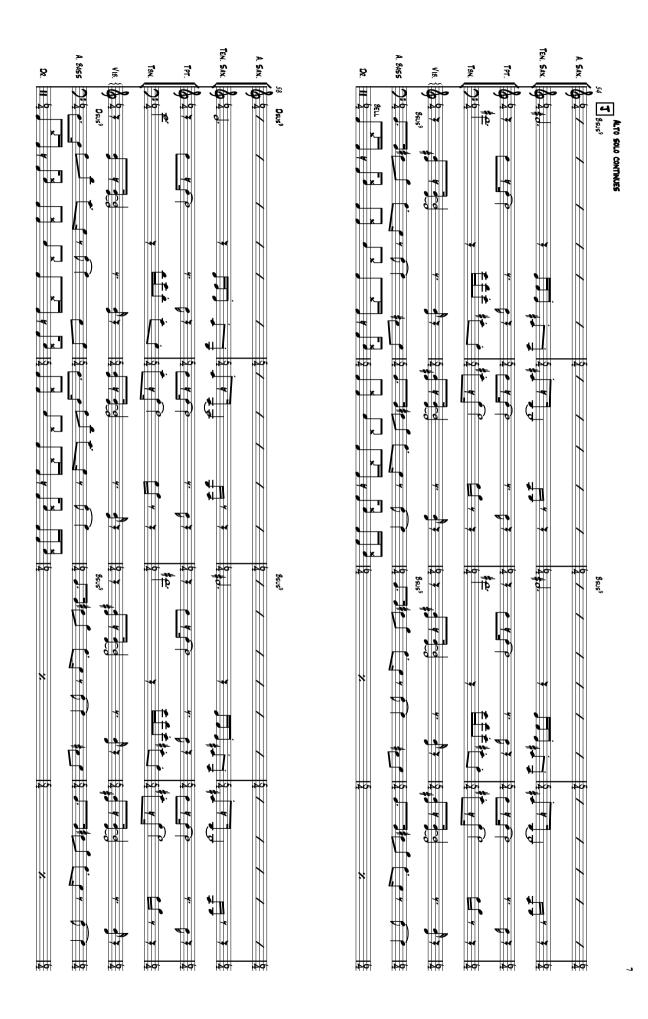




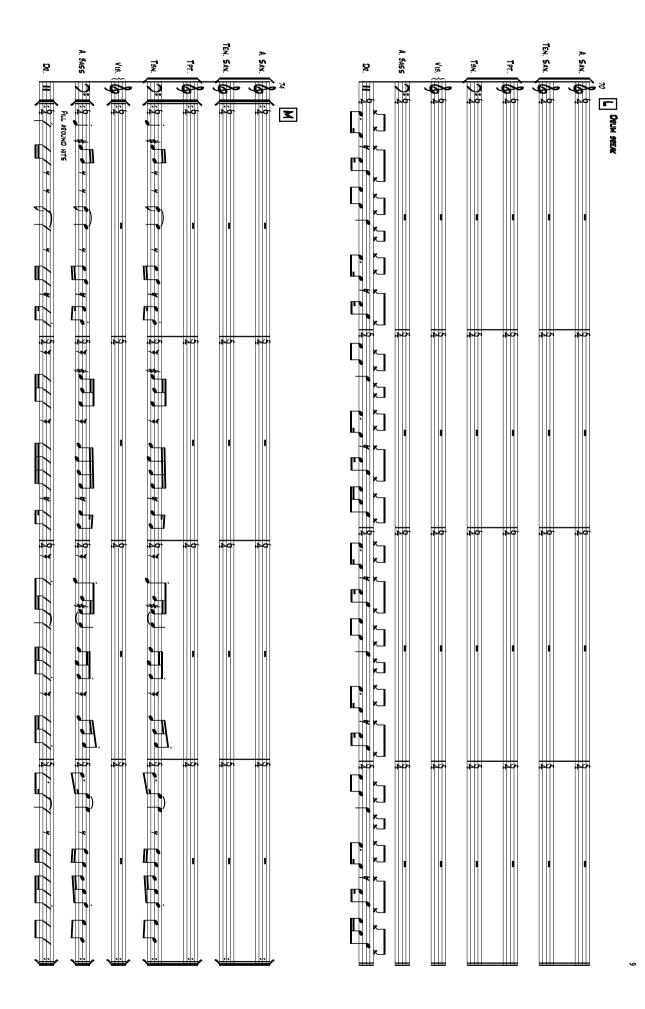


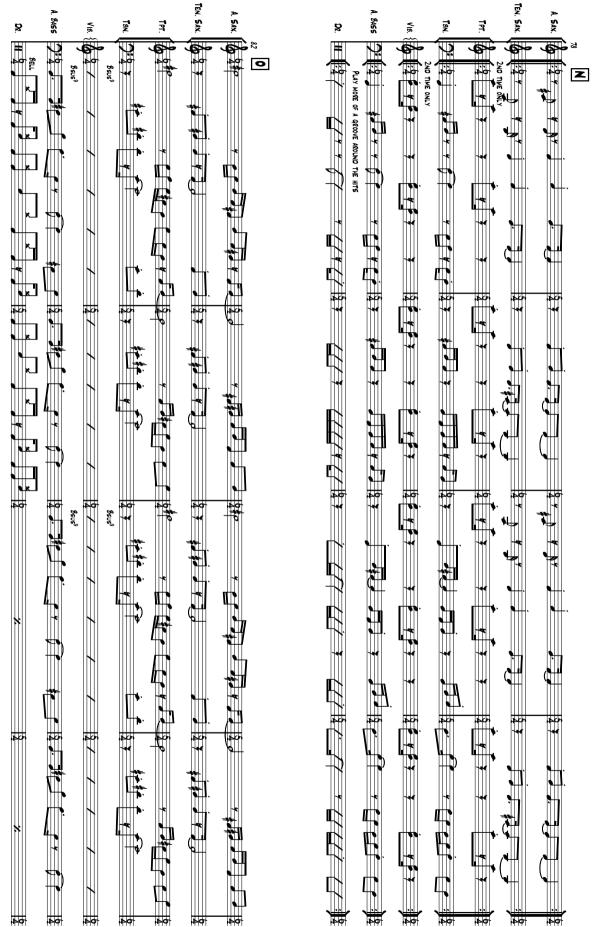


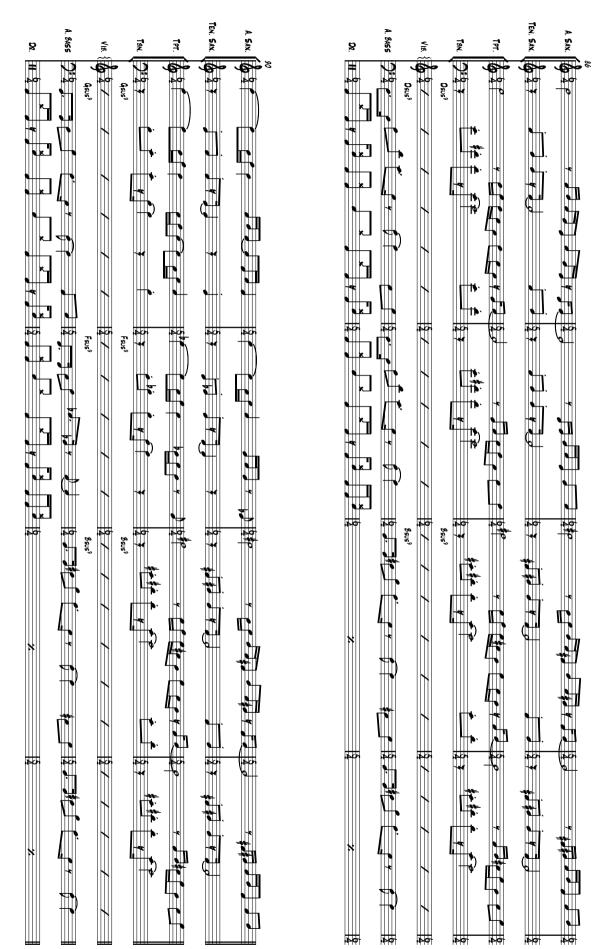




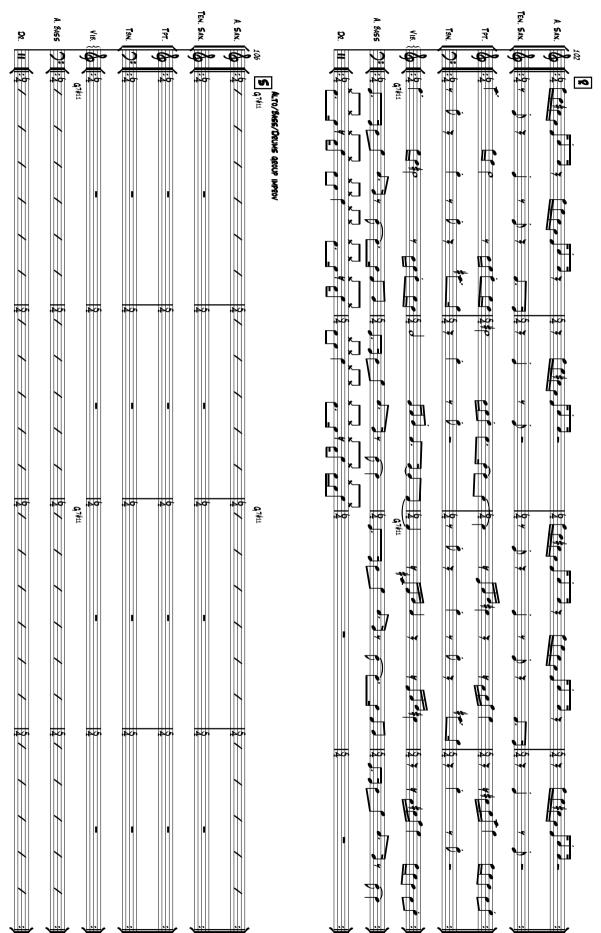
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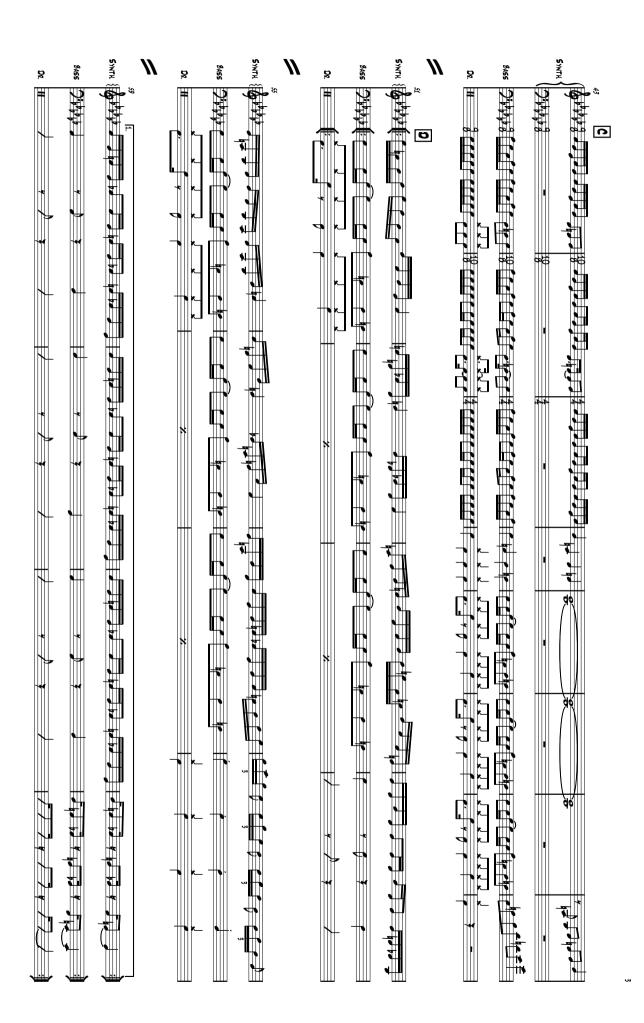


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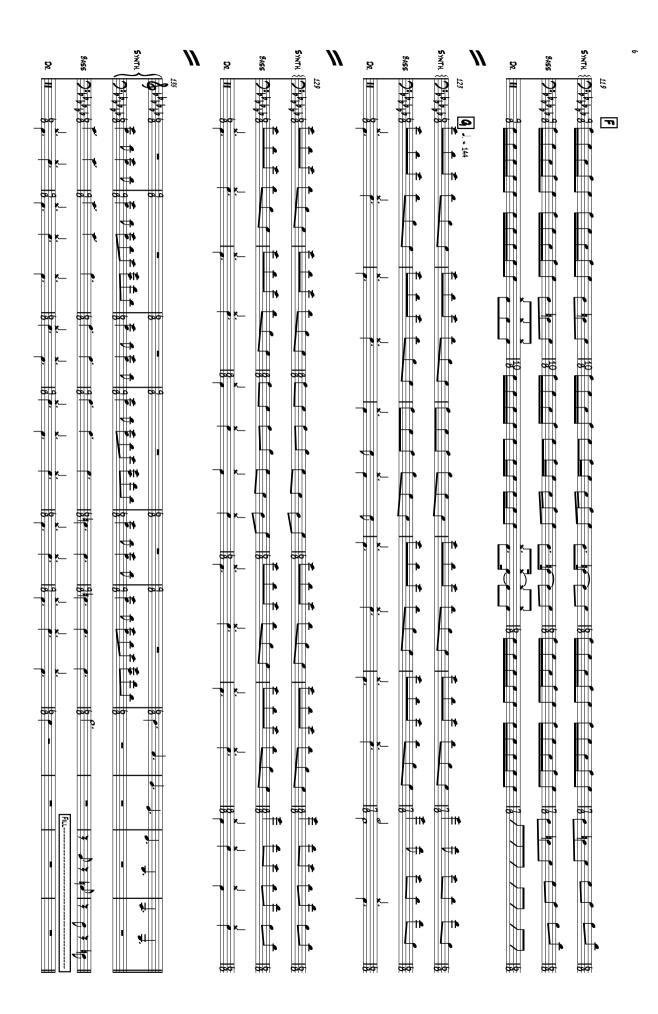
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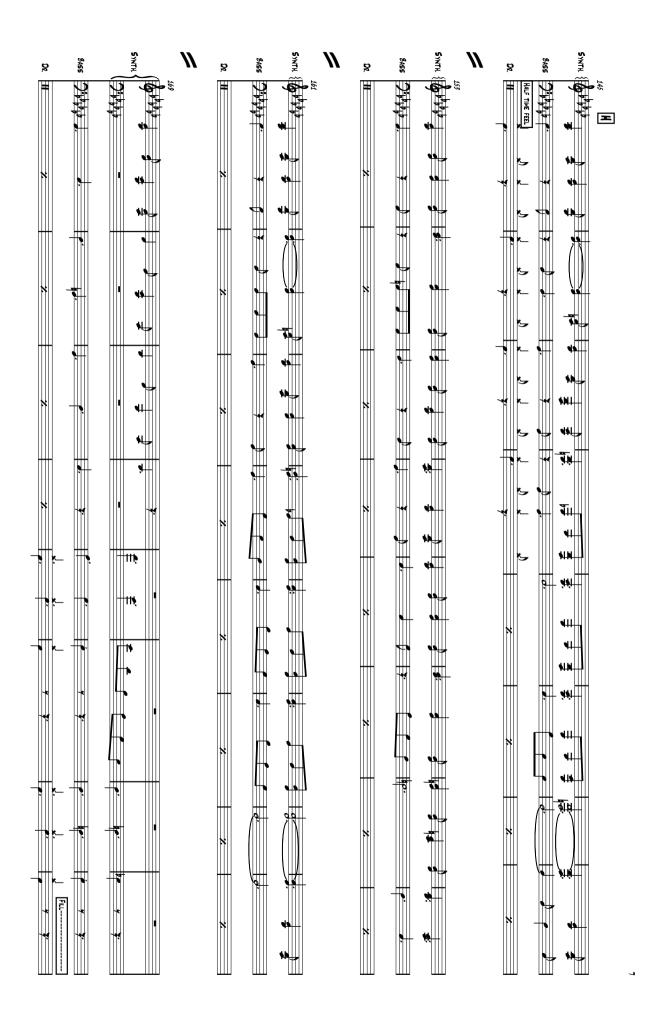
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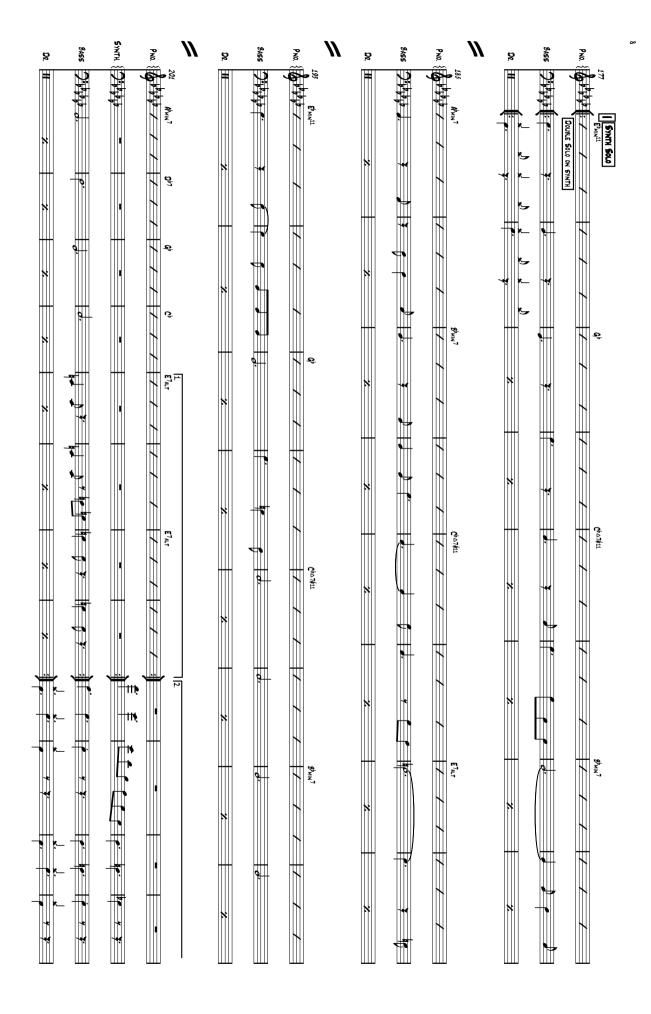


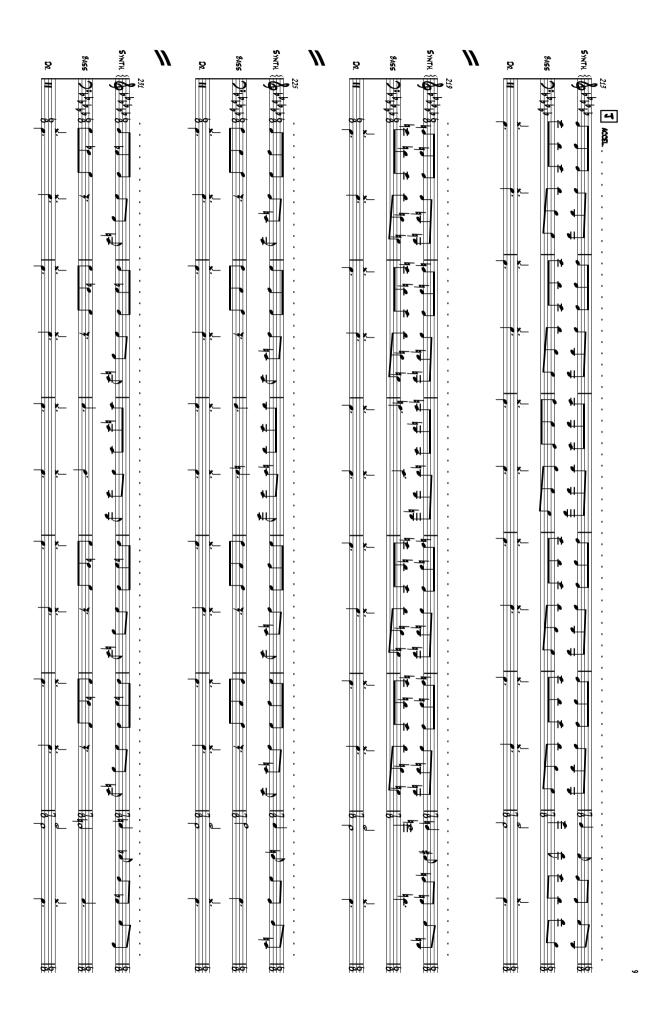


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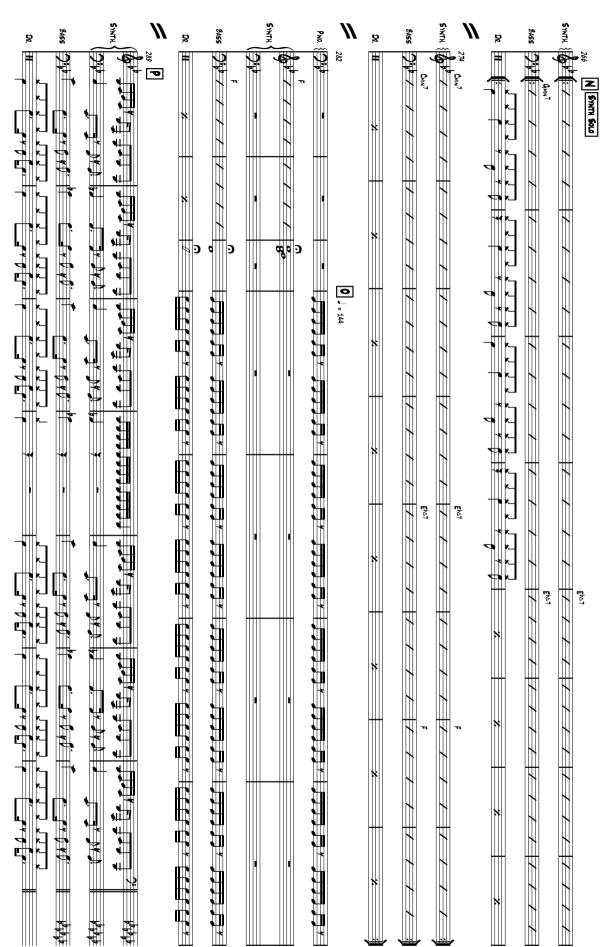




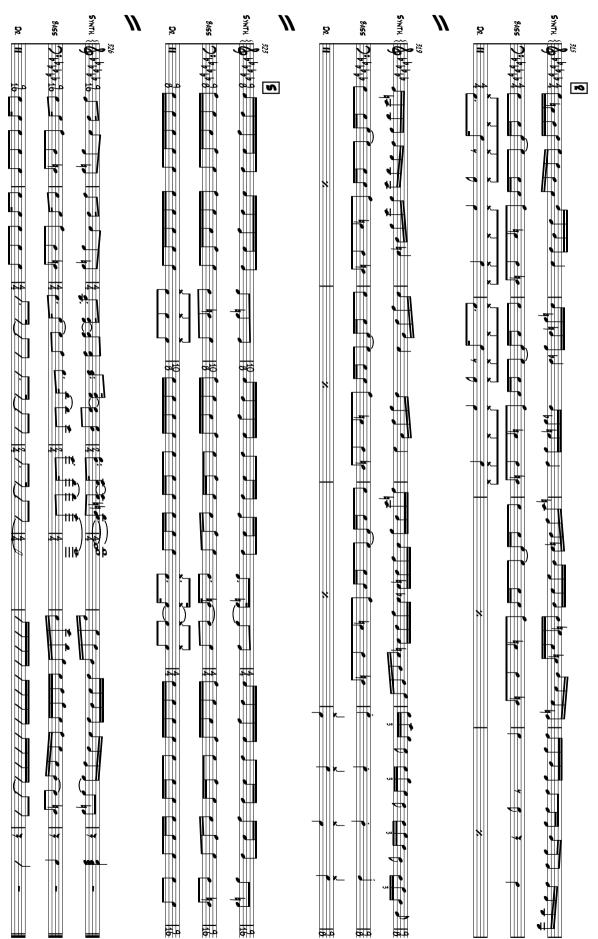


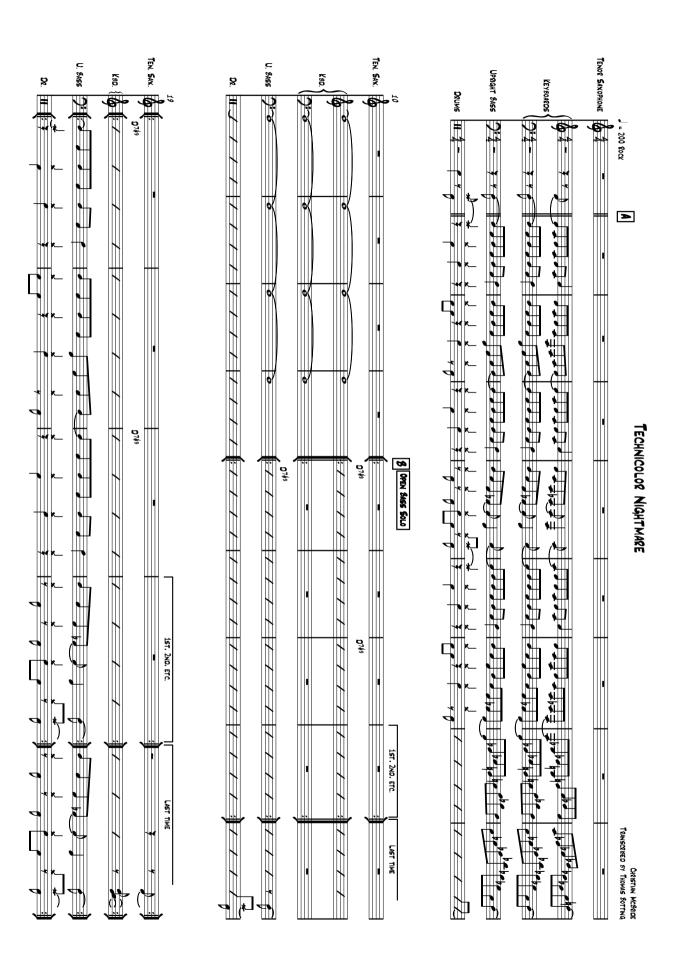


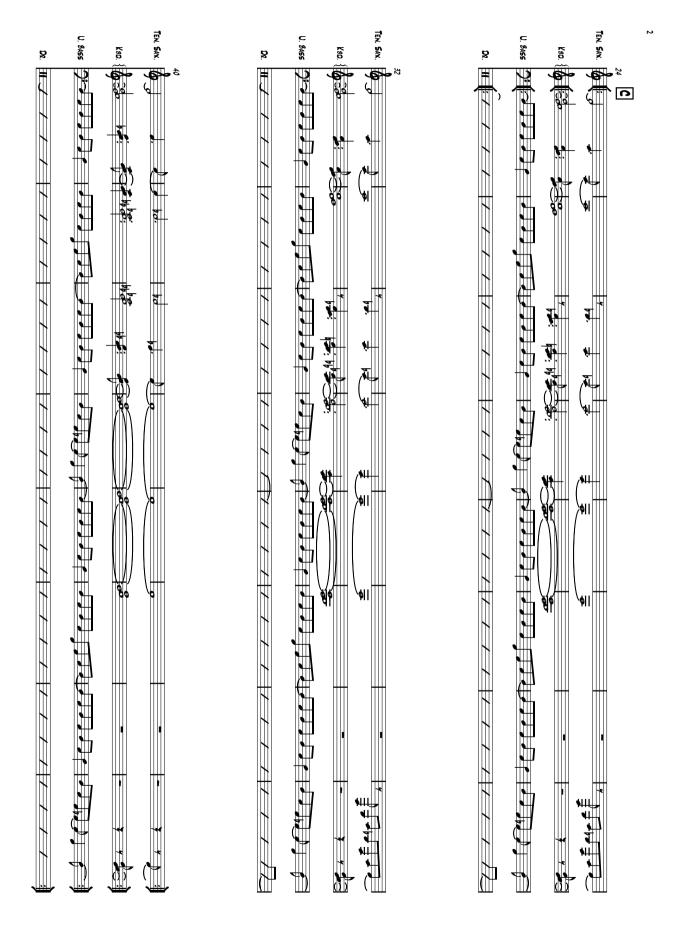
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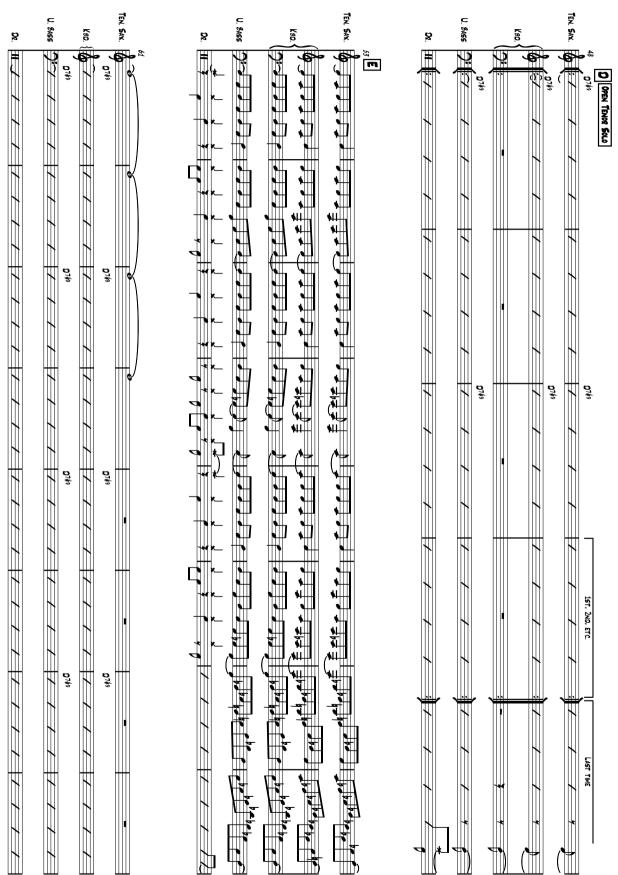


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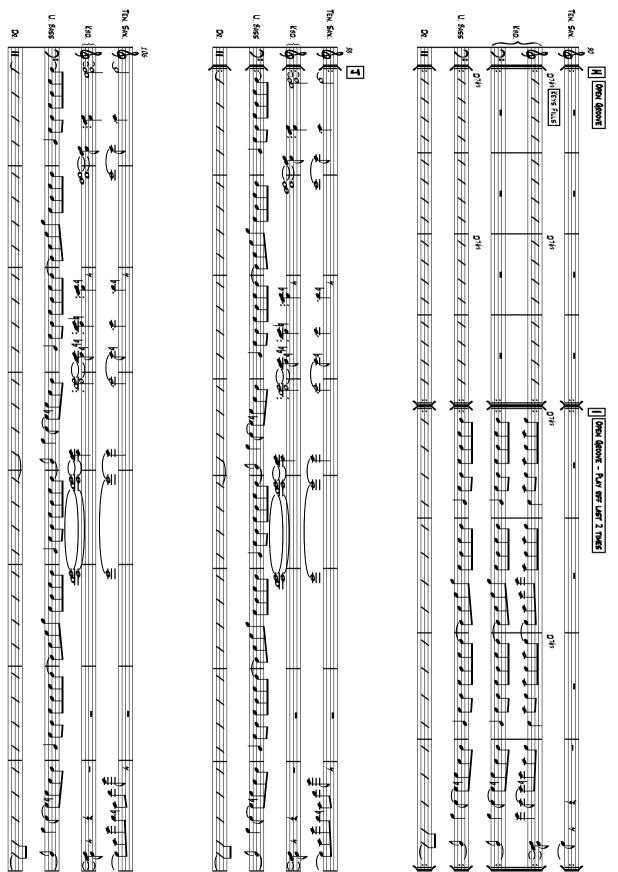






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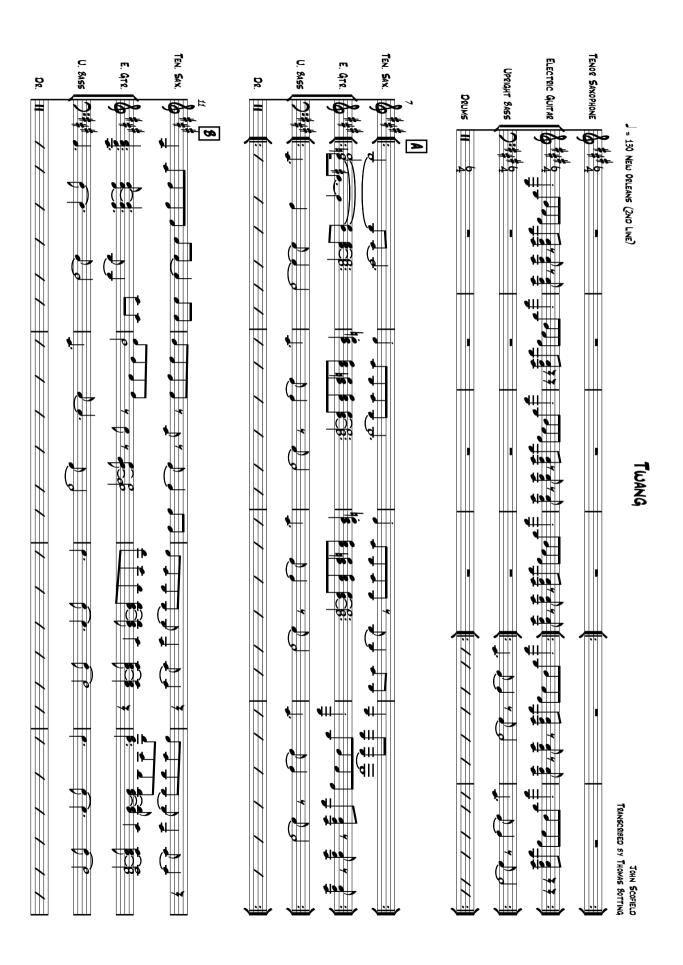
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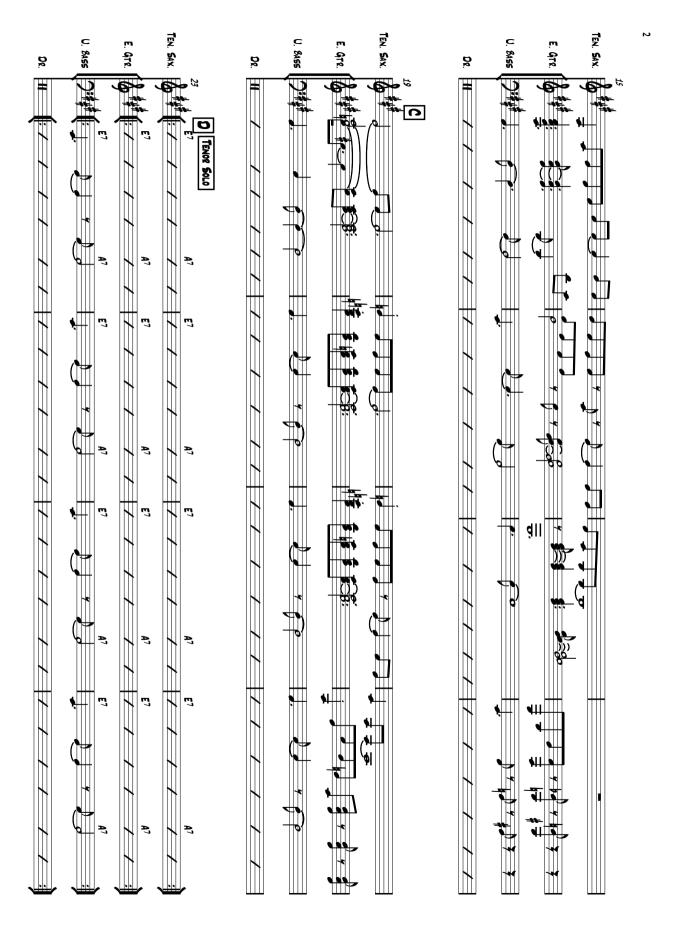


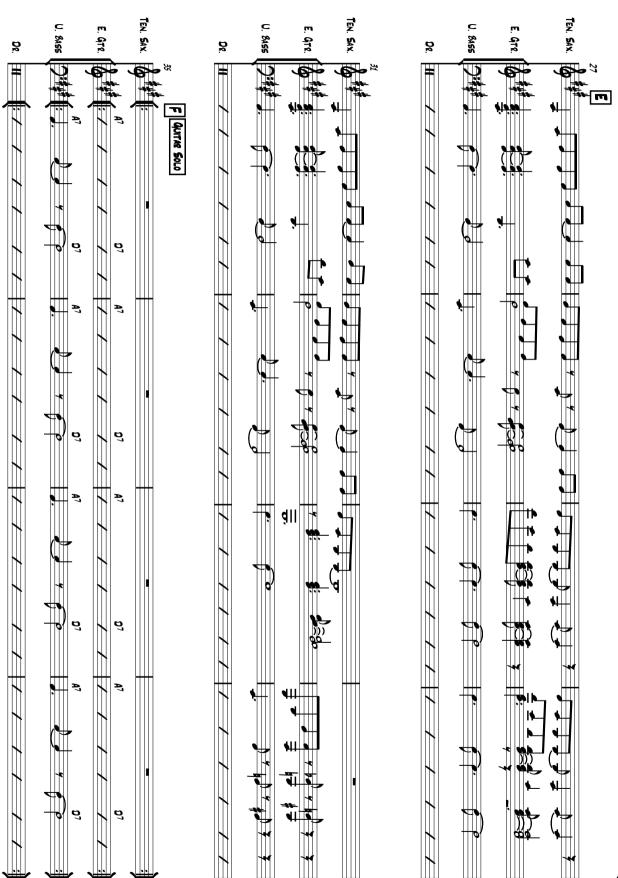
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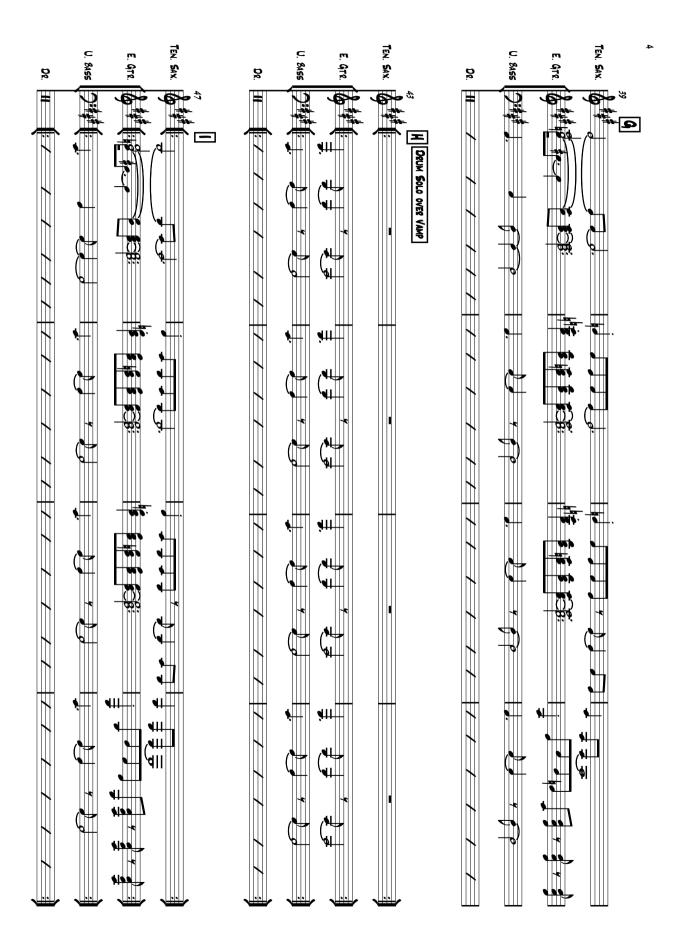


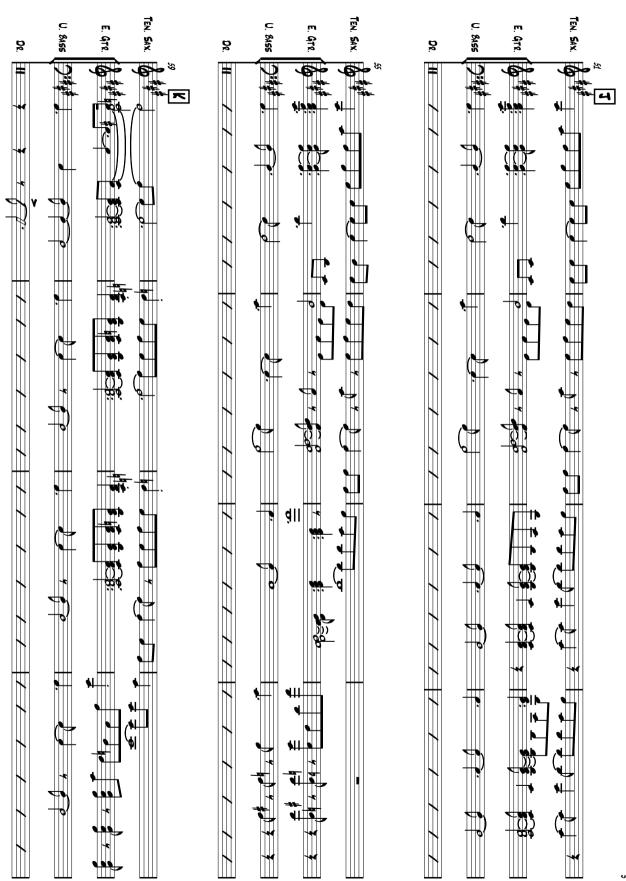


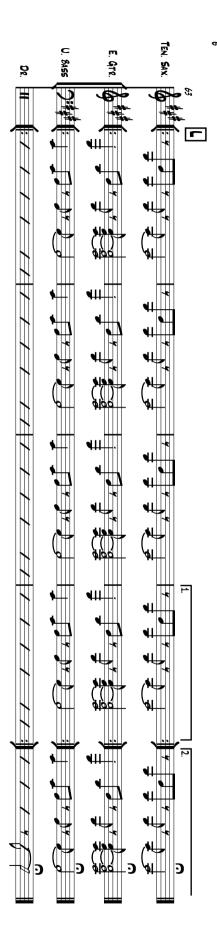




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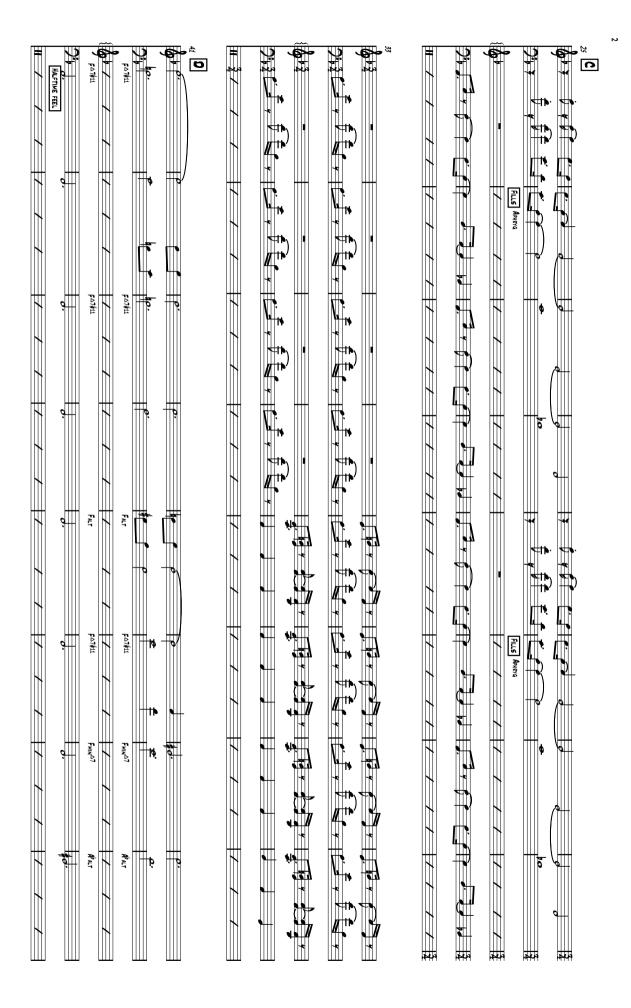


## Appendix 2: Original Compositions

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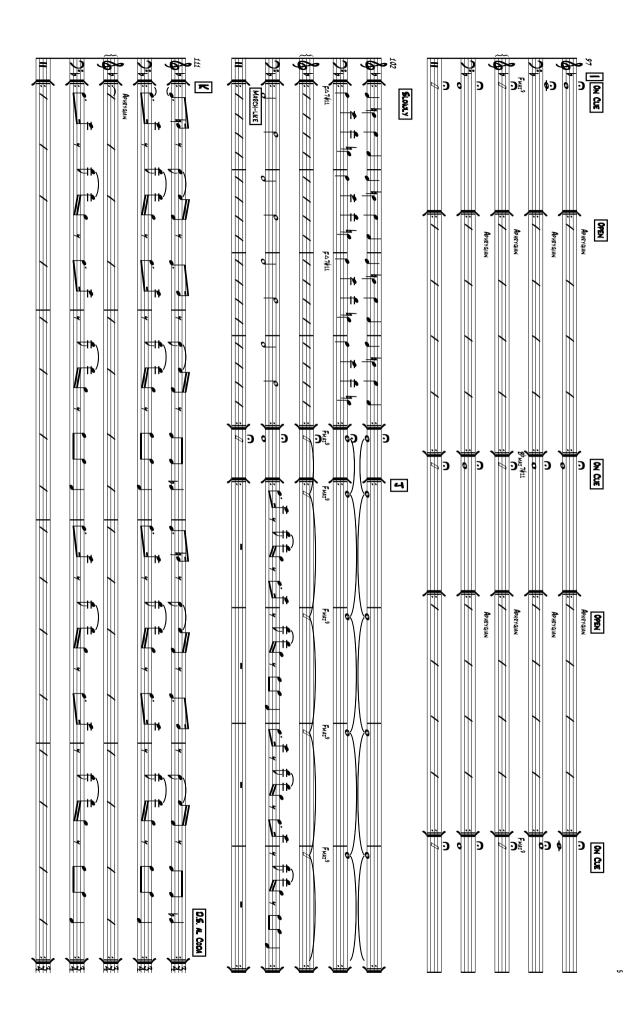
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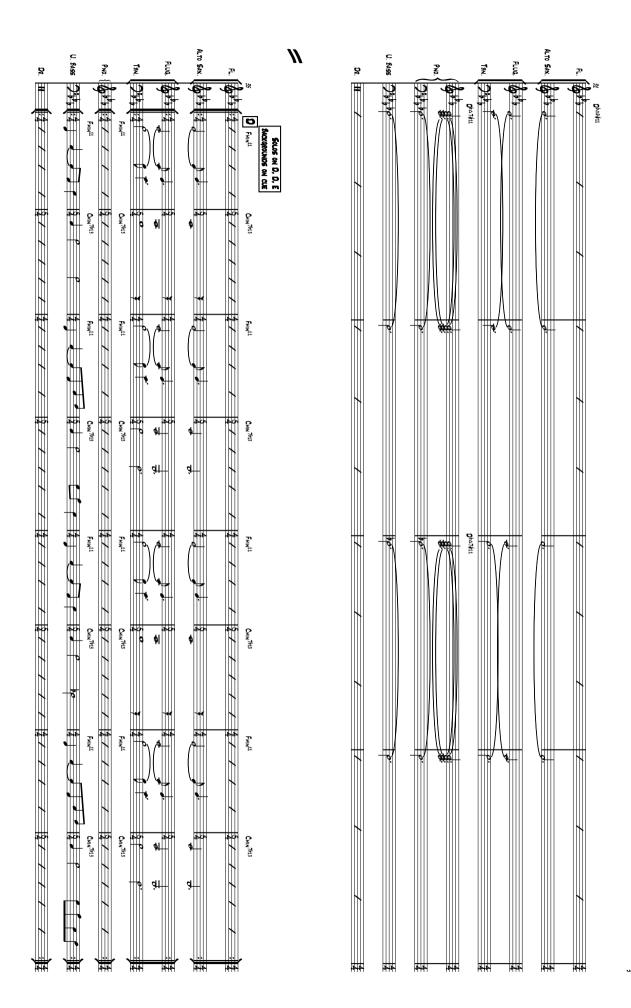
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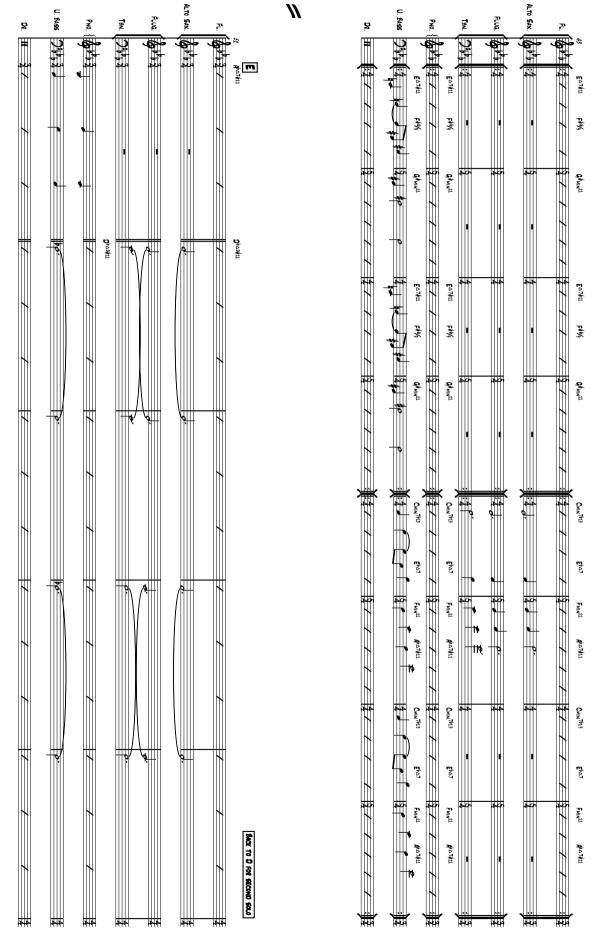
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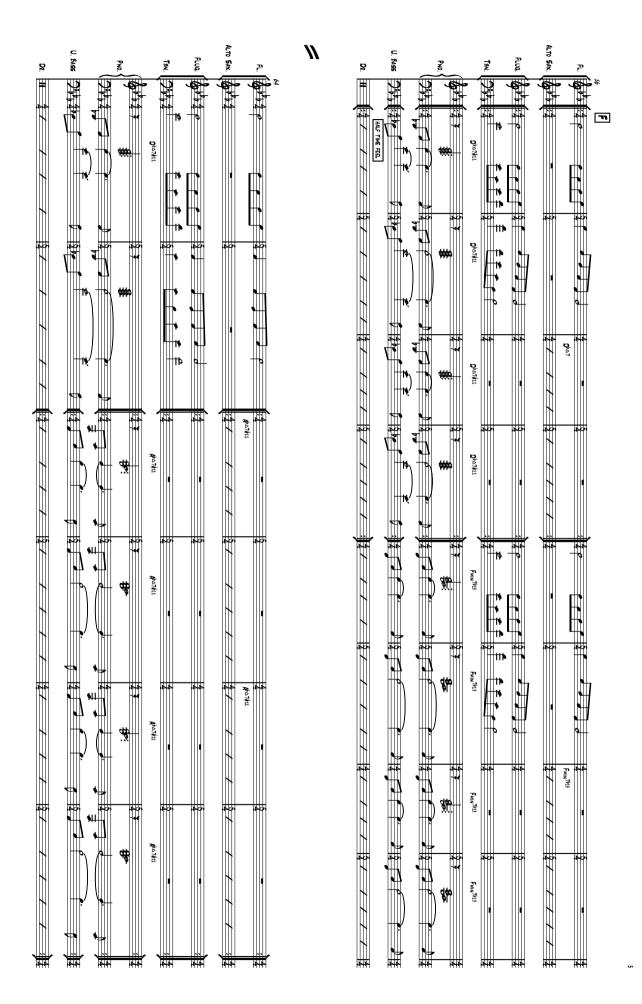
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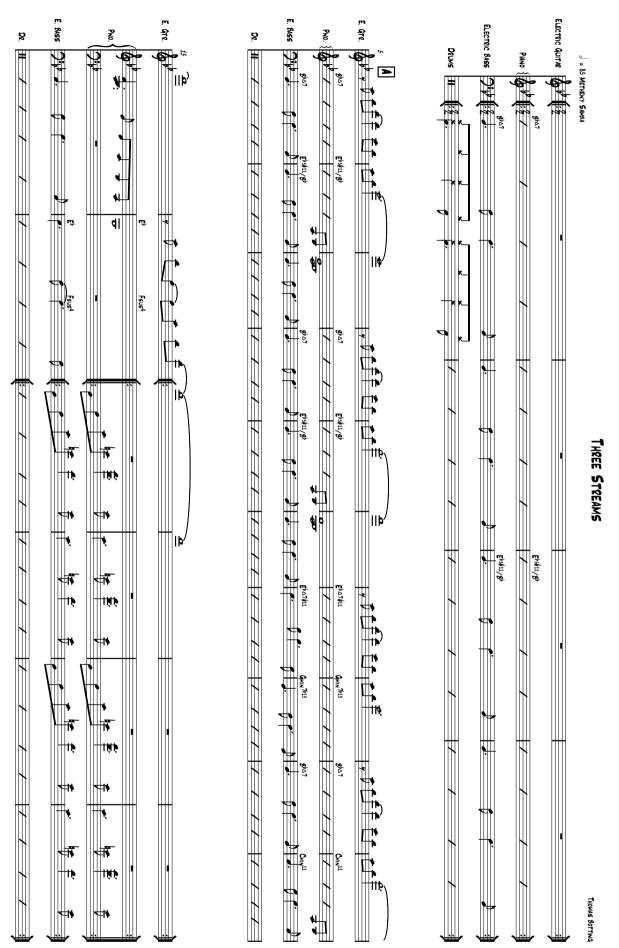
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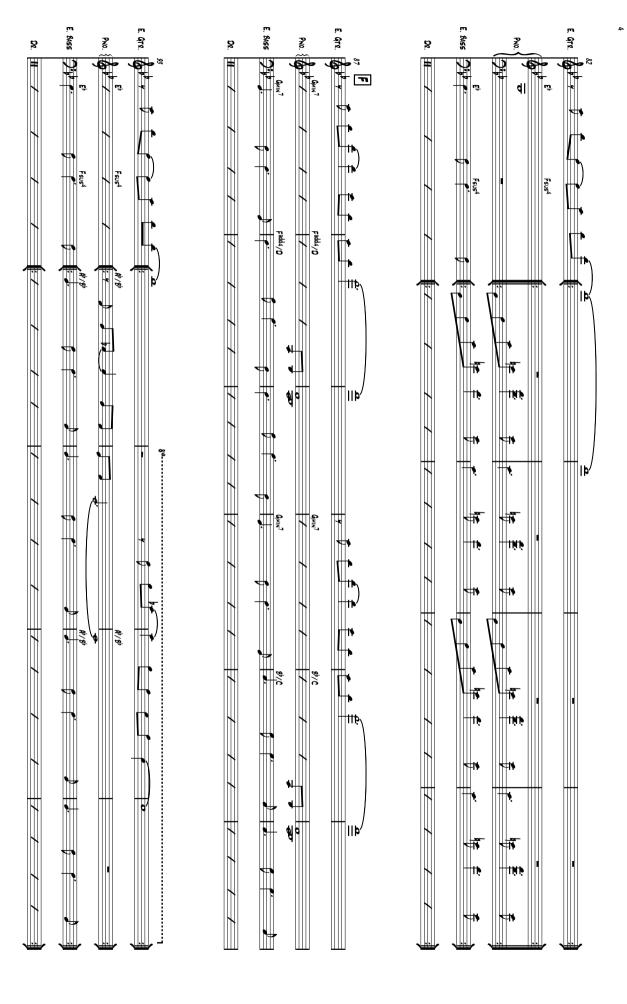
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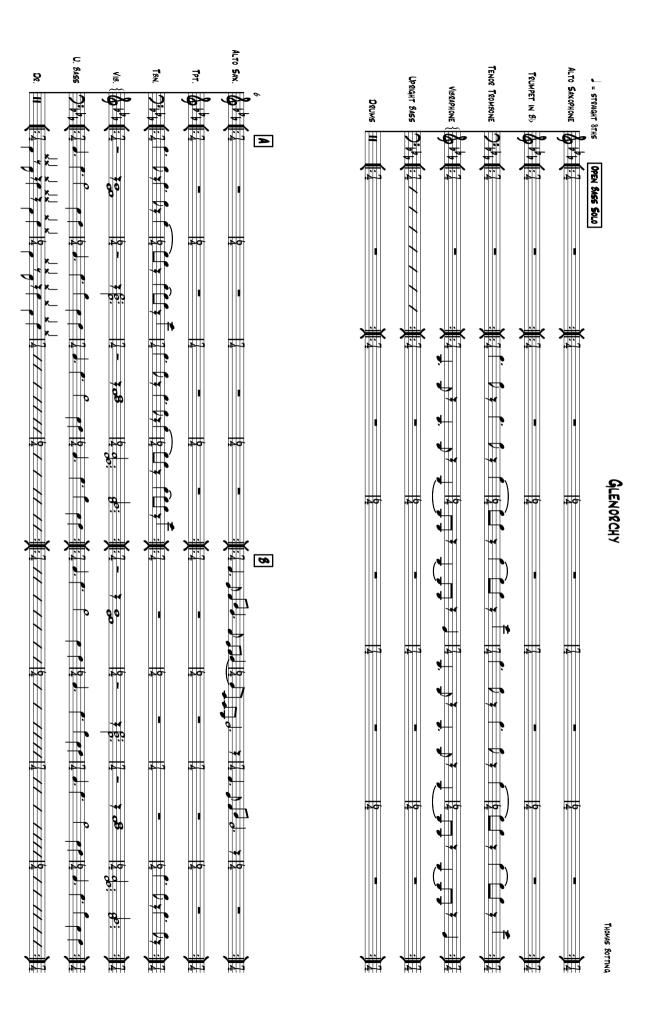
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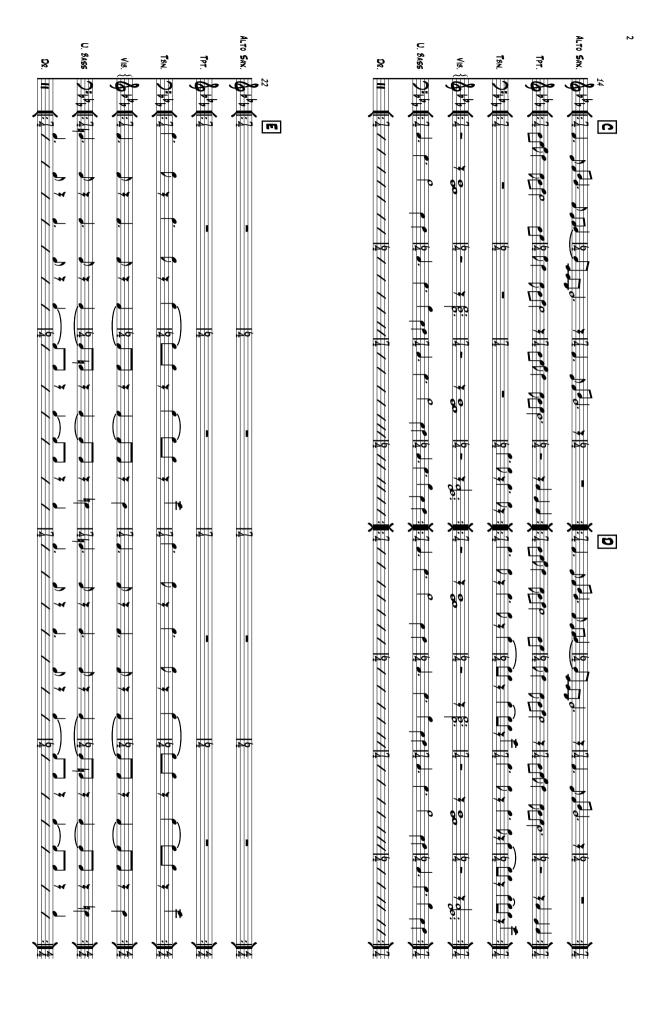
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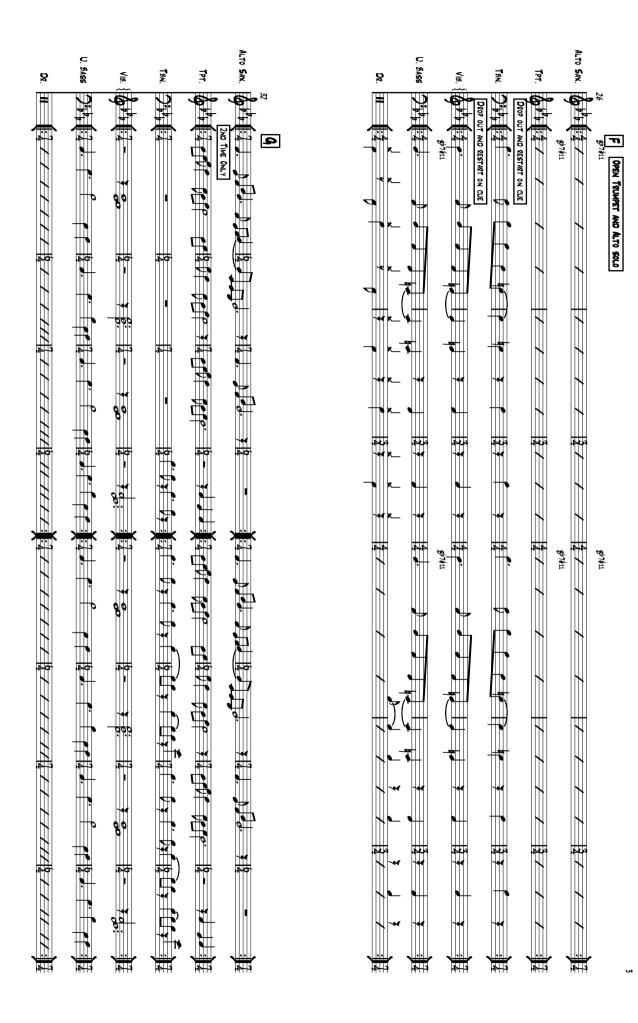


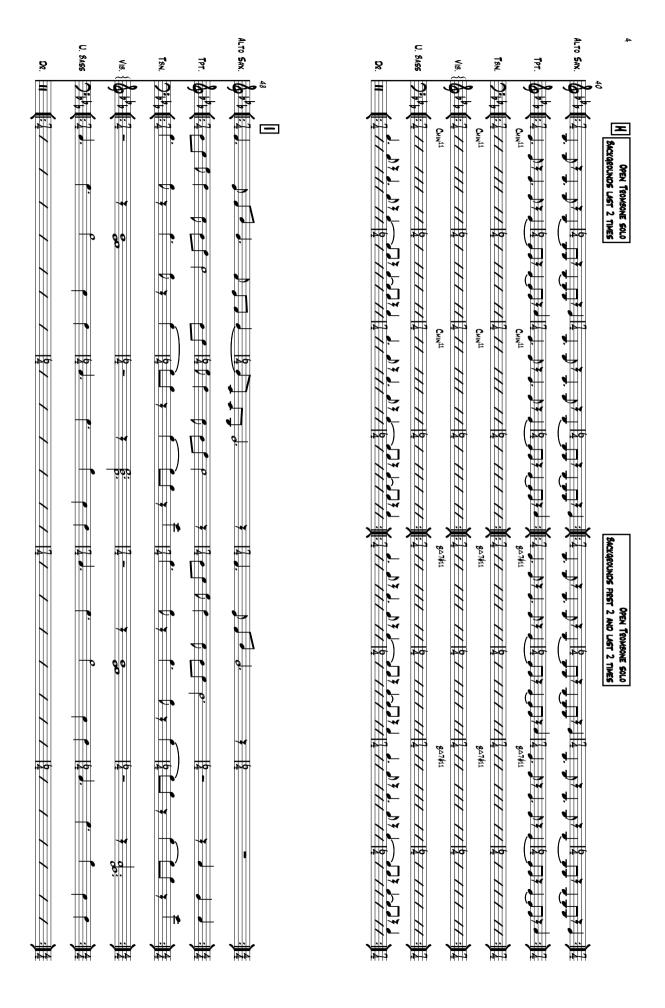


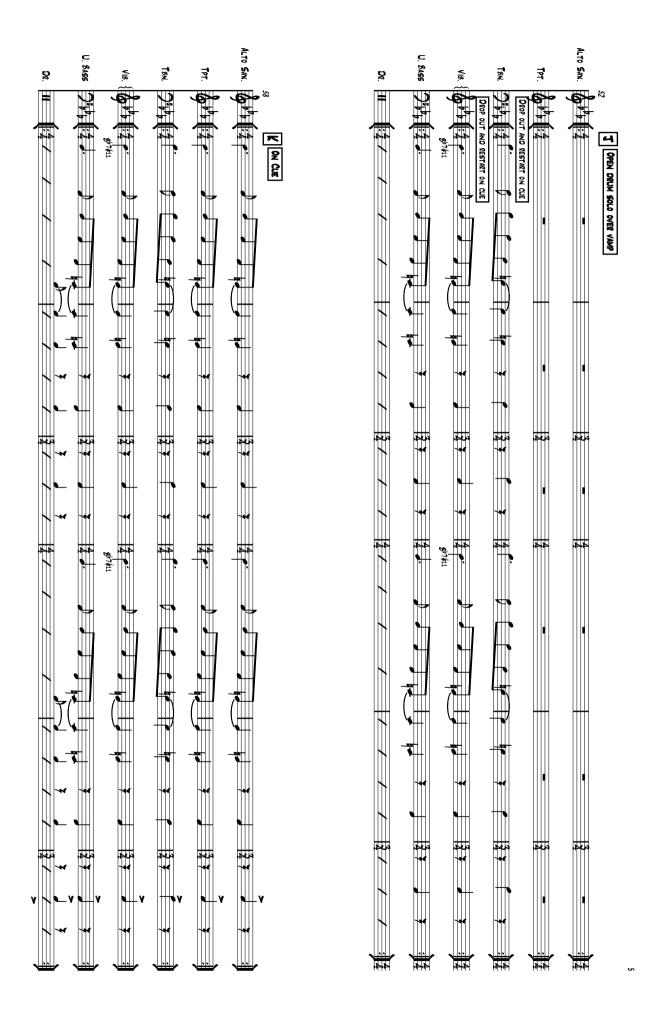
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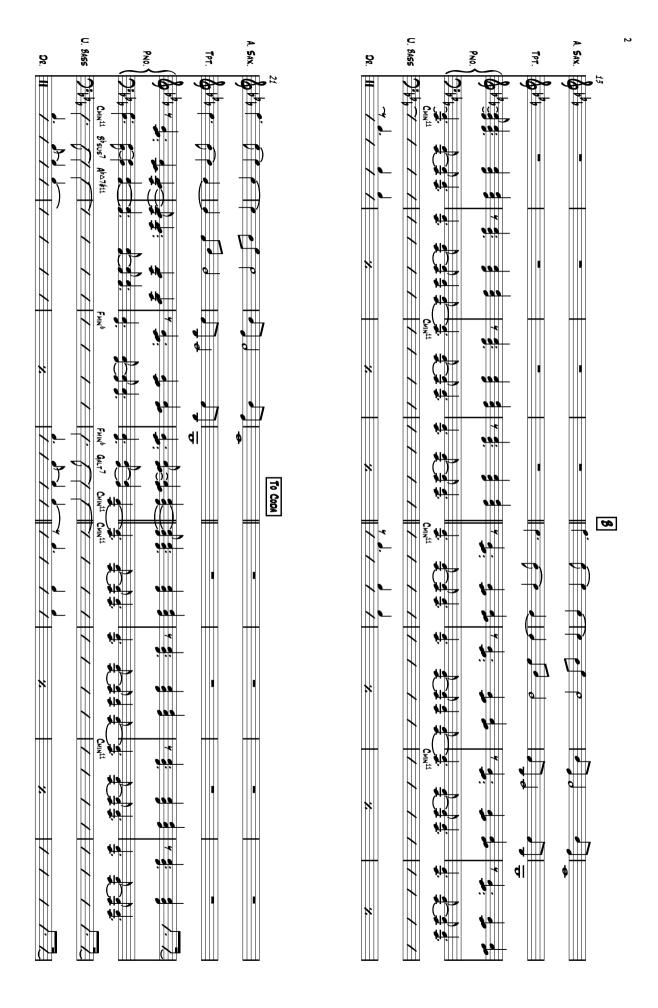


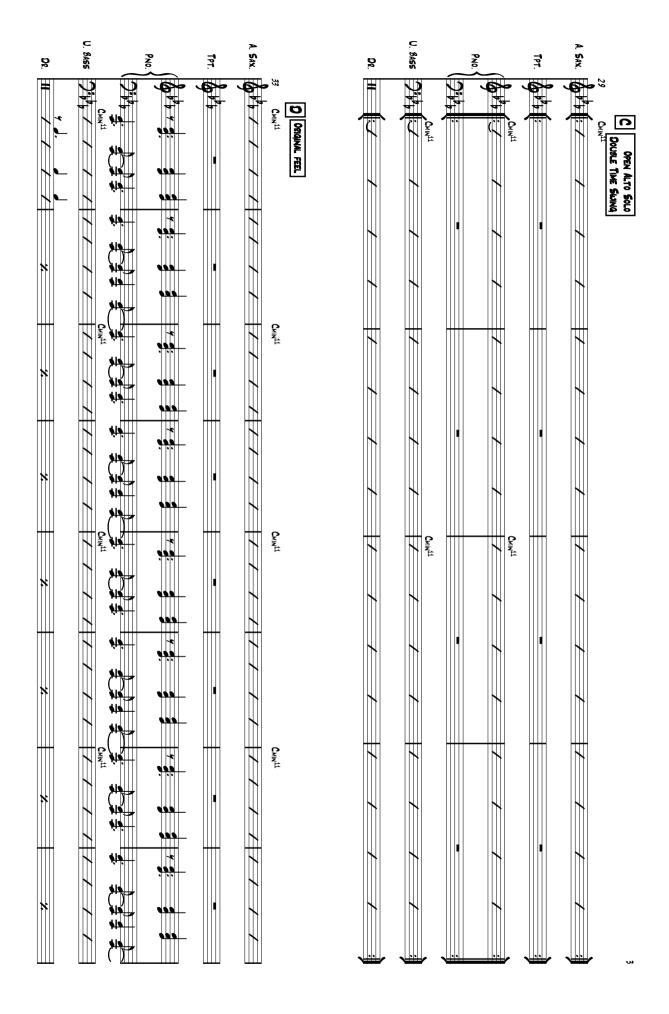






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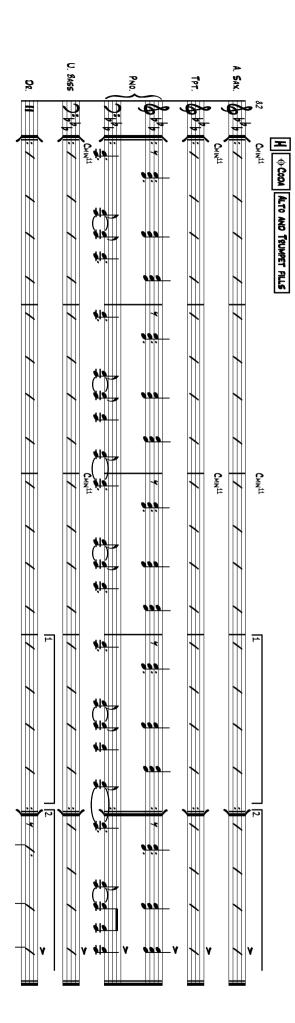


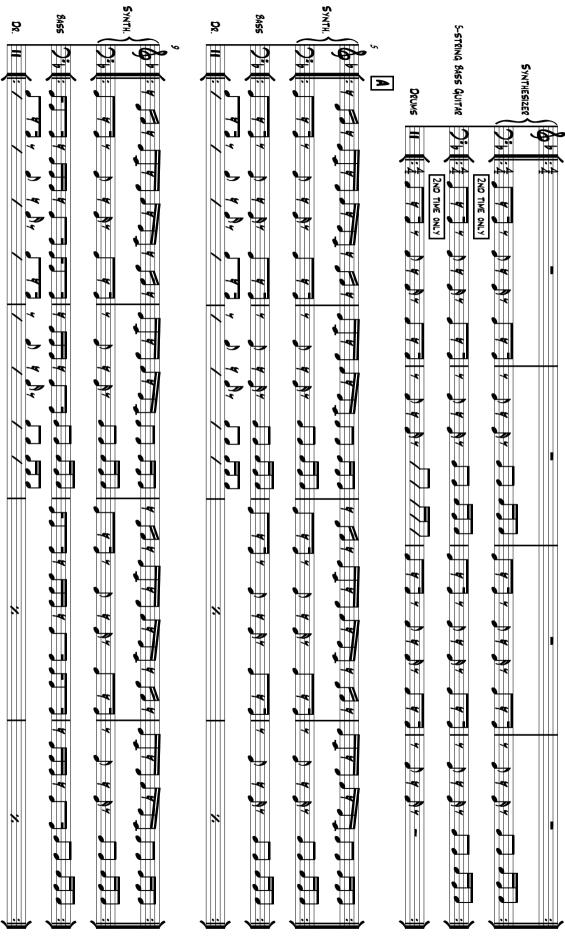






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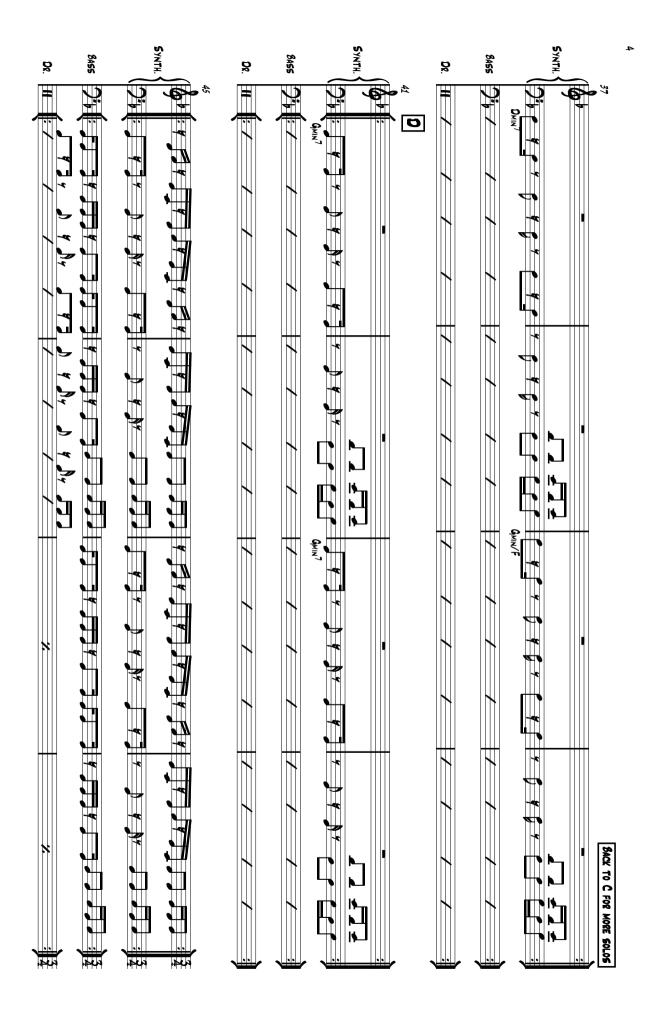


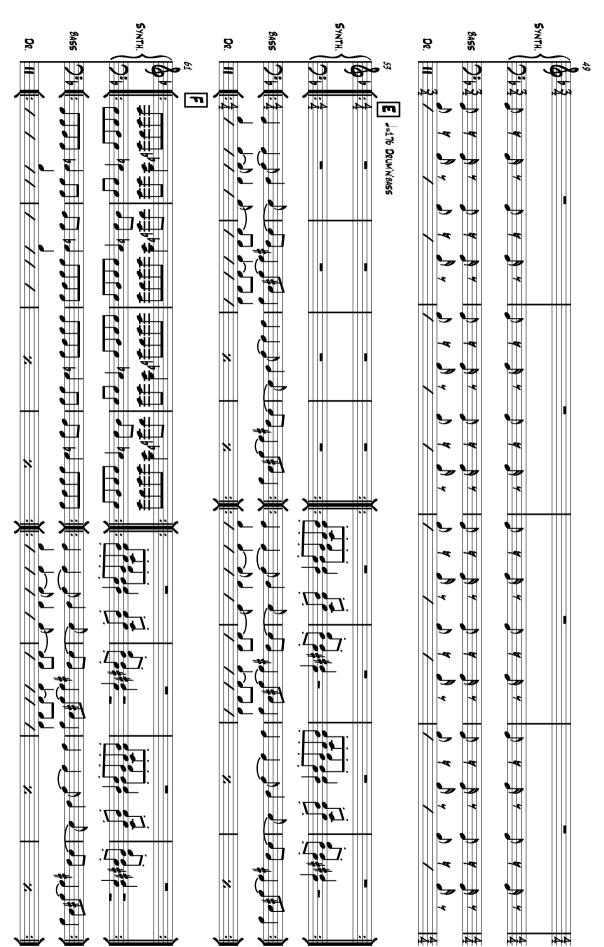


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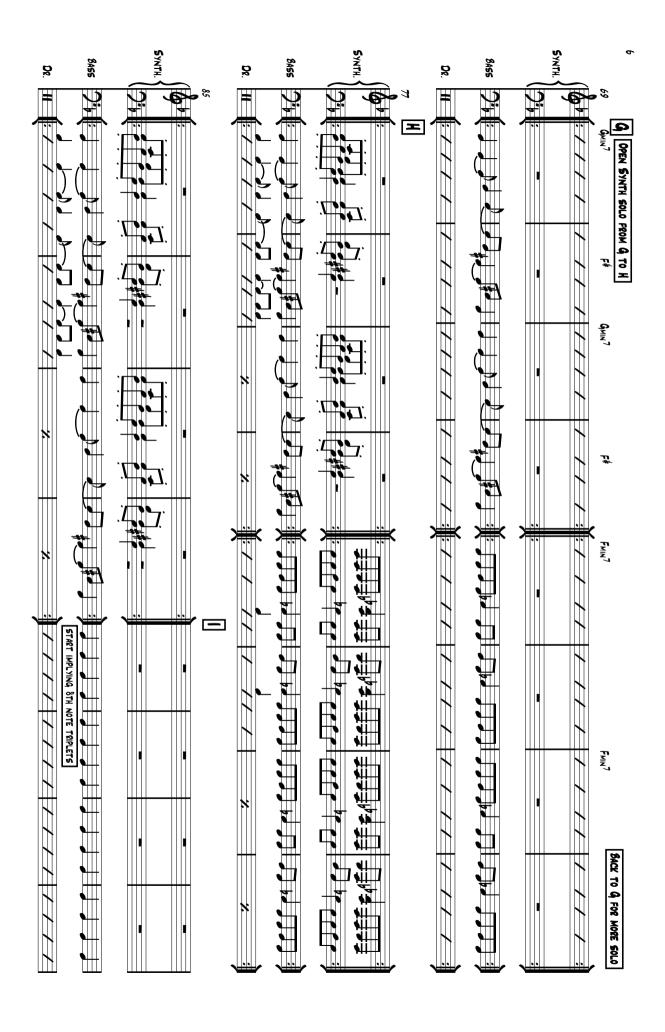








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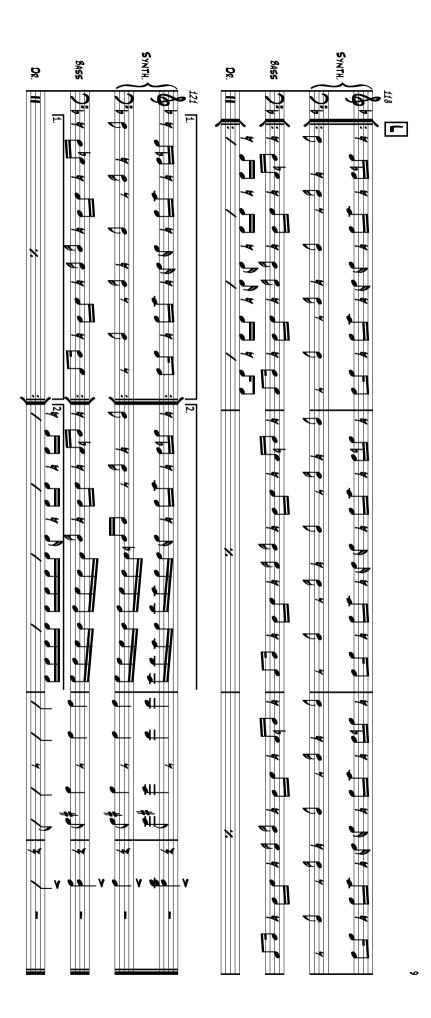


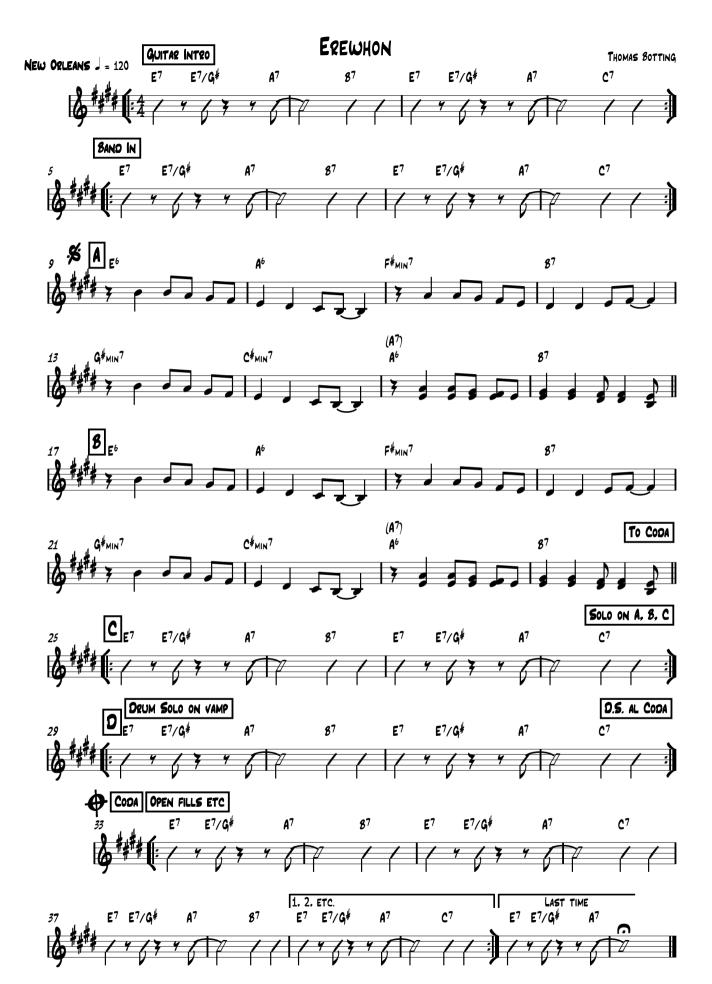


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