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Framing Freedom: Bandleading in Jazz and Improvised Music

Mark Holub

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Abstract

This thesis uses the concept of group language to examine the bandleader's role in creating the sound world of an ensemble in jazz and improvised music. It contributes to existing scholarship on jazz and improvisation, as well as to literature around leadership in jazz and wider leadership theory to create a deeper understanding of the role of the bandleader.

Methodologically, the project combines the qualitative analysis of original interview data, with creative practice research methods. Anthropods – an ensemble in its own right – was established to run concurrently within and alongside the term of the doctoral project, enabling enquiry into the creation of the group's sound world and the bandleader's role from the very start through a four-year history. A body of creative musical practice was generated systematically through the author's own practice-led enquiry on the development of group language within Anthropods. This original new body of creative output is presented as a combination of recordings, films, and scores as an integral part of this PhD submission. The material output of the portfolio exemplifies systematic, creative scrutiny of the process of the ensemble's emergent group language, including reflection on the role of the bandleader.

Alongside this longitudinal creative practice, ten semi-structured interviews were conducted with leading bandleaders. These were analysed through Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis to reveal how individual interviewees' approaches to band-leading enable them to generate trust and to develop deep understanding of a band's improvising language. Findings from the IPA interview study were integrated into the longitudinal creative practice with Anthropods, providing further insights into leaders'

relationships with their group's language development, and strategies used by bandleaders of groups with mature shared musical group language. By connecting the emergent understanding of each bandleader's approach with their musical output, this thesis illustrates how bandleaders' working practices connect to their desired output, underlining how the bandleader's main role relates to the development of the ensemble's group language. It also highlights how bandleaders refine a personal, authentic approach to create the clarity and trust required in a successful improvising ensemble.

Lay Summary

Name of student:	Mark Holub		UUN	s1982790
University email:				
Degree sought:	PhD in Creative Music Practice	No. of words in the main text of thesis:	49623 words + musical scores / audiovisual media (circa 2 hours)	
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This research looks at the role of the bandleader in jazz and improvised music, and how bandleaders work to create an ensemble reflecting their artistic vision while working in the collaborative world of jazz and improvised music.

To achieve this, this research has interviewed ten established and practising bandleaders from the jazz and improvised music scene in both Europe and North America, examining the bandleader's role within the ensemble, and the approaches involved in the ensemble's music creation.

Alongside the interview series, this research includes creative practice work where I have founded a new ensemble called Anthropods. The research follows Anthropods from the beginning of the project through to four years in, looking at the growth of the sound of the band from a completely new project to a band with a four-year and two-album history together.

This thesis provides new insights into leadership in jazz and improvised music, showing that the leaders' role is not in the moment of playing, but is rather about creating frameworks for an ensemble to work within.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank my partner Fiona Wootton for her support throughout the process. She supported this project through the early days of COVID, deciding if it was a good idea to go ahead with the future looking so uncertain, to listening to me bore on about findings, uncertainties, and what's next, for the four years that followed. Without this support, and this sounding board, the project would have certainly not been possible. I would also like to thank both my children, Maya and Owen Holub for putting up with me occupying a room in the house for 4 years and mostly letting me get on with things, with only the occasional "friend" popping in.

I would also like to thank my supervisory teams of Nikki Moran and Raymond MacDonald. They were able to take this drummer, who questioned constantly if there was a place for him in academia, to someone who actually wrote a PhD thesis, and now can question his place in academia more thoughtfully! Particular thanks go to Nikki Moran, who has the unique and undervalued skill of never making someone feel like they don't know what they are talking about, helping to enable me to continually move forward with the project even when I felt like I wasn't waving, but drowning. Without that support, this thesis would likely be still only an idea in the back of my mind. Likewise, a particular thanks goes to Raymond MacDonald, whose enthusiasm combined with his thorough knowledge of the world of research helped to bring me to the point of actual PhD submission.

Without the interviewees, this research would not be possible, so I would also like to extend a huge thanks to Lina Allemano, Tim Berne, Mary Halvorson, Peter van Huffel, Laura Jurd, Jan Kopinski, Faye MacCalman, William Parker, Cath Roberts and Orphy Robinson. Not

just through taking the time out to do the interviews, but through their respective catalogues of music they have inspired this research as well as given musical inspiration far beyond this thesis.

It was as a master's student, way back in 2003, that I met, Liran Donin, Toby McLaren, Pete Grogan and Chris Williams, the people who would go on to be members of my longstanding band Led Bib. While Led Bib itself may not be the focus of this research, without this project I would not have even started on this road and learned all that I know up until now about bandleading, so a huge thanks goes to all of them. Particular thanks go to Liran Donin for doing my first practice interview for this research.

Thanks also goes to the members of Anthropods: Susanna Gartmayer, Jakob Gnigler, Irene Kepl and Clemens Sainitzer. They were willing to be included in this research, as well as the project more broadly, without me or them really knowing what we were going to do together. Their dedication to the process of creating music as an ensemble, as well as their excellent musicianship, is what made the creative practice work here possible. Also, without Martin Archer at Discus Music and Walter Robotka at Klanggalerie, this music would not have seen a public release, so many thanks to them.

Lastly, I would like to thank the staff and research community at the University of Edinburgh. A special thanks go to Una MacGlone, Martin Parker and Gareth Williams for their advice in developing this project.

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Chapter 1 Introduction

1.1 Research Rationale

The purpose of this research is to examine the role of the bandleader in the creation of an ensemble's group improvising language in jazz and improvised music. This research began its life as an artistic problem. Having run Led Bib (www.ledbib.com) for nearly 20 years, I had a band that was working with free improvisation, but mostly very far from the "non-idiomatic" style of improvisation often associated with that word.

Somewhere along the way, we had created not just a band sound together, but an unspoken set of rules of what could and couldn't happen in the process of improvising. The language we used in our so-called free improvisation was somewhat fixed. Upon further reflection, I felt that all the bands and playing situations I was in had a certain set of rules, a certain set of boundaries of where they could go and where they could not, even in seemingly free improvisation. These boundaries were for the most part unstated, just a sense that one band played in one way, and one played in another.

Before starting this research, my original artistic goal was to try and find a way to expand the language of Led Bib. My first impulse was to try and use the language that we had formed as a band, place it somewhere else, and see where that would take us. This resulted in our work with Sharron Fortnam and Jack Hues on our songs album, *It's Morning,* released in 2019 (https://ledbib.bandcamp.com/album/its-morning).

This album was an attempt to find out what would happen to our established sound if we needed to work in a completely different way and with different people. However, when it came to recording the new music, we also ended up having to record the album with a different keyboard player, meaning that as well as the new people we were working with, the core band had changed. We were not just adapting to the new context of the music, but we were also accommodating a new member of the core band. This meant that it didn't illuminate new ways forward for the original quintet, because with a new keyboard player, the five founding members were not all involved.

Then came the COVID pandemic and this project with Led Bib was put on ice, as the idea of working on a cross-border project was not going to be possible, but the underlying questions were still in my head. Namely, how does a band go about forming a "group sound", and is it possible to keep that sound something which is expanding rather than it becoming more fixed?

This led me to think again about starting this research (which I had been contemplating for several years), and with the free time afforded me by the pandemic, I realised there would likely never be a better time than this to make a start on it. I began the PhD with not such a clear idea about what the project would be, and with perhaps only a vague idea about finding out a bit more about group language. With time, I realised that my original perspective on group language was obvious, and that it was through my experience as a long-standing bandleader. I then decided the project could be in two parts, one part based on researching other bandleaders' experiences, and the other part being artistic research of my own, which turned into my new ensemble Anthropods.

I had tried before in Vienna to start a local project as a leader but wasn't successful in getting it off the ground. The main stumbling block was, after so long with Led Bib, my de facto language as a bandleader and composer became the language of Led Bib, so in some way as a bandleader I was trying to recreate Led Bib, but in Vienna with different people. With time, I realised that to start a new band, I had to divorce my ideas musically from Led Bib and ask myself, "What are the musical choices that I want to make as a bandleader/composer/drummer outside of that ensemble?" and "How much of that ensemble was me, and how much of it was the band?"

These questions then became broader and beyond just my personal experience to examining how other bandleaders work to create band improvising languages in the ensembles that they are working in. When these other band languages become more set, do the bandleaders have effective methods that they employ to negate the possible negative impacts that I was dealing with in Led Bib of having an established language?

1.2 Terminology

1.2.1 Group Language

This thesis uses the term group language to explain a phenomenon which happens in improvising ensembles, namely that the musicians are often "free" to play anything, but their choices are influenced by their understanding of the common language of each ensemble.

Language and vocabulary are words used often in the context of the study of jazz (Haerle 1980). Learning “vocabulary” on your instrument, having a lot of “language” together. While these words are more often associated with spoken language, there is a strong parallel here with the jazz musician’s working practices, particularly in more open improvising contexts. Zack (2000, 232) explains, “…interactive conversation, as with less structured genres of jazz, is spontaneously constituted based on a compromise between future intention and past expression. Conversation is retrospective in the sense that what one says creates a context for further communication.” Every time a band plays together, the language they use gives shape to and affects the language they will also use in the future.

The role of group language is particularly relevant in the study of long-standing ensembles, like the ones that feature in this study. In improvised music, first meetings are often characterised by an element of trying to figure out what the ensemble “sounds” like. Without knowing the various musicians ahead of time, a participant musician cannot always be sure what sort of musical contribution will be appreciated by the assembled musicians. While this is a setting that some improvisers enjoy, and one which brings with it a level of spontaneity not easily possible in established ensembles, many improvisers prefer playing in established ensembles where a level of trust and understanding has been built up.

In a long-standing ensemble, the “group language” of an ensemble is much more defined. The established relationships between the musicians both musically and socially have given the members a deeper understanding of the language of the band, where the band “goes” musically, and where it does not.

The group language is however not something which can be easily quantified by the members, and likely each member would have a contrasting idea of what the group

language is. While each musician's personal understanding of the group language differs and affects their individual approach, their unique understanding of the group language does not negate the fact that a band language exists. Just like in colour perception, while one person's red might be someone else's blue, "our individual perceptions don't affect the way the colour of blood, or that of the sky, make us feel" (Wolchover 2012).

The process of the creation of group language is a particularly interesting way to look at the role of leadership in jazz and improvised music because it represents the meeting point between the bandleader's ensemble vision and the freedom inherent in improvised music. In the poly-idiomatic world that many improvisers inhabit, the defining characteristics of what makes a good performance must be defined within each ensemble. The implicitly agreed group language enables ensembles to do that. The ensembles are only able to judge the success of a performance in reference to the group language that the ensemble uses, and how that performance did or did not measure up to their ideal version of that sound world. This research project starts from the premise that the way the bandleader conceives and dictates an ensemble's understanding of the group's language, both consciously and unconsciously, is key to the ensemble's identity and characteristic sound.

1.2.2 Jazz and Improvised Music

With any writing about jazz post-1960s, and perhaps even before, one can get into the thorny topic of, "Is this really jazz?". Some of the music which is part of this study might raise some eyebrows about whether it is jazz or not, and that is exactly why it is interesting for this study, because many of these bands are using an improvising language which is not so easily connected to just one idiom. This "pan-idiomatic" approach has become the norm

in the current jazz scene. Nate Chinen states in his book *Playing Changes* examining trends in jazz and improvised music since the start of the twenty-first century,

> The whole idea of a definition [of jazz], was beginning to feel outmoded. Whatever you choose to call the music, 'jazz' is as volatile and generative now as any time since its beginnings. Instead of stark binaries and opposing factions, we face a blur or contingent alignments. Instead of a push for definition and one prevailing style, we have boundless permutations without fixed parameters. That multiplicity lies precisely at the heart of the new aesthetic – and is the engine of its greatest promise (Chinen 2019, xi).

Chinen's point is crucial to the understanding of the current scene. While there are still certain factions who see a binary relationship between traditionalists and innovators, real jazz and "something else", to many current practitioners, this understanding has been relegated to the past. The question for bandleaders/composers becomes not about setting out either the band's relationships to the tradition or the avant-garde, but rather its relationship to any manner of influences and idioms. These influences and the members in the band themselves then help to define what the band language actually is.

To capture the broad array of musical practices and outputs present in this research, I use the term "jazz and improvised music" to represent the scope of the music explored in this study.

1.2.3 Leader Focused Project / Band Focused Project

This thesis uses the terms "leader focused project" and "band focused project" to highlight the differences between a bandleader who has come with a somewhat pre-conceived concept about how an ensemble should sound, and a bandleader who wants to define the band's sound world in tandem with the musicians.

If a bandleader has started a band already with a clear concept and they are forming the band to realise their concept, this research calls this a “leader focused project”. If the bandleader is starting a band with a more open concept, where the band is defining the language collaboratively through playing together, this research calls this a “band focused project”.

These concepts of leader focused and band focused projects will be revisited throughout this thesis.

1.3 Justification for Research

There is an increasing amount of academic writing about jazz and improvisation, as well as a wealth about leadership, some even looking to the jazz band as a model for business leaders.

This research treads a slightly different path in several ways. In its relationship to leadership studies, this thesis is interested in jazz and improvised music as it is practised now, rather than the historical perspective that is drawn on in much of the research into leadership in jazz (Newton 2004; F.J. Barrett 1998, 2012; Holbrook 2015). This research contrasts with previous research into jazz leadership in that it views the key role of the bandleader in contemporary jazz and improvised music not in the moment of playing, but rather in their work in creating the band’s group language.

There is now a plethora of academic writing about improvisation which is particularly focused on free improvisation (Canonne and Garnier 2015; Wilson and MacDonald 2016; Hickey 2014). This research is somewhat concerned with this as well, but what is particularly

important in this research is not the freedom involved in totally free improvisation, but focusing on how group language defines the musicians' understanding of freedom in each individual setting, and the bandleader's role in the creation of this language. This is particularly relevant to the long-standing improvising groups that this research examines.

1.4 Thesis Overview

To answer the questions that this research poses around leadership and group improvisation language, this research uses creative practice and artistic output as enquiry, alongside contrasting external perspectives gathered and analysed from the original interview data.

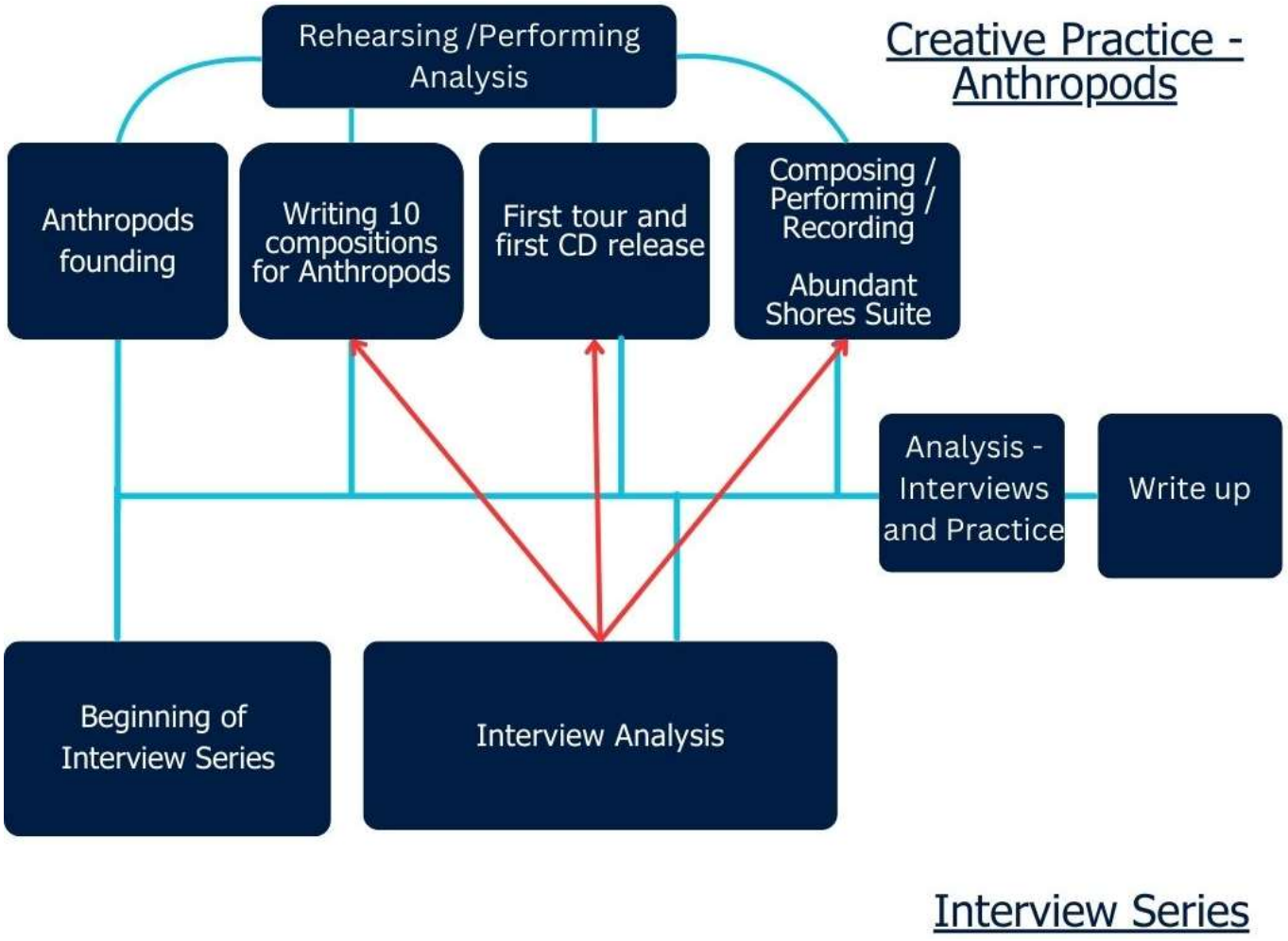

Figure 1 - Study Design

As shown in Figure 1, Anthropods as an ensemble was founded at the beginning of the study when the interviews were first beginning. As the results were coming in from the interviews, I was continuing the work with Anthropods and the results from the interviews were then affecting my practice with the ensemble. This process continued through the recording of Anthropods' first CD, first tours and then finished with the recording of the Abundant Shores Suite, the final recorded piece which features in this research. While working with Anthropods, all the rehearsals and performances were recorded, and I kept a diary of my thoughts about the band and the process, allowing for constant analysis of the process of working with the band. Following the recording of the Abundant Shores Suite and the analysis of the overall process with Anthropods, the data taken from both the interviews and the practice were analysed together, offering insights from both processes which helped to illuminate the analysis of both sides of the study. This was then followed by the write-up process for the thesis.

1.4.1 Anthropods (Creative Practice Element)

The original conception of Anthropods was to allow the ensemble to develop a group language as naturally as possible. The five musicians selected were not chosen because of how I conceived they would sound together, but rather because of their individual characteristics.

The work with Anthropods is presented here as a four-year history of working with the ensemble, from a group of musicians who had never played together to a band two albums in. This practice work offers a unique perspective into the growth of group language, for two main reasons. The first is that the entire process is documented, from early

rehearsals to the recording of the Abundant Shores Suite, offering insights both musically as well as insights into the process from a bandleader perspective. Secondly, while the interview series offers a historical perspective from all the bandleaders on the growth of their ensemble's group language, the creative practice work with Anthropods offers an in-depth analysis of this process as it is happening.

Examples from the work with Anthropods, including scores and audio / video clips, are presented throughout the research to illustrate the process and insights gained. The full artistic results are presented as two full albums, which can be listened to on these links. The remaining scores from the Anthropods project which are not presented within the thesis appear in appendix G.

Anthropods – *Self-Titled Album* – https://discusmusic.bandcamp.com/album/anthropods-117cd-2022

Anthropods – *Abundant Shores* – https://klanggalerie.bandcamp.com/album/abundant-shores

(Mark Holub 2025b)

1.4.2 Interview Series

To contrast and inform the creative practice work in this thesis, it was crucial to get perspectives beyond my own, as bandleading is very much a personal pursuit. The ten bandleaders who feature in this study are some of the most respected bandleaders of their respective generations and represent diverse approaches to improvisation and composition. The presentation and analysis of these ten semi-structured interviews offers personal insights from each bandleader into their role in the creation of group language, as well as an

analysis of the relationship between their leadership approach and desired output. (Holub and Moran 2025a)

1.4.3 Chapter Layout

The second chapter in this research examines existing literature on leadership, leadership in jazz, and research into free improvisation and group language, framing and presenting the research questions. It continues by explaining the research methodology and finishes with a section on positionality.

The third chapter explains the methods involved in the study. It begins by setting out the process of setting up and working with Anthropods and continues by discussing the methods involved in collecting the interview research data and analysing it.

In chapter 4, I present my work with my ensemble Anthropods, charting the course from the start of the ensemble to the recording of the Abundant Shores Suite. This chapter features audio and video recordings as well as scores from throughout the progress of the ensemble.

Chapter 5 presents and analyses the data from the interview series. It starts by focusing on the bandleaders themselves and how and why they became leaders. It then moves on to the beginnings of starting an ensemble, through to the actual creation of a group language. It continues with case studies of five different band leaders from the study, and finishes with a section on the bandleaders' methods for dealing with an established improvising language.

In chapter 6, I look at the insights that can be gained from looking at the whole process of working with Anthropods alongside the insights that were gained through the

interview series, delivering a deeper understanding of both sets of data. This includes the development of a bandleader leadership spectrum, related to a bandleader's desired output, as well as further discoveries regarding the growth of group language.

In chapter 7, I conclude by answering the research questions and examining the implications of the research and where further research is needed.

Chapter 2 Literature Review

Curiously, while bandleaders in contemporary jazz and improvised music haven't studied any particular style of leadership, and would mostly be completely unaware of the theories of leadership discussed in the literature, many experts in leadership have used the jazz ensemble as a model of what exemplary leadership could be outside of music (Williamson 2013; Cimino 2012; Napoli, Johansen, and Whiteley 2016; Newton 2004).

Education and training in music tends to be focused on instrumental technical skills, or the theoretical skills involved in composition/improvisation. However, little to no time within formal jazz training is spent on the actual skills of leadership, despite this being something which almost all musicians working in the field of jazz and improvised music at least occasionally do.

Bandleading in jazz and improvised music at its core is somewhat of a conundrum. Working as a leader in this collaborative context means at once working in a space which by its nature somewhat eschews the hierarchies common in the leader/follower relationship. These leaders are also leading in what most leadership scholars would describe as some of the most difficult circumstances to lead, (i.e. not knowing the future, embracing change, improvisation etc) (F.J. Barrett 2012; Hatch 1997) while at the same time, these are leaders with no formal leadership training.

When looking at various leadership theories, whatever their specific characteristics may be, one thing they share in common is that leaders are leading towards a goal (Bass 1985; Stogdill 1974; Burns 1978; Daft and Lane 2018; Greenleaf 1970). This underlining

tenet of leadership theories is somewhat thrown on its head by the practice of improvising musicians. The bandleader is not moving towards a concrete goal like a traditional leader, because the nature of improvised music is to leave an element of the “unknown” in performance. Renowned saxophonist and composer Wayne Shorter was often quoted with his thoughts on rehearsing, saying, “How can you rehearse the unknown?” (Sullivan 2013). If the “goal” is the “unknown” in performance, it is hard to see this as a concrete goal at all.

The only goal for a bandleader is a successful performance, but the definition of what success entails is variable, and often not even shared exactly throughout an ensemble. There is no set place that a leader is trying to move an ensemble towards, but rather the continuous journey is the goal itself. What is seen a successful concert today, might be seen completely differently by the same ensemble in a few years, or viewed in a different ensemble could be seen as a terrible performance. The “goal” of any ensemble is specific to it and is changeable as the ensemble develops.

This challenging leadership setting is made rather more complicated by the nature of the leaders themselves. The improvising musician is often by their nature somewhat ambivalent about the idea of leadership. Working with musicians who are equally adept at improvising without a leader or composition, the bandleader/composer can be viewed with suspicion (Fell 2015). A question readily asked in this setting may be, “Why do we need a leader when we can just as easily do this ourselves?”

The contemporary scene is particularly full of bandleaders who have worked with bands long-term (Chinen 2019), something which was unheard of in jazz in earlier periods, with even the now heroic bands of the past (Miles Davis, Charles Mingus, etc) lasting not much more than a few years. Contemporary bandleaders are creating ensembles to be their

main artistic output over long periods, and often their whole careers, embracing the inherent collectively involved.

To understand the role of the bandleader, this review will begin by examining group language in improvised music and the bandleader's role in the creation of said language. It will then continue by looking more specifically at the role of the bandleader in jazz and leadership more broadly.

2.1 Group Language in Improvising Ensembles

Improvisation, particularly in the context of jazz and improvised music, can to the layperson be a misunderstood term. Even the *Oxford English Dictionary* defines improvisation as, "the action or fact of composing or performing music, poetry, drama, etc., spontaneously, or without preparation" (Oxford English 2024). While this may be the dictionary definition, it does not capture the reality of improvised music, because the improvising musician in any genre/idiom is in no way going in without preparation. Their whole history of practising and performing on their instrument informs their next playing experience and what they will bring to it.

For jazz musicians, the time spent in the practice room before they reach the stage is about developing a personal language (Corbett 1994). In earlier jazz practice (pre-free jazz), this mostly meant soloists were improvising on set chord sequences and personal language was about finding unique ways to improvise around these. Free, or less structured improvisation creates a further conundrum. While practitioners still go into any playing situation with a personal language, the idea of using that language to then improvise on a

set series of chords is mostly non-existent. The language that each improviser uses becomes a melding of their personal language into the sound world that each ensemble inhabits.

Figure 2 illustrates that the connection between each musician's personal improvising language and an ensemble's group improvising language is a two-way conversation. The group improvising language is feeding back into the ensemble members' personal improvising languages both inside and outside the ensemble. This formula makes for a dynamic band language as well as meaning the individual musicians are gaining something from working within an ensemble because the group language is feeding their personal language.

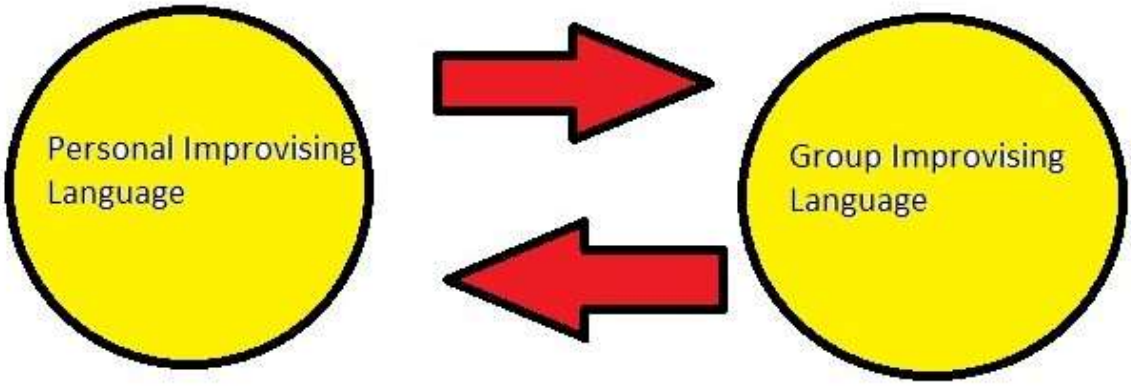

Figure 2 - Personal and Group Language Flow

2.1.1 Making Choices in Improvised Music

Musicians are clearly not coming to any playing situation with no preparation, but the question then becomes, how musicians are making choices in improvised music settings and what is informing their choice of language? There is a growing wealth of research looking at improvised music and how musicians make choices in improvised music settings, examining the various forces that impact improvisers' choices in musical settings, from ensemble

interrelations and perceived preferences, to the spaces the concerts happen in (MacDonald and Wilson 2020; Wilson and MacDonald 2016; Frost Fadnes 2020; Brand 2019).

In early improvised musical meetings, a lot of a musician's understanding of how they are being received by other musicians, as well the feeling of how it is going overall may be picked up through body language (Wilson and MacDonald 2016; Moran et al. 2015). The back channelling[1] that Moran et al. describe is a way for improvisers to mostly offer positive encouragement to one another and is particularly useful in settings where the musicians are less familiar with one another. However, in looking at longer standing ensembles, like this research does, the body language becomes less important. Within a long-standing ensemble, there is a greater understanding amongst the musicians about the language used in that group, thus they are looking less to each other in the moment of performing to sense how everything they are playing is landing.

This research is particularly interested in how the understanding of the people involved in each playing situation represents both a "limit on choice and a resource for improvising" (MacDonald and Wilson 2020, 103). The understanding within an ensemble of each musician's preferences and personal approach becomes more developed over time, as assumptions become near certainties, and this understanding develops into band-specific improvising languages.

[1] A concept from non-verbal interaction research

2.1.2 Development of Group Language

The concept of group language from the listener's perspective is easy to understand. One can hear recordings by all manner of artists and quickly understand who is playing by the way the band sounds. From inside an improvising ensemble, each musician's perception of the group language affects their understanding of what can and cannot happen in any given playing situation. This understanding is however not necessarily shared by each member of the ensemble (MacDonald and Wilson 2020; Wilson and MacDonald 2016; Nunn 1998) and is often unconscious. Each individual's personal interpretation is what makes up the language, rather than the language being something which everyone shares the same perspective on.

Any band language is by its nature made up of the members' personal languages. As a member of an ensemble, each musician has a vocabulary as an improviser and in each musical setting is deciding what elements of that personal language are appropriate. Figure

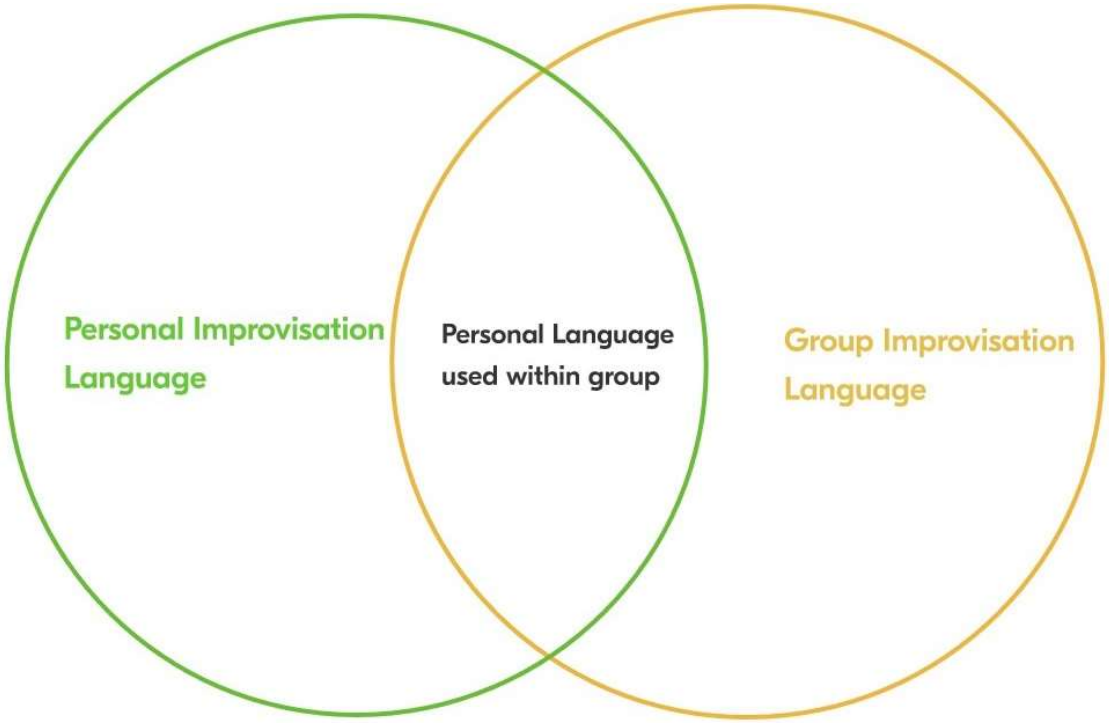

Figure 3 - Personal and Group Improvisation Language Intersection

3 illustrates how the language a musician uses within an ensemble is only a small portion of their personal improvising language. This is particularly relevant in settings involving any amount of “free improvisation”, where the improvising is somewhat dictated by the musicians’ understanding of the band language.

Veteran improviser John Butcher explains in this anecdote,

> …last February I played a concert in a quartet that included no-input mixing desk expert Toshimaru Nakamura. The music was extremely quiet, and after a while I stopped blowing into the instrument and worked instead with the sound of the pads as they audibly unstuck and then leapt open under the spring action. This sonic material seemed to interact satisfyingly with the other musicians’ input, and had a surprising vitality. The previous week I’d played in the same venue, Cafe Oto in Dalston, with Matthew Shipp, the American jazz (in the broadest sense) pianist. Sticky pad sounds would have been a ridiculous contribution. Equally, most of what I found myself playing in this duo would have sounded nonsensical in the Nakamura quartet. So, what can the free in free-improvisation possibly mean? The choice of how to play in each concert was up to me, and I decided upon what, at first glance, might seem to be quite different approaches. I wasn’t, I hope, just being a chameleon. Given a blindfold test, I think anyone who follows this scene would have recognized that I was the saxophonist in both concerts. The freedom that comes with improvisation is actually the freedom to recognize and respect the uniqueness of each individual playing situation. Doing this entails making specific and restricting choices, intimately connected to thoughts about whom you are playing with (and what you do and don’t know about them), the acoustics of the environment and your own personal history…Part of this means continually addressing the question of how to keep your own musical personality without bringing too fixed an agenda to each performance – how to get the right balance between playing what you know and what you don’t yet know (Butcher 2011, 1).

Butcher here is speaking about completely free improvisation, but the result is the same in less free settings. With an ensemble with a bandleader, the challenge becomes two-fold from a musician’s perspective. Not only does one have to imagine what fits in with the other members of the ensemble, but also what fits in with each member’s personal perception of the vision that the bandleader has for the ensemble.

While all the bands in this research have different approaches, and different musical styles, none of the bandleaders are dictating to the band exactly how they should be improvising. There are no flip charts explaining the rules or secret notes being passed around allowing certain things to happen. Even without the bandleader setting out how exactly each band should play; each band has developed a unique approach to improvising within their respective ensemble.

Tom Arthurs examines one way that established ensembles understand an ensemble's boundaries when he discusses a word that comes up often amongst Berlin improvisers, the concept of "field". "Field" describes how the group language of each specific group is,

> …defined by the tastes, materials and shared interests of its members, as well as by the group's history and experience. This knowledge [makes] it possible to focus, limit and predict musical outcomes, as well as to identify common ground for exploration and development... For long-term groups and collaborations, knowledge of the 'Field' [allows] musicians to develop ever-deeper into specific areas (Arthurs 2016, 187).

Blake (2016) examines using composition to help form what he describes as an "aesthetic agreement" within an ensemble, using the composition as an extra tool, beyond the musicians' knowledge of the other musicians involved, to help further steer an ensemble towards a group language.

While there is no one doubting the existence of a "field", "aesthetic agreement", or a group language inside longer-standing groups of improvising musicians, there are musicians who have a certain ambivalence about them. This was particularly true at the beginning of the free improvisation scene in the 1960s (Bailey 1992). Well-respected guitarist, improviser

and organiser, Derek Bailey, stated that he felt the long-standing group limited musicians in a free improvisation setting. Bailey ran a series of “Company” weeks over many years, where he put improvisers together in different and new configurations, he explains,

> I like that way of working in free improvisation; forming groups that can't last long….I think of it as semi ad hoc playing, it's not totally ad hoc because these people after five days are certainly not strangers, and they do have a chance to develop some relationship - it just stops short of it turning into a kind of band, and I think that at that point, for my tastes, a deterioration sets in. This is where maybe I wouldn't agree with a lot of people involved in this thing. That development thing, I don't see it as being, from the improvisation point of view, some kind of advance, or improvement (Childs et al. 1982, 52).

Bailey’s assessment is intuitive to practitioner musicians. There is a difference between playing with an ensemble for the first time and playing with an established band, and there are still many settings where improvisers meet for the first time on the stage of a festival or club. A first improvised music meeting has a high level of spontaneity because the musicians do not have a developed understanding of the language the ensemble uses and thus have nothing to fall back on, they can only respond in the moment to what they hear. While this highly dynamic form of playing improvised music may still be preferred by some, the majority of improvisers have embraced the idea of the longstanding ensemble and the benefits that this sort of relationship gives.

George Lewis argues that the actual journey to becoming an accomplished improviser is not just about personal growth, but specifically learning to work within ensembles. He says, “In my own view, the development of the improviser in improvised music is regarded as encompassing not only the formation of individual musical personality but the harmonization of one's musical personality with social environments, both actual and possible” (Lewis 2002, 150). The bandleader’s role becomes about developing an ensemble where there is a harmonisation of each member’s musical personality within the

ensemble to form an ensemble sound, as Lewis suggests, but the bandleader and the musicians involved also want to maintain the freshness involved in Bailey's approach, of not allowing group language to become too static. On top of this, the bandleader is also having to meld these somewhat contradictory concepts with their own musical vision going into the project. The goal may be a somewhat impossible one, but the jazz and improvised music bandleader is attempting to pull the best out of both approaches.

Examining two long-standing leaderless improvising ensembles, AMM and The Necks provides an interesting reference for the development of group language. While both ensembles have wildly different approaches, they both have an easily recognisable sound world that they produce their band's completely free improvisation within.

Jeremy Rose (2022) examines The Necks and their unique, slowly developing, somewhat minimalist improvising language. Rose outlines how The Necks work together on recordings, not discussing what to play, but how what ends up on the final record is always a unanimous decision. This research argues that this listening and commenting on the recordings is part of what in many ensembles helps to form the de facto language of the band. The musicians become aware of each other's preferences, and then in performance react accordingly.

AMM, the long-standing leaderless improvising ensemble, known for its spacious aesthetic, is easily recognisable to any fan of improvised music. Childs et al. (1982) explain how, similar to The Necks, in the beginning, founding members Keith Rowe and Eddie Prévost would record, meet up and listen to the recordings, and then discuss what they thought. Then as time passed, there was no longer a need for discussion. Those early experiments and discussions helped them to form what became the group language of the

band. In both cases, no one in the band was saying, this is how it should go, but rather just saying, I like this and I do not like that. This understanding of preferences then went on to influence the group language of the band. This literature review will now continue by looking into literature on leadership in jazz ensembles and leadership more widely.

2.2 Leadership in Jazz and Improvised Music

Numerous scholars (Furu 2006; Newton 2004; Hatch 1997; Dennis and Macaulay 2007; F.J. Barrett 1998) have queried the way that jazz musicians work both within ensembles and as leaders. While different authors have used different terms for the leadership style (group leadership, shared leadership, quasi-autonomous leadership, etc), they tend to have a similar concept, namely, that jazz musicians are working in a non-traditional leadership structure where anyone can be a leader at any moment, and that the leadership is shared throughout the ensemble.

Simon H Fell, bass player, composer and improviser and someone who worked often as a bandleader amongst improvisers, shared this feeling of the importance of a somewhat egalitarian approach as a leader and composer. He emphasised this concept of shared leadership and that the leader could be any member of an ensemble at any moment.

> The resulting music is understood to be a unique synthesis of the individual voices of all participants, not just those with posts of 'official' responsibility. In my experience, trying to reflect the ideals of this kind of rotating hierarchy in any kind of performance project can generate a relationship of supportive mutual creativity and considerable trust. In fact, by diligently acknowledging (and trying to incorporate) the creative potential of all collaborators, it might be possible to erase two centuries'-worth of drip-fed propaganda about musical geniuses and their inalienable right to tell other people what to do. In the process, one can reassert a musical environment where creativity and leadership are qualities possessed by all,

> to be exercised when necessary and as appropriate for the common good (Fell 2015, 194).

This research stresses however that while any ensemble member can ideally in improvised music become a leader in the moment of performing, this is still in the context of a band and sound world originally created through the bandleader's work. One could recognise Fell as the composer and bandleader of one of his groups, even though the ensemble is working in a more egalitarian way. Any ensemble member can become a leader in the moment of playing because the bandleader has set the groundwork for how the ensemble works together.

The general focus of the research around leadership in jazz is based around a specific period of jazz, 1940s-1960s, and working practices started in the bebop period. The literature often references some of the great bandleaders of that period, with often a particular focus on Miles Davis (F.J. Barrett 2012). Jazz is in a peculiar position in that while it is a relatively young art form compared to Western classical music, the period often studied is this 20-to-30-year period from the start of bebop to the beginnings of free jazz.

The way that jazz musicians worked in this period, working with "standards" that we see in many studies, was a common practice. Someone from the band suggests or brings a "standard" or an original composition, and the band suggests arrangement ideas or even does the arrangement "on the fly" during the performance. This style of working fits comfortably within the concept of shared leadership. The person bringing the tune is often not acting like what one would naturally see as a leader, and any member of the band can take a leadership role within the performance, shaping how the tune is crafted. This is possible because the language used within the ensemble is defined by the idiom that they

are working in. Each player and band is still using their individuality, but the overall shape of the music is dictated by the norms of the idiom.

Zack (2000) criticises the scope of previous studies, expressing that when they are looking at improvisation within jazz, it is often within these pre-determined structures specified by the style of jazz being played, such as this approach to playing standards. He singles out the early Miles Davis electric albums (*In a Silent Way*, *Bitches Brew*) because they were challenging the understood "rules" of jazz, and thus the role of leader was different. That is where this research starts, the leadership needed to create ensemble-specific rules, to create a unique group language within an ensemble.

This research is focused on the role of leadership in creating an ensemble's unique language and setting the boundaries that an ensemble works within, both consciously and unconsciously. The leader can borrow from various pre-existing traditions and make them their own, or they can set out from the start to abandon tradition. The focus is on how they are leading in the process of forming these structures within an ensemble, setting out the language that is then played within that band.

2.2.1 Who Becomes a Bandleader?

The understanding of what sorts of people tend to become leaders is plotted out through the research on leadership. Research on leadership discusses some of the traits of self-selecting leaders which include both psychological and sociological factors such as narcissism, authoritarianism, gender, socioeconomic status, biology, neuroticism, extraversion, openness to experience, and conscientiousness (Ensari et al. 2011; Chan and Drasgow 2001; Epitropaki 2018).

Leadership in jazz presents however a somewhat unique scenario. In the realms of business studies and the corporate workplace, leaders are mostly self-selecting, they are the people who want to become leaders within their companies or communities and may have had that in mind from the start of their careers. In jazz, every professional jazz musician is very likely to be a leader at some point, and most of the more successful musicians will do it regularly. Being a leader is the most effective way to put out into the music community who one is as a musician, enabling a musician to get further work that suits the person that they are, or want to become, as an artist. Regardless of the jazz musician's desire to lead, or lack thereof, leadership is something that they will have to deal with.

In the period that many researchers have looked at (1940s-1960s) the initial career goal of the jazz musician was to get into an established band and build their career from there. Established bandleaders offered at least somewhat steady employment, with many of the established bandleaders providing a breeding ground for jazz greats of the future (Davis and Troupe 1990). Musicians "paid their dues" working as side-people in established bands before being given bigger opportunities (Berliner 1994).

The jazz and improvised music scene has radically altered since the 1960s. Both musically, from the birth of free jazz till today, but also culturally, with a shifting demographic playing the music, the growth of jazz education, and the shifting centre of gravity of the music scene towards experimentation (Chinen 2019; Jeffri 2003; Jost 1981). This research will now highlight some of the factors that have affected the contemporary scene and the role of the bandleader.

2.2.1.1 Changing Music / Changing Cultures

Through research into the history of jazz and improvised music, particularly since the 1960s, we see how musical changes co-occurred with gradual changes in the social cultures within jazz.

The music in jazz up until the start of the free jazz era (1960s) could be seen mostly in the context of the leader/follower paradigm, the musical relationships within an ensemble were mostly a relationship between a soloist and a rhythm section supporting the soloist. Free jazz then discarded many of the hierarchies that were previously inherent in the small groups of jazz (Borgo 2002). With the dawning of the free jazz era, a certain level of democracy infiltrated the music. The relationship was now not always a soloist/accompanist one, but one often favouring group improvisation and with the breakdown of the leader/side-person, soloist/accompanist dichotomy, the hierarchies within jazz began to change (Jost 1981).

As free jazz more firmly took root in Europe, the ethos of the free improviser gradually became much closer to the concepts of the concurrently developing “community music” scene. John Stevens, a crucial figure in the growing improvised and community music scene in the UK, was highly active in running workshops where anyone could participate, the only prerequisite was that the participating musicians had to “have an open-minded enthusiasm for music” (Stevens 2007, 1). This approach was something carried on by a mentee of Stevens, Maggie Nicols, with her regular meetings with “The Gathering”, a freely improvised jam session, as well as her work with the Feminist Improvising Group. While many of the male musicians at the time spoke negatively about the Feminist Improvising Group (J.D. Smith 2015), their practice of a less hierarchical, anarchic and inclusive approach,

infiltrated the improvised music scene, where now it is common to see technically trained jazz musicians, playing alongside less technically trained musicians in long-running clubs like London's Klinker Club and Boat-Ting. The hierarchies inherent in earlier jazz of having to "pay your dues" before you were allowed to express yourself were beginning to break down.

2.2.1.2 Financial Changes

Musicians' accounts, as well as reports on new models of music distribution, show us that the financial model that jazz was built on has completely altered in the last 60 years and has been changing particularly quickly in the last 25 years. Musicians rarely make all of their income from playing, and certainly not in just one ensemble (Rubie 2019).

These changes in the music and culture ran alongside a decrease in public interest in jazz from the 1960s onwards, which continued decreasing over the following years. With the much later advent of music downloads and pirating, followed by the dominance of streaming services, the financial situation in the jazz and improvised music scene is miles away from the working practices of musicians pre-free jazz. Making albums has become almost a purely marketing exercise rather than something to generate revenue, contrasting with the record label-supported budgets of the past (Iverson 2023).

These changes have also meant a change to the role of the bandleader. Being in a band is certainly not seen as a way to secure a regular salary. Rather, the bandleader's primary enticement to be in their band is through delivering a positive musical and social experience, and providing this within an ensemble is something that the aspiring leader needs to do to have a band that wants to play together long term.

2.2.1.3 Where are we now?

The current scene, one characterised by financial instability, a DIY mentality, and a collaborative working style, requires a different style of working, and this is not something which is necessarily seen as a negative thing by the contemporary bandleader. Nate Chinen describes the 21st-century situation where musicians "[face] tougher conditions than any previous generation: a broken infrastructure, an uncertain course, a distracted, if not alienated, consumer base. But more than one wave of improvising artists has confronted this tumult, seizing license to create freer and more self-reliant forms of art" (Chinen 2019, x-xi).

In the current scene, rarely would a musician enter into an ensemble and be treated in the somewhat bullying, hierarchical way typical of previous bandleaders as described by bandleaders like Miles Davis and Charles Mingus (Davis and Troupe 1990; Mingus and King 1980) because the musicians would not want to stay in that ensemble. The rewards of being in a well-known musician's ensemble do not bring the guaranteed work they once did.

Alongside a slow demographic change, including the increase of college-educated musicians and the increase in women, the cultures of how jazz musicians work are changing (Jeffri 2003). Leaders are mostly working much more collaboratively on projects; the precarious financial situation has encouraged bandleaders to create a friendly social environment where people want to be, and the change of demographics has begun to dissipate the machismo which was often at the forefront of earlier jazz cultures. The scene is dominated by long-standing bands, and the aesthetic centre of jazz has moved perceptively in the direction of a more collectivist, band-driven, exploratory ideal (Chinen 2019).

The jazz and improvised music scene of today is not just a binary between tradition and innovation. Innovation runs much deeper in the scene, with journalist and critic Nate Chinen saying that “avant-garde practice and formal invention have now insinuated themselves into the mainstream” (Chinen 2019, xi).

To further illustrate the bandleader’s role in the contemporary jazz and improvised music scene, this literature review will now continue by looking more broadly at the research into leadership, offering further insights into the work of the bandleader.

2.2.2 Leadership Theories

The literature focusing specifically on leadership is broad and dynamic, which reflects how our understanding of what constitutes good leadership is constantly developing. It was perhaps put best by leadership scholar Ralph M. Stogdill when he concluded that “there are almost as many definitions of leadership as there are persons who have attempted to define the concept” (Stogdill 1974, 7). The literature around leadership is mostly focused on large businesses, countries, etc., rather than the small group jazz ensembles this research is looking at. Hence there is a certain amount of adaptation needed to fit leadership models onto jazz and improvised music bandleading.

Much of the earlier research into leadership was less focused on interpersonal relationships, but rather believed that leaders were born with certain traits that equipped them for leadership, or the so-called “Great Man Theory” (Stogdill 1948; Mann 1959; Stogdill 1974; Lord, de Vader, and Alliger 1986; Kirkpatick and Locke 1991). Modern leadership theories have however mostly moved away from the born leader approach, preferring an ego-less leader, and a structure where leaders and followers share many of the

same traits (Daft and Lane 2018). Modern leadership scholars have created many different leadership theories, often these are difficult to easily differentiate, with many new theories often built on top of existing ones. This research, rather than trying to fit the bandleader into a specific leadership theory, uses three leadership theories to help further understand the role of the bandleader in relation to the bandleader's desired output.

The following section of the literature review examines three different leadership theories, transformational, servant and authentic leadership and explores some of their traits and differences. However, it is worth noting that even within the academically firmly established theories of transformational and servant leadership, there is still confusion about how exactly they should be defined. Andersen (2018) in his critique of both theories points out a distinct problem, namely that servant leadership as originally presented, and not entirely defined by Greenleaf (1970), was developed and changed by so many scholars that a clear definition is nearly impossible. Likewise with transformational leadership, not only has recent scholarship differed greatly from the original theory, but the work of Burns (1978) and Bass (1985), considered to be the originators of the theory, differ so much from each other that the creation of a unified theory is futile. Despite these confusions, the underlying concepts of these theories prove useful to illustrate the tendencies of the contemporary bandleader.

These theories are thus not meant to define how bandleaders work but will rather be utilised to highlight some of the different approaches of jazz and improvised music bandleaders related to their desired outputs. To do this, leadership is looked at through a different lens, looking at the leader's main role as defining the boundaries an ensemble works within, and examining how leaders do this without ever actually overtly defining

them. The use of these theories helps to illustrate the spectrum of different approaches related to the bandleader's desired output.

2.2.2.1 Transformational Leadership

James MacGregor Burns defined transformational leadership as "leaders inducing followers to act for certain goals that represent the values and motivations – the wants and needs, the aspirations and expectations – of both leaders and followers" (Burns 1978, 19). Burns was not just describing leadership as was previously understood, but what he named transforming (later transformational) leadership. Leadership was not just about a "great man" giving commands from up high, but was beginning to be thought about as an interpersonal relationship between leaders and followers.

Burns set up the idea that there are transformational leaders, as described above, and that there were transactional leaders, who worked more on a reward/penalty system. Building on Burns' research, Bass (1985), particularly expanded on Burns' idea of the transformational leader vs transactional leader, stating that rather than there being leaders of either persuasion, that leaders exhibit patterns of both styles of leadership.

Stretching this out beyond the divide between transactional leadership and transformational leadership, one can see in the jazz and improvised music world that bandleaders are utilising at times both a transactional and transformational approach. The transactional leader in music, i.e. someone who pays on time, makes sure the hotels are not crawling with cockroaches, prints an extra copy of the scores, is valued by their bandmembers, whilst so is the transformational leader who focuses more on being inspiring musically. Ideally, the bandleader can have an element of both styles.

Mumford et al. (2002) however suggest that the visionary characteristics of the transformational leader may not be so useful in working with creative people, as the members likely have their own visions, meaning that transformational leadership in the context of working with creative people is more about creating a shared consensual vision amongst the group. Van den Born, Mehra, and Kilduff (2022, 21) add, "When teams are made up of musicians or other creative people, formal leadership may interfere with the self-organization and coordination that help teams achieve creativity."

These criticisms of transformational leadership in a creative context help to illustrate how this approach alone will not satisfy either the bandleader or the band members. The bandleader cannot exclusively inspire the musicians to fulfil their vision, but rather needs to include the musicians in the creation of that vision. Where transformational leadership however does draw a useful parallel with the bandleader is for the bandleader with a more pre-conceived approach.

The transformational leader attempts to inspire their followers to higher levels of performance for the sake of the organisation (Burns 1978; Yukl 1989). A bandleader who, while still wanting the individual musicians involved, has an overarching concept that those musicians should fit into. That type of leader is looking to get the best out of their musicians by inspiring them with both their concept and the way they deliver it, rather than working collaboratively on the concept itself. As in all improvised music, the approach is still somewhat collaborative, but the overarching goal is fulfilling the bandleader's vision, and thus the bandleader's biggest role is about inspiring the musician about their vision and the role that each musician can play in that.

2.2.2.2 Servant Leadership

Another leadership style which is connected to jazz and improvised music is servant leadership, a concept first coined by Robert K Greenleaf in *The Servant as Leader*. Greenleaf states that the way to determine if someone is a servant leader is to ask "Do those being served grow as persons, do they become healthier, wiser, freer, more autonomous while being served" (Greenleaf 1970, 37)? Greenleaf's ideas about leadership break from earlier concepts that felt the leader is endowed with special characteristics, and he makes clear that a leader is not just someone who has the aforementioned characteristics that leaders often possess. This is particularly relevant for the many reluctant leaders involved in jazz and improvised music. Further research emphasises that the thing that sets servant leaders apart is that the followers are the focus (Lubin 2001; Stone, Russell, and Patterson 2004). This difference in focus means that while both transformational and servant leaders are influential, servant leaders gain their influence through serving their followers (Russell and Stone 2002).

Max De Pree's (1992, 9) landmark book *Leadership Jazz* makes the case that the "jazz band is an expression of servant leadership. The leader of a jazz band has the beautiful opportunity to draw the best out of the other musicians. We have much to learn from jazz-band leaders, for jazz, like leadership, combines the unpredictability of the future with the gifts of individuals."

In this research, servant leadership provides a model for the bandleader who, rather than starting with a clear concept of what the band should sound like, allows the band to develop their language together. The focus of the bandleader is on what the band members can bring, rather than on what they have brought as a leader.

Johan van 'T Zet (2018) saw that self-reflection was the first step to becoming a servant leader, and that a self-reflective leader was seen as more authentic by their followers. This concept of being seen as authentic is crucial in building the trusting relationship necessary in an improvising ensemble, which leads to another leadership approach, namely, that of authentic leadership.

2.2.2.3 Authentic Leadership

The research around authentic leadership is still developing, but the generally understood tenets of it are practised quite naturally by the jazz and improvised music bandleader.

The basic tenet of authentic leadership, namely that one brings their authentic self to their leadership role (George 2003, 2007), is something which the musician/bandleader is doing quite naturally. The general working style is amongst friends, or at the very least good acquaintances and it would feel rather unnatural to come in acting like the "CEO of the band", and if someone did, they would likely not be a bandleader for very long.

The concept of utilising the authentic self sits quite comfortably with the tendencies of the modern bandleader. If a bandleader is very naturally skilled in certain areas, those areas come to the fore, rather than there being a one-size-fits-all approach to bandleading. More importantly, by bringing the authentic whole selves, bandleaders are creating trust and connection within the ensemble which is required for effective music making.

The Gardner et al. (2011) review of the existing research on authentic leadership stated that the four components posited by Kernis and Goldman (2006) as making up authenticity (awareness, unbiased processing, behaviour and relational orientation) are the

components on which many further studies on authentic leadership are built. They argue the authentic leader's leadership style is an extension of who they are as people. By being authentic as the leader of an ensemble, one can produce music which is both authentically from the leader, but more importantly, authentically music made by the members of the ensemble.

This research argues that while leaders have different styles, both related to their personalities and their desired output, this authentic leadership approach helps to create the required trust within an ensemble. It illustrates how the bandleaders are not working to a specific formula but are emphasising their strengths and being open about their weaknesses and using these to develop their leadership approach.

2.3 Gap In Literature

There is an increasing amount of literature about group improvisation, but very little dealing with ensemble "group language", particularly the issue of how this language is formed and the ability of the ensemble to keep this language active rather than static. By focusing on bandleader-led ensembles, and the role of the bandleader more widely in jazz and improvised music ensembles, this research offers a unique perspective on the growth of group language. In a bandleader-led ensemble, the project has to somehow conform to the leader's vision, thus offering a unique perspective into leadership in the often-collaborative environment of improvised music, as well as the development of group language within a bandleader-preconceived framework for an ensemble.

While there have been several studies into improvised music looking at why musicians make choices in the moment, this thesis takes a step back, rather than looking at this micro level, it looks at how a musician makes choices of vocabulary for each different ensemble situation, and the bandleader's role in the development of the ensemble's understanding of this language. This research thus offers a new way of looking at how improvisers are making choices musically based on the ensemble they are playing in.

The different things that impact musicians' understanding of a group's improvising language are numerous and difficult to fully quantify. Building on the research into group improvising language and its development, this research will more categorically look at how different leadership approaches are helping to create an ensemble's improvising language.

Referencing the research into leadership in jazz, what is lacking in the literature is the clarity of how and why jazz musicians can do something quite naturally which is seen as difficult or counter-intuitive to leaders outside of jazz. Much of the previous literature on leadership in jazz is focused on using jazz as a metaphor to inspire exemplary leadership outside of jazz, and thus is not focused on the relationship between leadership in jazz and musical output. This research fills this gap by exploring divergent approaches across the current jazz and improvised music scene, not focusing on leadership in the moment of performance, but rather the role of leadership one step before performance, and specifically how the bandleader is creating the barriers for the sound world that the band improvises within. This research then provides a valuable resource, both within the previous research on leadership and leadership in jazz, which exists more in the realm of business studies, and also for the scholars involved in jazz studies, looking at leadership in jazz ensembles from a musician/leader perspective.

Looking more broadly into leadership studies outside of jazz, this research sees leadership through a different lens. This research builds on existing leadership theories to help illustrate different approaches of bandleaders. Rather than looking at the leader's role as the C.E.O of an ensemble, it investigates the leader's main role as defining boundaries, and how leaders do this without often actually overtly defining boundaries. This then offers a unique perspective on what leadership can be, looking at leadership as a trailblazing activity specific to each leader, rather than a set of strategies that a leader must employ.

2.4 Research Objectives

This research examines how bandleaders work to enact their vision on an ensemble to develop an ensemble's group improvising language. The bandleader's vision for the ensemble can be either a highly pre-conceived vision, a concept that the band itself will form, or something in between the two. This focus on marrying a leader's vision with the individual improvisers they work with presents a different perspective into the study of improvised music. Rather than looking on the micro level of how improvisers make decisions in the moment, this research zooms out, exploring how the group language that the members of an improvising ensemble work within is formed, and how bandleaders affect that language, as well as the many influences on group language which are either outside the bandleader's control or unconscious.

This research interrogates the specific role of leadership within the collaborative environment of jazz and improvised music. It examines in detail the role of the bandleader in the contemporary jazz and improvised music scene, how the bandleader differs from traditional leaders, and how these differences affect their approaches. It uses the models of

transformational, servant and authentic leadership to illustrate the differing roles of the bandleader related to the bandleader's desired output. It uses these models to illustrate the role that the bandleader has in the creation of a band's group language, and how the bandleader's role in the creation of group language is the most musically significant part of their role.

2.5 Research Questions

2.5.1 Main Research Question

How do bandleaders in jazz and improvised music practice leadership to support the growth and development of an improvised musical language within an ensemble, and how are these approaches connected to each individual bandleader and their musical output?

2.5.2 Sub Questions

Do bandleaders who have a more collaborative ensemble form a group language truly as a collective, and if so, how is this achieved from a leadership perspective?

What do the bandleaders report as methods for dealing with the negative aspects of improvising within an established band language?

2.6 Research Methodology

This research uses a mixed methods qualitative analytical methodology. A qualitative approach is best suited to answer the above questions because qualitative methods help to define the details of the phenomena at the core of bandleading and the growth of group language. “Qualitative research not only serves the desire to describe; it also helps move inquiry toward more meaningful explanations” (Sofaer 1999, 1102).

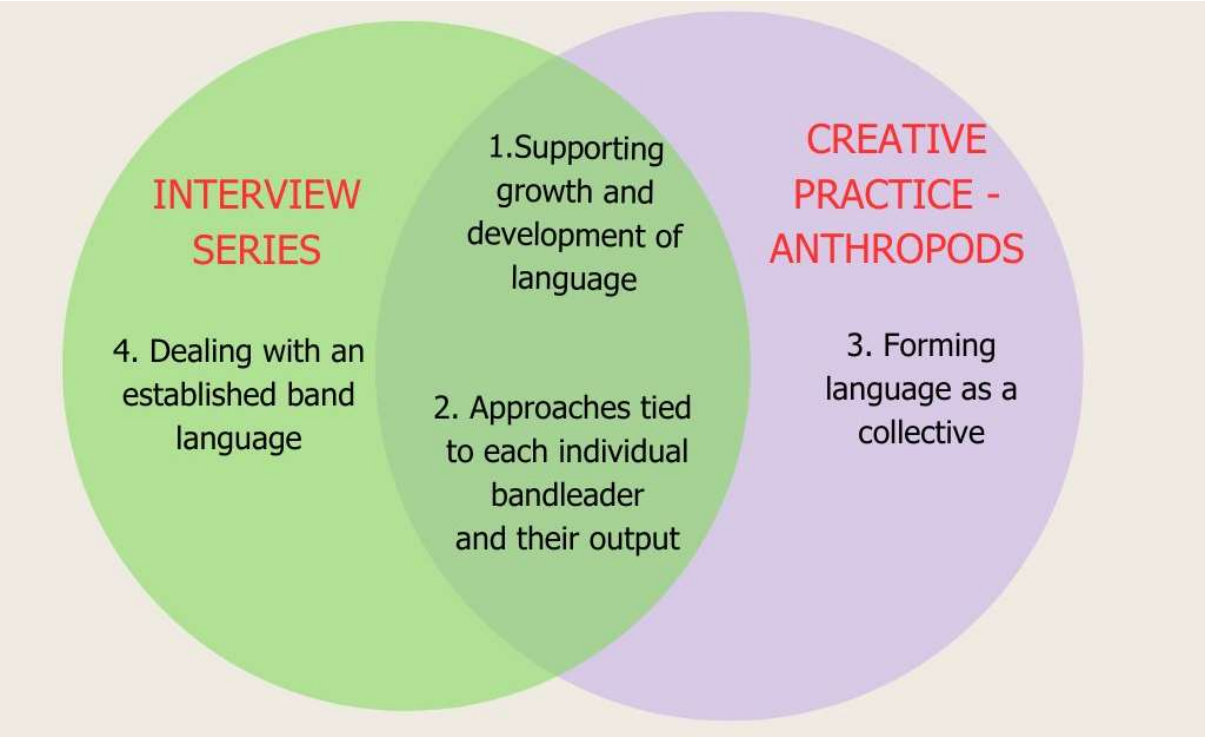

Figure 4 - Utilising the Mixed Methods

Figure 4 illustrates the two qualitative methods utilised in this thesis which are the interview series and the creative practice work with Anthropods. This study's main research question about how bandleaders work to support the growth and development of group language will be answered through both the creative practice work and the interview series. Using both methods will enable a broad set of insights, with the interview series exploring

multiple contrasting approaches as the bandleaders retrospectively look at their work, and the creative practice allowing an in-depth review at each stage of development from my perspective as the bandleader.

The second research question, addressing the ability of a bandleader-led ensemble to form a language collectively will be answered through creative practice. To deal with the question of the possibility of truly forming a language collectively, using the medium of creative practice allows a full examination of this process from the start. It enables the reader to examine the musical development alongside the changes of approach that each stage of the band's development enacted on my bandleading approach.

The third research question about bandleaders' approaches to dealing with an ensemble with an established language will be answered through the interview series. By interviewing many bandleaders with contrasting backgrounds and approaches, the interview series offers many different perspectives on the challenges of working with an improvising ensemble long term. This research is not hoping to posit that there is a correct way to work with an ensemble with a developed language, but rather to offer up different perspectives about ways to work with an ensemble long-term and the broad range of interview participants offers up several different and useful viewpoints.

Through this mixed methods design, the artistic research and the interview series can directly inform one another (Leavy 2015), enabling a broader perspective that addresses both retrospective and active aspects of the research questions. Alongside the interview series, the creative practice research "creates conditions for the emergence of new analogies, metaphors and models for understanding objects of enquiry" (E. Barrett and Bolt 2007, 7). The interview series allows a deeper understanding of the creative practice of

others, and the artistic research deepens my own personal understanding, while also deepening my understanding of the other bandleaders' experiences. "There is no better way to understand a particular aspect of creative practice than to research it in this direct way" (Knowles and Cole 2008, 31). The methodological integration of these two approaches extends the field knowledge beyond what is accessible in each individual approach, as well as helping to verify the results created through the different studies by "ensuring that the precise nature of the new knowledge is articulated through different lenses, and that the field can be assured that it has been challenged through the investigation process" (Vear 2022, 230).

This study uses Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) to analyse the interviews because it specifically looks at how the bandleaders work, and IPA is well suited to studying each bandleader's specific experience with their creative practice. "IPA is a method designed to understand people's lived experience and how they make sense of it in the context of their personal and social worlds" (J.A. Smith and Nizza 2022, 3).

The creative practice element, the creation of the ensemble Anthropods, offers a unique perspective on not only the question that will only be answered by creative practice, but also on the question which will be answered by both. By going into the project with these questions in mind, rather than looking at it retrospectively as in the interview series, the project offers deeper insights which can only be gained through active music-making and a constant assessment of each stage of the process in the creation of a group language. In using artistic practice as research, this thesis "offers an account of the search trajectories in artistic practices…the results present themselves as possibilities" (Coessens, Crispin, and Douglas 2009, 24). This approach depends significantly on my own subjective relationship

with the creative process and output, and therefore demands some inspection to understand what limitations and insights are brought about through my research positionality.

2.6.1 Positionality /Reflexivity

My positionality as a researcher is one of a practitioner. This positionality means that this thesis is not just an ethnography about bandleaders in improvised music, but rather is "knowing from the inside", a concept taken from the anthropologist Tim Ingold, where my experience as a practitioner is enriching the interviews, and the interview data is providing a transformational effect on my own practice based work (Ingold 2013). I have worked as a bandleader intermittently since starting playing the drums in the early 1990s, and I have worked professionally as a bandleader since roughly 2003. My experience as a practitioner offers me both a unique and strong perspective to analyse the data, (A. Barrett, Kajamaa, and Johnston 2020) as well as collegial access to the interviewees. In the interview series, I was mostly treated like a peer/colleague, rather than a researcher or journalist, and thus was able to gain insights which likely would not have been possible otherwise.

Having worked as a bandleader for the entirety of my professional career, the idea of removing myself completely from the research is neither realistic nor advantageous. Rather I am using my understanding of the bandleader experience to further understand the interviewees' experience. As British psychologist Ian Parker wrote on researcher subjectivity, "We can consider the text as a dream…but we need to be aware of ourselves as the dreamers…unlike instances of other people telling us their dreams, we understand and share, partially at least, at some level, the story" (Parker 1997, 488).

Through using the iterative analysis process inherent in IPA, I am better able to recognise my reflexivity in the process of analysis, reflect on where my experience is useful in the analysis process, while also gaining insights into each interviewee's lived experience of being a bandleader separate from my own experience (J.A. Smith, Flowers, and Larkin 2022a).

My positionality to the different interviewees was quite varying, some I knew as colleagues, some I knew as people on the "scene", and some I did not know at all. Some would have been aware of the music I make, while others would likely have little to no knowledge of my music at all. My position within the scene could have affected the way the interviews ran from both my perspective and the interviewee's perspective. The participants varied in age, experience and notoriety within the music scene, and their perception of my level of notoriety/importance to them could affect the way they responded in interview, and likewise their relation to me in age.

Being a white middle-class American man will have shaped the way that some participants responded to me, and this is particularly relevant in this study when speaking to women or people of colour, acknowledging the effect my race and background could have on the weight of the questions and addressing this in the analysis process.

The challenge within this study becomes about being aware of my positionality in both the delivery of the interviews and the analysis process and using my experience as a bandleader to help to understand the interviewees' experience while attempting to not prejudice their experience through the lens of my own experience. As Willig (2013, 25) explains, "Reflexivity...means more than acknowledging personal 'biases'; reflexivity invites us to think about how our own reactions to the research context and the data actually make

possible certain insights and understandings." Reflexivity is however not just a set process, but is tailored to each project and "based on [the] research aims, values and the logic of the methodology involved" (Finlay and Gough 2003, 17).

To address the challenges inherent in this project, before the interviews, I attempted to listen through each bandleader's musical back catalogue with an as unbiased ear as possible. Listening not to whether I liked the music or not, but rather attempting to listen to it from a researcher's perspective, and how their work as a bandleader was influencing the group sound. During the interviews I attempted to create a comfortable and relaxed feeling, to diffuse any potential tensions between myself and the interviewee. In the analysis, the IPA process is particularly designed to pull oneself outside of a subjective understanding as the interviewer to enable a deeper understanding of the interviewee's personal experience (J.A. Smith and Nizza 2022).

One particular problem during the analysis then became again about my own musical taste. As previously stated, the interviewees I chose were mostly around my own musical taste, but this pertained to some more than others. When I was less enamoured with the music that we discussed as the band sound, it was then more challenging to not let too much of my own preferences move into the analysis. In these cases, I had to take a step back once again and look at the music as purely as possible as a researcher and not from my personal perspective as a listener. Thus the process of reflexivity is a constant one, informed by reflection at each stage of the process and with the aim to consider my "understanding of culture, social realities and position" (A. Barrett, Kajamaa, and Johnston 2020, 10). While overall my positionality in this research creates challenges, these are far outweighed by the

positives inherent in my closeness to the subject at hand and the insights gained by being an insider.

Chapter 3 Methods

This thesis uses a mixed methods approach, beginning with creative practice with the ensemble Anthropods. The second section is an interview series with ten bandleaders that was analysed with Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis. This chapter first discusses the process and analysis of the Anthropods project. This is followed by the interview series, presenting the method for selecting the interviewees, the interview design and the process of transcribing and analysing the interviews.

3.1 Creative Practice – Anthropods

Anthropods was an ongoing project throughout the data collection process for this research. The compositions and the working style were not a direct result or directly connected to any specific research data, but rather an ongoing communication with the interview study. The insights gained through the interview process filtered into the rehearsal process and composition process. In line with the ethics approval given to this project by the University of Edinburgh, the members of Anthropods were informed about the project (see appendix D) and gave permission for their names to be identified within the research (see appendix E).

The Anthropods project is a response to the research questions through the means of artistic research and is an auto-ethnographic case study on how I as a bandleader work in the context of creating group language. As auto-ethnographic artistic research, it is by its nature “non-linear and involves cycles of creation, reflection, [and] refinement…” (Bartleet

2022, 138). While this element of the study is about my personal artistic work, an auto-ethnographic work also sheds light on the work around it because, “the reading and writing of self-narratives provides a window through which self and others can be examined and understood… autoethnography is an excellent instructional tool to help…gain profound understanding of self and others” (Chang 2016, 13).

The process of composing the first compositions for the band coincided with the beginning of the interview series. I attempted, as much as possible, to go into these first rehearsals without a clear idea of what the band sound should be, but rather to go in with a few compositions and then develop more compositions as the band sound became clearer in my head. All the rehearsals were recorded, and I wrote reflective notes both after the rehearsals and after hearing the recordings. As the interviews developed, ideas gained from the interviews fed into a style of working with the ensemble and this led to more compositions and eventually the recording of our first album. After recording our first album, and doing our first tour, the data collection for the interviews was mostly finished and the process with Anthropods continued.

The final part of the project was the composition and recording of the Abundant Shores Suite. After taking a full assessment of the music and data that was generated in the study, this suite represents something that, while still being a product of my own approach, is a greater reflection of the group language of the band. While the band is bound to develop further, this suite represents what I will describe in the research as “closing the circle”, finding a way as a bandleader to bring all of the musicians together, utilising their distinct voices, while at the same time fitting them within a sound world that I feel comfortable in as a bandleader.

This piece was first premiered in Vienna, Austria at Echoraum in November 2022. It was professionally recorded in September 2023 at the Janka Industries Studio in Vienna, Austria. Like the rehearsals, all the concerts and studio sessions were recorded, and reflective notes were written both before and after listening to them. The journey from the start of Anthropods to our second album is a personal reflection and inquiry into the research questions, the themes explored in the interviews, and the connections between these things.

3.2 Interview Series and Analysis

The interview series began with the process of selecting bandleaders. My initial requirements for the interviewees were that they were long-standing bandleaders working in jazz and improvised music, and I wanted to try to get at least 50% non-male identifying bandleaders. This research project was given ethics approval by the University of Edinburgh (see appendix B), and the interviewees were informed about the project and gave permission to have their names appear within the research (see appendix C and E).

Consistent with an IPA approach, the interviewees were selected through my contacts within the jazz and improvised music scene, as well as my knowledge of different bandleaders currently active (J.A. Smith, Flowers, and Larkin 2022b). The interviewees are presented throughout with their preferred pronouns.

3.2.1 First Five Interviewees

Cath Roberts (Sloth Racket) – Saxophone – Born 1983 – Lives in London, UK

Cath Roberts is someone I have known for many years as part of the jazz and improvised music scene. Several criteria led to my selection of Roberts as a research participant. Having known Roberts and their music for many years, I knew that they were an interesting composer and musician, and that Sloth Racket was quite a long-standing band. I also was aware that Roberts was very involved in the public funding side of things, which is not so common with everyone I talked to. I wanted to see how different Roberts would view their role as someone who is often applying for funding to help support her project. I contacted Roberts via email to ask them if they would like to take part in the study. The interview was a semi-structured interview, and it took place on January 6th, 2022 online via Zoom and was recorded with OBS studio.

Jan Kopinski (Pinski Zoo) – Saxophone – Born 1948 – Lives in Nottingham, UK

Jan Kopinski is someone who I have known for many years, having first encountered his music when I was a student in Leeds around 2001-2002 when he was the artist in residence. I have been a fan ever since and have been lucky to play with Kopinski in several different improvised configurations and have guested with a few of his projects. I thought he would be a good interview candidate because Pinski Zoo is a long-running band, and having worked with him, I was aware of his quite hands-off approach as a bandleader, just bringing the music and letting it go. I also thought it would be interesting to look at a band that, despite it being long-standing, had quite a lot of personnel changes over the years, and wanted to know what that would mean to the overall way of working and output. Kopinski is also the only musician I spoke to that always did music as a side job, his money was always coming from somewhere else, so I was interested in how this affected his approach. I contacted

Kopinski by email to ask if he would want to be involved in the study. The interview was a semi-structured interview and was held online via Zoom on October 28th, 2021 and recorded with OBS studio.

Faye MacCalman (Archipelago) - Saxophone – Born 1991 – Lives in Newcastle, UK

I had never met Faye MacCalman personally before and was familiar with her music through her bass player John Pope. I met Pope several times when I was up playing in Newcastle, and some friends told me about MacCalman's band Archipelago, and I thought it would be an interesting band for this project because it seemed much more like a "band", rather than a bandleader and side musicians, and was located fairly far away from the more traditional jazz world. I felt before the interview that it seemed like more of a collaborative ensemble with a leader, and I wanted to get some perspective on that. I contacted MacCalman via email to ask if she would want to be part of the study. The interview was a semi-structured interview and was held online via Zoom on December 3rd, 2021 and recorded with OBS studio.

Peter van Huffel (Gorilla Mask) – Saxophone - Born 1978 - Lives in Berlin, DE

I have known Peter van Huffel for quite a few years and have played a few double bills with Gorilla Mask and my group Led Bib as well as with other projects. I thought he would be a good candidate, because Gorilla Mask, somewhat similarly to Led Bib, is a "free-improvising" band that is improvising within a very specific sound world/idiom much of the time. I wanted to see how this was implemented as a bandleader, and how this was enabled to

develop. I contacted van Huffel via email to arrange the interview. It was a semi-structured interview, and was held online on December 14th, 2021 via Zoom and recorded with OBS studio.

Laura Jurd (Dinosaur) – Trumpet - Born 1990 – Lives in Frome, UK

I was familiar with Laura Jurd's music through the London jazz scene, and playing a festival together once in Germany, but I did not know it so well, outside of casual listening. We know each other personally a bit, and I play with her husband, Elliot Galvin, who plays keyboards in Dinosaur, but outside of a few meetings, we do not have a personal relationship. I thought she would be an interesting candidate because I wondered how being a bit closer to the jazz tradition and a bit more accepted by the jazz establishment would affect her approach, and how having success at an early point in her career would have affected her. I contacted her via email to arrange the interview. The interview was held online via Zoom on January 20th, 2022 and recorded with OBS studio.

3.2.2 Second Five Interviewees

Having finished these five interviews I paused to reflect on what I had so far and what I wanted to get out of the following interviews. Drawing on the data that was coming back from the first 5 interviews, it was clear that age, background and geography were big factors in how bandleaders were working and perceiving themselves and their bands. For the following interviews, I wanted to make sure that I spread the net a little wider, outside of my

personal acquaintances, to take in people from different places, backgrounds and ages to expand the perspective of the study.

The data from the first five interviews showed that the processes involved in forming a group language were more relevant to this study in bands that featured a larger amount of open improvisation. In these second five interviews, I aimed to find bandleaders where the majority of the band sound was made in the moment of performing the music, rather than in the composition.

As much of jazz and improvised music in the current scene owes its roots to the original free jazz pioneers of the 1960s, another factor in the recruitment of these final interviewees was getting some people as close to the original wave of free jazz in the 1960s as possible. All these factors meant that this next group of 5 interviews leaned more towards North America and included BAME musicians, as well as older musicians. To accommodate some of these recruitment aims, as well as to reflect where interesting data was coming back from in the first set of interviews, this second set of interviews features bandleaders who have not just led one band for a long time, but people who were active leading various ensembles. This group was more of a mix of people who I had a personal connection with and people who I had no personal connection with at all.

Mary Halvorson (Various Bands) – Guitar - Born 1980 – Lives in New York, USA

I have been familiar with Mary Halvorson's music since sharing a festival bill many years ago. We had never actually previously spoken to each other before, and I doubt that she was aware of my music, but we shared a record label, and the label (Cuneiform Records) kindly

put me in touch with her. I thought she would be an interesting candidate as she has led many different projects and the band we spoke about grew from trio to nonet, but somehow still seemed like one band, which was an interesting concept, and I was interested in how this worked. She also represents musically perhaps the clearest link between free improvisation and the jazz tradition of the interviewees, so it was interesting to get her perspective. Steve Feigenbaum from Cuneiform Records contacted her on my behalf, and she agreed to do the interview. The interview was a semi-structured interview and it took place on March 10th, 2022 online via Zoom and was recorded with OBS studio.

Lina Allemano (Lina Allemano Four) – Trumpet – Born 1973 – Lives in Berlin, DE and Toronto, CA

Lina Allemano is someone I met perhaps seven years ago when doing a double bill with a band of mine in Vienna and her touring improv band from Canada, Titanium Riot. I really enjoyed her concert and subsequently sought out more of her composed music and felt that her quartet, which she has been leading for many years, could be a great ensemble for this research because of its development over the years from something more resembling "modern jazz", to a much more open improvising ensemble. The band I had seen her with previously was a completely improvised ensemble, so the thing that interested me here was finding out what it means to be a bandleader more in the context of what is generally understood as "free improvisation". I contacted Allemano via email about doing the interview. The interview was a semi-structured interview and took place on March 17th, 2022 online via Zoom and I recorded it with OBS studio.

Orphy Robinson (Various Bands) - Vibraphone/Percussion - Born 1960 - Lives in London, UK

I first met Orphy Robinson perhaps fifteen or so years ago, while playing on the same bill, where he was playing in a band with Charles Hayward, Hugh Hopper and Lol Coxhill. We have seen each other here and there on gigs and have played together a bit over the years, but do not have a close personal relationship. I was interested in interviewing him because while he has worked as a bandleader, his role stretched also into being an MD and being a mentor and I was interested in the connections here. I also wanted to be more representative of the non-white section of the jazz and improvised music community, which is where it all started, and I felt that an original member of the Jazz Warriors was a good place to start. I contacted Robinson via email about doing the interview. The interview was a semi-structured interview and took place on May 5th, 2022 online via Zoom and I recorded it with OBS studio.

Tim Berne (Various Bands) - Saxophone - Born 1954 - Lives in New York, USA

I have been familiar with Tim Berne's music since seeing a few of his concerts while at university in 2000-2003 and have been a fan since. The difference in Berne's case compared to many of the other interviewees is he is not focused on just one band but has been the leader of many different long-standing ensembles. This felt somehow closest to the jazz tradition of people like Art Blakey and Miles Davis, having a band be a sort of training ground for young musicians, with each iteration of Berne's band being a new exploration of his fascinating language. I had no personal connection with Berne and contacted him via email about whether he would want to take part in the study. The interview was a semi-structured

interview, and it took place on May 4th, 2022 online via Zoom and was recorded with OBS studio.

William Parker (Various Bands) - Bass - Born 1952 - Lives in New York, USA

I have been familiar with William Parker both as a player and bandleader for many years, but had no personal connection with him, following a series of enquiries, I was very pleased that he wanted to take part in the interview. Parker for me represents the closest I could get to the original innovations of the 1960s free jazz pioneers, and he felt like a really important perspective to have. His generation, ethnicity, and relation to many early pioneers, gives him a perspective on improvised music that I would not be able to attain through any of the other interviews. The interview was a semi-structured interview and it took place on May 3rd, 2022 online via Zoom and was recorded with OBS studio.

3.2.3 Interview Design and Pre-Interview Preparation

I decided that the best design for this study would be to do a series of semi-structured interviews because I wanted to ask "probing, open-ended questions and want[ed] to know the independent thoughts of each individual in a group" (Adams 2015, 494). I set a series of draft questions informed by Adams' guidance on how to conduct semi-structured interviews, which I then refined with the help of colleagues and my supervisory team. I then proceeded to do a practice interview with bass player/composer/bandleader Liran Donin, which helped me to further refine both the interview questions and my interview style.

As the main focus of the interviews was to gain further insight into the creation of group language, a good place to start with each interview was to ask the interviewees to send a track beforehand that they felt either represented best the group sound of the band, or felt like the turning point for the band where it was clear what the group sound was. In preparation for the interviews, I listened through the back catalogue of all the interviewees and tried to pinpoint myself where it felt like the group language was formed. While listening through the back catalogue, I took notes on all the albums, reflecting on the development of the ensemble, and took a step back to look reflexively at how I was hearing the music. Asking for the interviewee to bring a track offered a counterbalance to see if the bandleader's opinion about the development was similar to my own, and in most of the cases where the bandleader picked a track, we had similar opinions of where the band language became clearer.

Requesting the track was however not always fully successful, some interviewees brought the track to the interview, some were not able to pick anything, and in the case of a few bandleaders who had a broader output, it did not make sense to start with just one track. However the preparation with the track went, the interview started by discussing group language.

The interviews were roughly split into three sections (see appendix A), 'Bandleading Style', 'Reflections on the Band', and 'Practical Realities of Running a Band'. While each section had a series of questions, the interviews were somewhat tailored to each interviewee's particular experience, and the interviews were allowed to wander into discussions beyond the written questions. The questions followed the guidance set out by J.A. Smith and Nizza (2022) specifically tailored to conducting semi-structured interviews for

an Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) study. This meant ensuring that the questions were open-ended without assumptions to not steer the interviewees to give a particular answer. The interviews were structured in a funnel structure (Brinkmann and Kvale 2015), where the start of the interviews were broader questions about group sound and as the interview went on, the questions became more specific about personal relationships within the ensemble. The interviews varied somewhat in length but generally were around one hour long.

3.2.4 Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis

As I wanted to "understand people's lived experience and how they make sense of it in the context of their personal and social worlds" (J.A. Smith and Nizza 2022, 3), Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) was an excellent method for analysing this study. Smith and Nizza elaborate,

> With IPA the objective is to get as close as possible to the lived experience of participants so that it can be examined in details. Accordingly IPA researchers aim for insight into what it is like to have an experience from the point of view of the person who has had it to elicit rich descriptions, trying to capture the emotions surrounding the experience and how people understand it and make sense of it (J.A. Smith and Nizza 2022, 4).

IPA is suited to a smaller sample size and a somewhat homogenous group. However, with the role of the bandleader in jazz and improvised being somewhat rare amongst the general population, IPA also accounts for the shared experience of being a bandleader to create the necessary homogeneity in the sample (J.A. Smith, Flowers, and Larkin 2022a). With a relatively small sample size, this study itself is not aspiring to be reflective of the

differences in approaches based on age, gender, race, etc., rather it highlights the individual approaches of these bandleaders. Bandleading is an artistic and personal activity, and thus IPA highlights each individual's approach and the effect that their background has on it.

While IPA is looking at the individual's experience, it also describes the convergence in accounts by the participants (J.A. Smith and Nizza 2022). Through the analysis of each bandleader's individual approach, this research then seeks to gain insight into convergences and divergences among the bandleaders, as well as connecting the bandleaders' experiences to their musical output.

3.2.5 Individual Interview Analysis Process

The analysis process followed the process set out by J.A. Smith and Nizza (2022) in *Essentials of Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis*. Each interview was held online over Zoom and recorded directly into the computer with OBS studio. The first part of the process was the transcription of the interview. I began by playing through the recording of the interview at a slower speed to enable me to more accurately transcribe the interview. When this was completed, I then went back through the interview at normal speed several times to check for any mistakes and note down any significant events in the interview I may have missed in the slower version (i.e. long pauses, laughs, connection issues, etc.). In a standard IPA study, this would also be the time to anonymise the data, but as this study was not just about the bandleader's experience, but the relationship between their experience and their musical output, it was not possible to anonymise the data in this case.

I then formatted the transcript with large margins on either side and line numbers and listened back to the interview along with the transcript and made notes in the right

margin of my initial reactions and made a set of exploratory notes about the interview. This was followed by going through the interview once more with the notes and formulating in the left column a series of experiential statements, creating at least one statement for each time the interviewee spoke, trying to capture what the meaning of the experience to the interviewee was. These were then collated in the left column of the transcript.

This was followed by making a new document with all the experiential statements and printing them out. I then cut out each experiential statement and arranged them randomly on the floor or table (see appendix F). This process is done to enable the analyst to approach the experiential statements with a clean slate rather than be affected by when they happened. In the next phase, I then put together which experiential statements fit with which other ones and attempted to make the statements into three or four clustered personal experiential themes.

After the clustered personal experiential themes were created for each interview, I made another document separating the original experiential statements into the clustered personal experiential themes. I then went back to the transcript to include illustrative quotes alongside their line numbers on the new document. As IPA is meant to be an iterative process, the process of creating the document of these clustered personal themes often meant going back to the original text and realising some things were connected that were not immediately clear. Following the completion of this process on all ten interviews I began to do the cross-case analysis.

3.2.5.1 Cross-Case Analysis

The beginning of this process involved looking through all the personal experiential themes and "highlighting the shared and unique features of the experience across the contributing participants" (J.A. Smith, Flowers, and Larkin 2022b). Once points of connection were determined, then the process began to determine whether, when experiencing a similar experience, each bandleader reacted in the same way.

In the process of the cross-case analysis, I printed out all the analyses of the interviews and began to highlight different experiential themes and clustered experiential themes and connected them across the studies. Since this group had quite diverse backgrounds, experiences and unique interview styles, this sometimes meant a further layer of analysis was required. For example, sometimes this could be as simple as connecting one bandleader's discussion of the effect that their formal jazz education had on their approach, to another bandleader's discussion of their lack of formal education, and its impact on their approach. However, as the interviewees were given space to explore different themes, sometimes wider philosophies came into focus in the interviews, and then the analysis process involved determining whether these philosophies fit into their bandleading approach or their wider life approach, and how to connect these to other interviewees' experiences.

As I went through the different interviews, the amount of different group experiential themes got smaller. It was clear through the process that the connections from one topic to another often fit closer together than I realised as I read through more accounts. By the end of this process, I ended up with 4 group experiential themes:

- Bandleading Philosophy

- Musical Philosophy
- Social/Emotional
- Logistics/Business

Some individual interview themes fit quite neatly in these categories, but with the ones that did not, I went through each printed analysis transcript one by one and marked them for placement in the best corresponding theme. When necessary, I also went back to the original interview transcript.

While the interview study used IPA to do the analysis, the overall thesis does not follow a typical IPA design. Firstly because it's a mixed methods study, but also because it is interested in the relationship between the experiences of the participants and the resulting music. The generalisations made in the study are then a further level of analysis related to each bandleader's experiences connected to their musical output. Due to the mixed methods approach and the connection of the findings from the interviews and the musical output, the clearest way to present the output is through the merging of the discussion and analysis sections of the IPA study. While this is an atypical design for an IPA study, it is accepted within the realms of IPA analysis (J.A. Smith, Flowers, and Larkin 2022b). Likewise while combining an IPA study with an auto-ethnographic approach is not common, J.A. Smith, Flowers, and Larkin (2009, 132) offer up the suggestion that "it is unusual to see this in IPA work, but it is possible to imagine that IPA *could* be used as an approach alongside such a strategy."

3.3 Presentation of Findings

The creative practice and interview studies are presented concurrently to show how they are complementary and are both involved in answering the main research question from different perspectives, as well as offering perspectives on the sub-questions that only each specific method can bring. Chapter 4 presents the artist research with Anthropods and the interview study features in chapter 5. Chapter 6 offers an analysis of the results of both the studies and what they offer together in answering the research questions. This is followed by the conclusion in chapter 7.

Chapter 4 Creative Practice - Anthropods

4.1 Anthropods Project Overview

I set up the Anthropods project as a new start for me as a bandleader. After running Led Bib for twenty years, a project which very much took on a life of its own musically, I wanted to reassess what I wanted to do as a bandleader starting again twenty years later.

The Anthropods project provides a detailed account of how the band's language developed from the first rehearsals to two albums in (across a four-year period). My goal as a bandleader was to develop a band focused project, allowing the project as much as possible to run itself, and examining how the project would develop without too strong an influence as a bandleader. The project was running concurrently alongside the interview process, and as a bandleader, I was using insights gained through the interview process in my leadership of the ensemble.

Throughout this chapter, there are audio and video recordings from rehearsals, concerts and studio recordings. The recordings document how the ensemble developed from a band with no established language, to a band with a developed group language four years later. Alongside the musical examples, the scores for the pieces are included. The scores are provided to offer a clearer picture of what the ensemble was working from when they performed together, but the focus is on what is contained within the recordings, and what the band did with those compositions, rather than the scores themselves. This chapter will now present the Anthropods project chronologically, beginning with the founding of the ensemble and moving through the first rehearsals, album recording sessions and touring.

4.1.1 Anthropods Formation / Band Members

When I began searching for members for the ensemble, I knew I wanted the instrumentation to be somewhat non-traditional, an ensemble which by its instrumentation already had to think differently about group sound, rather than being able to fall back on traditional instrument roles. I did not have any specific instrumentation in mind but knew that I wanted to avoid a front-line horns and rhythm section situation.

The people I chose have somewhat mixed musical backgrounds, Irene Kepl (violin – www.irenekepl.at) was someone who I have worked with often in improvised music projects, as well as other projects, and was the first person I thought to ask. Kepl did study jazz and classical music, but her main focus as a player is in contemporary and improvised music.

The next person I thought of was Susanna Gartmayer (bass clarinet - http://gartmayer.klingt.org). I knew Gartmayer from a few projects, and she also played some clarinet on the last Led Bib album, but we had not played extensively. She has a fine art background, having not studied clarinet at university, and has no experience that I am aware of playing in more traditional jazz contexts. In terms of her projects, they range from improvised music to experimental rock music, to contemporary music.

I then thought of Jakob Gnigler (tenor sax - http://jakobgnigler.com), who I had played one concert with and heard him play a small amount with different people. I did not know his playing so well, but enjoyed our one concert together and thought it could work

out. Gnigler studied jazz at university and is involved in some more jazz-leaning projects but is mostly involved in improvised music.

The last chair to fill was that of the cello, in this case, I did think that I wanted specifically to have the cello as an instrument in the band, but I did not know who would be right. I did not know Clemens Sainitzer (cello - http://www.clemenssainitzer.com/), aside from sharing a bill on a gig together. In that gig, I enjoyed his playing, but I knew very little about him aside from that, so I took a chance and asked him. Sainitzer studied musicology at university and the projects he is involved with are more on the "song" end of the spectrum, although also jazz and improvised music.

My own role within the ensemble is not just as the bandleader but as the drummer. As a drummer, I am involved in many different projects ranging from avant-rock music to free improvisation to more jazz focused projects.[2] While I enjoy playing with new musicians and do often play in new configurations, my career has been characterised by working within bands long-term, and I particularly enjoy improvising within different bands' developed languages.

The age range is a little wider with Anthropods than with my other project Led Bib, with Gartmayer being 48 in 2024 and Sainitzer the band's youngest at 33.

[2] For further information - https://www.allaboutjazz.com/take-five-with-mark-holub - https://www.classical-music.com/features/artists/led-bibs-mark-holub - http://www.markholub.com

4.2 Ensemble Founding

The start of Anthropods was complicated in some ways by the fact that we were not all coming out of the same training or background. I needed to find a way to communicate and relate to these players in a way that I did not have to be so conscious about with my other project Led Bib, where all the players had a jazz background. The beginning of Anthropods saw me bring tunes to a band that did not have a developed sound yet. Without a developed language, I was hoping to not have any further influence on the band's language beyond my compositions.

4.2.1 Early Recordings

4.2.1.1 Rehearsal- 20/10/2020

When I first started working with the ensemble, I brought along a few compositions to use as a starting point. While I did somewhat have the musicians and the instrumentation in mind, without having played together previously, any active knowledge of the band sound was not possible. In this early rehearsal, my comments at the time were:

> It feels at least in the moment that it sits most comfortably with more of a 'free improv' language, but it also seems to work based more in tonality and time…so, somewhere in between(!) But it definitely doesn't sit where Led Bib naturally sat, and I sometimes feel that the pieces which are more 'groove' based, seem to get a tiny bit lost somehow, like they are pieces written for the wrong band.

However, even at this early juncture in the band's history, one can hear the beginnings of the band's language which continued developing, even though I was not

aware of it at the time. This first composition, Forest Capers, was written before I had any real idea of what the band might sound like, and certainly, a composition like this, with some variation could have found a home in Led Bib's repertoire. However, the approach compositionally was also slightly different to a Led Bib piece because there is so little composed material and no real groove to call on in the improvising in the traditional way that Led Bib would have. I wrote the composition using language that I was accustomed to, hoping this could offer inspiration for the improvisers, without dictating what should happen.

Forest Capers / Rehearsal Audio - https://on.soundcloud.com/3CRxfrEtd5YjmQSX8(Mark Holub 2025a)

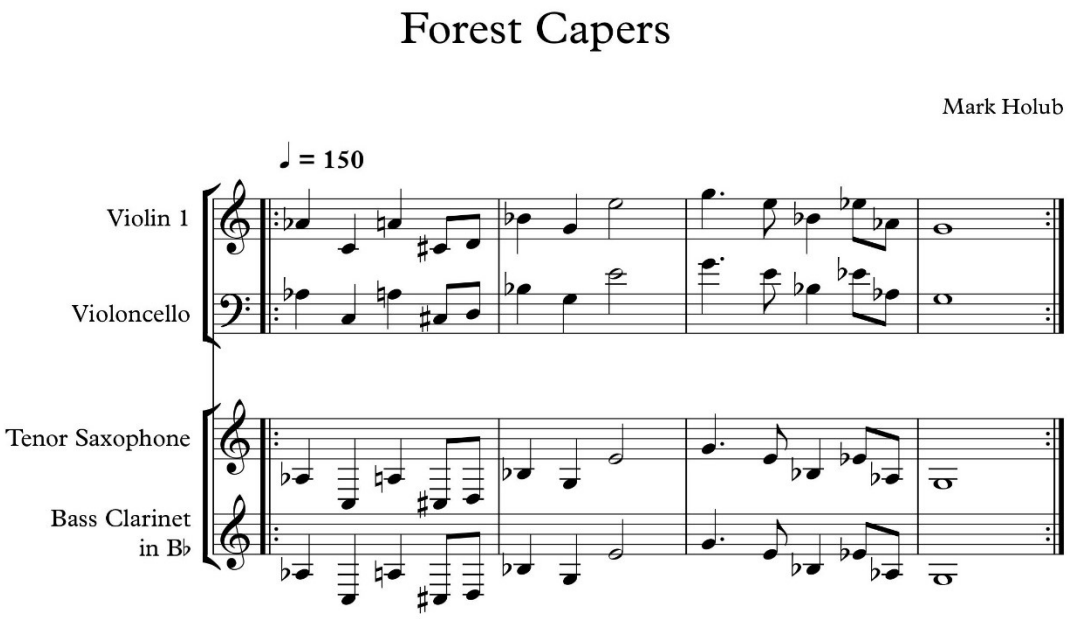

Figure 5 - Forest Capers Score

Even in the more traditional "free jazz" language at the beginning of the improvisation (0:20 - 1:50), one can hear a strong connection to tonality, repetitive figures,

and melody, approaches that the band would continue to develop. Particularly later in the improvisation (2:50 – end) one can hear the role that Susanna Gartmayer went on to further develop within the ensemble, creating drones, tonal colours and areas that the band then improvised around. Having Gartmayer, someone who was not bringing the traditional "free jazz" approach, helped to colour what would become the ensemble's sound world. While this was an early meeting, one can already hear some directions that the band continued to explore, even though I was not able at the time to spell out where it felt like the band might be going musically.

4.2.1.2 First Concert- 2/2/2021 – Porgy and Bess, Vienna

This felt like a big moment for the band, even though it was a streaming-only concert due to the COVID pandemic. In my notes on the concert, I say,

> The concert went by rather fast. I think this is a combination of factors, one being that it has been a long time since the last time I played a concert, but the general nervous energy that I had about the whole thing made it zip by rather quickly. In the moment of playing and afterwards, I felt it was quite a strong performance, and I felt like it was an ensemble which definitely is beginning to find its voice. But, now 2 days later, I am really not so sure. I don't actually have much of a memory of moments of the concert which I usually would have.

Perhaps my uncertainty could be attributed to the "newness" of the whole thing, I was somehow too in the moment to have the time to get such an objective picture of how the performance went. Coming off the stage there was quite a mixed reaction from the band, and I think my own exuberance and nervous energy meant that I overplayed on the gig, which did not allow the music to develop in such an organic way. The improvisations ended up somewhat one-dimensional, leaning towards a more comfortable place, namely a

more typical free jazz language, with little time or space given for deviations from this language. This concert snippet features the aforementioned Forest Capers as well as Messy to Me. Messy to Me was another early composition for the band, and leans more towards language that I had developed with my band Led Bib. This is not to completely say that the compositional language does not suit the band, but rather that the composition was not written with the developed band sound in mind.

Forest Capers / Messy To Me Live Video Link -

https://youtu.be/ZtGyJxbjhM0?si=6oCtft1BvNTKN4v6(Mark Holub 2025a)

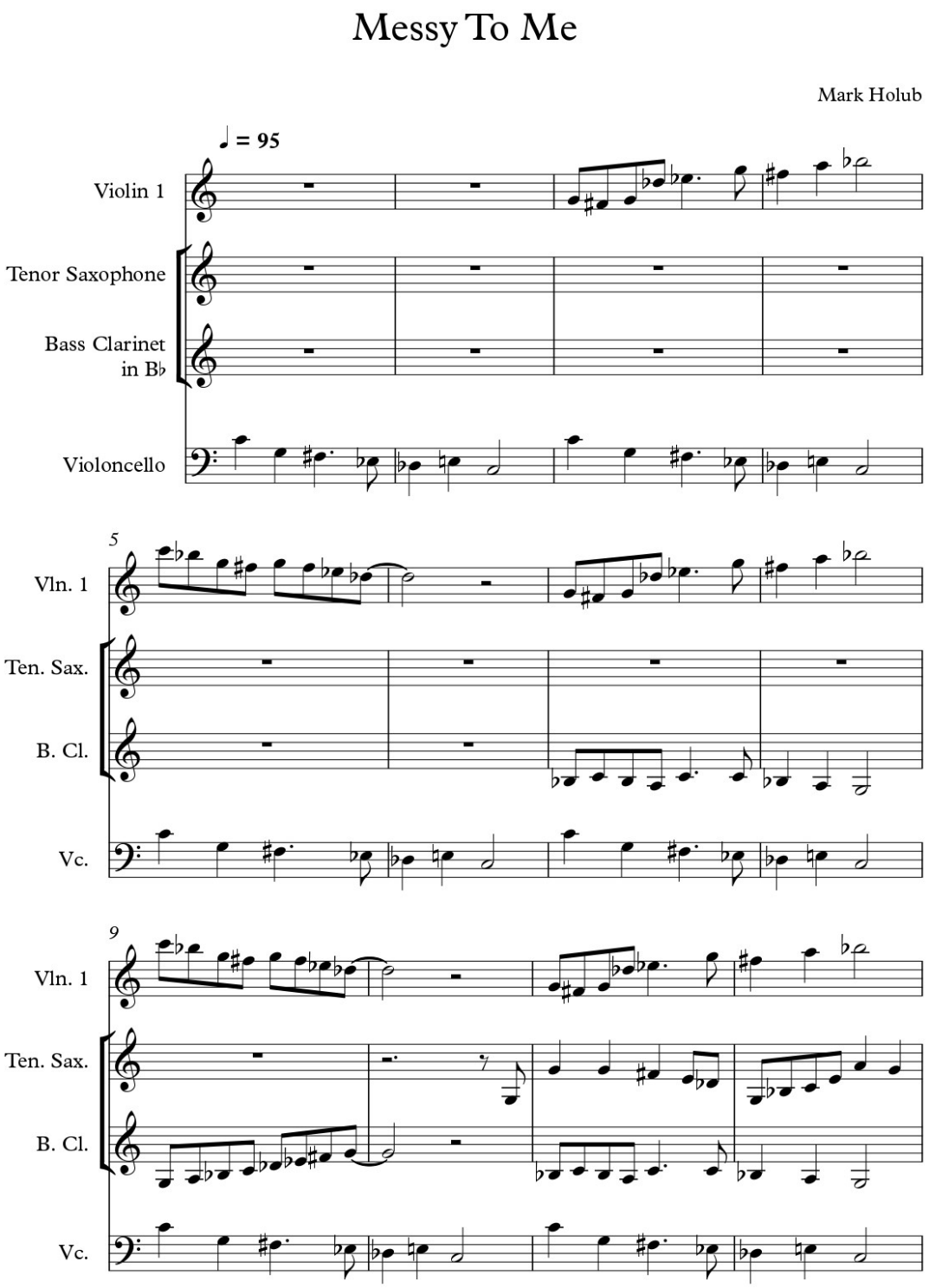

Figure 6 - Messy To Me Score - Page 1

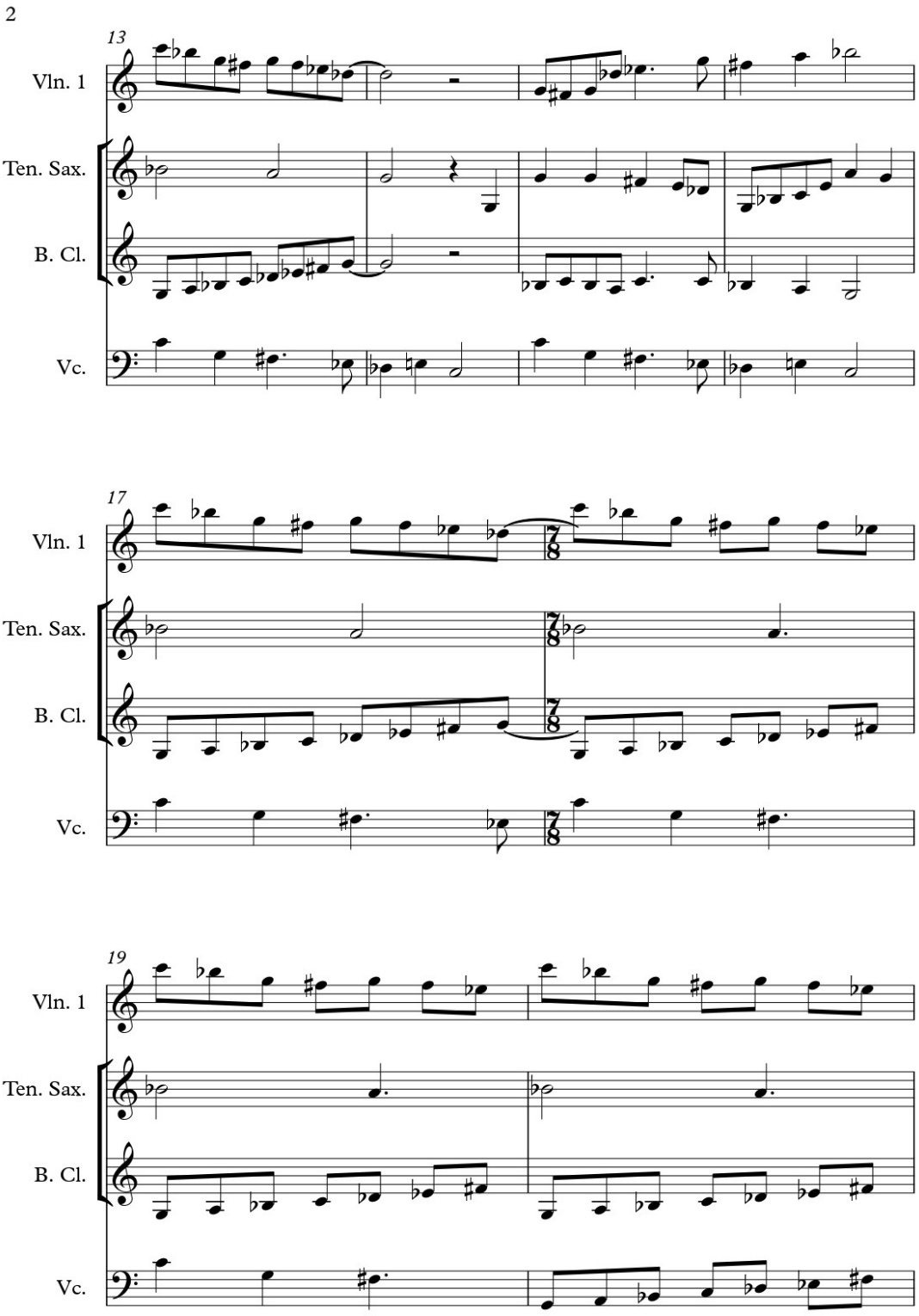

Figure 7 - Messy To Me Score - Page 2

4.2.2 Unconscious Influencing

Despite my efforts to allow the band to develop without my influence as much as possible, listening back to the rehearsal recordings around this period, I often share my views about what I think could happen. My comments were never instructions before playing, but rather comments on what happened in the playing, and they were often positive reinforcement of things that went on in the improvising that I liked. While it may not be that all these characteristics that I was advocating for found their way into the music, I was setting out my preferences, which in different ways would have filtered into each musician's understanding of what the music could sound like.

Sometimes however, there was a more concrete impact of our discussions. For example, outside of rehearsal, in an informal meeting with the band, I mentioned that I did not really like bands doing musical "swells" in improvised music. This became a bit of an ongoing joke and Clemens Sainitzer even wrote on his Anthropods music folder "No Swells Band". While the whole thing was seen somewhat as a joke, "swelling" became something that the band rarely does, a clear connection to this discussion.

I will continue with quotes from within rehearsals where I directly commented on what had happened, offering directions of what could happen musically in the future. Alongside the quotes, I will offer explanations of what I feel I was trying to communicate more broadly about musical possibilities within the ensemble.

4.2.2.1 Rehearsal Quotes

MH - "It was cool in beginning of the improvising, you were playing a bit of the tune and it sounded sort of demented."

Here I was attempting to push the idea that using the tunes in the improvising is a good idea, and that we do not need to always start completely afresh when we get to the improvising sections. This was happening a lot anyway, so rather than trying to shape the sound, this was a reinforcement of what was already happening.

MH - "I think having the feeling of not being scared when I don't play, but the feeling that we can make a quick change into something else instead of going oh shit"

Here I was trying to develop a sense that the music is adaptable to people coming in and out, and particularly that when I stop playing it does not need to mean that the improvising is finished. This was a theme which came up in quite a few different quotes from the rehearsal recordings. Early in the life of Anthropods, it often felt like when we finished one idea, rather than going to another one, we would just play some "filler" material until either the tune came or we stopped, so I was also trying to stop us from doing that.

MH - "It's like when Jakob is playing a lot, or whoever is playing a lot, when we get to the notes, the written notes, don't go just right into the notes, then it has this sort of, we are doing this and then we are doing that…so it has this sort of hangover between the sections"

The improvising and tunes should be connected and flow into each other, rather than being two separate things. This is always a challenge in any band which mixes composed and improvised material, and it was no different in this band.

MH - "I think if you're out, don't be afraid to be like, I am out, it's done…I think it's better to not let it drag on, like I am maybe out…either I am going to go or I'm not"

This is a characteristic that has always been important to me as a leader, namely the idea that it is better to be concise than to let things drag on too long.

MH "Don't be afraid to jump out as a soloist, I feel like it's a lot of group texture…"

This was something that I talked about a lot in the beginning, and struggled with, because having a jazz background, I am used to often having soloist/accompanist relationships within an ensemble, something which was happening infrequently in this band. With time, however, I embraced the sound that the band naturally made, which was generally much more of a group improvisation texture.

MH - "In concert, I think it will be clearer, do we want to do the tune again…"

Here I am attempting to leave open the idea of whether we will play the tune at the start and end of the piece – "jazz style". This ended up being a point of discussion, particularly with Gartmayer, who wanted to understand more about how the pieces are meant to work as a whole programme. Because of the pandemic, although we had been

playing a while by this point, we still had not played in public, so my feeling was that some of these things would sort themselves out in actual performance. The conversation continued later in the rehearsal.

CS - Since we've never played live before, is it like, we can play the tune again at the end?

MH – Yeah, probably we play live and we play every tune at the end. No…we definitely could…

CS - We say it's possible, but it never happens, even in rehearsal.

MH - No, we definitely can do it..

SG - Maybe it's good to have a plan

IK - I think it makes it clear what it can be like as a programme

CS - Or it makes it clear like this is an impro part and then into another tune

These sorts of conversations, as well as my perspective on how the music was developing, led me to believe as a composer that I should work with more through-composed compositions, with the improvising composed inside them, rather than my jazz-based approach of "composition – improvisation – composition". These conversations also gave me a better understanding of what the band felt like was working well, further influencing my compositions for the ensemble.

It is however impossible to effectively quantify exactly what the impact of these statements and discussions were, and how they were received and acted on by each member. Some may have been ignored, some may have been realised, and likely the things that were absorbed were not necessarily realised in the way that I had envisaged them.

Likewise, comments from the band on the music may have landed differently with me than they meant them. However, while it may not be that everyone's perspective on the discussions were the same, whatever each person took from the discussions informed the way that we all thought about the language of the band. Each interaction helped the band members have a deeper understanding of how they perceived my vision for the ensemble and their role within that. From my perspective as the bandleader, all these discussions furthered my understanding of how the music I was bringing was sitting with the band, helping me to find better ways to work with the ensemble.

4.3 Early Development of Group Language

While in retrospect one can hear in the early Anthropods recordings where the group language developed from, the recording of the first album and our first tour mark the start of when it began to feel clearer to the ensemble and myself how the language was developing. Entering the recording studio and taking the material on tour meant that the playing situations were different from the rehearsals. The added pressure of knowing that the music is for public consumption and that we need to perform it in real time makes an ensemble dig deeper to find out ways to make things work. This develops everyone's understanding of where each ensemble can go. This section examines music from the first album as well as the band's first tour and finishes with a section extracting the language components of the band up until this point.

4.3.1 First Album Recording Session - 8/2/22 – 9/2/22

The band's first recording session saw me bring nine compositions which we recorded over two days. It was all recorded in one room, and while the compositions themselves offered inspiration to the improvisations, no formal directions were given beforehand as to what might happen in the improvisations.

In the run-up to the recording, we were having a band discussion about how we were going to set up and Sainitzer made an interesting point that if we had played together for years, it would probably be easier to do everything with headphones and in separate rooms because we could somewhat "fake it". "Faking it" gives the concept a slightly negative connotation which it does not necessarily need to have. The process of recording improvised music in the studio is often done with an element of "faking" the real live moment of playing. But, the crux of his point was that we do not really know how this band sounds, so we cannot fake it. We have to all be able to respond in the moment to what is happening, and as improvisers, the best way to do that is to be in the room with the other musicians.

The session itself, like pretty much any session of improvised music, was challenging. The attempt to recreate what happens in concert in the recording studio is always challenging. This session was no different, but the thing I reflected on in my notes that perhaps was special to this session was my understanding of what good was.

> I need to change my expectations of what it should sound like. In my head, I hear the sound that Led Bib made when it was working well and think that is sort of the pinnacle of what 'my' band can do. But this is a completely different ensemble and I need to rethink what it can be and what a 'good sound' for this band is. I think that with some space from the session and then listening back, I should have a better feel for what this band really sounds like.

Particularly after leading Led Bib for so long, my understanding of what "good" meant was what Led Bib sounded like when they were playing well, but that was a completely different ensemble with a completely different frame of reference. My notes at the time say,

> I have never gone into something as a bandleader with less of a sense of what it should/could sound like. And also less of a sense of whether I think it's good…I am really going into it, and presenting it, though not overtly, as a work in progress. I don't know if this is what the band should do, but we are doing it, so here it is! It actually is somehow quite liberating to not have the feeling that it has to be amazing…I have no idea if it will be amazing or terrible, but I will just try to make music and respond in the moment and see what comes…and that is a good recipe for mental health, and also perhaps a good recipe to make the music work.

My approach of allowing the band to do what it felt like it wanted to do in the moment was still feeling somewhat foreign, but I was also beginning to realise that previously as a bandleader I was putting pressure on each gig, each recording, to be amazing. It's not that with Anthropods I did not want it to be great, but rather, I wanted it to just be what it was on the night, and not feel the pressure that I needed to make it happen. I was beginning to realise that feeling pressure to make it "happen" in the performance makes it harder for the band to be what it wants to be in the moment, an insight which was also coming back from the interview series, and that by letting the ensemble find its own way, I was able to enjoy the process more, and the music also benefited. This ensemble needed to have its own "aesthetic agreement" (Blake 2016), and I needed to get some space from the session itself to allow myself to find what that agreement was, and realise that the band was beginning to find its language. I will now examine three compositions from the session in further detail.

4.3.1.1 The Bells

The Bells - Listening link: https://discusmusic.bandcamp.com/track/the-bells

The most successfully realised compositions on the album, in my opinion as the bandleader, are ones where I was able to reflect more on the natural sound of the band and compose with that in mind. Highlighting two different approaches, the first is my composition The Bells. I consciously tried to create something which was not reliant on groove and was on the more low-key end of the scale. I also created a composition where the improvising and the composition could flow more naturally together, helped along by the drone-based language, and the drums taking a back seat. The improvising is quite tonal, and not quick in moving from section to section. It is quite anchored to the tune, and mostly group improvisation, rather than solo and support. A lot of these characteristics were far from what I was suggesting in the rehearsal discussions, but they came to be characteristics that defined the ensemble. This shows that while I may have been offering some positive reinforcement of certain characteristics I liked in the improvising, the members of the ensemble still trusted the process enough to find their own way within the band language.

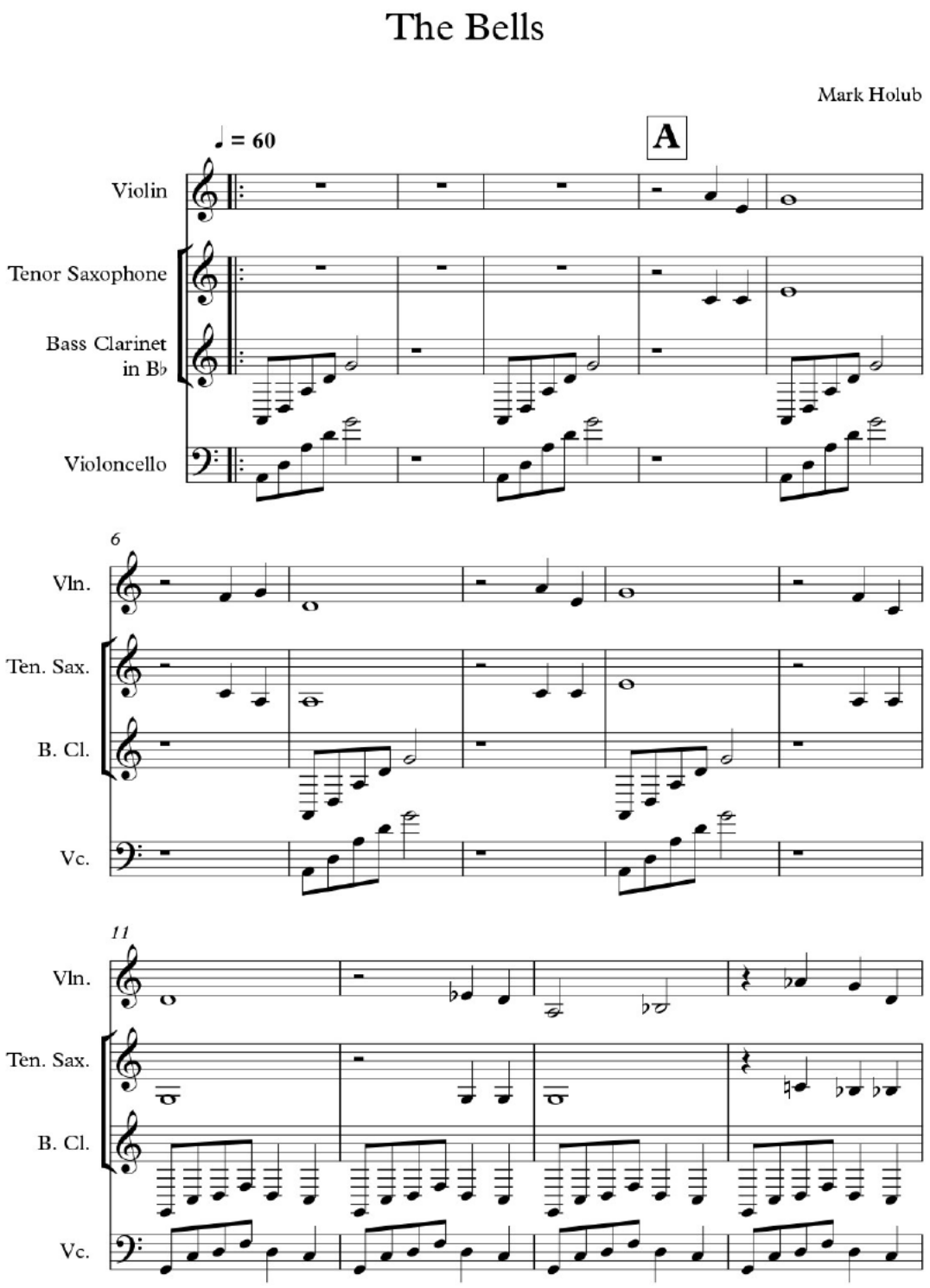

Figure 8 - The Bells Score - Page 1

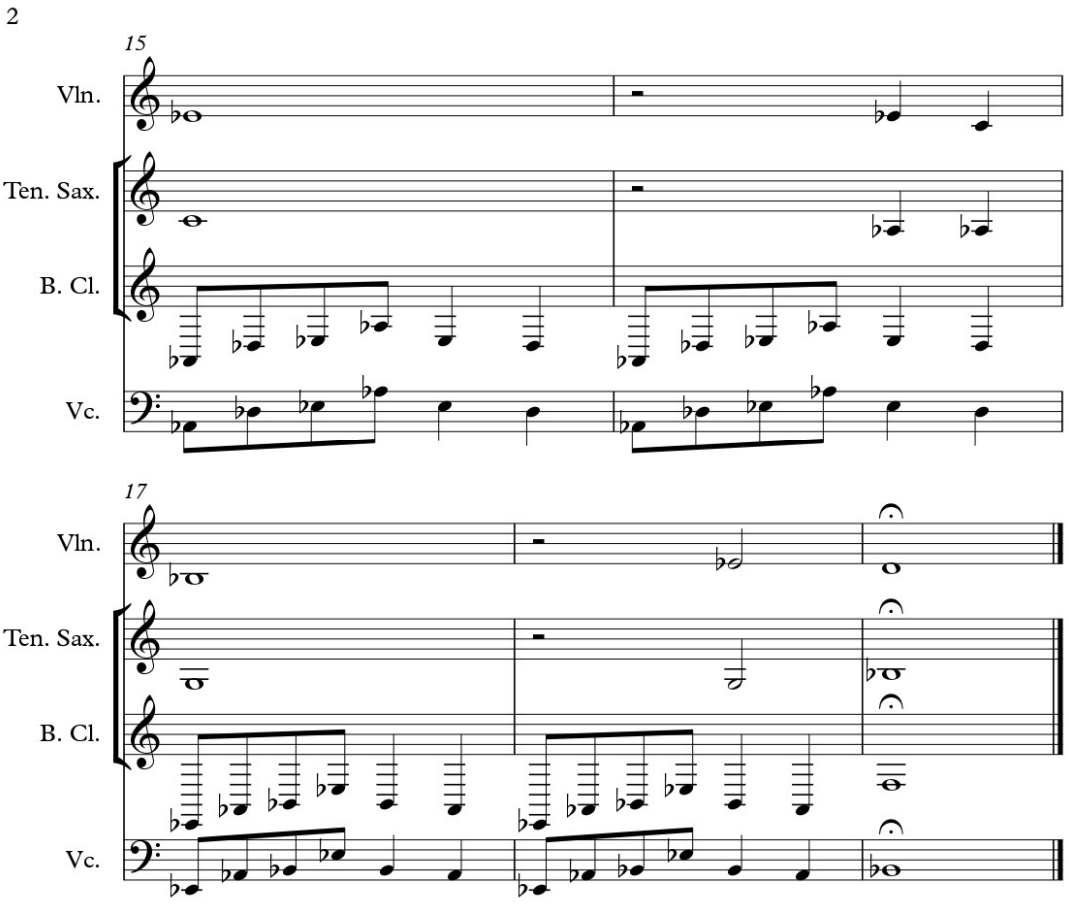

Figure 9 - The Bells Score - Page 2

4.3.1.2 For Charles

For Charles - Listening Link: https://discusmusic.bandcamp.com/track/for-charles

Another composition from this session which was more directly responding to the band sound is For Charles. I wrote this piece without a specific instrument in mind, it's essentially a sort of pentatonic bluesy melody. With this piece, I composed the indeterminate elements directly into the piece. No one specific has to play the melody, and there is no set harmony part, as well as no specific time that the melody should be played. I wanted this to work as a small section of melody which would create an improvisational

zone which we would then play within. We are not particularly referencing the composition in much of the improvising, but the influence of either knowing that the composition is coming eventually or knowing where we came from influences where we go. Likewise, my own somewhat preconceived ideas about where the improvising could go that I referenced in the discussion section are mostly non-existent here. This is not improvising related to the jazz soloist tradition, but much more of a group improvising texture. There is not the feeling of being stuck to the material, but there also is not the feeling that the material is completely superfluous and just an excuse to improvise together.

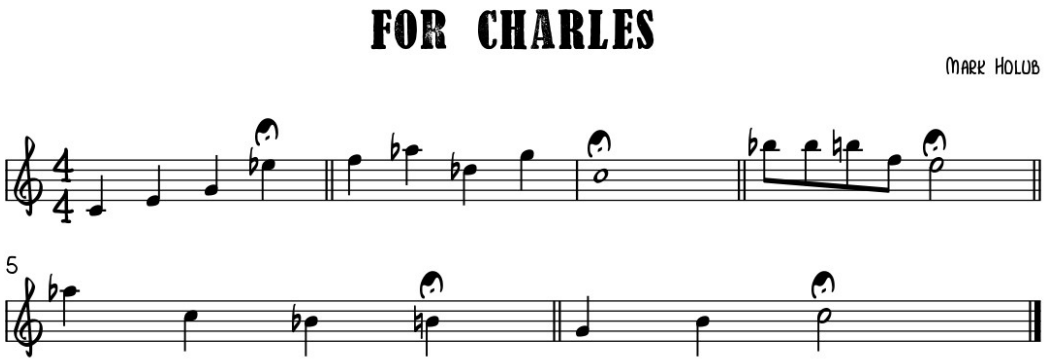

Figure 10 - For Charles Score

4.3.1.3 Pumpkin Patch

Pumpkin Patch - Listening Link: https://discusmusic.bandcamp.com/track/pumpkin-patch

This composition was written later in the band's history but owes more to my compositional style with Led Bib, a more groove-based, high-intensity approach. However,

the band manages to find their own way within it. The improvising is mostly based in time, and there are some more soloistic performances here, but the general group improvisational approach is still at the forefront for a lot of it. Rather than this being a transplantation of a Led Bib approach into Anthropods, the composition functions as a way to introduce an intensity and groove language into the ensemble and bring the improvising into different places than it usually goes.

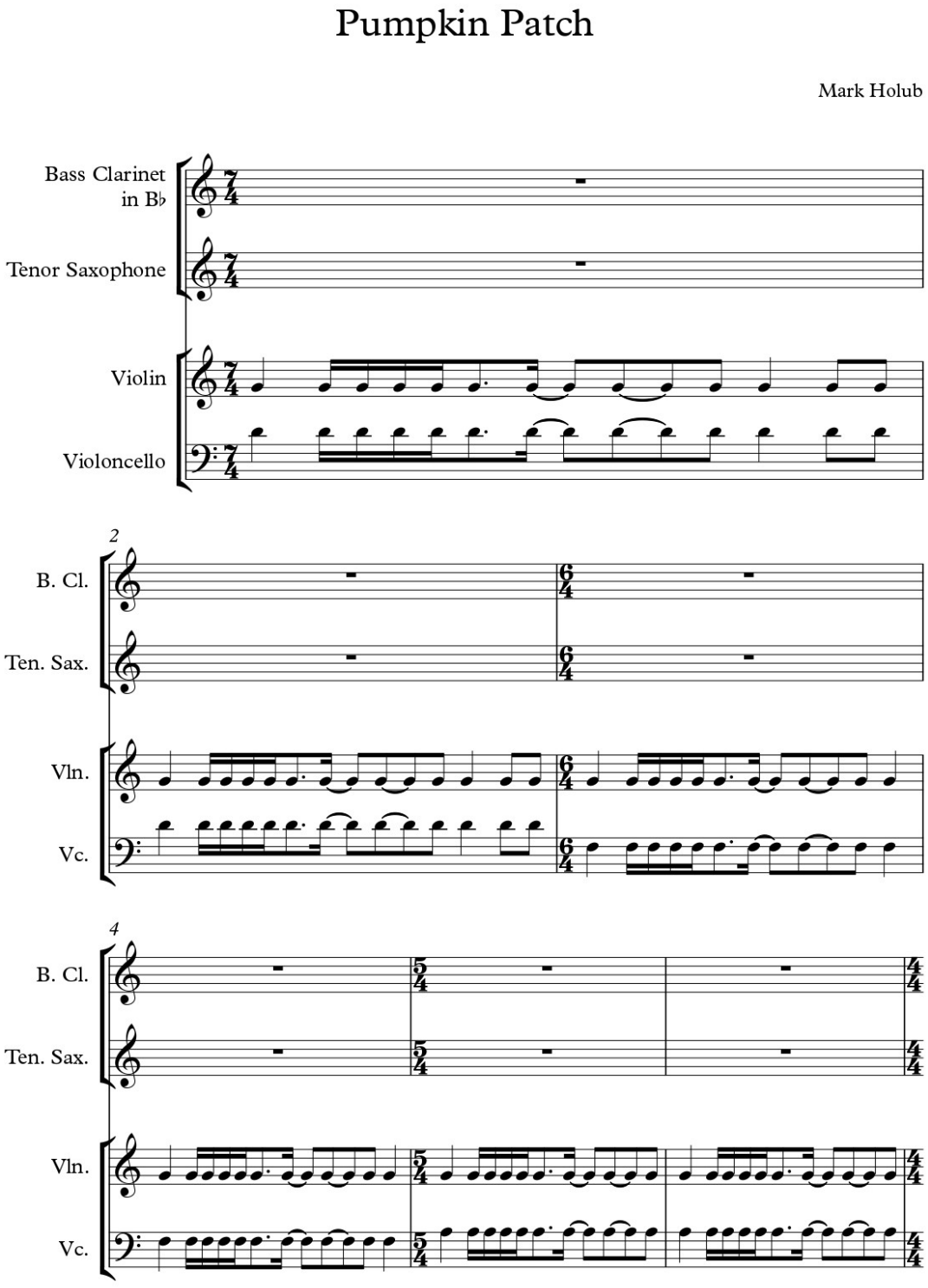

Figure 11 - Pumpkin Patch Score - Page 1

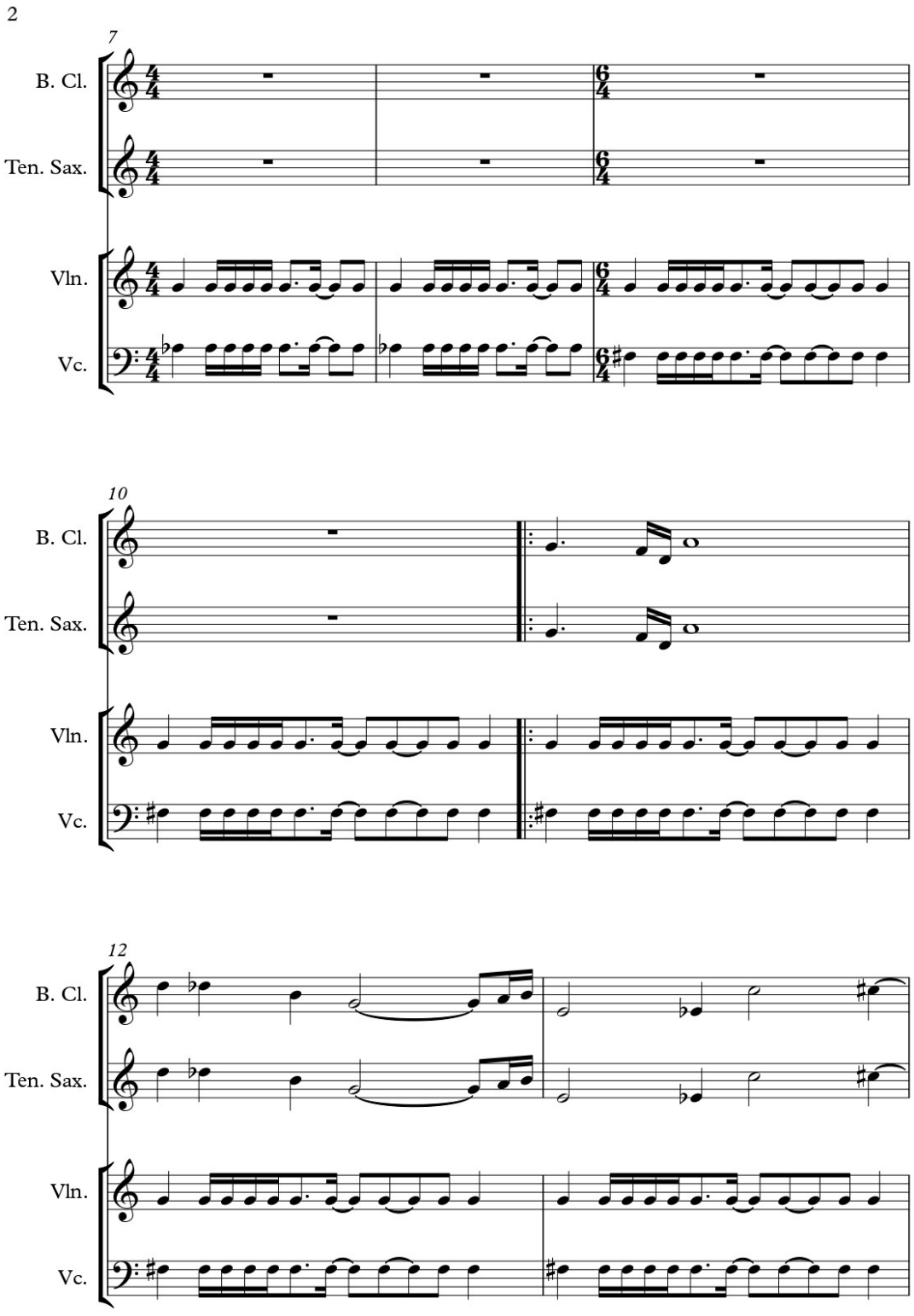

Figure 12 - Pumpkin Patch Score - Page 2

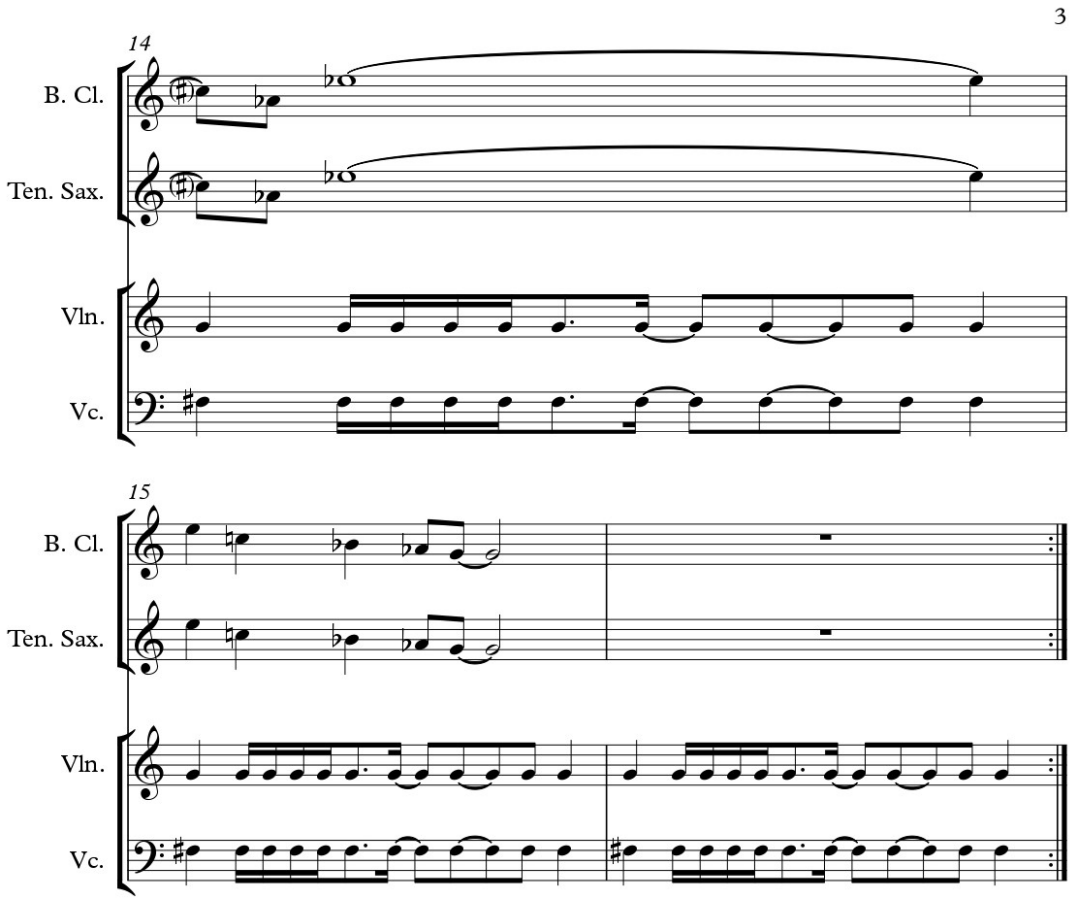

Figure 13 - Pumpkin Patch Score - Page 3

4.3.2 First Tour – February 2022

The band's first tour offered another opportunity to further develop the band's language which had become clearer in the recording session. Through the playing of the material in front of an audience, the band was forced to figure out in real time what we could do with it, and this helped further to develop the sound world of the ensemble. We always discussed in the rehearsals that the compositions could flow into one another in concert, but without concerts, it was difficult to make this work. Once we started the tour, it worked quite well

and often there were small medleys of tunes as the band became more comfortable with the repertoire and what they could do with it. My notes at the time say,

> I like the way the tunes are flowing into each other and it feels like the group is coming together a bit more. So I think that in some way, just letting it happen is paying off!"

At this point, I was starting as a bandleader to realise that while I was influencing the development through the compositions and the discussions, playing the music live was really where we were growing as an ensemble. I will now present a small medley from this tour.

4.3.2.1 For Charles – Pumpkin Patch – Porgy and Bess, Vienna 2/2/2022

For Charles / Pumpkin Patch - Video Link :

https://youtu.be/TGP08vF7h3I?si=00klxGQqcl_wVgtP(Mark Holub 2025a)

Here, For Charles has a quite different treatment, with the composed material coming at the end. This has a much more cohesive sound amongst the band, a confidence that we know what to do, rather than waiting for the next thing to happen, a certain patience. The transition into the groove of Pumpkin Patch is not perfect, but eventually we all figure out where the downbeat is, and we are off. The material is useful for bringing us into a new area of improvisation as well as punctuating the concert. Around 10:50 it feels like we lose our confidence in the band language, or at least I do, and end up in a more traditional "free jazz" language, although Jakob Gnigler manages to keep the vibe of the long notes from the composition going. My overall approach with Anthropods was as much as possible trying not to force the music to "happen" in the moment of playing, and just to be

patient and wait and see, however, this is easier said than done, and this moment to me as a listener is a moment of me getting the fear that it is not going as well as I want it to. We soon find our way back to the composed material however and find an interesting way to get back to the composition with some improvising around the groove.

On this tour, we were able to take the compositions that I had brought and merge them together in performance, without it being set that this would definitely happen. Every night we were taking new pathways with the improvisations, exploring the relationship between the compositions and the improvisation and the musical relationships within the ensemble. I could feel that the band was starting to realise that I wanted them to take the music where they thought it could go each night, and not feel like they needed to wait for me to tell them what to do.

4.3.3 Anthropods Language Components

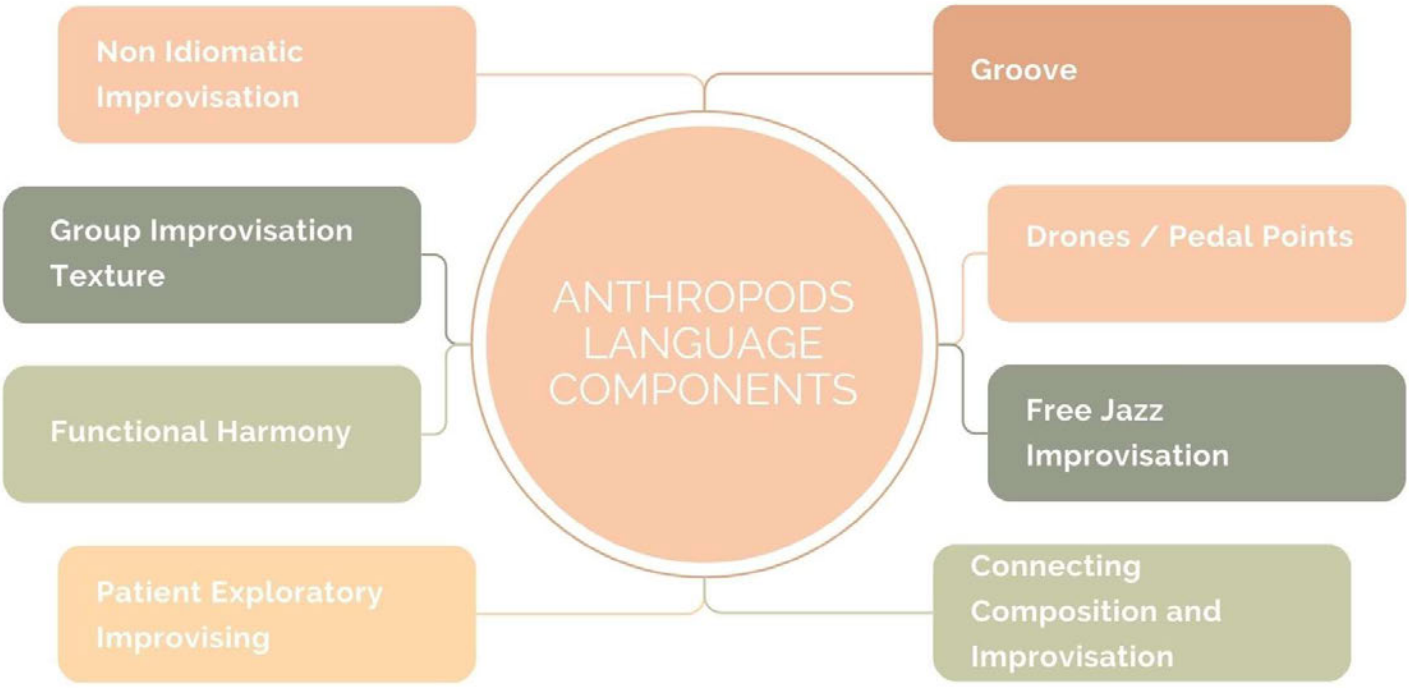

Figure 14 - Anthropods Language Components

With the completion of the tour and the album, I took some time to reflect on where we were as a band in our language. As previously mentioned, it is very difficult to effectively summarise what a band's language is, and likewise, Figure 14 would likely be somewhat different for each member of the ensemble. Figure 14 however offers an assessment of where I saw the language of the band around this time. These are not concrete things that I, or likely anyone in the band thought of in the moment of playing, but it rather examines the band language from the outside and tries to pinpoint what makes Anthropods sound the way it does.

After playing with Led Bib for many years, it felt like sometimes we could simply go out and play a concert and improvise in a “Led Bib” way, and somehow it feels harder to distil the Anthropods language into something that you can go out and “do”. This is partially related to the fact that some of the components of the language are somewhat contradictory. Going out and playing improvised groove language, or non-idiomatic language would not come across as this band’s approach. Reflecting on these elements led me to then work on new music which I felt could both complement the sound world we were already working within, as well as broaden our approach into new musical territory. My goal was encapsulated in my notes post-tour,

> I definitely felt like playing tune after tune with this band was not the perfect formula…I still think I would like to try and essentially compose a 45-minute suite of music without breaks, but I need to think about what it should look like on the page. Having a large element of freedom is important, but just by taking what we did before and then sticking it all on one page is not going to be enough to enact real change. So, I need to think about what exactly it is all going to look like, and the process of actually creating the music.

This goal to create a new 45-minute piece, rather than a collection of compositions, is what I went on to do and it became our second album and the Abundant Shores Suite.

4.4 Composing Abundant Shores Suite

The Abundant Shores Suite represents the final recorded piece of music in this thesis. This is the culmination of four years of work together as an ensemble and my process of finding the best way to work with the band. The suite was an attempt to respond to what I saw as problems with my initial methods of working with the ensemble, utilising this new composition to create solutions which would better reflect the ensemble's strengths. I will

now highlight some of the things I saw as problems with my initial approach and how the composition of this suite provided solutions to these problems.

4.4.1 Problems/Solutions

4.4.1.1 Presentation

One problem that I noticed early on with this ensemble is that for the members who were coming less from a jazz background, the idea of just having a "tune" that you play at the start and perhaps at the end was confusing. Bringing a lead sheet and saying, let's see what happens with this, was confusing, because they wanted to know how the improvising related to the tune, rather than just playing the composition and then improvising. Upon reflection, for jazz musicians, the idea of having a lead sheet of a tune that you then improvise on and then play the tune again is so natural that we assume that all improvisers would be happy with this approach, but this is quite a jazz centred understanding of improvising.

With this suite, the goal was to remove the jazz lead sheet feeling about the music, to create more of a connection between the improvising and the composition, rather than the more cliff-edge approach to composition and improvisation which is common in jazz. The improvising sections were now within the composition, each section of composition leads to an open improvising section, which then leads to more composition, removing the jazz lead sheet approach of the original compositions.

4.4.1.2 Flow From One Composition to the Next

In rehearsals, I suggested that some of the tunes could flow together in concert, and in some of the performances, this happened. However, my approach of saying “this could or could not happen” meant that there was some confusion in how exactly we were meant to move between pieces, or if we should play a composition at the end again or not.

By essentially through-composing a structure, the goal was to create a piece where the music flows from one thing to the next, creating a more coherent full set of music, rather than a collection of pieces. This also removed any doubt about whether we should stop between pieces, or play the tunes again or not, because in this composition it was all one piece and we needed to get from the beginning to the end.

4.4.1.3 Open Instrumentation

With this band, sometimes having composition at all has felt somewhat restrictive. The idea of having set roles at different times within the piece felt like it was sometimes stifling the creative free approach I was hoping for.

With the first part of the suite, I wrote every part for an open instrumentation. Sometimes there is just one part, and sometimes there are two or more, but I have not specified who should play what. With this score, it can be different every night who plays what, and it is fine if we skip a section altogether or play it completely differently each night. The freedom for the musicians is written directly into the composition itself.

4.4.1.4 Harmonic Language

This composition is an attempt melodically and harmonically to bring elements of the band's improvising language into my compositional language, without losing sight of my approach as a composer. The band was naturally working within tonality in a lot of our improvising, and a lot of the improvising involved a group improvising texture. Within the composition, I utilised these tendencies within the written sections, making use of the language we were already using in improvising, as well as attempting to bring that language into new places.

4.4.2 Abundant Shores Suite Score

The score itself is written in two separate sections, the first section is open, with any instrument able to play any part, thus I gave the score both in concert and in transposed keys for the wind instruments. The second part is composed for specific instruments and each musician has their own part.

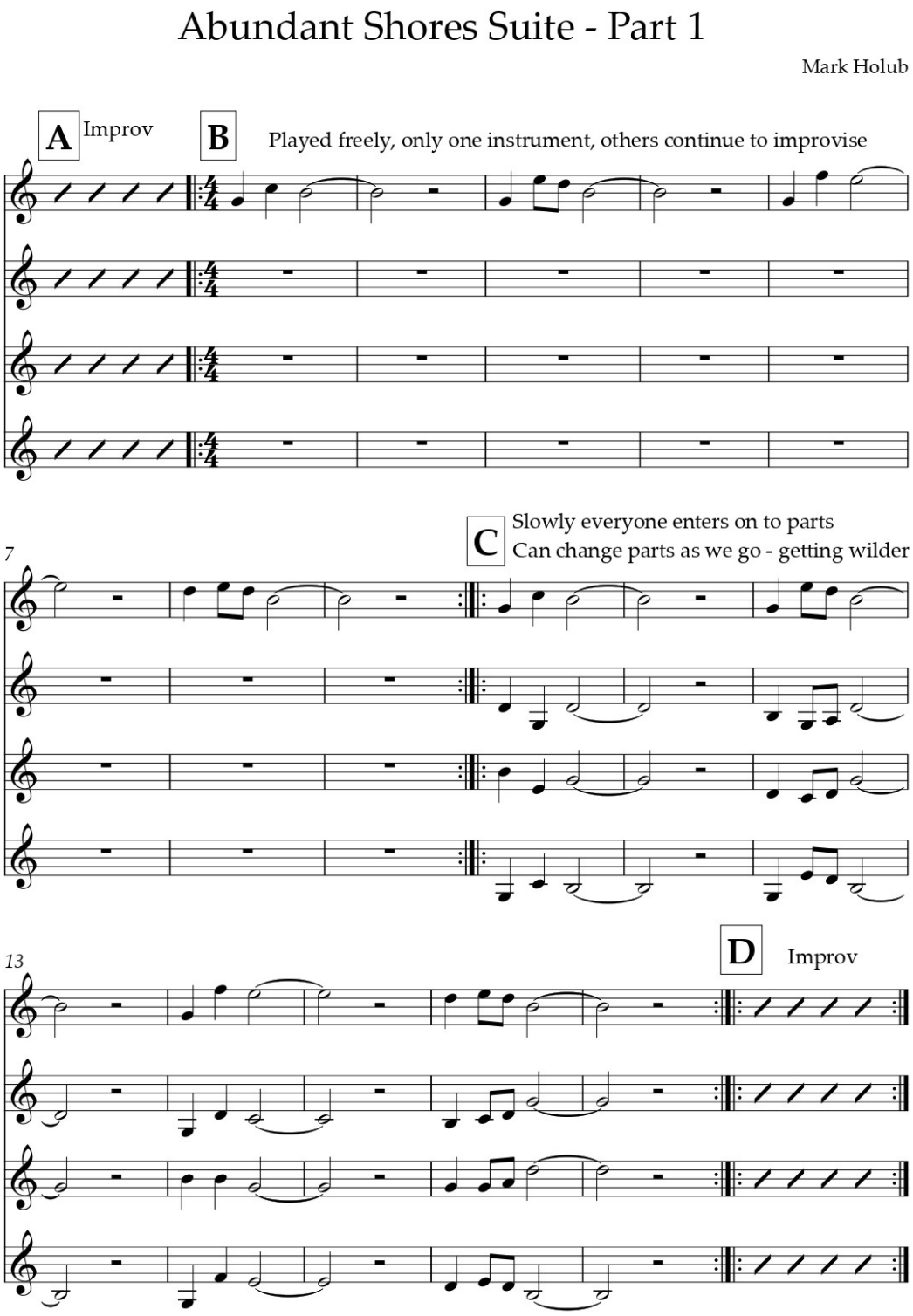

Figure 15 - Anthropods Suite Score - Page 1

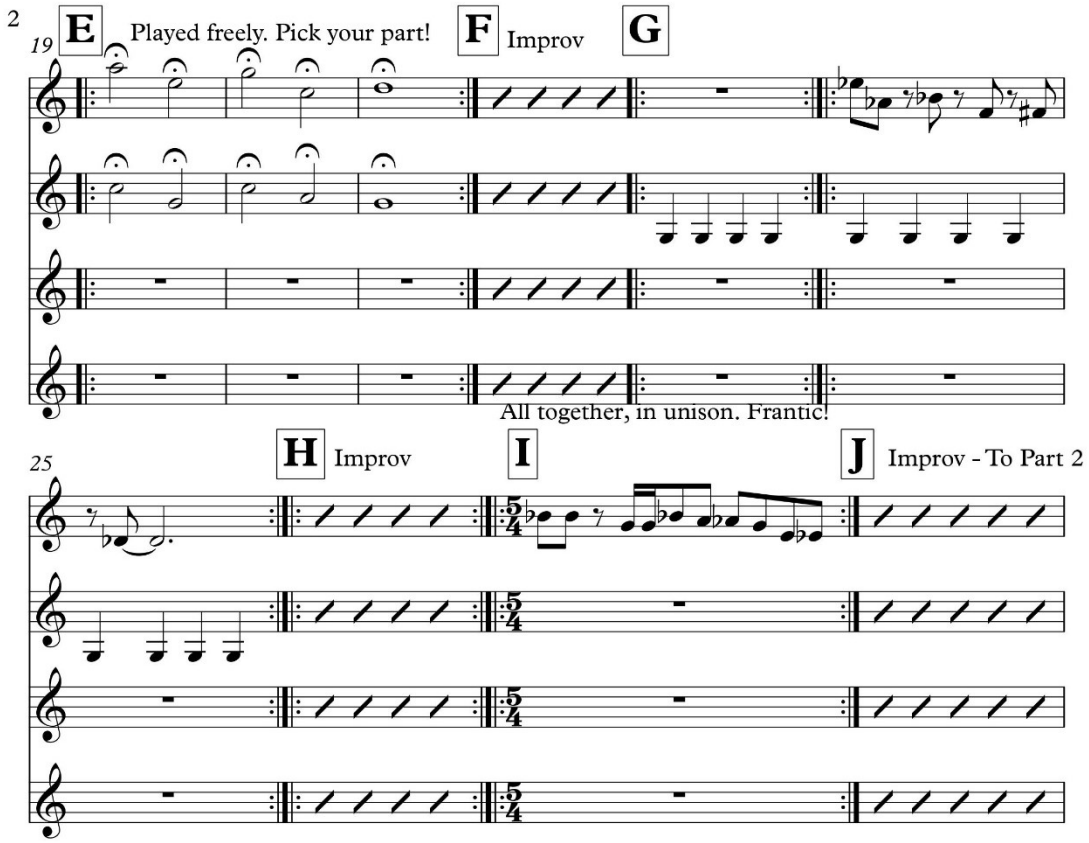

Figure 16 - Anthropods Suite Score - Page 2

Suite Part 2

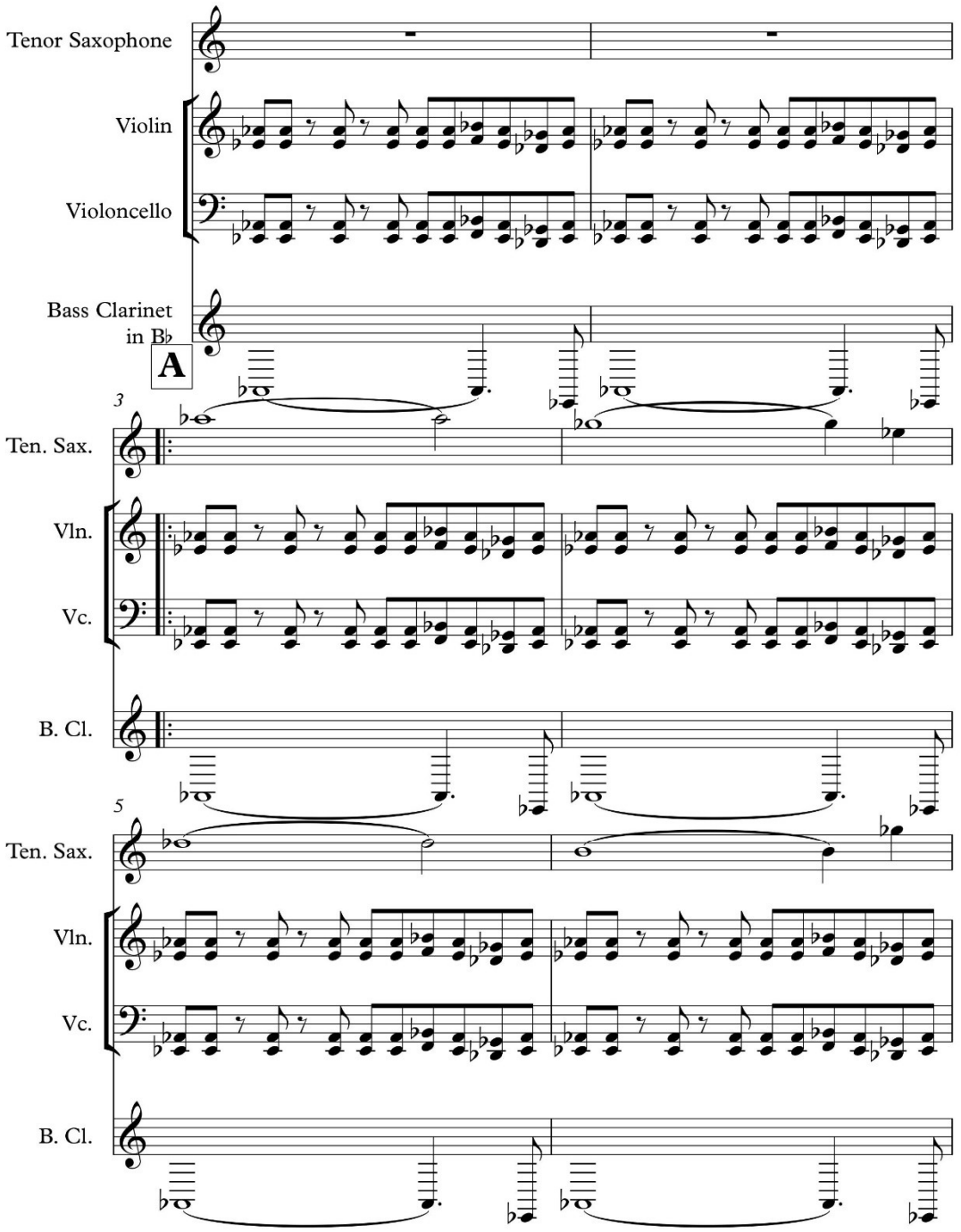

Figure 17 - Anthropods Suite Score - Page 3

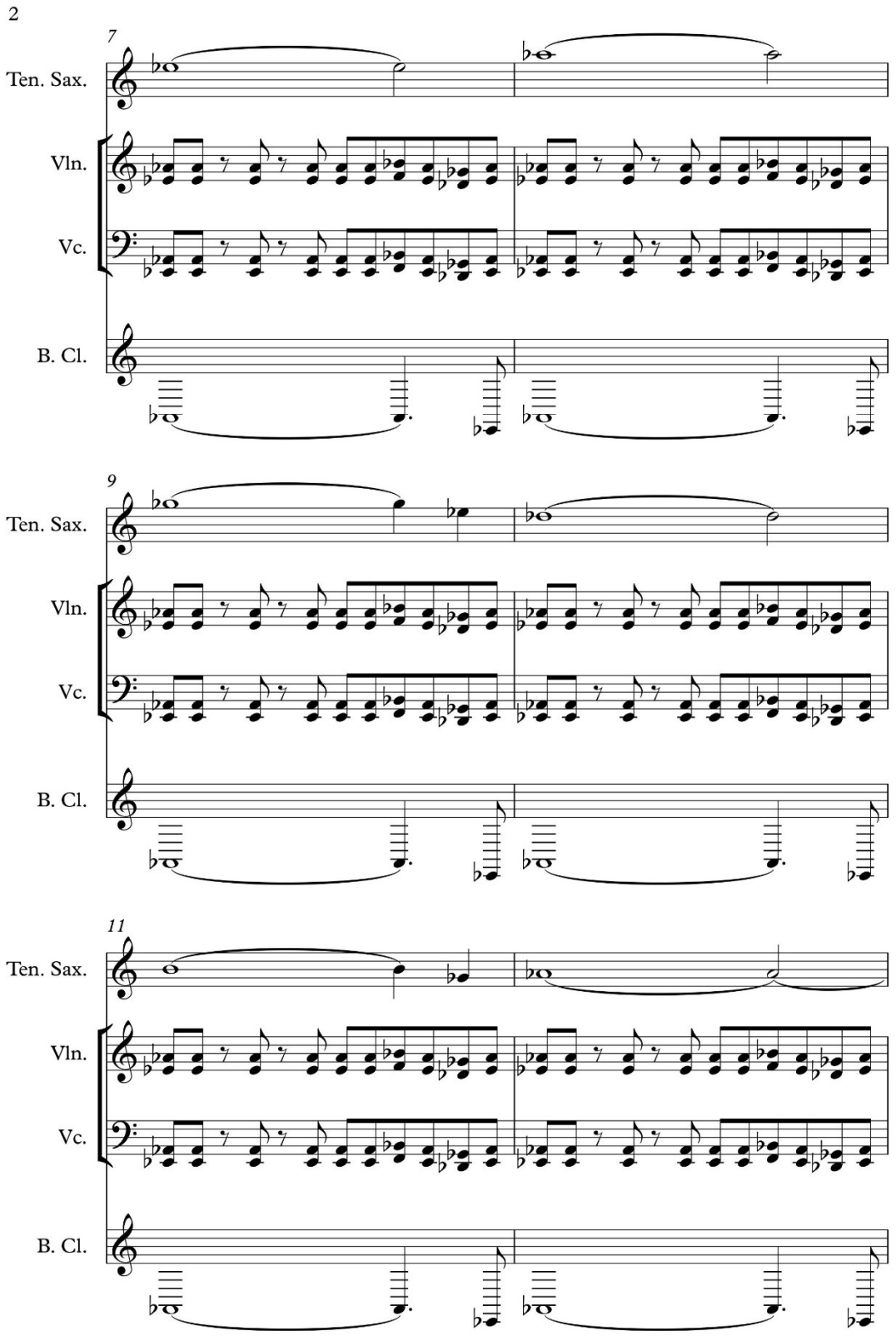

Figure 18 - Anthropods Suite Score - Page 4

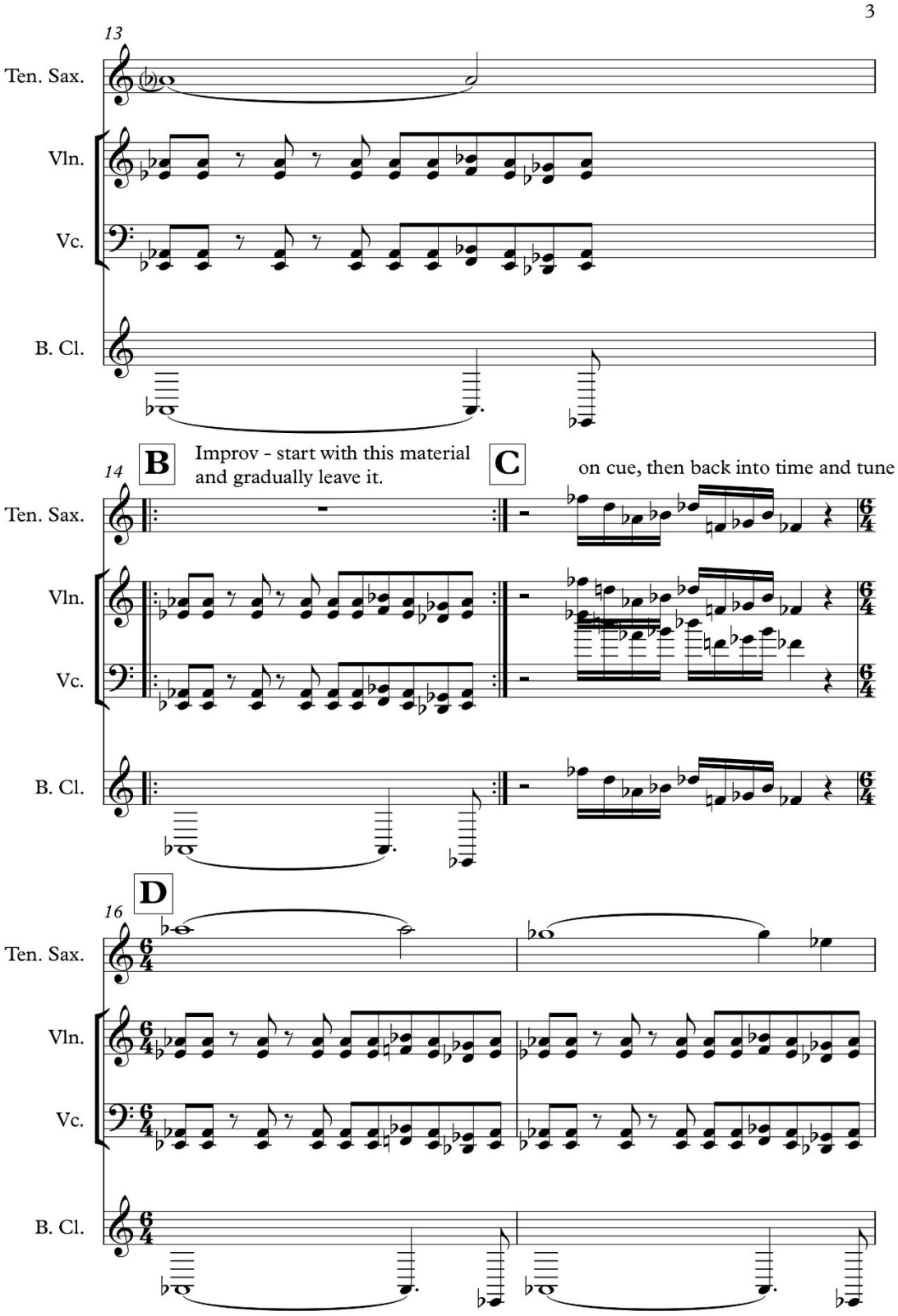

Figure 19 - Anthropods Suite Score - Page 5

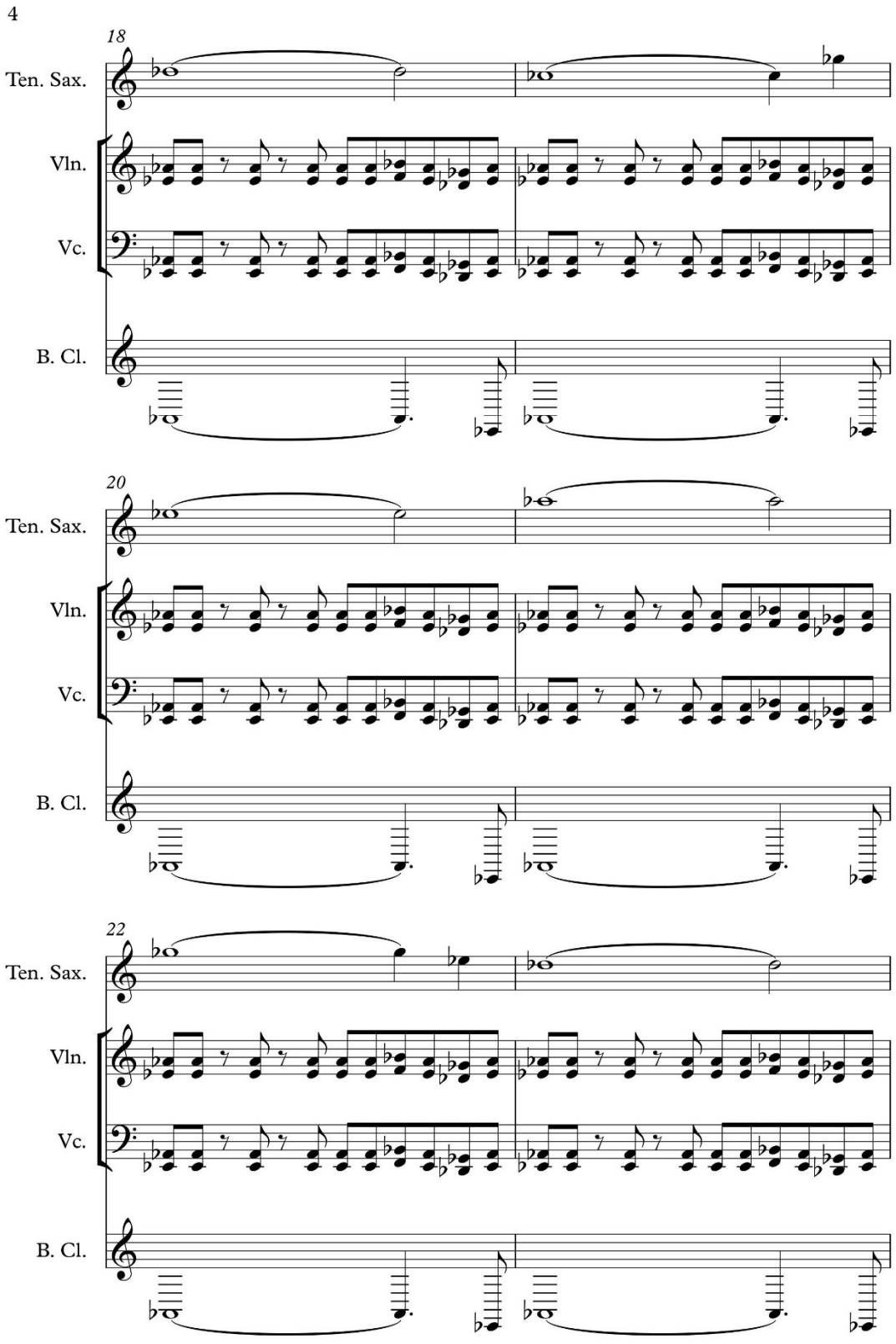

Figure 20 - Anthropods Suite Score - Page 6

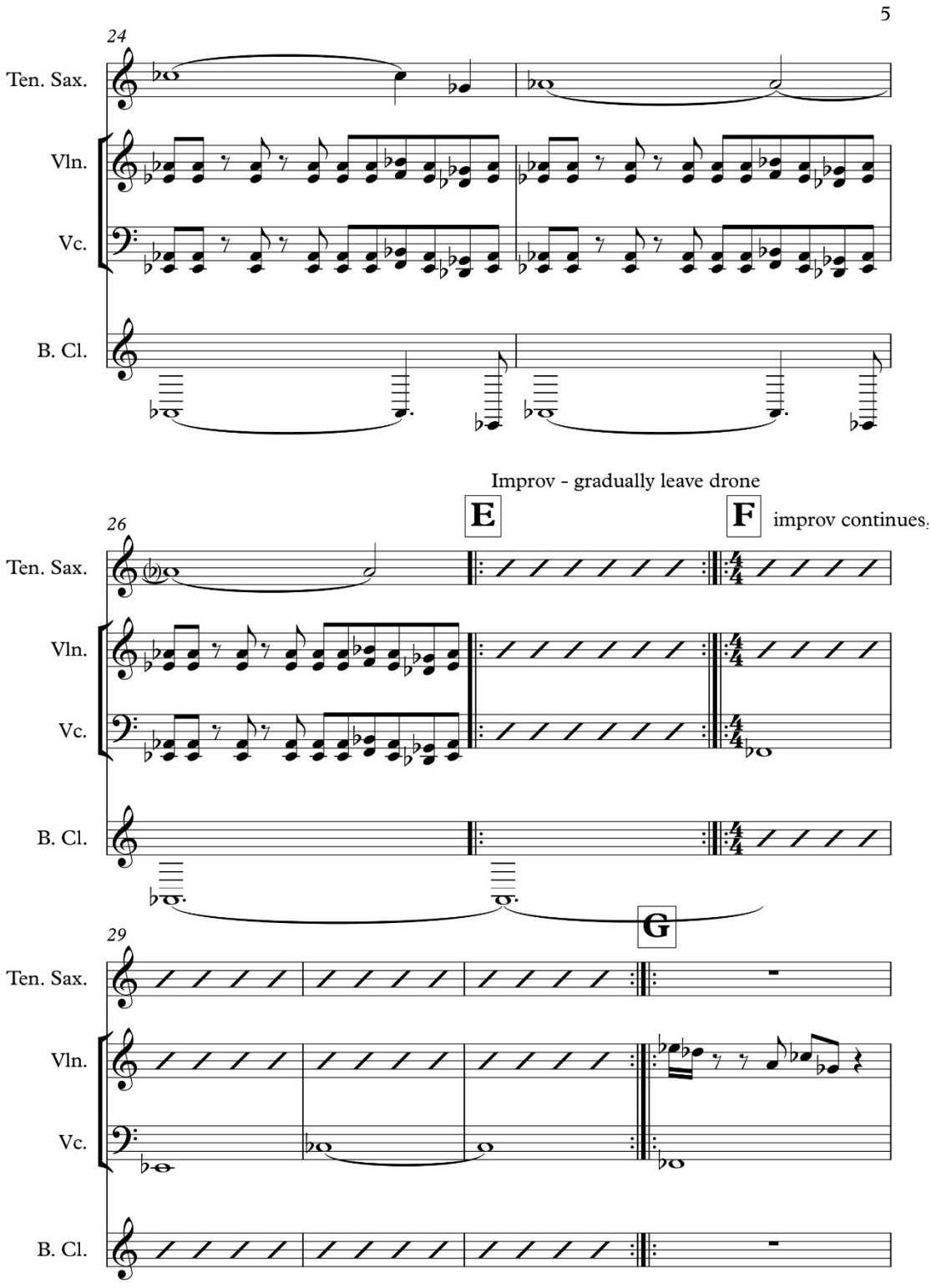

Figure 21 - Anthropods Suite Score - Page 7

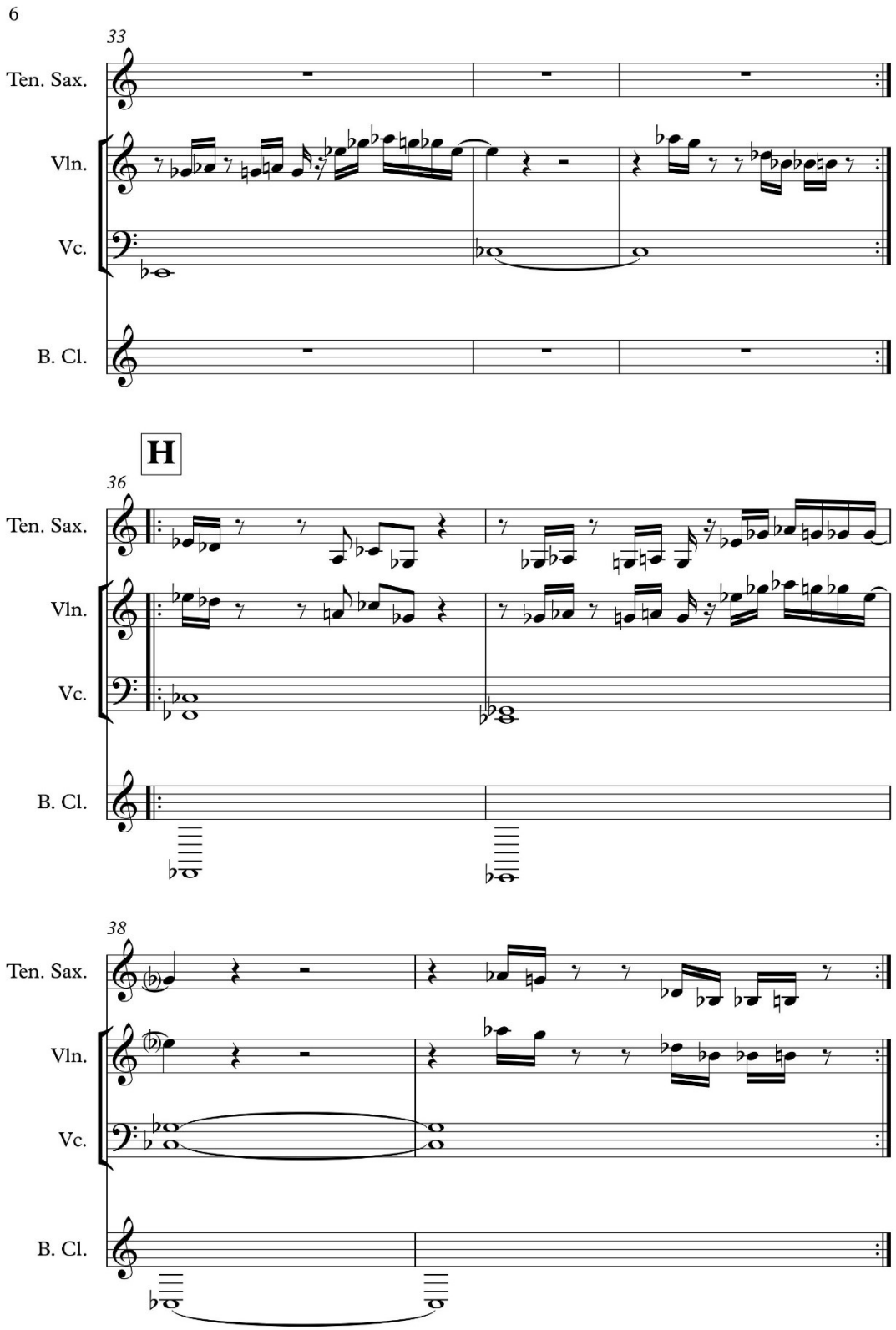

Figure 22 - Anthropods Suite Score - Page 8

4.5 Rehearing, Performing and Recording Suite

In starting to rehearse this suite, the challenge was not whether we could play the material, all the composed material is relatively easy, but the question was whether we could make it all work as a piece. My anxiety in these early rehearsals is nicely encapsulated here,

> I am engrossed enough in the process that I am really not sure how it sounded, which I guess is a good thing. I think the thing that I am having doubts about the most is that the whole thing works as a concept. Does it really make sense to have essentially one hour of unbroken music, rather than a collection of pieces? And I guess if having it as one thing means that it flows in a different way, or does it mean that we are always waiting for the next section to happen, rather playing in the moment?

This concept of improvisation being impeded by composition is a problem encountered by improvisers all the time, and it is particularly an issue in this long-form piece, where you can end up as a player always waiting for the next section to come. Bassist and composer Simon Fell explains it as such,

> …there are underlying tensions revolving around the compromising effect that any kind of distracting simultaneous activity can have on an improviser's ability to focus on the realisation of effective improvisation. For many, the moment attention is split between creative playing and relating to some structuring device, the quality of improvisation can suffer quite dramatically.
> A reluctance to appear authoritarian on the part of the instigator can often result in a mode of 'default improv language' activity; the players have lost faith (or have not yet found faith) in the structuring strategy, but have not the freedom of self-direction that would enable their improvisation to develop significantly in its own right: this kind of no-man's land is common when the level of intervention is relatively high, but without any clear or worthwhile conceptual justification (Fell 2015, 192).

The danger in a through-composed piece moving between composition and improvisation is that the improvisation can become improvising just to fill time. Indeed, I comment on that in one of the early rehearsals,

> I like the brief moment where it just goes down to bass clarinet, it's a funny thing, because in normal improvised settings, that would likely be the end of the piece, so it's a funny feeling in the playing of it because you are thinking, ok, I need to keep this going…what comes next….

4.5.1 Abundant Shores Suite Studio Session - 13/9/2023

Abundant Shores Suite Listening Link -

https://klanggalerie.bandcamp.com/album/abundant-shores

For the actual recording of the suite, because of some complicated logistical problems, we ended up recording in the recording studio, rather than the live concert we had planned. We did three separate takes of the entire suite over about four and a half hours, all recorded with small breaks in between. What features on the finished recording is almost exclusively the first take.

The suite is the closest I have felt as a bandleader thus far to composing music that works well with the ensemble, whilst inspiring it to go in new directions. As we have not played it live extensively, it is hard to imagine what it will feel like after playing this piece on tour over many concerts, but for now, it feels like a good encapsulation of where we have been and where we are going.

4.6 Chapter Conclusion

This section seeks to answer the question of whether it is possible to allow an ensemble to develop fully on its own, beyond the influence of a bandleader. The answer from this research is no. As a bandleader, this research has shown that I influenced the ensemble through my compositional voice and through my comments, my playing and my general way of working with the band. The ways that a bandleader influences a band's language are so numerous and often unconscious that it would be impossible not to have some influence, even with the greatest of efforts.

Particularly in an ensemble such as Anthropods, where the musicians do not have a long playing history together, there is bound to be some sort of steering from the bandleader, even if that steering is just positive reinforcement of what is already happening. For the members of the ensemble, they are not just finding their way musically within the ensemble, but also attempting to find their way to what they perceive my vision as the bandleader to be. Particularly in the earlier days of the ensemble, when I would ask what everyone else thought should happen in certain compositions, a comment would come back that it was up to me because I was the bandleader. I do not believe this was meant as a way to dodge the question, but rather a feeling that by having set up the ensemble with the hierarchy that I am the leader, it was not their place to make these decisions, even though I very much wanted to work on the compositions collaboratively. Over time, the ensemble's willingness to collaborate increased, but in the beginning of an ensemble, there is an element of each member finding what their role is, both musically and socially, and before those roles are clear, deferring to the bandleader as the decision maker is an obvious answer.

While my impact as the bandleader on the language is part of what makes up the band's sound world, much of the language comes from the band itself. This was particularly evident through working on the recording sessions and the concerts. The playing of the music itself, rather than the discussions about the music, became the main driver for the development.

The process has been a learning process for me, and something where I am realising that I can find a middle ground between my interests and the interests of the band. As we have not played so many concerts, it still feels like the band language is somewhat open. I can hear in the recordings that we have an approach, but it does not feel like we get to the improvising, and we could just "do" that approach, it is not yet that set. The process has shown that while the language is always somewhat developing, the core of what makes the band language what it is remains there. The group language that makes a group sound like itself is at least to a point somewhat static, otherwise, it would not be recognisably that band. At the time of the first rehearsals with the band, it may not have been clear to me what the band's language was, but in retrospect, one can hear that the core elements of the way that we were going to improvise together were already there.

My goal as the bandleader going forward becomes finding ways to challenge this language, both stretching it in new directions, as well as utilising it as a positive thing that we have a history and understanding together as improvisers. I need to try and maintain a certain amount of spontaneity through my work as the composer and bandleader so that the language is not something that we go on stage and "do", but rather a history together that we draw upon to explore anew each time we get together to play.

Chapter 5 Interview Study

This chapter will now present the bandleader interview study, focusing on the bandleaders themselves, what brought them to bandleading, their methods, and the journey of their ensembles from founding to having an established group language. Alongside the presentation of findings from the interview series, there are five case studies of bandleaders from the interview series looking at a piece of their music, and the connection between the music and their leadership approach.

5.1 Becoming Bandleaders

"The bandleader thing…I didn't really want to take over that role…it wasn't really what I came from, I came from the improv background, where everybody is quite equal really." Faye MacCalman

As stated in chapter 2, leaders in jazz and improvised music are already atypical from the self-selecting leaders common in the business world, as many are somewhat reluctant leaders. Many bandleaders do not see themselves as a leader "type", or do not feel they have the skills required for leadership. In business situations, this type of person would likely not become a leader, but in jazz, that is not such a viable option if one wants to produce original music. This reluctance in leadership brings a unique perspective to the leader in jazz and improvised music, as they try to navigate what it means to be a leader while not wanting to lead people at all.

This is the challenge for the bandleader, and rising to this challenge can help to form each bandleader's unique approach, while at the same time generating the trust and respect from their band members that is needed to form an effective collaborative improvising ensemble. This study will proceed to look at four factors highlighted by the bandleaders for becoming and working as bandleaders. Figure 23 illustrates these four factors along with the positive reasoning behind them.

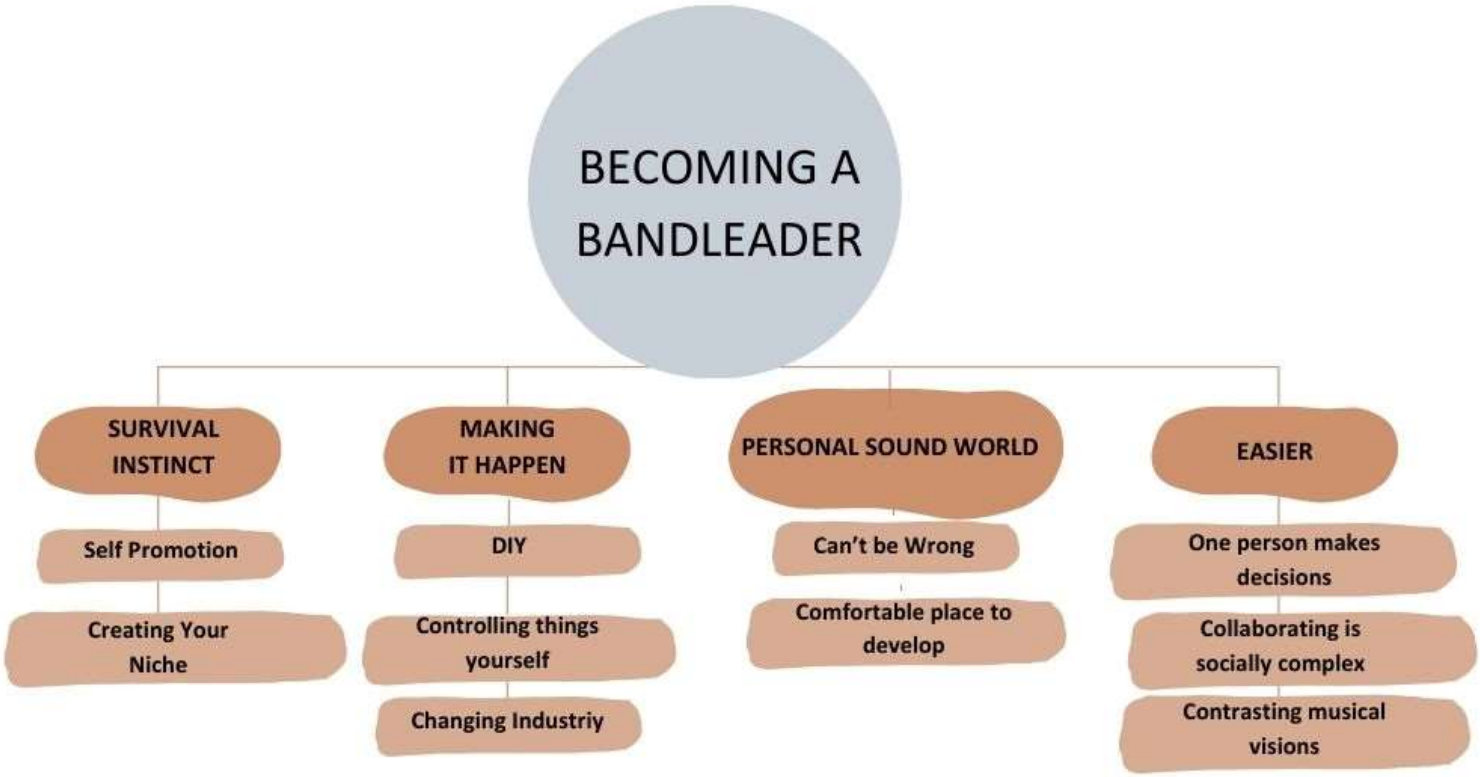

Figure 23 - Reasons for Becoming a Bandleader

5.1.1 Survival Instinct / Self Promotion

Peter Van Huffel highlights more of the "survival instinct" aspect of becoming a leader when he says; "I do think there's also the aspect that sax players are much less often asked for other people's bands than drummers or bass players or pianists or guitarists, right? So, if I wasn't a bandleader, I would probably have many less gigs than I already do."

It is certainly true that almost every band needs rhythm section players, it does not necessarily mean that rhythm section players are being called to do the specific things they want to do musically. An important part of any instrumentalist becoming a leader is self-promotion. Any musician who is putting themselves out as a bandleader is then more clearly expressing their own personal musical language, something which gives them a better visibility within the scene and means that other bandleaders, when they are looking for the specific thing that musician offers, will spot them because of their band.

5.1.2 Making it Happen

With the changes in the music industry in the last 25 years, a DIY aesthetic has become essentially the norm pretty much throughout the entire jazz scene. Musicians put on their own gigs, form collectives, release their own records, etc. (Dias and Medboe 2014). The bandleaders take this DIY mentality with them to the actual making of the music. They have the feeling that if they want something to happen musically, they can only be sure that it will happen if they do it themselves. Cath Roberts states,

> Organising just seems like it's an essential thing…it was like, look, if you're going to do this, the only way to do it was to make everything happen, I had to make everything happen myself. Nobody is going to come along and say, oh hey would you like to do a ten-night tour? it's really well paid and I've booked it for [you]…that's not

> happening, so that's always been my thing, and then I'm in that routine…who's going to do all those jobs? It's going to be me. Who's going to do the press? It's going to be me. Who's going to do the booking? It's going to be me.

Doing the records yourself has long been an option, but in the current landscape, for most artists operating in jazz and improvised music, it is almost the only option. Most labels that do exist do not offer much support beyond distribution for the recordings. This means that for many bandleaders, the role becomes about not just running the band, but like Cath Roberts does, running the whole thing: the band, the label, the booking, etc. Without the necessary infrastructure in place, people like Roberts have decided that if they want something to happen, they need to do it themselves. Rather than seeing this as a problem, they use it as a somewhat positive development, meaning that they can have complete control of their output artistically.

5.1.3 Personal Sound World

Particularly for the younger generation, who have mostly been through jazz education at the university level, the emphasis in the training is often on being a great all-around player who can do essentially any sort of gig effectively. However, the reality of trying to make a living as a musician after finishing university often offers a different perspective. Peter Van Huffel explains,

> …there was also the realisation that if I want to play, I've got to create something and get it playing. Otherwise, I'm one of a ton of sax players and there's so many other guys out there who are better be-bop players and changes players and standards players, especially where I came from in Toronto, that was the big deal then too. Everybody was looking for who can play Giant Steps the hottest and that was not me…

This is a two-fold reaction, one is that by being a bandleader one is setting themselves out from the huge crowd of musicians who are finishing university and entering the professional world each year, as well as something more related to the "survival instinct" previously discussed. Van Huffel elaborates,

> …as a musician there's tons of things I am not good at, which is also why I think I lean towards…doing more individualistic music, doing original stuff, writing my own material. I think I've got my own kind of way of writing, and some people probably love it and some people probably think it's stupid, but it's me and that's where I feel my strongest…I guess that [being the bandleader] also helps me in a way to have my career where I can avoid, in a sense, situations where I'm not going to be at my best.

Improvising and playing with musicians is always a somewhat vulnerable place to put oneself in. By being the bandleader, one is setting the "rules" for an ensemble, creating a space as a musician where one cannot be "wrong". The bandleader also creates a place socially where they feel comfortable to try things out because they have not only chosen the people they want to play with, but have set up the band socially, either consciously or not, to work in a way that suits them as bandleader. By setting up this situation, the bandleader is making it easier for themselves to then take risks both in the musical conception, as well as in the actual performing of the music.

5.1.4 Easiest Way to Get Things Done

While jazz is often seen as a collaborative art, many of the interviewees spoke about the difficulties of collaboration and the advantages of having a bandleader. Lina Allemano explains concerning her work as a bandleader, compared to when she works as a sidewoman

> …a few of the collaborative things I am in here, I, it's hard for me to wrap my head around, because I don't have the same ideas about aesthetics and things like that, so I don't know - How do people arrive at things together? I haven't found a group of

> people yet where it's like oh yeah, we have the exact same thoughts about the exact same thing…

When a leader has a specific sonic vision, it is much easier to just have them leading the project rather than seeking to fully meld their aesthetic values with the people they are working with. Serial bandleader Tim Berne also elaborates on his preference for leading over cooperatives,

> Most of the cooperatives that I've been in work really well until the egos kind of emerge and then all of sudden it's like, well I'm doing more work than you, or I want to play my tune tonight, and you know you've got to be democratic…just making all these decisions, taking so fucking long to make a decision, you know, the setlist, the this, the that, you know, it's not my thing. I love the idea, but it really only works with people who aren't keeping score.

Berne is hitting on a similar point to Allemano while highlighting something which may seem somewhat counterintuitive, namely that, it's just easier to be the leader sometimes. Van Huffel elaborates,

> …you know if there's a bandleader, and it's somebody who's good at bandleading…it doesn't have to be the big boss or the CEO of the band, but it is kind of like the glue…they say, I have this music, I want you all to play this with me. Some bandleaders are more specific about, it has to be like this, and others are like, hey here's my music let's conceptualise it…And sure it's a lot of pressure as a bandleader to do that, but honestly organising rehearsals and a tour with a collaborative is much more hell, right…It's much simpler [having a bandleader], and I find it just works better.

There are of course long-term collaborative ensembles, some of which are mentioned in this thesis, but the vast majority of the acclaimed jazz ensembles throughout jazz history are bandleader-run (Gioia 2021), and a part of the reason for that is, it is easier

to have a person at the top who is the person who essentially makes the final decision both musically and logistically.

5.2 Choosing Members

The first real task for any bandleader once they have decided that they want to run a band, is to pick the members. While it may seem that this task is just one of choosing the best musicians available, this study has shown that even at this early stage the process is more nuanced than that. Already at the point of deciding on members, bandleaders need to have an idea of both how they want to work, and their desired output.

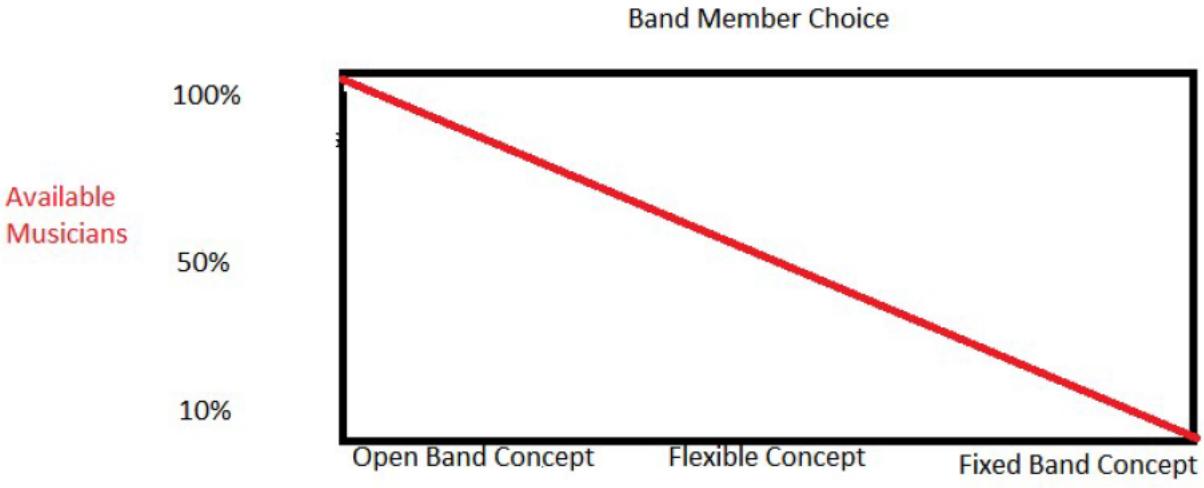

Figure 24 - Available Band Members

Figure 24 illustrates that the amount of available band members is directly related to the amount that the bandleader has preconceived the group language of the ensemble. A bandleader who has gone in with a very fixed concept is only able to pull from a small pool of musicians who would be able to work within that concept (i.e. have an understanding of

the idiom and the skills involved). However, a bandleader with a more open concept has a much larger pool of available musicians. They can hire anyone that they are interested in musically, as the musicians they choose do not have to bring specific idiomatic skills to the ensemble, but rather just their original approach, which will form part of the group language.

Jan Kopinski, leader of Pinski Zoo, describes his approach as “get the players that something in them has astonished you.” Pinski Zoo has a sound world that it inhabits, but it’s flexible, when there are different players in the band, it easily meshes into something slightly different. A band member does not need to go into this project with a specific understanding of a language, but rather a willingness to go on the journey. Kopinski describes, “It’s like, this is what we need to do, we’ve all got to create this…are you willing…I am so pleased you are willing to help me do this, I wouldn’t dream of saying you’ve got to play it like this.” His approach is about finding players who are willing to take the journey with him and bring who they are to the project. When describing the other founding member of Pinski Zoo, Steve Iliffe, Kopinski says, “Steve, he would practice 52 weeks a year for nothing…he wouldn’t mind. So, he’s the guy for me to play with.” Iliffe’s dedication to the project itself is what makes him the perfect musical partner for Kopinski.

This is not to say that Pinski Zoo is a completely open concept, Kopinski did go into the project with a concept for the band, which is loosely there throughout its history, a sort of freeness, but within mostly groove language. Hence, anyone who would want to be in Pinski Zoo would at least need to have some sort of relationship to this groove language and an interest in free improvisation, but the general prerequisites for whom he requires are low. The band sound shifts somewhat to accommodate the different players who are in it.

The most important thing for Kopinski in picking musicians is selecting someone who wants to dedicate themselves to being in the project.

On the other end of this spectrum is guitarist Mary Halvorson. Halvorson says,

> …it becomes very important that the people I choose can do all of it. So when I am thinking about who I want for the band, if I am trying to find a trumpet player, it has to be somebody who can nail a bunch of changes, and be into playing free, and be open to kind of navigate those zones because I really want to have both of those elements in the music.

Already from the start of the band, she is limited in her choices to a rather specific pool of musicians. Their dedication to the development of the music is less important, because the music is already somewhat conceived in Halvorson's head before the band gets together. That is not to completely negate the personal influence of each member on the overall sound, but to illustrate the difference in approach to a band like Pinski Zoo. Halvorson needs players who have the skills to realise her vision rather than moulding her vision around the people that she has.

Tim Berne, long known specifically as a bandleader rather than a sideman, takes an approach which is more connected to the earlier days of jazz bandleading. "It starts out with younger musicians or guys who aren't leading bands…then eventually as we become semi, I wouldn't say successful, but we've done a lot of stuff, those people get known and then they start their own bands." Berne's bands become incubating grounds for new talent, which benefits Berne with people who can expand his sound world and benefits the musicians because they raise their profiles by playing in his band. To play in one of Berne's bands, one does not necessarily need knowledge of a specific approach like Halvorson states, but one needs a certain level of comfort in both playing the sometimes complicated compositions, as well as Berne's general approach to improvisation.

William Parker expands on Berne's idea of different musicians adding something new to his sound world,

> …you have colours and if you go into a forest, the green goes into the leaves, the blue goes into the sky, the brown goes to the earth, now if you go to the ocean, the blue and green go into the ocean, with the white, the sky remains blue, so if you go to the mountains, the colours distribute themselves differently, so if you look at colour as sound, it's the same thing, we are just distributing things in a different way with different personnel.

For Parker using different musicians for projects is just another way to add different colours to his musical palette. Parker uses the very broad idiom of free jazz as well as earlier jazz idioms and the players in Parker's ensembles each add their original voices to give the ensemble its specific sound.

5.3 Developing Group Language

With the members of an ensemble now selected, Figure 25 shows that the first goal of the bandleader, regardless of their overall approach or desired output is to create clarity. The band needs clarity to know their roles and how much they can contribute to the overall sound world. The way each bandleader creates this clarity is through a leader-specific approach. To engender trust within an ensemble, bandleaders are creating clarity through leading in an authentic way to them, rather than using pre-defined leadership methods.

When trust is developed in an ensemble, the more concrete ways that the bandleader develops the language become through more traditional methods such as composition, discussion and through actual playing. This research will now further elaborate

on the development of group language, and the role of these different methods.

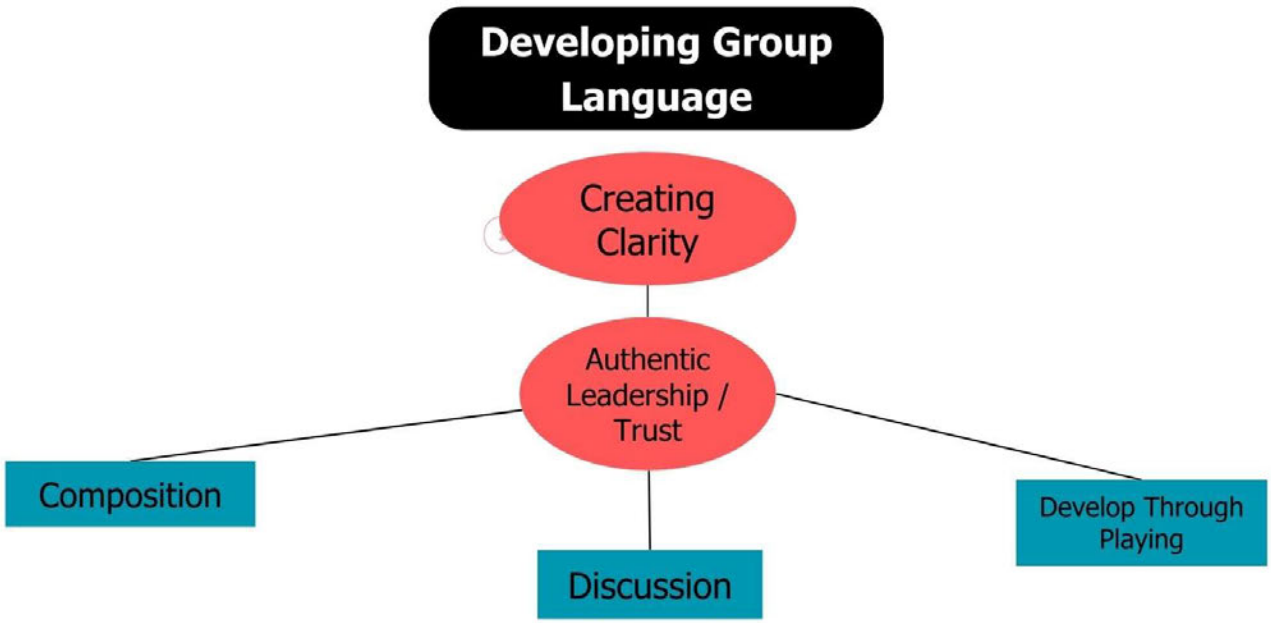

Figure 25 - Developing Group Language

5.3.1 Creating Clarity

"I think that's kind of what bandleading is, at least for me, it's just kind of giving people some clarity on what you would like from them, and it doesn't mean you have to be… really prescribed, but just to be giving them a direction." Faye MacCalman

Creating clarity is the cornerstone of making an ensemble work. The goal of any bandleader is to express this clarity effectively to the members of the ensemble and make sure that the members understand what is expected of them. The only way to make group improvisation work is to have all the musicians aware of what can happen, whether that be "anything", or something quite specific. The way that clarity is created is specific to each bandleader and the routes are based on the desired output, but developing a trusting

relationship between the bandleader and their musicians is where creating the clarity starts.

5.3.1.1 Trust / Authentic Leadership

The ensembles that form part of this study have bandleaders with contrasting approaches and contrasting outputs, but every bandleader talked about the importance of reciprocal trust. Trust is a key characteristic across most modern leadership theory, and is something inherent in both transformational and servant leadership (Burns 1978; Greenleaf 1970). However, trust in the context of authentic leadership offers the most valuable insights here. As previously mentioned, the leaders in jazz do not fit into a typical leadership mould, many are reluctant leaders and have to find a way to stand up in front of people and tell them what to do, to whatever extent.

Through an authentic leadership approach, leaders are gaining trust through relational transparency (Gardner et al. 2011). Many musicians would be able to tell you a story of turning up to a session and the bandleader saying, “play whatever feels right”, but actually meaning something completely different. The building of trust in the relationship between the bandleader and bandmembers is paramount in band members understanding their role in the ensemble, and the perceived boundaries of the improvisation. The trust means that when the bandleader says, “play whatever you want”, it is understood to mean just that.

This trust is not engendered through a universal approach, but rather through the leader’s authentic self, helping to develop a belief that the words and the person match up. The trust does not just go from musician to bandleader, but throughout the ensemble and it helps to facilitate a “group flow” (Borgo 2002). The bandleader needs to trust the band

members, something which many leaders expressed being a slowly developing process. Many of the leaders expressed that the band's sound was clear to them around the same time that they began to develop more trust in the band. Peter Van Huffel discussed an interesting development in his approach regarding trust,

> I think a lot of it too comes down to trust. And I think that is also something that I could have had more of at the beginning. I can't say that I didn't trust these guys, otherwise I wouldn't have asked them to be in my band, but when I compare how I function with this band as the leader [now] versus how I did back in 2009…10..11, it's very different. And now I really trust them to do their thing, and there are definitely gigs, even in this recording that we did recently there are moments where they choose things where in my head I think, 'hmmm…ok you want to go there', but I rarely say something now, because I feel like, this is the band and actually, I am the leader, but when it comes to the music, each member, all three of us are equally important…each person's input…and Rudi is Rudi and Roland is Roland and Peter is Peter so whatever we each collectively put in, that creates the sound. But if Rudi is playing what Peter wants and Roland is playing what Peter wants, then it's not a band sound anymore.

Novice bandleaders may feel that the role is not about trusting the other members to develop the music, but rather to be "leading" the ensemble, whatever "leading" may mean to them in their heads. Much leadership theory describes leadership as doing things like inducing the followers to act (Burns 1978), but in improvised music, the leader is creating a trusting relationship so that the musicians do not feel inhibited in the moment of playing, rather than trying to make the musicians do a specific thing. The act they want the musician to partake in is a collaborative one, where the leader can be anyone at any moment.

Orphy Robinson explains about a project he directed re-imagining Van Morrison's *Astral Weeks* album,

> I kind of said, guys, I could write out a load of stuff, but it wouldn't have the spontaneity, I want you to just check out the album and write your own parts, what you think you need to play and what you think you don't need to play, and we'll meet at the end [laughs], and it worked because the musicians that I'd chosen…they

> had the discipline…they also had that open-mindedness as well, to go, he said we can take it, we're holding him to that.

Robinson put a lot of trust in the band and with this level of trust also comes a shared sense of responsibility. If a bandleader micromanages everything in the band, the members do not need to have the same commitment to the overall sound. In a situation like Robinson is talking about here, where the bandleader has essentially given all their trust to the musicians involved, then in the moment of playing everyone is equally responsible for making the music happen, there is no leader/side-person relationship. The musicians have free reign to take the music where they want, within their understanding of Robinson's boundaries as a bandleader.

Robinson is creating an environment of trust alongside an ambiguity of what can happen, the players have to remain very aware of everything that is happening, which is a scenario that any bandleader in improvised music is trying to create. His approach means that because the players do not know what might happen next, they have to be extra aware, like they would in a first improvised music meeting. George Lewis (2000) describes this concept using the metaphor of basketball to explain how improvised music works at its best. He explains how improvisers, like basketball players, need to be aware at any moment of how their movements are affecting the movements of the other players. The goal is to always be working in a way as improvisers that one does not know what is going to happen next, maintaining an elevated alertness, ripe for the development of new improvisational zones. By Robinson keeping this freedom within the form of doing the project, he is achieving just that.

Laura Jurd nicely rounds off the trust discussion, “It’s almost like the trust is unnecessary because you know how amazing these musicians are. It almost seems silly, trust is like there is almost some sort of doubt…almost like letting go of something, but really it doesn’t feel like that…”. While it can take time for a leader to create and feel this mutual trust in an ensemble, the creation of this is paramount to having a successful band for all involved.

5.3.2 Practical Ways of Forming Language

Creating trust and clarity are the overriding goals for the bandleader, but there are also more practical ways to form group language. This research will now examine three more concrete ways that the bandleader is affecting the language of the ensemble.

5.3.2.1 Composition

As a bandleader, composition is the most obvious way to influence the ensemble's sound. Looking at one of the original free jazz pioneers, Ornette Coleman, author and music critic Alfred Spellman (2011, 135) describes his compositions as “directed toward setting up areas of improvisational possibilities, and not toward strict interpretation.” In the landscape opened up by Coleman and others, composition is often used exactly in this way, not as a structure to improvise on, as in the jazz that came before, but rather as something to lay out a set of “aesthetic possibilities” (Blake 2016).

The way that compositions influence the improvising is varied. Some bandleaders in this study use an approach more common in earlier jazz, where the composition contains a

set of chords, or a groove, something which the improvising is then based on. Others, similar to the aforementioned music of Ornette Coleman, use the composition to lay out the possibilities available in the improvising. The style of presentation, from it being delivered aurally, through graphics, or standard notation, is related to the bandleader's individual approach, as well as their desired output. The "authentic" bandleader is finding a way to present the music that feels the most natural to them and their way of working. A score with numerous details on it gives the musicians a different picture of what is expected of them than a graphic score, or a simple lead sheet. The way the music is presented, not just the notes on the page, helps to express the clarity that the bandleader is looking for.

5.3.2.2 Discussion

In any ensemble, discussion about the music takes on many different forms. While the process of rehearsing the music is the most obvious time that the music is discussed, there are many other times when discussions affect the group language. These can occur after specific performances, but they can also just be a casual comment in a social situation outside of the ensemble's working life.

As most jazz and improvised music compositions are written in a relatively nonprescriptive way, some of these discussions happen at the moment the bandleader brings the composition to the band. The bandleader has to explain what is meant to happen, as often the score does not hold enough information in itself.

The amount of discussion needed depends on the amount of input the bandleader wants to have over the musical output. In Faye MacCalman's band Archipelago, where the overall sound world is quite influenced by the bandleader, MacCalman sees her more

detailed discussions about the music as, “not restricting, it’s actually creating more freedom for them, because you are giving them something to work with.“ Through the clarity she creates, the band can understand what they are working with and where the music can go and thus have more freedom in the way that they interpret the music.

In a band like Pinski Zoo, where almost none of the music is written down, the process of discussion in rehearsals is naturally more detailed, Kopinski also offers up a slightly different take on talking about the music, and the way they found a shared language in Pinski Zoo.

> We got that [a shared language] pretty quick I think by practising together so much…when I would refer to a thing and I would say have you heard this by Penderecki, in fact some of the samples and stuff he was using, Schnittke and Penderecki samples, and mess them all about, but he knew what we were on about in a different context.

Rather than telling them what Pinski Zoo should sound like, he was offering up music that he was interested in that they should check out. This music was perceivably worlds away from the music of Pinski Zoo, so by its nature, it does not just slot easily into the Pinski Zoo sound world. Each musician had to find a way of filtering these influences into the music they were playing with Pinski Zoo, and this undoubtedly encouraged them to do it in their own idiosyncratic way, helping to bring the band their inimitable sound world.

One prevailing trend from this study is that many bandleaders found that over time the amount of discussion required in the rehearsal of new music became less. This comes from the fact that those early discussions and playing experiences set up the group language for the ensemble. This harks back to Greenleaf’s ideas about servant leadership, namely that a great leader's role is to facilitate the leap of imagination, he says, ”One of the great

communicating arts is to say just enough to facilitate that leap. Many attempts to communicate are nullified by saying too much" (Greenleaf 1970, 47).

Particularly as a band is first beginning to perform publicly, there is however a danger as both a bandleader and as a member to overanalyse how the concerts went, both in the moment of playing and afterwards, the fear being that an over-analysis can make a group too self-conscious (Borgo 2002). While it is important to have a sense of the development of the ensemble, over-analysis, particularly in the moment of playing, can make it more difficult to fully engage in the playing situation.

Inevitably in many ensembles, however, there will be some talk from the bandleader about how they feel the concerts/recordings/rehearsals are going. These discussions after performance often go on to have a huge impact on the musicians' understanding of the sound world of an ensemble. In a bandleader-led project, the bandleader needs to decide how much they want to say after performances, and this is particularly crucial when what they want to say concerns negative feelings about performances.

5.3.2.2.1 Negativity in Discussions

Inevitably, sometimes the bandleader, or the members, are going to feel negative about how things are going musically. Sometimes this can signal a positive development for the ensemble, and post-concert discussions can lead to a better understanding from everyone of what the band language can be. However, musicians have feelings too, and the improviser is doing what they feel is the best thing in the moment of playing and discussions do not always go well. As a leader, one needs to tread lightly and consider how to go about the thorny issue of criticising performances, if at all. As shown in Figure 26, the interview

analysis revealed four different strategies taken up by the bandleaders from this study for dealing with negativity.

Figure 26 - Dealing with Negativity

5.3.2.2.1.1 Perspective

One method employed by various bandleaders in the study is to try and get some perspective on the situation, rather than immediately going in with your feelings. Lina Allemano describes how she tried to remind herself to get perspective,

> You start to learn more about yourself, so sometimes you realise, I am just having dark thoughts because I have a headache actually, or I am a bit tired and annoyed, so I kind of can judge now, like, ok Lina, you need to just like put a lid on this right now

> and just try not to worry about it and just let it flow and let the guys just…be joyful about it.

By allowing oneself to get some perspective, the bandleader is likely to see afterwards that perhaps the concert was not as bad as they thought and that likely nothing needs to be said at all, like Allemano says, just letting the band feel "joyful about it." If after some reflection and time the issue does still feel crucial, then when it is presented to the band, it is delivered outside of the initial period of frustration from the bandleader, making it easier for the bandleader to deliver this constructively and thus making it easier for the band to hear.

5.3.2.2.1.2 Diversion

Music making is however an emotional experience, and as the bandleader in an improvising ensemble, it can be difficult to manages feelings about what happened in a concert. Jan Kopinski offers up this fix, "you feel like, that's terrible what's happening, but the answer is usually to moan about technical stuff…ya know, I can't hear myself, it's terrible." Kopinski is acknowledging that he is not happy with how the gig went, which is likely clear to the ensemble anyway, but he is taking the blame away from the music and the people he is playing it with.

Kopinski's method becomes about not hiding your feelings but channelling them into something else. He goes on to say, "I could never (say the music wasn't going well)…I daren't do that because it's a bit fragile, if everybody starts feeling shitty about something, or it's going wrong". By diverting, bandleaders can express dissatisfaction without focusing it on the music or the musicians involved. This also requires a degree of perspective and trust.

There must be a belief from the bandleader that the band can play better, the concert was just a one-off and not a statement about the band as a whole, and that discussing it more openly would not bring any rewards.

5.3.2.2.1.3 Do Not Judge in the Moment

Sometimes easier said than done, but not judging the music while you are doing it came up with quite a few bandleaders, and this approach removes the need to have to deal with negativity following playing. Many musicians cannot help themselves in terms of their own feelings, so it becomes not about suppressing feelings, but rather going into the concert with the understanding that the way they might feel in the moment may not be the whole truth, and that often the gigs that feel like a struggle on the bandstand are very interesting in the listening back.

Tim Berne elaborates on his practices at gigs, “I will try not to go near the band at the break, I don’t even want to know what anybody thought, including myself…I won’t go in the dressing room, I hate dressing rooms, I don’t want to be around the musicians, I don’t want to be distracted, I just want to go out and sit at the bar by myself, or talk to some friend.” Berne highlights an important problem in discussing the music with the band, namely that, “everybody is pretty fragile and everybody takes it a different way and it’s best to just kind of stay laser-focused when you are playing and then forget about it.” This goes back to trust as well. The bandleader has picked musicians that they feel are up to the task of playing the music, they are adequately rehearsed and do not need further instruction. The bandleader responding to the musicians with how they felt in the moment is not always necessary and can create a bad feeling amongst the band. Berne continues,

> One thing I learned is, after not doing it right for a long time, is that judging the music as you are doing it is a big mistake. You really got to let it go, you sort of do your best and then you worry about it later, but most of the time you are wrong, you know, so it's better not to make these snap judgements…sometimes it's just as easy as letting…the fact that the audience almost always likes it, kind of let that carry you through, especially if you are on a tour, you know, you need as much positive reinforcement as you can get because it's easy for us to get down on ourselves.

5.3.2.2.1.4 Respect

Sometimes however the bandleader feels that it is not possible to avoid a discussion post-concert. Perhaps some of the music was played incorrectly, or the vibe of a tune was wrong. Particularly for the bandleader who has a clearer idea of how the improvising should be going, one must be a little more critical after performances/rehearsals to help the band understand where it is that the bandleader wants the band to go. Peter Van Huffel elaborates, "I definitely don't hold back if I feel like something is not going the right way, I will definitely say something, but I am never mean or anything about it, because I don't want to ruin the vibe." Van Huffel's approach is however more necessary because he was looking for a quite specific sound world in the improvising, and if he was not critical about the improvising, at least in the beginning, it would not be possible to achieve this.

Lina Allemano offers another option for opening up discussions, she says, "I actually kind of prefer that [someone asking her if something is wrong], if someone asks me what's going on, it's a little easier". This removes the feeling of conflict created by the bandleader going to the band and saying that something was not working. Rather, by someone in the band noticing that something does not seem right with the bandleader, the member then enters into the discussion differently, dealing with the issue with care and respect from both sides.

5.3.2.3 Develop Through Playing

One fairly universal theme amongst the participants is that sometimes you have to just let the music flow, and that will help work things out. Allemano's point here is interesting, when she says "It's also good to realise that sometimes if you say nothing, and you just let the music do what it's doing, that is probably the best…it may not be exactly what you wanted or whatever, but usually in retrospect it's fine, if you just let it do what it needs to do that day." This idea that there has to be an element of internal compromise sometimes, that by letting things just happen, rather than micro-managing, bandleaders have to accept that what might come back is not necessarily exactly what they envisaged but could also be just as good.

One tricky aspect of this approach is when a band first starts, the bandleader often feels a need to do more explaining about how the music should go. Laura Jurd offers an alternative approach, "…sometimes things can just start small and actually just playing would solve a lot of problems, you'd find something out just by playing the music a lot, and sometimes talking about something just delays the solution." Jurd suggests that sometimes talking about the music actually slows down the process of self-discovery. Tim Berne mentions, "I might say, it can do this, or it can do that, and then once we've started playing together a lot, I try not to say anything, and then if there is something I don't like, which happens maybe three percent of the time, I might just say something, you know provocative, that you know, might take them off the trail." Once again showing that while there may need to be occasional interventions, once a band "gets it", it is usually better to just let the ensemble figure it out in the playing.

As with many things, the great William Parker often puts it best,

> …you got to just drop all the pretence and just let the music flow through you, because …we are weak human beings, we are trying to figure out everything by ourselves, but it never works…let yourself go, and let the light come in to you, you become empowered, it's like an inner tube, there is no air in there, it doesn't roll, but once you fill it up with the air, with the spirit, then anything can happen, you can flow and fly and jump and that's what you want each musician to do, except for some reason, certain musicians are trying to do it all by themselves and I'm saying…you've got lots of help out here, you don't have to do anything by yourself, all you have to do is just get on the surfboard and just let the waves take you, but if you're saying, I'm the composer and this didn't work and this didn't work and I didn't do this, it's like, you are blocking the flow of the music, because what we have to remember is that, we didn't create music, music was here when we got here …we are like guests in this house of music and we have to respect that and we have to flow with it…

5.4 Case Studies

This research will now look at five different case studies from the interviewed bandleaders highlighting the differences in approach and how these differences are necessitated by their desired output, as well as the level of collaboration within the ensemble. Each case study begins with a brief explanation of whether the band is band focused or leader focused, and continues to explain how the band language was developed and the available members for such an ensemble.

5.4.1 William Parker

Band focused project – Language developed through composition and playing – Rooted in the idiom of free jazz – Band member choice is restricted to people with knowledge of the idiom.

William Parker illustrates how he leads his ensembles, when he expands on how he presents the music to the band, "I don't say anything, I never say anything about the music. I

never say…well, this is a bossa nova, this is this, this is that, this is 7, this is 6/8…never. I just say, ok, well, let's try this tune and we hit it." Alongside his sparsely notated scores, his verbal approach and his general personality and ethos, he can communicate with clarity what he wants, namely that his fellow musicians have the freedom to interpret the music in the way that they see fit in the moment. Parker's approach puts him much more on the band focused side of the scale in terms of his approach to leadership. Parker goes on to say,

> …total freedom, you don't get that everywhere, it's usually, my band, and I tell you to do this, you do that…this is my music and it has to go a certain way, I am saying, it doesn't have to go a certain way, it has to work on its own level and I'm not controlling that level, I am giving up my control to respect the music. It's sort of a different philosophy, to say, well, if you don't control, then it's not your music, well I am not interested in it being my music, it's THE MUSIC, it takes on a life of its own, you're just guests in this house of music.

Parker is giving up ownership of his music not just to the band, but to the music itself, following his principle of letting the music flow through us. It is important however to understand Parker's position within the music scene. Parker is rightly revered amongst the jazz community as one of the leading lights of the second generation of free jazz musicians (Bradley 2021). There is a musical link between what he is doing as a player and composer that not only goes back to the free jazz tradition but further into jazz history. That means as a member of Parker's ensemble, one has what Parker describes as "total freedom", but the general language is at least roughly related to a free jazz vocabulary. That is not to say that this is restrictive, but the understanding of the boundaries of where that ensemble might go musically is somewhat rooted in the jazz tradition, which affects both the role which Parker needs to take with his musicians, as well as their expectations. It would be rare for anyone involved in contemporary improvised music to not be aware of Parker, and their entrance into his band would come with an amount of expectation as to what the music might be.

Parker as a leader does not have to spell out how the music should go, because he is part of a lineage of great composer/bandleaders who utilise the idioms of jazz/free jazz. The group language, while allowing individual freedom, is somewhat dictated by that idiom that the ensemble works within.

Looking at Parker's composition East Harlem Sunrise, the compositional material itself is very simple, but this repetitive piano riff gives the piece a very specific character. The band keeps this piano part going through much of the improvisation, but one can hear that they are not tied down to it, they have the freedom to play it, or not play it, to play the written melody, or not. The scoring of the piece also has no dynamics, chord symbols, etc, further emphasising the freedom allowed in its interpretation.

The way Parker describes talking about the music clearly plays out in the performance of the music, the players sound free to take the compositions in all manners of directions. Within that freedom, the overall sound world is defined both by the individual players approach within the idiom, as well as the strength of the composition.

East Harlem Sunrise - Listening Link - https://williamparker.bandcamp.com/track/sunrise-in-east-harlem

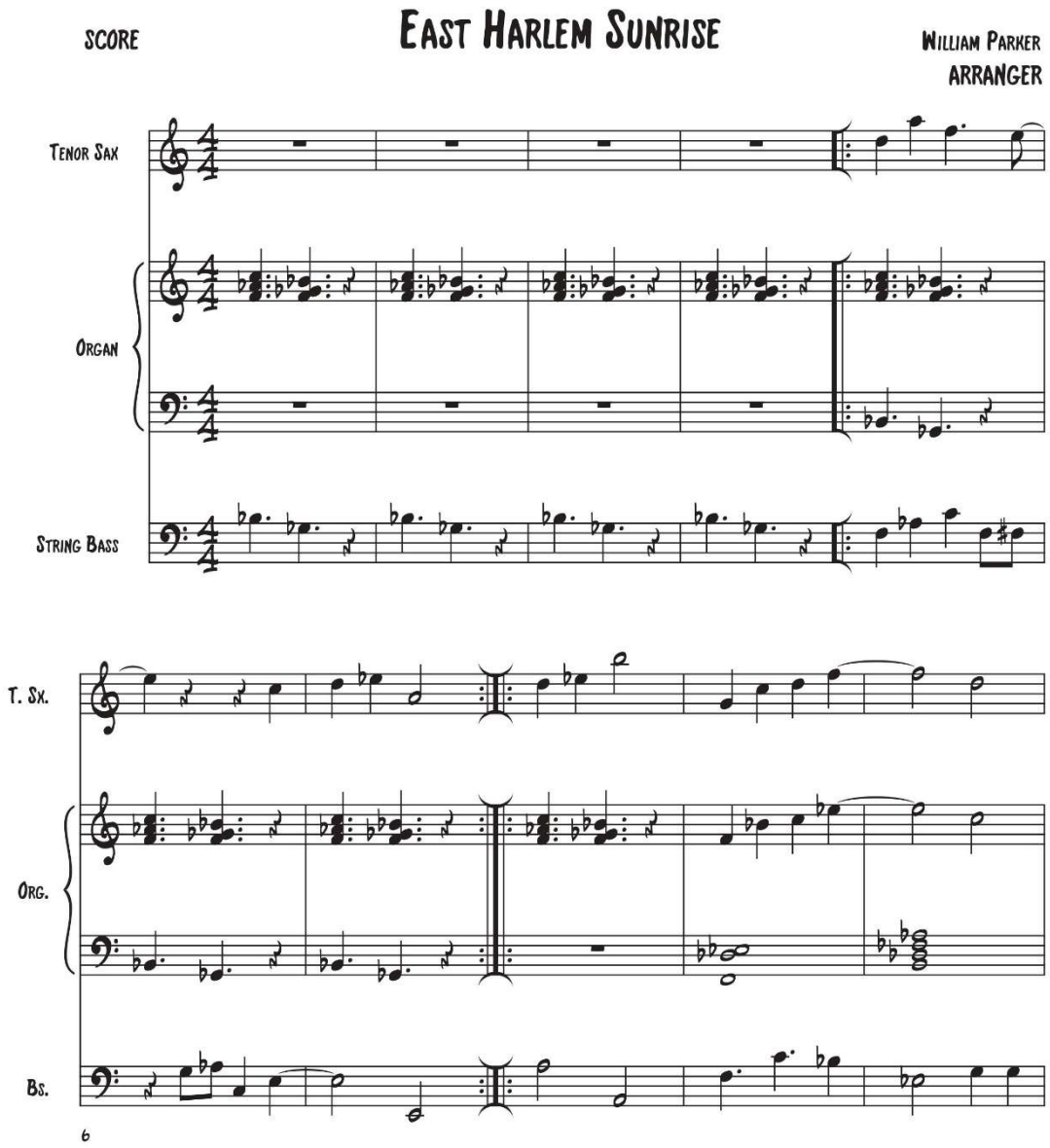

Figure 27 - East Harlem Sunrise Score - Page 1

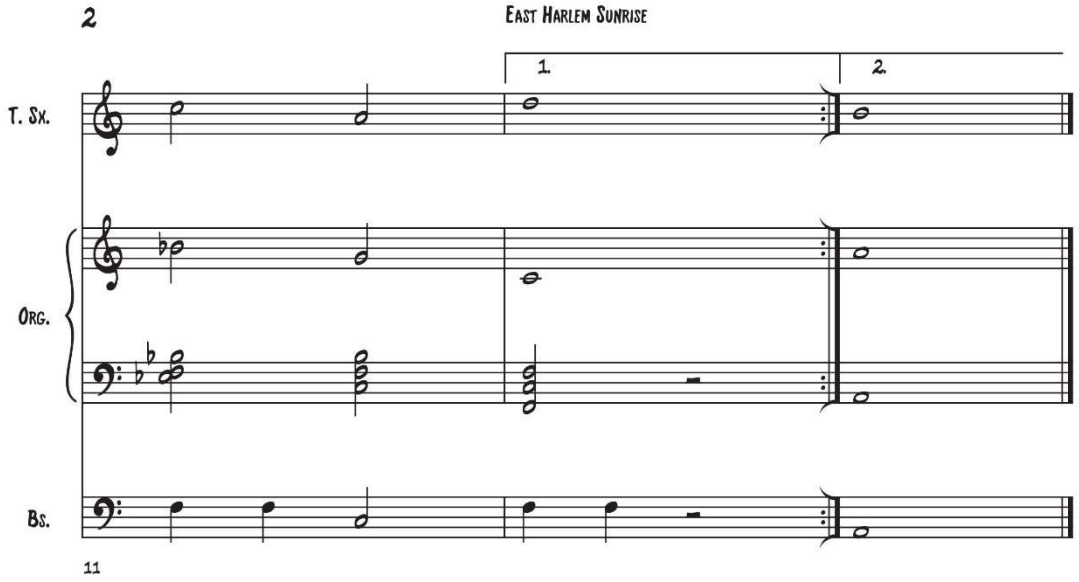

Figure 28 - East Harlem Sunrise Score - Page 2

5.4.2 Jan Kopinski

Band focused project – Language developed through composition, playing and some discussion – Band member choice is relatively open.

Sax player and composer Jan Kopinski with his band Pinski Zoo is not interested in dictating what the band will play. Pinski Zoo, out of all the ensembles in this study was perhaps the most DIY project, Kopinski describes "I had to mend the van if it broke, and I bought the van, I mended the van, I changed the engines, I built the PA, I did everything…with Steve's help, he would always help. I always thought of it like a democracy really…we are all in it together." Kopinski's style of running the band infiltrated his attitude to the playing, which he describes as "…although I led this band, I did all the running round, …when it came to the music, I just wanted to set it up, and let it go and talk about other stuff." The way he ran the band influenced the way he thought about the project in general.

He made so much effort to make it all happen that during the playing he wanted to be able to let go.

The project was a labour of love for Kopinski, he always worked other jobs to earn money whilst maintaining a heavy rehearsal and performance schedule with Pinski Zoo. Kopinski's dedication to the art helped to forge his attitude about working with the musicians. He explains, "It's like, this is what we need to do, we've all got to create this…are you willing…I am so pleased you are willing to help me do this, I wouldn't dream of saying you've got to play it like this."

Stefan at the Window, from Pinski's Zoo's album *The City Can't Have it Back*, quite clearly illustrates the Pinski Zoo sound, an often more groove-based approach to free improvisation, with the improvising being directly influenced by the composition. While Kopinski did not quite spell out exactly how they got to this sound world, one can hear the development through the early albums and the personnel changes to finding what felt like the Pinski Zoo sound. Kopinski describes his approach and the way he presented Stefan at the Window,

> I was really interested in Eastern European folk music and Bartok, so the main lines are from that influence. But the counter one which I suppose would be in a different key, although I prefer to think of it as in a different visual scene like a film, I worked out at home. I did have ideas of wanting big blocks to cut through and we were using loads of percussion at the time, and I was listening to Penderecki a lot and wanted those big blocks to drift or collide…We never used scores. I might write something down later to remind myself if there was a particular part of a line I liked. But in those days and further along we very rarely brought scores or chord symbols….Actually it would have been quicker to write it down but then I always wanted to suggest stuff and leave it to each individual. This was precisely why we asked Karl to join, as I knew he had the talent to pick things up and you could totally rely on him doing his own interpretations or additions. So I always said to him, and the drums also, 'just play your stuff to this sound'...The best renditions were when the group could all play the figure or melodic line at dynamic spots without being told when to do it.

Stefan at the Window - Listening Link - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BsiDe-HoAlw

Over the years, the band developed a certain understanding of the band sound through regular rehearsals and performances, which is clear in this performance. Kopinski did not need to give any further information than just the melody of the tune. Also, by not using scores, the musicians have internalised the written material in a way that was less common in the bandleaders I spoke to. This internalisation makes it easier for the players to move between the composed material and the improvisation, which they do throughout the composition, moving further away from the composition and then bringing back in snippets of melody.

5.4.3 Cath Roberts

Band focused project – Language developed through composition and playing – Band member choice is open to musicians with a variety of backgrounds.

Cath Roberts, another band focused project, is essentially allowing the group to create the sound world in the moment of playing. Robert's impact is mostly through the compositions themselves, and the band is free to interpret these as they see fit. Roberts explains, "I'm not going to be like, this is my band! You play this, you play that, this is how the music is going to be and I want it to sound like this…I'm not interested in that." This is then reflected in the band sound, there are elements of what could be described as "non-idiomatic" free improvisation language, as well as free jazz language, but there is also groove, tonality, and melody and these are not characteristics that Roberts enforced in the

improvising, but elements from the compositions, as well as the pathways that the band naturally took.

The method for a bandleader with this band focused approach that is working pan-idiomatically is less about finding the right players to fit their idea of what the band should sound like, but rather finding the players who are willing to go on the journey to find the sound world for the band. This democratic approach only works if the bandleader is happy with a sound world which is not pre-defined. In listening through all the bandleaders' back catalogue for this research, Sloth Racket had one of the most cohesive band sounds early on in their recorded history. The freedom that Roberts gave each member allowed the band to naturally come to a sound world that suited all the members quickly, while at the same time fitting in with her compositional vision.

Looking at one of Roberts' compositions, A Glorious Monster, one can also see how their compositional approach creates a sort of ambiguity in the composition. The score does not give that much information about what exactly it should sound like, but rather gives ideas about things that can happen, and the band moves fluidly through the sections and instructions, without feeling like they are restricted from a listener's perspective.

A Glorious Monster - Listening Link - https://slothracket.bandcamp.com/track/a-glorious-monster

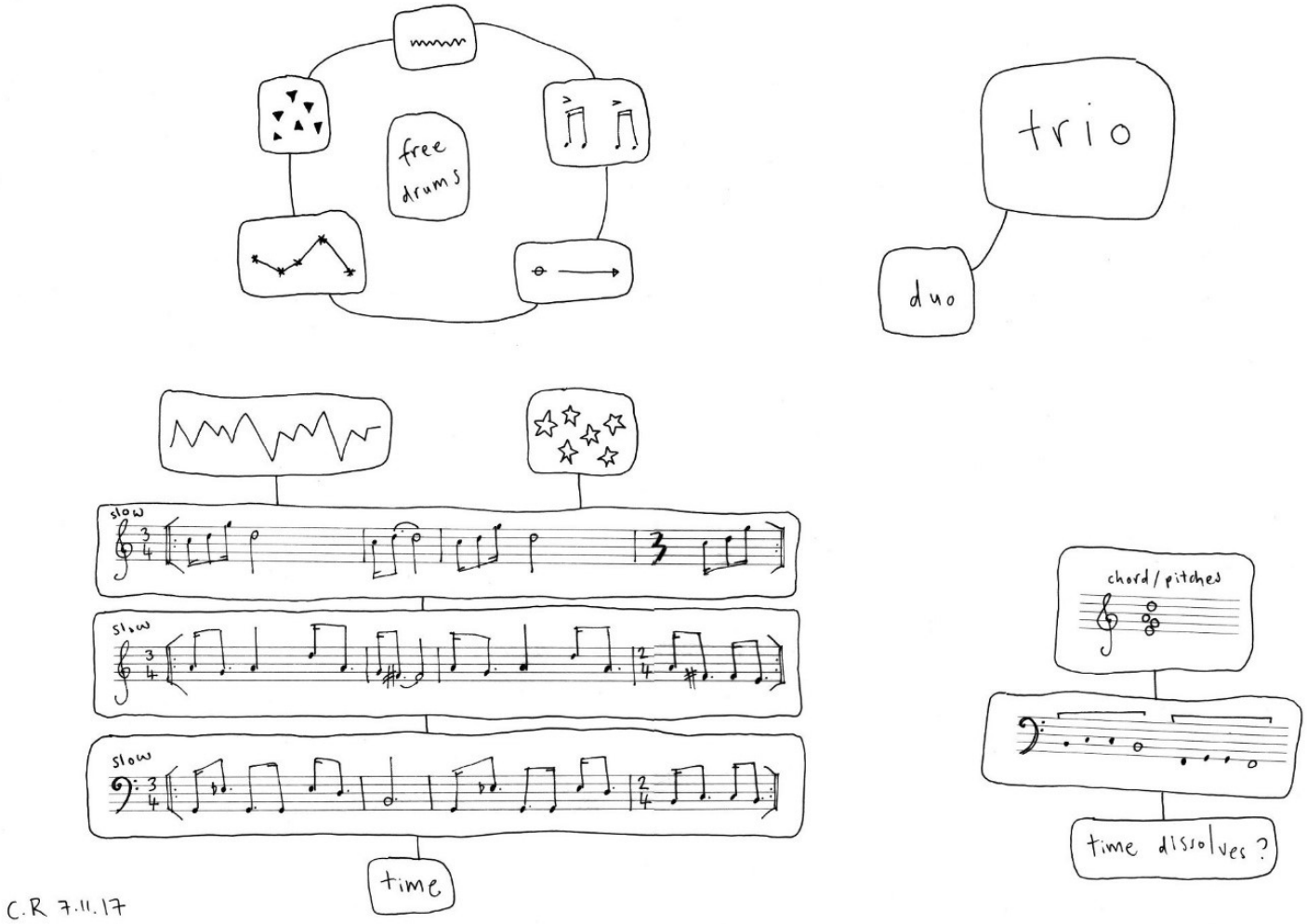

Figure 29 - A Glorious Monster Score

Roberts describes the way she presented the composition as,

> I think I said that there are four sections and we'll move through them as a group. So top left (the wheel of stuff with the drum improv), top right (the duo - trio), bottom left (the written material with added bits), bottom right (the ending material). That information isn't on the page though because I wanted us to be able to decide to do different orders each time. And the 'moving through'-ness isn't directed, we just do it.

Roberts' open approach to the language of the band is written directly into their compositional style and the way they present it. Whatever ensemble played this piece, something completely different would come out. By presenting the music in this way, Roberts is further enforcing that the music should be formed in the moment and should not be dictated by what the band believes Roberts wants them to play.

5.4.4 Mary Halvorson

Leader led project – Language mostly developed through composition – Member choice is limited to musicians with a thorough knowledge of jazz chord changes playing, as well as free improvising.

Mary Halvorson's approach illustrates a completely different way of working, and the other end of the spectrum of approaches. Already before the project has begun, because of the specific idiomatic skills required to play her music, she is looking for rather specific musicians to fill the roles, because her musical vision necessitates that. The specific skills the members need to have are clear when one looks at the compositions and the sound world inhabited by the ensemble. Halvorson herself states,

> I do care about the identity of all the individual people and I do write for those people specifically, but at the same time, I feel like what I am trying to do is have the compositions be strong enough that [they] sort of create a guide and a framework, and if you have a really good improviser, they will be able to step in and just kind of be in that sound world and they will bring something different.

The members are still important in the overall making of the music, but more as soloists or in their interpretation of the composition. The overall sound world is much more dictated by the composition. Halvorson further elaborates, "…if I don't like something, I feel like it's usually because what I wrote didn't work…not the fault of the player…If there is something that is not working, I might tweak the composition a little bit…"

The process of developing the music for Halvorson is not just about developing things in rehearsal or performance, but rather, when something is not working, looking back at the composition and what can possibly change to make it work more smoothly. This approach differs quite starkly from the band focused projects where the compositions were more vehicles for inspiring improvising. In this project, Halvorson is using improvisation within a greater compositional framework.

In Spirit Splitter no 54, from Halvorson's octet album *Away With You*, one gets an overview of Halvorson's approach. The composition is quite intricate, and much more than simply a "head – solos – head" approach. With Halvorson's knowledge of the musicians' abilities, specifically their ability to move between more changes based playing and free playing, she is able in the improvising to allow a certain level of freedom to move between these zones while also having the improvising fitting firmly within the compositional sound world.

The score begins at the start of improvising section (2:18) where the solo order is not dictated, but it is stated that it should either be alto or trombone. Halvorson is offering up the idea that the form can open, but that the overall improvising section should maintain the character of the composition. The band plays around this section gradually getting freer in their interpretation of the harmony as well as the rhythm. From around 3:35, while there are still elements of the composition, particularly in the guitar, the playing becomes freer. The final section of the improvising before coming back to the composition at 5:18 has a separate part of composed material, with the direction that it either can be played or not. Even though there is very little verbatim playing of these lines, this section influences what happens at the end of the improvising and brings it to this specific new sound world. The players maintain their sense of freedom, but Halvorson can still somewhat dictate the overall sound world of the composition.

Spirit Splitter No 54 - Listening Link - https://maryhalvorson.bandcamp.com/track/spirit-splitter-no-54

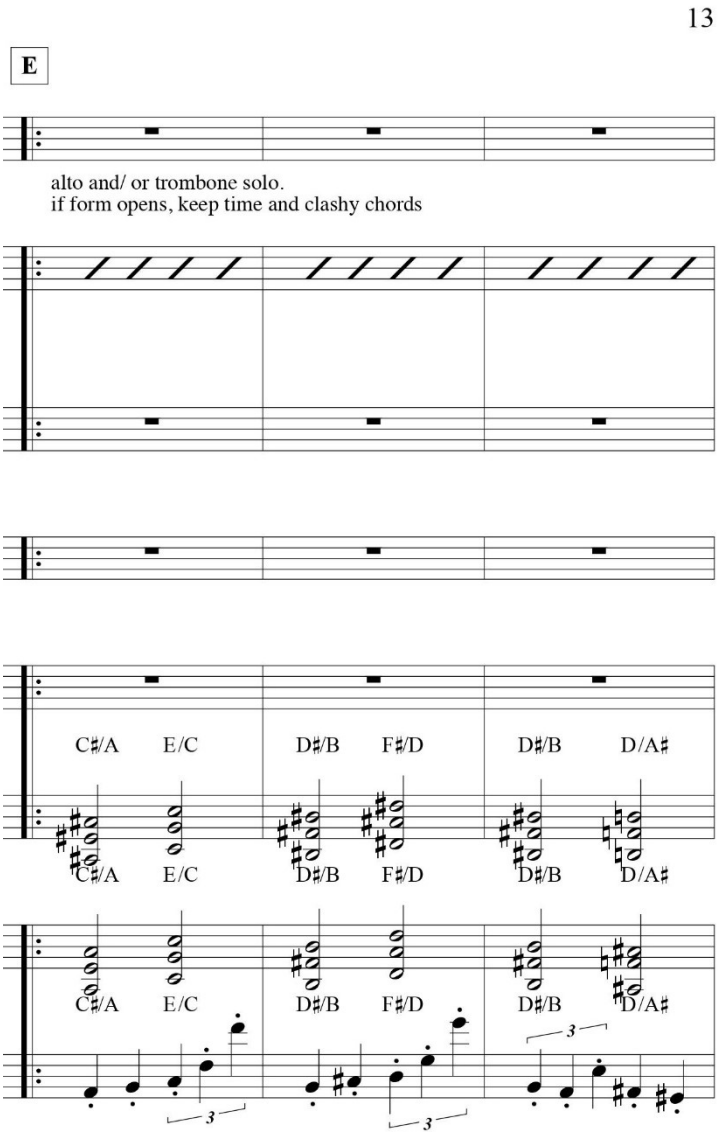

Figure 30 - Spirit Splitter Score Solo Section - Page 1

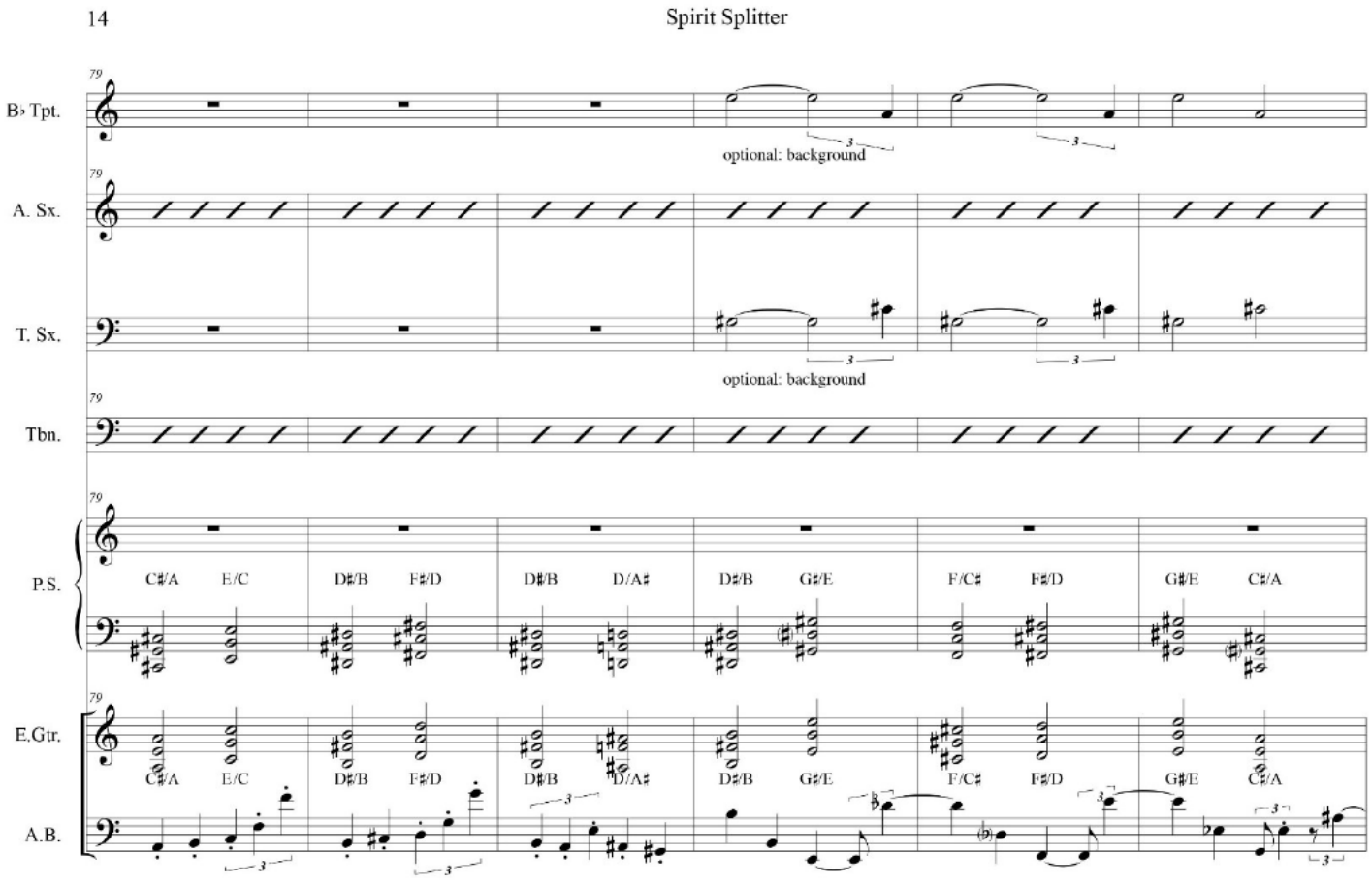

Figure 31 - Spirit Splitter Score Solo Section - Page 2

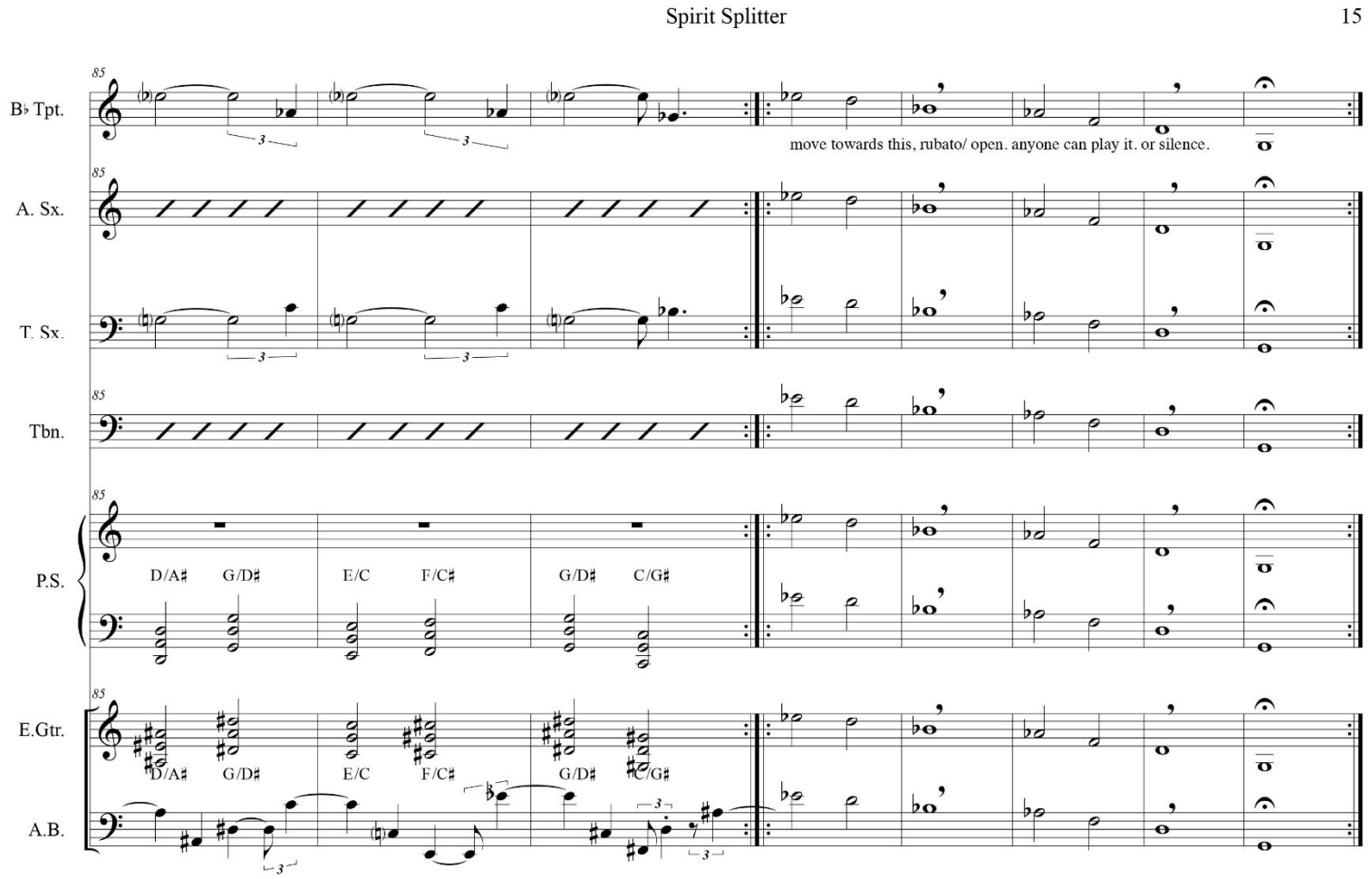

Figure 32 - Spirit Splitter Score Solo Section - Page 3

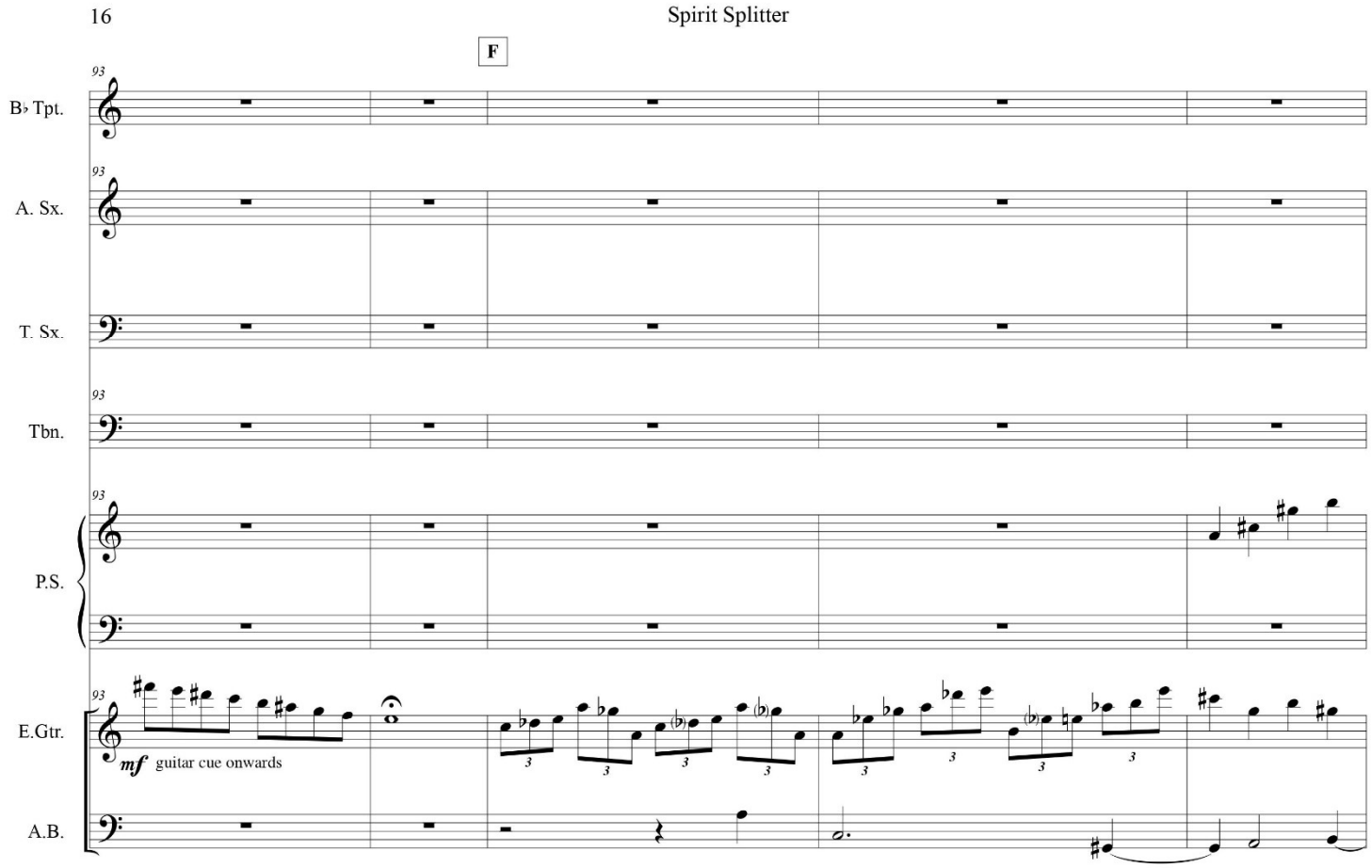

Figure 33 - Spirit Splitter Score Solo Section - Page 4

5.4.5 Peter Van Huffel

Leader led project – Language defined through discussion and composition – Band member choice is restricted to musicians with knowledge of the idioms involved and the ability to move between those idioms and free improvising.

Looking beyond music which is more closely to a tradition, "total freedom" can have also a different meaning. This is evident in the work of Peter van Huffel's band Gorilla Mask. Similar to William Parker's score, van Huffel's score offers little information as to how exactly the tune will be played, let alone what might happen in the improvising. Van Huffel describes his initial ideas behind setting up the band, "…my initial intention with Gorilla Mask was to create an easy band in Berlin with simple songs where we could play like powerhouse style and just have fun and no pressure, no business, no booking…nothing." Van Huffel goes on to express that hearing The Thing, particularly on the album *The Garage,* https://thingjazz.bandcamp.com/album/garage was an initial influence and provided an initial idiomatic framework for the improvising language that they would utilise within Gorilla Mask.

The boundaries of the improvising are something which had to be much more defined by Van Huffel, because unlike William Parker's music, Gorilla Mask's approach is not as clearly part of a tradition, Van Huffel states,

> I'd say especially in the first half of the band's life we had moments on gigs or in rehearsals where…a tune went in the middle, like Chained for example, and maybe we got somewhere in the improv section where it goes towards the drum solo and suddenly Rudi dropped out or Roland started playing some high pitched drone or something and then it all of sudden got into…very spacey kind of, totally

> atmospheric sound and I did have moments at that time where afterwards I would say to them, guys, this isn't the tune for me. We are losing the energy here.

Van Huffel had a specific idea in mind about how he wanted the improvising to sound while also wanting the band to somewhat have the "total freedom" that William Parker describes. Van Huffel had to work to define the parameters for the band sound as he went along, meaning he needed to run the band, at least at the start, in a much more leader focused fashion. Van Huffel was at the start of the band creating the understanding within the ensemble of what constituted the group's improvising language.

Listening to his composition Chained, one can hear how the composition itself is having a huge effect on the improvising language. The driving groove and sense of tonality are maintained almost throughout the improvising. The improvising language was something that van Huffel discussed and set up with the band as they started, but as the band got a clearer understanding of it, discussion was less necessary, as the band themselves understood the sound world, and were freer to experiment within it. By this point in the band's history, while there may have been some sort of discussion of possible directions in the improvising, one can hear that the band understands the language and can improvise freely within it.

Chained - Listening Link - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YSO9vskvu3s

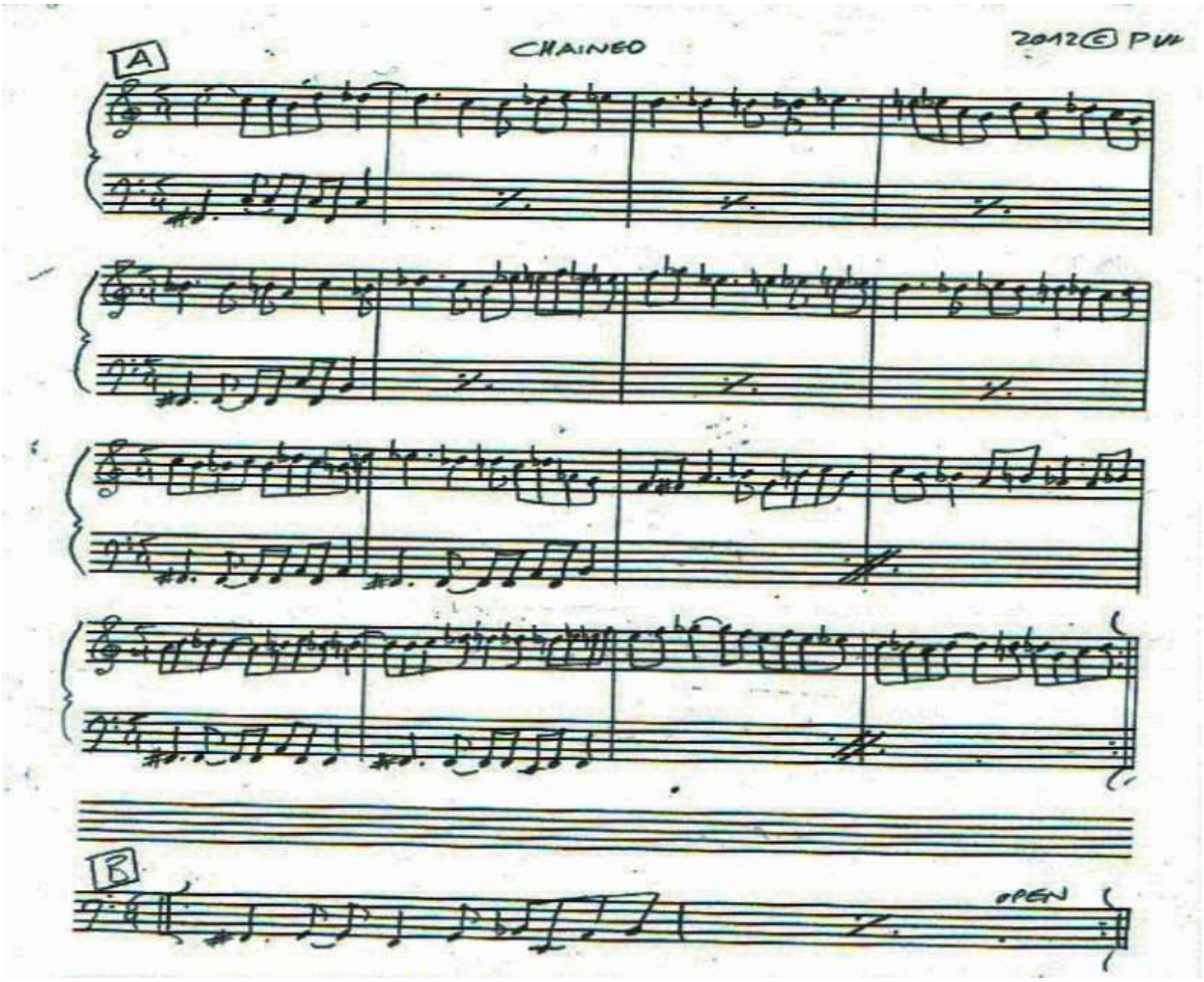

Figure 34 - Chained Score

5.5 Bandleader Strategies for Long-Standing Ensembles

Improvising musicians change and develop through the years, and their personal language is something that they are constantly working on. But, if you ask any player how different their language is between when they were twenty and forty, they will likely answer that while there has been development, the core approach will likely not have changed very much. Insights from the interview series show that bandleaders believed that you similarly cannot

completely alter a band's language after it has formed, and the bandleaders rather see their job as challenging that language and finding new ways to work within it. The goal as a bandleader becomes not about how one can keep it developing, but rather how to deal with the fact that the language exists.

Bandleaders take different approaches on how to deal with the problems created through working with a band long term. Figure 35 illustrates three different approaches highlighted by the bandleaders from this study to deal with the possible restrictions created through band language, and the positive ramifications of each strategy. This research will now elaborate on these methods.

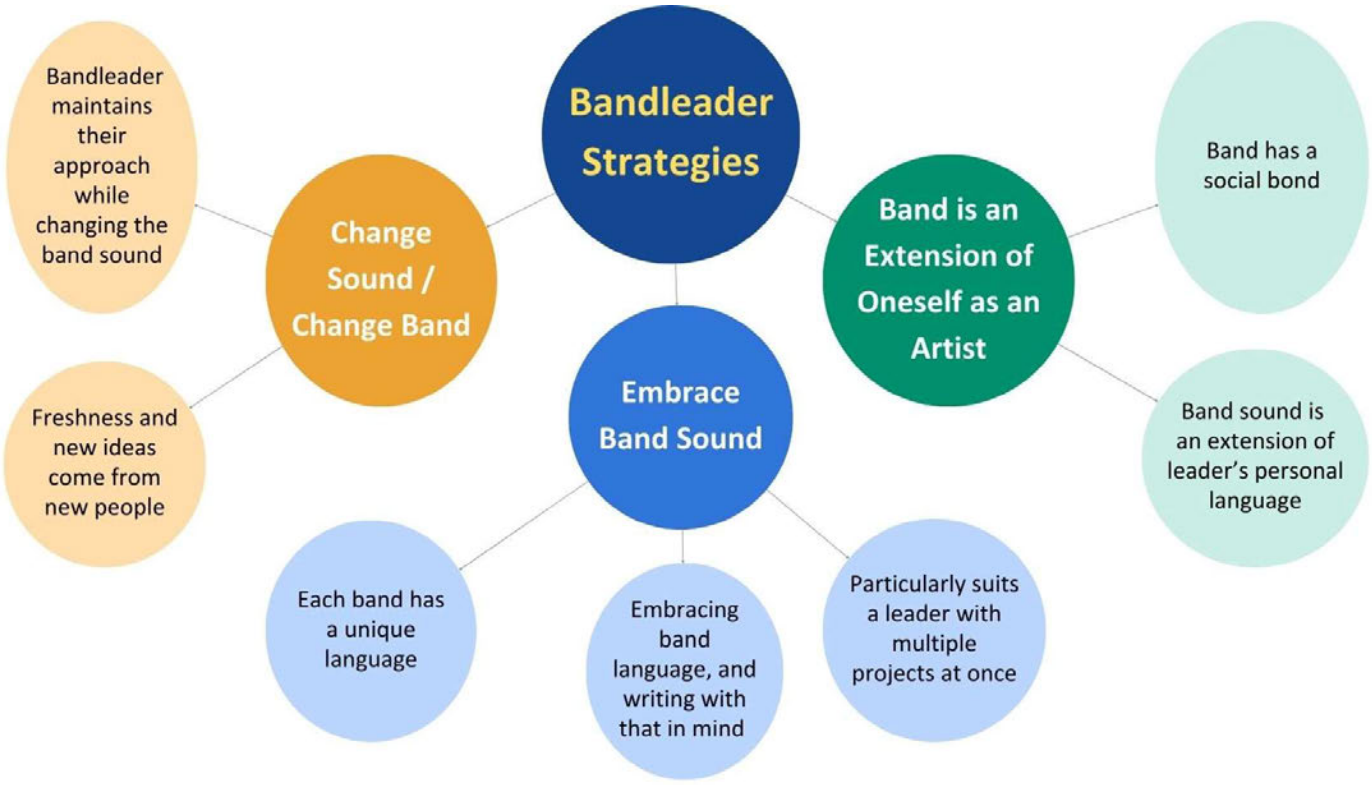

Figure 35 - Bandleader Strategies for Working with Bands Long-term

5.5.1 Change Sound / Change Band

One approach which has existed throughout jazz history is that when the bandleader wants to change the band sound, they start a new band. A leader like Miles Davis did this prolifically, rather than changing his personal approach radically, he changed the musicians around him to alter his sound world (Davis and Troupe 1990). From this study, prolific bandleader leader Tim Berne offers his own take on this approach,

> The first record I did in 78 or 9, I think my general approach to writing, improvising, my ideas about mixing composition and improvisation were there…instead of trying to change how I do things, I just basically change people, and that seems to work out because you get all these people, you know you are adapting a whole new series of personalities.

With a composer who has developed a unique sound world like Berne, his "stamp" is on whatever project he puts together. Adding different people to that mix means that each band offers a different perspective on that sound world, keeping a freshness both for the bandleader and for the ensemble. This approach is reflective of the fact that the surprise and spontaneity can be lost somewhat with a longer-standing band, and instead of trying to change that, the answer is to start over.

5.5.2 Band Sound is to be Embraced

Some bandleaders, while aware of the possibility of an established group language becoming a negative thing, embrace the idea that each band has a specific sound world. Particularly for the bandleader who runs multiple projects, Faye MacCalman offers up her perspective that, "I feel like there is stuff I write that is Archipelago now, and there is stuff I write that is not Archipelago, and for that, I will find another home for it."

Archipelago has its sound world, and if she wanted to do something other than that, she would use a different band to realise it. This approach acknowledges the limitations of a band's sound world and says that if the bandleader wants to do something different, rather than trying to change the band's approach, they should do that music with a different band. Serial band leaders like Lina Allemano stretch this concept even further. Allemano is the leader of four different ensembles, each offering a different group language. She then does not need to worry about the language becoming stifling for her, because if she wants to improvise in a different way or context, she can do that in one of her different ensembles.

5.5.3 Band is an Extension of Oneself as an Artist

For some bandleaders, their long-term bands become an extension of who they are as artists. They are often not known as just individuals but as the leaders of a specific ensemble. Cath Roberts, leader of Sloth Racket, offers up a different perspective when asked about what they would do if they wanted to do a project that was a big departure from Sloth Racket, "I probably would bring them [Sloth Racket] because of trust and having long musical relationships with people."

The band becomes an extension of Roberts' own musical identity, and if Roberts were to do something wildly different, they would still use the same people because of their existing relationship, and also because those musicians have become somewhat of an extension of who Roberts is as a composer. This sort of approach puts more pressure on the bandleader, because they have to try to completely change the wiring of an ensemble if they want to do something wildly different. However, for the bandleader that takes this approach, that may not matter, because they are connected enough with their ensemble that any

difficulties involved in doing an about-turn musically are deemed not so challenging to enact that it would necessitate stopping working with the same people. This is also an approach that I adopted with Led Bib, which was my main creative outlet for 20 years.

5.6 Chapter Conclusion

The current scene in jazz and improvised music is epitomised by leaders who are not becoming leaders out of a self-selecting desire for power, but rather as the most effective means for getting their music out into the world.

When a leader goes to pick their band members, they are already making choices about how they want to work and what they want their output to be. When a bandleader goes in with a very specific concept, they have a more limited pool of musicians to choose from than one who goes in with the idea that the band itself will develop the group language together. These choices are not just affected by who the "best" musicians are, but rather by the musicians' knowledge of the vocabulary which will be utilised within the ensemble. When this vocabulary is created within the ensemble, rather than from pre-existing idioms, the member choice at the start is much wider, because the members do not need to have specific knowledge of a language or idiom going into the project. Most projects in jazz and improvised music fall somewhat between these poles.

Once the members are selected, the approach then taken by the bandleader must be an approach with is authentic to them, which builds trust within the ensemble. This approach is different for each leader, reflecting each leader's unique personality, but the required approach is also connected to the leader's desired output and style of working. To run an ensemble like Mary Halvorson's with William Parker's "total freedom" approach

would not work. Each bandleader has a specific approach that they adopt which is related to their personality, their social relationship with the musicians, and their desired output.

There are numerous ways that bandleaders affect the output of an ensemble, some of them are clear, like the compositions on the page and the way that they discuss the music. Others are much subtler, a comment after a concert, responses to listening to a recording session, a mood after a particular performance. Every band interaction has the potential to have a lasting impact on the overall approach of an ensemble. The bandleader's role is to try and craft these interactions to enable the ensemble to move in the direction they see fit, whether that be a rather specific pre-specified vision, or whether that be a sound world developed by the band itself. What is true of all the ensembles is that as the bands develop, the members' understanding of the barriers of the ensemble becomes more detailed. The discussions about what should happen in the music become more infrequent and increasingly, the unstated rules of the group language define the way that the band plays.

Bands have become longer-term projects, with many bands lasting decades rather than the notably short-term projects known from jazz history. The bands themselves in many cases represent the bandleader's artistic vision in the public sphere with the leaders themselves becoming identified with the band. While there are challenges associated with working in a group of improvisers with an established language, overall, the bandleaders in the interview study saw group language development as positive thing. The bandleaders felt that the idea of completely changing the language in an existent ensemble was not possible and that the role of the bandleader is to find out how to inspire the ensemble to continue to be as spontaneous as possible in the moment of playing within the developed language.

Furthermore, if a completely different group language is what the bandleader truly desires, then the bandleader can revert to using different ensembles and musicians.

In the next chapter I will explore the insights brought about through the analysis of both the interview study and the creative practice work with Anthropods, exploring how together they further illustrate answers to this study's research questions.

Chapter 6 Bringing it All Back Home (Anthropods & the Interviews)

To fully contextualise the collected findings from both the practice work and the interview study, this chapter begins by presenting a "bandleader leadership spectrum", which expresses the bandleaders' approaches related to their desired output. This chapter continues by delving deeper into leadership styles and social structures within ensembles, and further into group language development by examining the results of both studies.

6.1 Bandleader Leadership Spectrum

As explained in chapter 5, the bandleaders, while working in ways that were personal to them, also led their ensembles in ways related to their desired output and the level of collaboration involved in this. To help illustrate bandleaders' leadership approaches, this research will now relate the findings from the two studies to the literature on leadership and illustrate the variety of approaches based on the desired output.

While bandleaders do not fully exist on either end of the spectrum, and may pick and choose from some of these styles, Figure 36 helps to illustrate how the desired output of the bandleader is dictating to a certain extent how they can work with an ensemble.

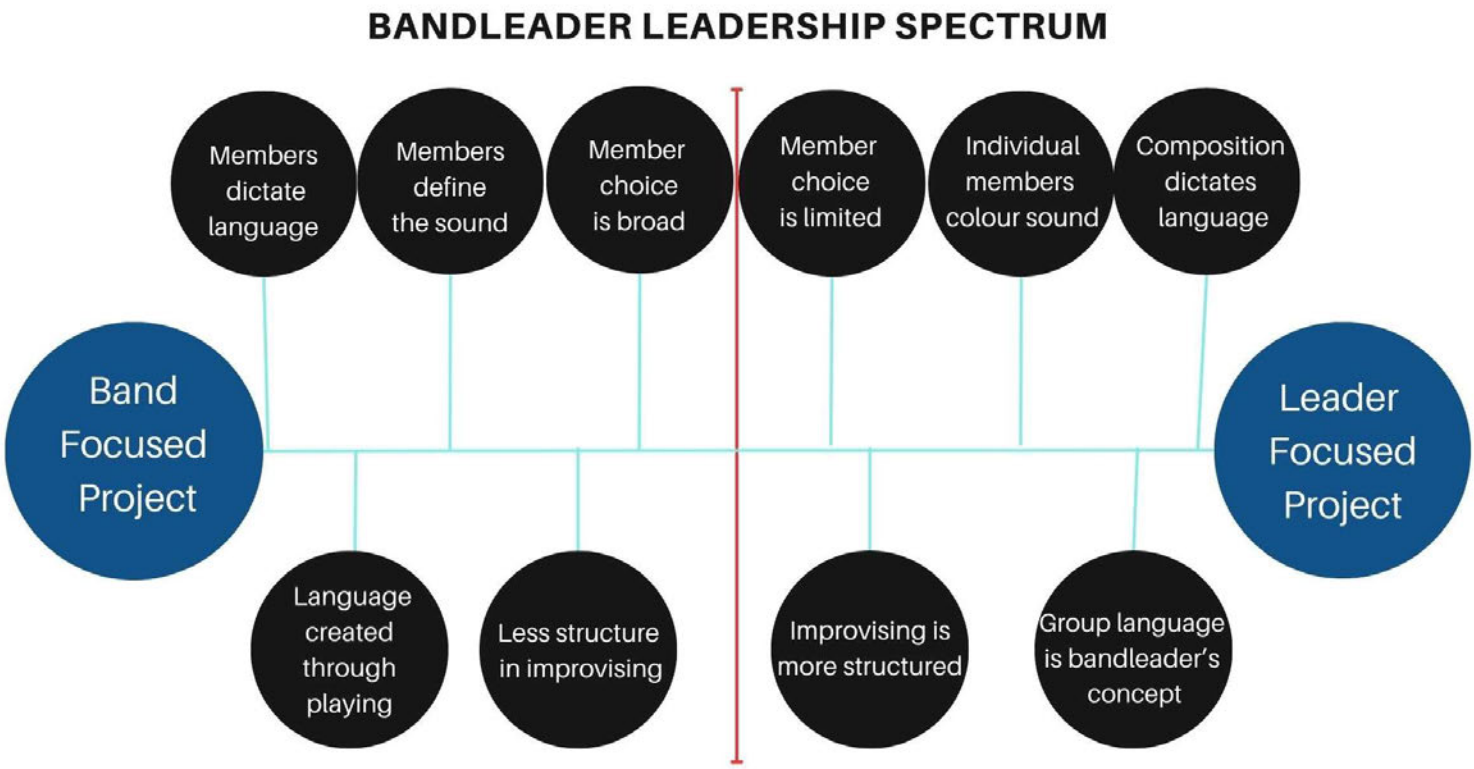

Figure 36 - Bandleader Leadership Spectrum

The biggest factor determining how a bandleader will work with an ensemble is whether the bandleader has a preconceived idea of what the group language should be or not. If they do have a preconceived idea, they then fall on the "leader focused project" side of the spectrum, because to fulfil their musical vision they have to take more control over the ensemble. On the other end of the spectrum, in a "band focused project", the leader comes in with a less preconceived vision and allows the band itself to define the group language to a larger degree. The bands who feature in this interview study sit on all different points of this spectrum, and it is not that a band sits on one side or the other, but it rather illustrates how bandleaders' approaches are affected first and foremost by their desired output.

Transformational leadership (Burns 1978; Bass 1985) and servant leadership (Greenleaf 1970) offer up useful models which can help to express the different facets of the spectrum that bandleaders work within. Authentic leadership (George 2003) also plays an important role across the spectrum of approaches, with an authentic approach being taken by bandleaders across the spectrum. This research will continue by elaborating on these connections.

6.1.1 Leader Focused Project

James MacGregor Burns describes transformational leadership as “leaders inducing followers to act for certain goals that represent the values and motivations – the wants and needs, the aspirations and expectations – of both leaders and followers” (Burns 1978, 19).

Transformational leadership, in the context of running an ensemble in jazz and improvised music, can be understood as a leader who is presenting a somewhat pre-defined vision of what the ensemble should be. They are going in with a clear idea of how it should sound, and while the musicians are of course still important to the overall sound, the bandleader’s original concept drives the project. The transformational leader’s role is about inspiring the members to be enthusiastic about the bandleader’s vision and to bring their creativity to the ensemble, as Bass (1985) explained, the transformational leader’s goal is to get the members to work for the good of the group, rather than just for themselves. They do this by offering up their vision of what the ensemble can be and inspiring the musicians to want to be a part of it and contribute to its growth. While these are still calling on their members to be creative in the process of developing the music, there is a much clearer

"goal", namely, to create the music that is in the bandleader's head, and their role as leader is to inspire the band members to do that in the best way possible.

6.1.2 Band Focused Project

When a bandleader is going into a project with a much less clearly defined idea of what the project will be, the approach is different, and servant leadership helps to illustrate this difference. Robert K. Greenleaf, the founder of servant leadership describes this as the test of whether someone is a servant leader, "Do those being served grow as persons, do they become healthier, wiser, freer, more autonomous while being served" (Greenleaf 1970, 37)? While some of these claims may sound grandiose in the context of running an ensemble, they highlight that the servant leader's focus is on the members. A band is a collection of musical voices and the servant leader is the one who is putting those voices together, but each member's input is integral. Russell and Stone (2002) express that a crucial part of servant leadership is that the leader is gaining trust through "serving the followers".

Rather than inspiring the members towards the bandleader's vision, the bandleader is supporting the members and gaining their trust through their approach. They are steering the ensemble into what is a much more collaborative endeavour through their composition, discussion and the way that have set up the ensemble socially. For a leader to successfully develop an ensemble within this approach, they need to be able to focus much more on the tools of creating the band sound, which are the people themselves.

6.1.3 Authentic Leadership

While providing a useful reference point, neither transformational nor servant leadership can fully define the work of the bandleader. The growing field of authentic leadership however offers a different reference point for the contemporary bandleader. In authentic leadership, a leader is bringing their authentic self, both positives and negatives, strengths and vulnerabilities to the leadership role (Gardner et al. 2011). Whether a leader is working on a more leader focused project or a band focused project, the idea of bringing the authentic self is paramount.

In improvised music, where so much is based on having immense trust amongst the ensemble, the leader's authentic approach engenders this trust and deepens the bond between the ensemble. Someone who is lacking more of a traditional "leader" method does not go in and bark commands at the musicians, but rather uses their personality to accentuate their strengths (Avolio and Gardner 2005), and this goes right through from how they rehearse the band, to how they talk about the music, and even how they write their scores.

6.1.3.1 Anthropods Authentic Leadership Style

To fully understand the interviewed bandleaders' natural tendencies and strengths in their personal lives would require further research, but my work with Anthropods provides some insight into how my personal strengths affected my decision-making process.

As stated in chapter 4, Anthropods was a project which I set up with an open mind as to what the musical outcome might be. I did not pick members because of how I thought their approaches melded together, but rather I picked musicians who I thought were

interesting and wanted to see what would happen when I put them together. This puts me on the band focused end of leadership spectrum, as well as offering me a large selection of possible members.

Personally, as a music student, I was always more interested in the problem-solving aspect of music. I enjoyed writing Bach chorales because it felt like solving a puzzle. Likewise in composition, my interest is less focused on the individual notes, but rather on how I can make it all work together. For me, bandleading is part of this same problem-solving concept. By selecting musicians based on their individual traits, rather than with a grand idea of how they are going to fit together, I am giving myself the puzzle of how to make things work with the group of people I have chosen.

My process, both musically and socially becomes mostly about figuring out solutions. That is a place where I feel comfortable as a person, and a place that I feel like I can offer something to a group. Unconsciously, my style of working has become not just the most efficient way to produce the desired output, but a reflection of the way that I feel the most comfortable interacting with the world. I have naturally set up a band to work in a way that I will be at my best, and therefore, the ensemble will work best.

Self-awareness, and knowing ourselves is helping fuel our working styles and preferences. “Self-awareness is not a destination point, but rather an emerging process where one continually comes to understand his or her unique talents, strengths, sense of purpose, core values, beliefs and desires” (Avolio and Gardner 2005, 324). This is not necessarily something any leader would be consciously aware of, but rather is just a natural tendency to work in a way that seems to work well, and it’s only on reflection that we might see that our ways of working as bandleaders are connected to emphasising our strengths.

Likewise, with further research, one would likely see that many bandleaders' styles of working are based on emphasising their strengths.

6.2 Social Structures / Hierarchies

Part of the leadership approach of a bandleader is not just musical, but their management of the social side of the ensemble. The interview data showed that some leaders preferred a more professional, detached approach, while others preferred a much closer relationship. This was often related to whether the project was more band focused or leader focused, with the leaders of the leader focused projects often more concerned with the logistics of paying people on time, efficient rehearsals, etc., reflecting that they wanted to show the members through their actions that they appreciated that they were taking the time to help realise their vision as bandleader. On the band focused side, the leaders were often less concerned with these logistics and more in the general social harmony within the ensemble.

As it became clear in the interview series that different bandleaders were creating social structures and hierarchies in different ways within their ensembles, I reflected on my work with Led Bib and reflected that the relationships within the ensemble were rather unique compared to the experiences of the bandleaders in the study. I was the bandleader, but for most of the life of the ensemble, everything was shared. Not just money-wise, but also decisions about mixes, logistics, etc. While it was a bandleader-led project, it functioned much more like a collaborative ensemble of five very good friends, but with a leader. While this suited my desire to run things more collaboratively, it was also challenging to manage socially as a leader, and not something that other leaders were doing.

Thus, I set out with Anthropods to continue to work collaboratively, but to make more decisions myself, rather than involving the band in the minutiae of working on everything. I set up the ensemble socially reflecting what I had learned from the bandleaders operating on the more collaborative end of things, and created more of a hierarchical relationship than I had with Led Bib. I would be making decisions of a more logistical, as well as a musical nature, without consulting them. The change was subtle and perhaps not entirely perceivable from the outside, but from my perspective the change was large.

I added a level of detachment between me and the ensemble, and while we were still working collaboratively, I was treating them more as side-people, rather than full collaborators. This was challenging, as I do not naturally like making all the decisions myself, but this detachment enabled a smoother social relationship within the ensemble. The ensemble is clear about who makes the decisions, meaning there are fewer hurt feelings when things do not go the way that different members envisaged them.

To somewhat counter the hierarchical relationship in the ensemble, I took special care to try and keep the informal friendly atmosphere that I like, and to encourage collaboration. Particularly in the beginning of the ensemble, the members felt hesitant to fully collaborate on things, because they saw the musical decisions as ones that I as the leader should make. While this hierarchical relationship was difficult for me to manage at the start, with time, these hierarchies began to dissolve somewhat in the moment of playing. This meant that the ensemble developed a more collaborative approach, without the possible social difficulties of managing a nearly fully collaborative ensemble as a leader

that I had experienced in the past. We were collaborating, but with the clarity that the final decisions were mine as the leader to make.

6.2.1 Friendships in the Band

Across the interview series, the levels of friendship varied greatly with different bandleaders preferring to work in different ways. While it was not universal across every bandleader, the ensembles who were working on a more band focused approach, tended to have closer relationships within the ensemble than the ones with a more leader focused approach. Orphy Robinson, one who preferred working with friends, describes it as such,

> The background of what we've probably all grown up listening to, we've all grown up playing, probably the food we eat, where we used to hang out. This one played football, most of us funnily enough, in my band, most of us played cricket… so there would be a bat and ball on tour with us…so there was that social side as well, and politically we were all in the region of the same page as well…I think that's one of the most important things.

Robinson's approach is about getting people together who have similar interests and who get along well as a group. It is a more familial approach, which also echoes Robinson's ideas in chapter 5 of creating trust in an ensemble. It is easier to develop a trusting relationship with people we feel we have more of a personal connection with.

Many participants however stress that it is not necessary to be all good friends, but just that you are friendly enough with one another that you can get along. A consistent theme was that a band has one or two good friendships and that the rest of the members just get along well.

The work of the bandleader is solitary work, but many leaders talk about having one member of the band that they work more closely with. In some cases, this can be just about the nature of who you are working with, like in the case of Laura Jurd, who is married to the keyboard player in her band, Elliot Galvin. Jurd explains, "I definitely would communicate to Elliot, because our relationship is different. We go back to the hotel and go, oh I really found that whole part annoying, or I just really didn't like it, but I think I would only discuss with the rest of the band if I felt it necessary." Having her husband in the band offers a sounding board that means Jurd only must bring things to the band if it's really important, but if she is just feeling somewhat unsure or just wants to comment on something, she has Galvin to bounce things off of. This one closer relationship within an ensemble helps to maintain harmony within the ensemble because the bandleader is more relaxed when they have someone to share things with, and the band is more relaxed because there is less information coming back from the leader.

Of course, not every band has a married couple in it. Lina Allemano discussed how she would often bounce ideas off her drummer Nick Fraser, until it gradually became a sort of paid position within the band. Allemano explains, "…even if I maybe am making the decision in the end, it is nice to be able to call him up and say, what do you think, is it crazy to go from Graz to Brussels in one day, and then we look at the map together and it just somehow feels less stressful because I used to just make all those big decisions myself." In her case, having someone to bounce more logistical ideas off makes her role as the leader easier, relieving stress for herself and likely relieving situations that could produce tension within the ensemble. Allemano has taken this a step further, not just by asking for help, but deciding that this relationship would work better if it did not operate as a friend in the band

helping her out, but rather as someone who is paid to help, so she decided to make this a paid position, relieving what could perhaps create an unequal relationship within the band.

Having a sort of "friendship duo" inside the band is something also echoed by Jan Kopinski in Pinski Zoo, but in a rather more musical way. Despite many personnel changes, Kopinski and Steve Iliffe were always the anchors of the band. Kopinski himself did much of the daily grind of running the band, but he says about Iliffe,

> Steve is always up for anything, I only had to say, I like two basses, shall we do it? If I said shall we have an accordion player or penny whistle he would say, yeah why not? He doesn't mind, there is something really strangely, reckless….you got to have somebody in there who's determined to do what he's going to do and he's quite reckless and Steve is like that.

Kopinski and Iliffe's musical connection, built up over many years, is one of the things that gave Pinski Zoo its unique sound. The band, though defined by Kopinski somewhat as the leader, really was the two of their musical voices interacting with a rotating cast of different musicians over the years.

In my work with Led Bib, there is a mirror of many of these different situations. Within the band, there were closer relationships, but as the band developed, both my musical and personal relationship with Liran Donin, the bass player, developed. Donin became the member that I would bounce ideas off most often, rather than putting everything to the entire band. At the same time, Donin became more of a powerful voice within the ensemble, helping to form a big part of what was the Led Bib improvising language. My relationship with Donin allowed me to run the ensemble more easily because I had someone who I could bounce ideas off without having to bring every idea to the whole band. However, in this case, Donin was not paid like in the Allemano example, and there is a

danger that this then creates, particularly in an ensemble like Led Bib which musically operated quite democratically, a feeling of inequality among the members.

Whatever the relationships may be, the bandleader is striving to create a healthy social environment, because as previously stated, the social environment is the working environment. For each bandleader, the way they decide to work and the level of friendships within the band vary, however, all the bandleaders strive to create a sustainable relationship within the ensemble which encourages the members to contribute and want to be a part of the ensemble.

6.3 Group Language Development- Anthropods / Interviews

Through combining the insights gained from the interview series and the practice work with Anthropods, a deeper understanding of group language development within ensembles has been created.

As stated in chapter 5, the crucial role of the bandleader is creating clarity in their vision, whatever that may be. In Anthropods, my jazz-centred understanding of the role of composition within improvised music created a barrier to having this clarity at the founding of the band. Without everyone in the ensemble coming from a jazz background, not everyone was accustomed to composition working within improvising in this jazz way, namely more of a “composition – improvising – composition” approach, without an obvious connection between the improvising and the composition.

Without meaning to, the compositions were confusing the members as to what I wanted as a bandleader, and while my explanations about the compositions offered some

clarity, it was not enough. The thing that started to bring clarity to the ensemble was the actual playing of the music, particularly live, where everyone started to get a clearer idea of what the ensemble could do, and I was supportive of these developments. As the ensemble developed and the clarity increased, I also had further clarity about how the ensemble worked best, which led to the composing of the Abundant Shores Suite, a piece which I feel better represents the band's natural working style. This theme was also reflected in the interview series, that as bands played together more, the need to talk about musical things decreased. The necessary clarity had already been created because the group language already existed.

What also became clear in the performing and recording of the suite was that the way that I wanted the band to approach my compositions from the start was beginning to happen, namely that the compositions were a guide and an inspiration to improvise, and they did not have to be played a certain way. As we continued playing the suite, there was an increased sense of individual freedom in the playing, moving and changing the composition each time we played it.

It became clear that me simply saying at the beginning of the ensemble that the ensemble is free to interpret the music how it deemed fit was not enough. It was too much information to give all at once. A bandleader can only give their band members information when they are ready for it. As stated in the chapter 4, without realising it, I offered quite a lot of information about how I thought the music could go, and there was a general confusion about what should be happening in the improvising. From my perspective as a leader, the answer was that I wanted us to collectively find out where it could go musically, but in retrospect, this was not enough clarity for a new ensemble. One is reminded of the

Nichiren Buddhists' concept of expedient means.[3] A bandleader needs to give the right amount of information when the musicians are ready to receive it, and if they deliver it too early, it just causes confusion, rather than bringing the required clarity. I needed to let the musicians find their own ways to the amount of freedom I wanted, and I could not adequately express that until they truly felt it themselves.

6.3.1 Cycle of Growth

What my work with Anthropods, particularly the composing of the Abundant Shores Suite, helps to illustrate is that all the methods that develop group language mentioned in chapter 5 (discussion, composition, playing) are flowing into each other. It is not an either/or scenario. When we were rehearsing and performing with Anthropods, the musical feedback I was getting from the playing was going into the composition process and also into discussions within the band, which were then feeding back into the compositions and playing. Everything was happening at the same time, and thus it can be difficult to say exactly what was influencing what else. It is not just one conversation that forms the language of an ensemble, but all different things happening at the same time that affect how bands work together.

Where Anthropods sits, on the more band focused side of the spectrum, this holds perhaps more truth, though it can also be said to be relevant to the bandleader who comes in with a much clearer vision. While one could see it as a clear cause-and-effect relationship,

[3] "The teaching that directly reveals the truth of enlightenment is called the true teaching, while the teachings that are expounded in accordance with the people's capacity and as a temporary means of leading people to the truth are called expedient teachings or provisional teachings" (Gakkai 2006).

where a bandleader is receiving feedback from a band about how they felt something worked, and if the band felt it was not working, the bandleader would change it, this relationship is often more complex. Like most human communication, so much is communicated by things that are not said. The bandleader is responding to how they feel things have landed with an ensemble, which can often be a reaction to what was not said, rather than just what was. They are responding to what conversations about the music keep coming up, how it went on the gig, etc., all these aspects feed back into the way they work. The successful bandleader can synthesise all that is happening in rehearsals, discussions and performances into how they will work going forward. Importantly, nothing is happening in a vacuum, and every element is feeding into everything else.

6.3.2 Influencing Group Language / Closing the Circle

What was clear in the analysis of my working practices with Anthropods is that the way that I was trying to bring the band together was by finding points of convergence between the ensemble. Where there were not obvious points of convergence, I was trying to move my approach closer to the other members of the ensemble.

In the updated republished edition of drummer and improviser John Stevens' landmark book *Search and Reflect*, vocalist and creative lynchpin on the UK improv scene Maggie Nicols, reflects on her early experiences with Stevens. In it, she remarks that John often spoke about "working at the pace of the most vulnerable person in the group…when people feel valued, they gain confidence and give more of themselves. The whole group is strengthened" (Maggie Nicols in Stevens 2007, Memoir two).

What Nicols is referring to here is Stevens running open group improvisation sessions, where, as Nicols states, she felt like she was the most vulnerable person in the group at the beginning. This story has some distinct crossovers with the idea of working with a band on the more collaborative end of the spectrum. In my case, I am working on the level of professional musicians, so one would not necessarily look at one member as more "vulnerable" than any other, because we are discussing musicians who are all experienced. What is however interesting in this case is the process of bringing the people together. It is certainly possible that in a collaborative ensemble, most of the musicians come from a similar musical background, as in Led Bib, but even in a setting like that, as a leader, one is confronted with the gap between one's interests and instincts and those of the rest of the band. As a bandleader, part of the keeping the group together is finding a way to bridge that gap.

In Anthropods, the gap is larger than with Led Bib, the players are coming from a more diverse set of musical backgrounds, rather than five men all studying in the same jazz school around the same time like Led Bib. In the rehearsals, the gap between my approach and Susanna Gartmayer's approach appeared to be the widest. While we were both involved in improvised music, I was coming at it from a jazz perspective and she was much more interested in how the whole structure worked, rather than my jazz understanding of "head – improvising - head again". A lot of the development of this band, and any collaborative ensemble, is finding a way to close the circle, and this closing of the circle starts with narrowing the gap between the person whose approach is the furthest away from yourself as a leader by finding a way to bring your approaches closer together. In the case of the Anthropods project, the composing of the Abundant Shores Suite was an attempt to bridge

this gap. I was finding a way to produce something which still felt like my music but was able to bridge the gap into something which melded together our different approaches.

6.3.3 Impact is Mostly Unconscious

While it was common across the interview series for many of the bandleaders who set up their ensemble on the leader focused end of the spectrum to gradually move towards giving the ensemble more freedom as trust developed, none of those bandleaders reported that they went into a band at the start with a clear idea of how exactly the band needed to improvise, and they were explicit in explaining that. Even in the most leader focused project, the band members and the bandleaders still had to negotiate what exactly the group language was.

What the Anthropods project shows is that the way both leaders and band members understand the boundaries of the group language is as complex as our understanding of human communication is. It can be that one time a band member said they thought a certain thing did not work in rehearsal, or it can be a comment in the pub that the leader said they did not like a certain artist, or a bad feeling in the dressing room after a gig. Our understanding of each unique playing situation is determined by so many factors, and while bandleaders do have control over some of them, they are often not aware of all of the boundaries that have been created in the ensemble.

In Anthropods for example, our discussions about groove, tonality and the relationship between improvisation and composition changed the way I wanted to work with the band, and came to define the language. The experience of our first concert where I

played in a heavier way, reminiscent of my work with Led Bib, was met with some criticism, and this also added to my understanding that the ensemble worked best in a more low-key chamber setting. While it is hard to pinpoint exactly what influenced what, one can infer that from certain moments come certain responses. If you asked the members of Anthropods about what makes up the group language or how it got there, they would likely have a completely different vision of what the sound is, and likely would also have completely different ideas about how their understanding of that sound deepened. Despite the varying perspectives, the group language still is what it is, it just is filtered through all the musicians' original perspectives.

If a musician is playing with an established figure on the scene, like William Parker or Mary Halvorson, they are likely already going in with a preconception of what the language might be, because they are already familiar with the bandleader's work. Likewise, if a musician is going in with a leader that they do not know at all, they have to find different markers to help them understand more deeply what the language can be. The impacts of our understanding of each playing situation are individual, diverse, and too numerous to fully grasp.

6.4 Chapter Conclusion

Combining the data from the interview study and the practice work with Anthropods has shown that the approach that bandleaders take is intrinsically linked to their desired musical output. The amount of preconception about what the band sound should be determines what musicians can be involved in the project, the amount of possible collaboration, and can also determine to some degree the style of relationships within an ensemble.

Bandleaders do not fit into a pre-defined leadership theory, nevertheless transformational leadership and servant leadership offer up useful models to express the difference between the bandleader who needs to inspire a band to fulfil their vision, and a bandleader who wants to inspire a band to find a vision together. However, this research posits that authentic leadership offers up a particularly useful theory for the reluctant leader involved in jazz and improvised music, and that it is through emphasising strengths and being open about weaknesses that bandleaders are learning how they specifically should run an ensemble and develop trust within a band.

While I set Anthropods up to be a collaborative as possible project, I did also set it up with a certain level of distance between myself as the bandleader and the members. This was a choice from my side based on the interviewed bandleaders' experience in the study that by not collaborating on all decisions, the social side, as well as the musical side of the band works better. Through my experience with Anthropods, this was proved to be true, but having this detachment also was another factor in why the band could not form a language completely separate from my influence. Inviting the musicians to collaborate but making it clear that I was making the decisions in the end created a level of hierarchy in the ensemble. This does not mean that the music was not collaborative, but it does mean that the music was made collaboratively within a hierarchical structure of a bandleader with a group of musicians.

Looking at both studies accentuates the complexities involved in the growth of group language. With both bandleaders and members being influenced by so many forces at the same time, it can be difficult to see what caused what. Something which particularly came out of the Anthropods study is that to work collaboratively in the development of group

languages, bandleaders need to try and find common ground within an ensemble. While in some ensembles this may be easy, the more diverse the ensemble is, the more the bandleader has to move towards the other members to find what can work for everyone.

Chapter 7 Conclusion

The research has highlighted the variety of leadership approaches that the jazz and improvised music bandleader takes in the creation of the group language. In doing this, it highlights the importance of the role of the bandleader not in just the day-to-day activities of running an ensemble, but rather in the creation of the group language, the sonic framework that the ensemble inhabits. This conclusion will now continue by providing answers to the original research questions.

7.1 Research Questions

7.1.1 Research Question 1

How do bandleaders in jazz and improvised music practice leadership to support the growth and development of an improvised musical language within an ensemble, and how are these approaches connected to each individual bandleader and their musical output?

Musicians become bandleaders for different reasons than most people in traditional leadership positions. While there are bandleaders who have a natural tendency to want to lead, the overwhelming impetus to becoming a bandleader is that it is the easiest way to get the bandleaders' music out into the public realm. Many of the leaders in this study discussed becoming bandleaders relatively reluctantly, rather than the self-selecting leader present in many other sectors.

The unique nature of the mostly non-self-selecting bandleader, and the collaborative nature of jazz and improvised music, means that leadership is dealt with differently than in traditional settings. The leader's role is often not in telling their musicians what to do, but in finding ways to create a band culture, both socially and musically, to fulfil their musical goals. Rather than doing this through traditional leadership methods, bandleaders find personal authentic approaches, utilising their strengths and weaknesses, to create social environments ripe for the development of group language within their ensembles. Their role is to define the group language of an ensemble before performing, enabling the band to dissolve the hierarchical bandleader/bandmember relationship in the moment of playing.

This research has shown through both the interview series and the artistic work with Anthropods that the methods of musical leadership, while specific to each bandleader and ensemble, exist within a spectrum of leadership behaviours related to the desired output of the bandleader. The bandleader's desired output and level of collaboration affects the number of different musicians available for an ensemble. If the bandleader begins a project with a relatively preconceived vision of what the group language should be, they are limited to players who have knowledge of the idioms and ways of working inherent in that preconceived group language. A bandleader with a more open concept that will be developed within the ensemble has a wider choice of available musicians to work with.

A band with a very specific bandleader-led vision often has a different approach to rehearsal, performance and writing scores, as well as a different style of relationship within the ensemble. The bandleader adopts a more professional attitude, keeping rehearsals on task, paying musicians properly, making scores clear, etc. The bandleader's role, alongside the creation of music itself, is finding musicians who want to play their music, inspiring those

musicians with their vision, and enabling them to express themselves within that vision. This research ties this role loosely to transformational leadership because the bandleader's main role is reaching the "goal" of realising their vision for the ensemble, and their leadership needs to facilitate this.

On the other side of this leadership spectrum are bands with a more collaborative approach. These bands, while still somewhat a product of a bandleader's imagination, are formed much more out of the languages of the individual musicians involved. Often the scores give less information, and the relationships are on a more equal level, rather than a boss/subordinate level. This research ties this leadership approach loosely with servant leadership, a leadership theory where the leader is focused on the followers and bringing out their individual characteristics.

As is displayed throughout this research, the specific bandleaders often pick and choose elements from this spectrum of approaches that fit their particular personalities, the level of collaboration in the ensemble, as well as the musicians involved. For example, a bandleader could have a very specific musical vision, putting them on the leader focused side of the spectrum, but only likes working with close friends, or likewise any manner of permutations. There are no specific rules of how it should be done but this illustrates the general trend of bandleader working styles related to their output.

Across the entire spectrum of approaches, what was consistent is that bandleaders need to create clarity. The bandleader can create clarity that there are no rules, or they can create clarity that there are quite specific parameters that the ensemble works within. The means for creating this clarity are personal, related to the output, and both conscious and unconscious. As shown through the study with Anthropods, a bandleader just telling the

musicians they have the freedom to play what they want in the moment does not on its own create freedom within an ensemble. The bandleader needs to express that through their playing, through their reactions to the music, and through their social relationships within the ensemble. Every interaction between the bandleader and the band members can help to build the trusting relationship required for the ensemble to understand and trust what the bandleader is saying.

This study has shown that the way the bandleaders talk about and critique the music played by the ensemble affects the ensemble's understanding of the group language, well beyond the moment of playing a specific composition. Even minor comments in passing can go on to form cornerstones of how the musicians understand the way a specific ensemble works together. The interviews showed that the way the bandleader expresses their pleasure or displeasure with what is happening in the music, or whether they express anything at all, is specific to them. This individuality in approach is important because each bandleader needs to express things authentically to their musicians to gain the aforementioned trust that they truly mean what they say.

The interview series showed that for many bandleaders the trust in their musicians developed over time, and as time went on they were able to let the band make the sound that it wanted to make. The creative practice work showed however that there is more to this than just trust, sometimes a bandleader needs to give information one piece at a time, and only when the musicians are ready for it. If a bandleader turns up with a new piece to a new band and says, we can do whatever we want with this music, although that may be true in the bandleader’s mind, it would be too much information for a less established band. It

was only after four years of working with Anthropods that they were able to take on that the music could be anything in the moment of performing, as I had originally envisaged.

The consensus through both the interviews and the practice work is that once the sound of the ensemble is more or less developed, the bandleader does not need to offer much further input, and the band begins to run itself. These early conversations and working practices help to define the group language, and thus, there is not a huge amount of further discussion needed.

7.1.2 Research Question 2

Do bandleaders who have a more collaborative ensemble form a group language truly as a collective, and if so, how is this achieved from a leadership perspective?

This question was answered through creative practice with the Anthropods project. This research has shown that the answer is dependent somewhat on the specific bandleader and musicians involved, but in the context of this case study, the answer is no.

What this research uncovered is that the influence from a bandleader on an ensemble is not always overt. In the case of Anthropods, I brought the music with the hope of developing an ensemble sound within the band with little influence from me. However, my influence on the ensemble, through my compositions, through things I said, the environment socially, and through my own playing impacted the direction that the ensemble took in clear ways, as well as ways that are not so easily quantified. Even though I aimed for the project to be fully collaborative, the members had in the back of their minds that it is at least to some extent my vision as a bandleader, thus they naturally deferred to me on some

musical decisions. This research showed however that the group language development was not just being delivered from the leader to the members, but was influenced by everything that was happening in the ensemble. As a leader, I was being influenced by conversations in the band and how the playing was going, and this was feeding back into the composition process. Just like in the moment of improvising, everything happens at the same time, and it is not clear what is influencing what.

Although the language was not created completely collaboratively, there is still a marked difference between the approach I took with Anthropods and in what this research describes as a leader focused project. While I undoubtedly had an impact on the music that Anthropods produced, the overall sound world is something that comes from that group of five musicians. One only needs to hear the difference between Led Bib and Anthropods to see that while I have not changed so much as a player or as a composer, the sound world of the two bands, while sharing a few characteristics, is overall very different.

While the project may not have been fully collaborative, working with Anthropods revealed methods for developing group language within a more collaborative ensemble. This research revealed that on the band focused side of the spectrum, which Anthropods sits on, the leader needs to close the circle between themselves and the members, finding ways to bring the ensemble together musically by finding shared language between the ensemble. This research also showed that in order to fully collaborate on the music, it can take an ensemble time to develop the trust that this is what the bandleader really wants. By having an ensemble with a bandleader/bandmember hierarchy, particularly in the beginning, it is self-evident that the members will sometimes defer to the bandleader to see if what they

are doing is what the bandleader wants, but as time goes on and trust develops, the ensemble feels more able to work on things collaboratively.

While further research with different bandleaders founding new bands would be necessary to evaluate different approaches to this, through this research, it seems unlikely that a bandleader, because of the hierarchy created through having a leader, would be able to have an equal influence as the rest of the ensemble by their sheer presence as the bandleader.

7.1.3 Research Question 3

What do the bandleaders report as methods for dealing with the negative aspects of improvising within an established band language?

This question was answered through the interview series, highlighting the bandleaders' different approaches to working with an ensemble with an established language. From an artistic perspective, this question is perhaps what drove me towards this research more than anything else. Having run Led Bib for more than twenty years, I was feeling somewhat limited by the defined language that the band improvised within, and I wondered if it was possible to find ways to manage what I saw as the negative aspects of having a defined language.

This research showed that while the core of the group language in a long-term ensemble may stay largely the same, all the bandleaders were looking for ways to enact the spontaneity of the initial improvised musical meeting, where the musicians genuinely do not know what might happen because they have never played together before. The bandleaders

found different ways to encourage each performance not to fall back upon the band's established language, maintaining the energy and spontaneity of those first musical meetings.

Despite that, the bandleaders recognised that there were possible negative repercussions of having an established language, and different bandleaders offered up different solutions. Some bandleaders embraced the idea of a group language and saw their role as not trying to radically change the language, but rather attempting to keep it dynamic, challenging the players to work at the edges of what they do. The bandleader who worked in this way often had more than one ensemble, so if they wanted to improvise differently, they could work with one of their other bands, negating the feeling of limitation created by working with only one ensemble.

Other bandleaders took a different approach, not that they do not embrace the group language, but that when they feel that the band has reached its peak with the language it is working with, or they just have a desire to do something different, they switch players. This is a practice that has been used throughout jazz history, when a bandleader is looking for a new sound, instead of radically altering their approach, they change the soundworld of the players around them.

Some other bandleaders see the band as something else, as an extension of their own personal language. It becomes a comfortable place for the bandleader to work because they have developed the necessary trust within the ensemble. While that bandleader may or may not feel limited somewhat by the language within the ensemble, they embrace the band as an extension of themselves as artists. Any possible limitations are negated by the

level of trust developed within the ensemble, and the outcomes of having that trust on both the social and musical environment.

7.2 Impacts on Research into Leadership

As shown in this research, the role of a leader in a jazz and improvised music ensemble is far beyond just making the arrangements and counting off the tunes. The leaders in these ensembles are consciously and unconsciously setting the boundaries, as well as giving permission, for what can happen at any moment in the music.

The bandleader reflects on what is happening within the ensemble and develops the ensemble from these reflections. This research offers a different way to think about leadership, not through day-to-day tasks, but rather by setting out the models for others to follow. Leadership is so often understood by both experts as well as by lay people as a leader telling other people what to do. Jazz, by its nature of being a collaborative improvised music, has always been an interesting focal point for leadership researchers. Jazz is a music where the bandleaders are trying to move away from telling their musicians what to do, and rather allowing them to decide in the moment what is right, offering a different perspective on the leadership role.

In the moment of playing, like much of the previous research has stated, there often is no leader at all, or a shared leadership amongst the band. This is as true in contemporary jazz and improvised music as it was in the bebop era. This research has shown that the crucial role of the leader in jazz and improvised music in the current scene is not in the

moment of playing, but rather in creating the musical and social structures that the band works within.

When we start to look at leadership in jazz as the creation of language and the creation of the rules, not through dictating the rules on a stone tablet, or even knowing the rules as bandleaders, our understanding of what jazz leadership is changes. Great leadership in jazz and improvised music is about being the leader who is not following a worn path, but rather creating a new musical paradigm that the ensemble lives within. This concept can be spread out to leadership in the wider world, showing that truly great leaders are creating the boundaries for collaboration rather than copying leaders of the past. If we look at leaders differently and see the real leaders as the people whose goal is to set their followers free, we could have a whole new understanding of who the true leaders are and new insights into leadership studies.

7.3 Impacts on Research into Improvisation / Group Language

Group language constitutes a set of boundaries and permissions, and this research helps to illustrate how these develop, and the bandleader's role in their development. Rather than looking at why musicians are making choices in each moment, like much of the previous research, this research zooms out and examines how musicians are making choices more broadly based on the ensembles that they are working within. This offers a new perspective on what musicians are bringing to each improvisational setting, and reflects on how the social settings in an ensemble are impacting musicians' understanding of each ensemble's group language.

This research shines a specific light on improvisation within the realm of partially composed music. While many of the ensembles working within this research are utilising free improvisation within their work, the improvisations are often within the character of the compositions. This offers a different perspective on improvisation than much of the previous research, because the free improvisations are coloured not just by the group language and choices in the moment, but by the compositional framework that the improvisations are happening within.

As much of the previous research into improvisation has been focused on ensembles where musicians are improvising freely without a leader, this research offers a unique perspective by looking at bandleader-led ensembles. This provides a new viewpoint allowing the research to examine how musicians' understanding of group language is not just about what the bandleader says should happen, but also about their perceived understanding of what they think the bandleader wants to hear. In any improvised setting, part of what is driving each musician is what they think fits with the music and players around them, but in a bandleader-led ensemble, as shown by this research, there is another layer of thought about how the improvisation is perceived to fit within the leader's vision.

In the current jazz and improvised music scene, one inhabited by many long-standing bands, this research adds new knowledge to the understanding of how musicians are making choices in improvised music based on their knowledge of the language of each ensemble. This is particularly relevant to the ways that bands in jazz and improvised music are working today, where many bands are using free improvisation, but working well beyond the non-idiomatic improvisation often associated with that word.

7.4 Further Research

This research offers several pathways for further research. With the research of these ten bandleaders already taken from the bandleader's perspective, there could be a wealth of further information to gather from speaking to the members of these ensembles. This could involve examining how the member's view of the ensemble, its language and the bandleaders' style of working differs from the bandleaders, and how even though everyone in the ensemble is aware of a language within an ensemble, how much their individual definitions of it differ.

Another path is diving deeper into the understanding of group language, particularly into the understanding of how musicians understand the group language in the moment of playing. While there have been studies with musicians reflecting on why they made choices in the moment of improvising, this could take a wider approach and look at why they make certain choices in an ensemble more broadly, examining how the group language helps to define the personal language that they bring to each playing situation. This is something which this research touched on, but which could form a PhD thesis all on its own.

Another avenue of further research would be exploring the difference between the process of the forming of group language between a leader-led ensemble and a collaborative ensemble. Looking at how the give and take of closing the circle works in an ensemble without someone to decide how that process should be completed, and without the need to marry the vision of a leader and their musicians. This idea of closing the circle is easy to see from a bandleader's perspective, as the bandleader is the one who is moving towards the ensemble. The roles in a collaborative ensemble are however different, and a further understanding of this phenomenon without a leader would prove particularly

interesting. Another study could use a practice-based approach from a musician who is both a bandleader of one ensemble and a member of a collaborative ensemble. The research could then examine the perspective of a leader against the perspective of the same musician working collaboratively, or likewise a similar study with an outside researcher looking at both a leader-led and collaborative ensemble.

What this research has shown is that by combining creative practice research with traditional research methods, one can arrive at results that would not be possible with either method on its own. I hope that this thesis can encourage other practitioners that connecting with academic research need not be stifling of their creativity, but rather it can offer new insights into their practice as artists while also offering new perspectives within academia.

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APPENDIX A – Interview Questions

Interview Questions

Pre interview question – Can you pick one song(or a few) from the band's recorded history that either you felt at the time, or in retrospect reflects the band's 'sound'?

Bandleading style:

What is your general approach to bringing new music to an ensemble(i.e. completed scores, learning by ear, etc etc)

How do you decide that you have found the right people for the band?

As a bandleader, does you express your preconceptions of how you feel the improvisation should work within certain compositions, and if so, how do you express that?

What approach do you take as a bandleader to help the band members find their own voice within the ensemble? Are you flexible when a composition is played very different from how you imagined it, or an improvisation takes a very different path than you envisaged? What is your approach when people say they "don't know what to play', or need further direction?

Do you make efforts to foster an environment socially, that makes people comfortable to express themselves musically and in talking about the music? How?

How important is it to express your opinions about how a concert/rehearsal/recording went? Do you consider hiding your opinions to some degree when they are negative in order to boost band morale(particularly on 2 set gigs, and recording sessions)?

Can you think of any occasions when bandmates have come up with an idea that you don't naturally agree with? If your bandmates have come up with an idea that you don't naturally agree with, how much would trust the group to make decisions that contradict your original intentions?

Reflections on the band:

Is this project something which you can sub out musicians, or do you see the ensemble as something which is only fully realised when it is the collection of musicians which you have selected?

Do you feel the ensemble sound is something which is 'your vision', or at least a collective version of 'your vision', or is the ensemble sound a group vision with you as the leader? Elaborate….

Why do you think you became a bandleader? What strength and weaknesses do you think you have in terms of leadership and the practical realties of running a band?

What do you think are the advantages/disadvantages of having a bandleader vs working in a collective project?

What do you see as your role in being a bandleader?

Practical realties of running a band:

Does the reality that the musicians need to eat and pay their bills affect the way that you work? Are you aware of trying to keep the musicians busy with decently paid work?

Is it important to you that gigs have good conditions on the road?(Food, hotels, etc). Do you think this has an impact on the overall success of tours and concerts?

What is the right balance of keeping the band involved in decisions(more of a logistical nature) and making them yourself?

What sort of professionalism do you expect from your ensemble and do you make any efforts to enforce it?

How important do you see the role of finding an audience for the music? Do you see this as important to the overall morale of the band?

Would you stick with an ensemble longer than perhaps feels right out of a feeling that it's easier to work with an established band(both in a social and economic sense)? As in, when an ensemble already has a relatively fixed improvisational language, would you find it easier to just work with a different ensemble to try to change things, rather than try to do something with your existing ensemble?

When the band is going through a tough patch(difficult tours, no gigs, bad gigs, etc), what efforts do you make if any to keep up morale?

How do you show the musicians that you value what they do?

What is the most important part about the development of an ensemble, the rehearsal, the concerts or the post gig hangs?

APPENDIX B – University of Edinburgh Ethics

Approval

Jisc Online surveys

28/1/2022

PGR Self Audit Checklist for Ethical Purposes - 2020/21

Response ID	Start date	Completion date	
193399-193392-85764455	8 Nov 2021, 10:18 (GMT)	8 Nov 2021, 10:56 (GMT)	

1	Student name	Mark Holub
2	Universal username (UUN)	s1982790
3	Programme name	PhD Creative Music Practice
4	Title of Project	Leadership in Contemporary Improvised Music
5	Project Supervisor / Tutor	Dr. Nikki Moran
6	Funding Body (if applicable)	None
7	Are there any issues of confidentiality which are not adequately handled by the normal tenets of ethical academic research?	Yes
8	Are there issues of data handling, management and consent which are not adequately dealt with and compliant with academic procedures?	
9	Are there any special moral issues/conflicts of interest?	
10	Is there a potential for harm or stress for those involved in your research?	
11	Is there a potential for physical harm or stress for those involved in your research?	
12	Is there a potential for risk to the researcher?	

APPENDIX C – Participant Information Sheet – Interview Series

Participant Information Sheet

Project title:	Leadership in Improvised Music
Principal investigator:	Dr. Nikki Moran
Researcher collecting data:	Mark Holub
Funder (if applicable):	

This study was certified according to the Informatics Research Ethics Process, RT number (193399-193392-85764455) Please take time to read the following information carefully. You should keep this page for your records.

Who are the researchers?

Supervisors: Dr. Nikki Moran, Professor Raymond MacDonald

What is the purpose of the study?

Looking at how a bandleader facilitates the creation of a group language in collaborative improvised music settings. Examining how the bandleader's methods of working with an ensemble help or hinder the growth of an ensemble's sound world and what the skills and attributes of leadership are, that a bandleader should possess to enable an ensembles growth.

Why have I been asked to take part?

Leading bandleaders of longstanding ensembles working in jazz and improvised music have been asked to take part, in order to get an overview of practices and outcomes across different ensembles.

Do I have to take part?

No – participation in this study is entirely up to you. You can withdraw from the study at any time, up until PhD submission without giving a reason. After this point, personal data will be deleted and anonymised data will be combined such that it is impossible to remove individual information from the analysis. Your rights will not be affected. If you wish to withdraw, contact the PI. We will keep copies of your original consent, and of your withdrawal request.

What will happen if I decide to take part?

You will be asked before the interview to select one or two performances of the ensemble that feel most representative of the birth of the 'group sound' of the ensemble. You will be interviewed for approximately one hour. During the interview, Mark will ask you questions about your role as bandleader both on a social level and in relation to the musical output. The interviews will be recorded and transcribed, but the audio and transcription will be securely stored and not published, only selected answers will appear in the final submission and where applicable may feature alongside selected publicly available musical examples. Before the final submission, you will be sent the paper and offered a chance to comment or withdraw any quotes/music that are from you.

Are there any risks associated with taking part?

There are no significant risks associated with participation.

Are there any benefits associated with taking part?

Aside from getting to spend an hour chatting to Mark, no.

What will happen to the results of this study?

The results of this study may be summarised in published articles, reports and presentations. Quotes or key findings will not be anonymized. The full interview transcripts and audio/video files will be deleted after the PhD submission and acceptance.

Data protection and confidentiality.

Your data will be processed in accordance with Data Protection Law. All information collected about you will be kept strictly confidential. Your data will only be viewed by the researcher/research team (Mark Holub, Dr. Nikki Moran, Professor Raymond MacDonald)

All electronic data will be stored on a password-protected encrypted computer, on the School of Informatics' secure file servers, or on the University's secure encrypted cloud storage services (DataShare, ownCloud, or Sharepoint) and all paper records

will be stored in a locked filing cabinet in the PI's office. Your consent information will be kept separately from your responses in order to minimise risk.

What are my data protection rights?

The University of Edinburgh is a Data Controller for the information you provide .You have the right to access information held about you. Your right of access can be exercised in accordance Data Protection Law. You also have other rights including rights of correction, erasure and objection. For more details, including the right to lodge a complaint with the Information Commissioner's Office, please visit www.ico.org.uk. Questions, comments and requests about your personal data can also be sent to the University Data Protection Officer at dpo@ed.ac.uk.

Who can I contact?

If you have any further questions about the study, please contact the lead researcher, Mark Holub,

If you wish to make a complaint about the study, please contact inf-ethics@inf.ed.ac.uk. When you contact us, please provide the study title and detail the nature of your complaint.

Updated information.

If the research project changes in any way, an updated Participant Information Sheet will be made available on http://web.inf.ed.ac.uk/infweb/research/study-updates.

Alternative formats.

To request this document in an alternative format, such as large print or on coloured paper, please contact Mark Holub, M.S.Holub@sms.ed.ac.uk

General information.

For general information about how we use your data, go to: edin.ac/privacy-research

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APPENDIX D – Participant Information Sheet – Anthropods

Participant Information Sheet

Project title:	Leadership in Improvised Music
Principal investigator:	Dr. Nikki Moran, Professor Raymond MacDonald
Researcher collecting data:	Mark Holub

This study was certified according to the Informatics Research Ethics Process, reference number (193399-193392-85764455). Please take time to read the following information carefully. You should keep this page for your records.

Who are the researchers?

Supervisors: Dr. Nikki Moran, Professor Raymond MacDonald
Student: Mark Holub

What is the purpose of the study?

Looking at how a bandleader facilitates the creation of a group language in collaborative improvised music settings. Examining how the bandleader's methods of working with an ensemble help or hinder the growth of an ensemble's sound world and what the skills and attributes of leadership are, that a bandleader should possess to enable an ensembles growth.

Why have I been asked to take part?

The Anthropods band project will feature as some of the creative practice element of Mark Holub's research, specifically looking at the forming of a group improvising language.

Do I have to take part?

No – participation in this study is entirely up to you. You can withdraw from the study at any time, up until PhD submission without giving a reason. After this point, personal data will be deleted and anonymised data will be combined such that it is impossible to remove individual information from the analysis. Your rights will not be affected. If you wish to withdraw, contact the PI. We will keep copies of your original consent, and of your withdrawal request.

What will happen if I decide to take part?

The rehearsals and performances of Anthropods will be recorded and analysed for possible inclusion in the final PhD submission. This could include commercially available recordings as well as rehearsal/concert performances.

Are there any risks associated with taking part?

There are no significant risks associated with participation.

Are there any benefits associated with taking part?

Aside from listening to Mark bore on about the study as well as countless rehearsals, no.

What will happen to the results of this study?

The results of this study may be summarised in published articles, reports and presentations. Quotes or key findings will not be anonymized. And audio/video files included in the submission will remain accessible beyond the PhD submission and acceptance. Any recordings not used will be deleted following the PhD submission.

Data protection and confidentiality.

Your data will be processed in accordance with Data Protection Law. All information collected about you will be kept strictly confidential. Your data will only be viewed by the researcher/research team (Mark Holub, Dr. Nikki Moran, Professor Raymond MacDonald)

All electronic data will be stored on a password-protected encrypted computer, on the School of Informatics' secure file servers, or on the University's secure encrypted will be stored in a locked filing cabinet in the PI's office. Your consent information will be kept separately from your responses in order to minimise risk.

What are my data protection rights?

The University of Edinburgh is a Data Controller for the information you provide .You have the right to access information held about you. Your right of access can be exercised in accordance Data Protection Law. You also have other rights including rights of correction, erasure and objection. For more details, including the right to

lodge a complaint with the Information Commissioner's Office, please visit www.ico.org.uk. Questions, comments and requests about your personal data can also be sent to the University Data Protection Officer at dpo@ed.ac.uk.

Who can I contact?

If you have any further questions about the study, please contact the lead researcher, Mark Holub, M.S.Holub@sms.ed.ac.uk

If you wish to make a complaint about the study, please contact inf-ethics@inf.ed.ac.uk. When you contact us, please provide the study title and detail the nature of your complaint.

Updated information.

If the research project changes in any way, an updated Participant Information Sheet will be made available on http://web.inf.ed.ac.uk/infweb/research/study-updates.

Alternative formats.

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General information.

For general information about how we use your data, go to: edin.ac/privacy-research

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APPENDIX E – Participant Consent Form

Participant number:_____

Participant Consent Form

Project title:	Leadership in Improvised Music
Principal investigator (PI):	Dr. Nikki Moran(Supervisor)
Researcher:	Mark Holub
PI contact details:	, M.S.holub@sms.ed.ac.uk

By participating in the study you agree that:

- I have read and understood the Participant Information Sheet for the above study, that I have had the opportunity to ask questions, and that any questions I had were answered to my satisfaction.
- My participation is voluntary, and that I can withdraw at any time without giving a reason. Withdrawing will not affect any of my rights.
- I consent to my non-anonymised data being used in academic publications and presentations.
- I understand that my non-anonymised data will be stored for the duration outlined in the Participant Information Sheet.

Please tick yes or no for each of these statements.

1.	I agree to being audio recorded.	☐ **Yes**	☐ **No**
2.	I agree to being video recorded.	☐ **Yes**	☐ **No**
3.	I allow my data to be used in future ethically approved research.	☐ **Yes**	☐ **No**
4.	I agree to take part in this study.	☐ **Yes**	☐ **No**

Name of person giving consent	Date dd/mm/yy	Signature

Name of person taking consent	Date dd/mm/yy	Signature

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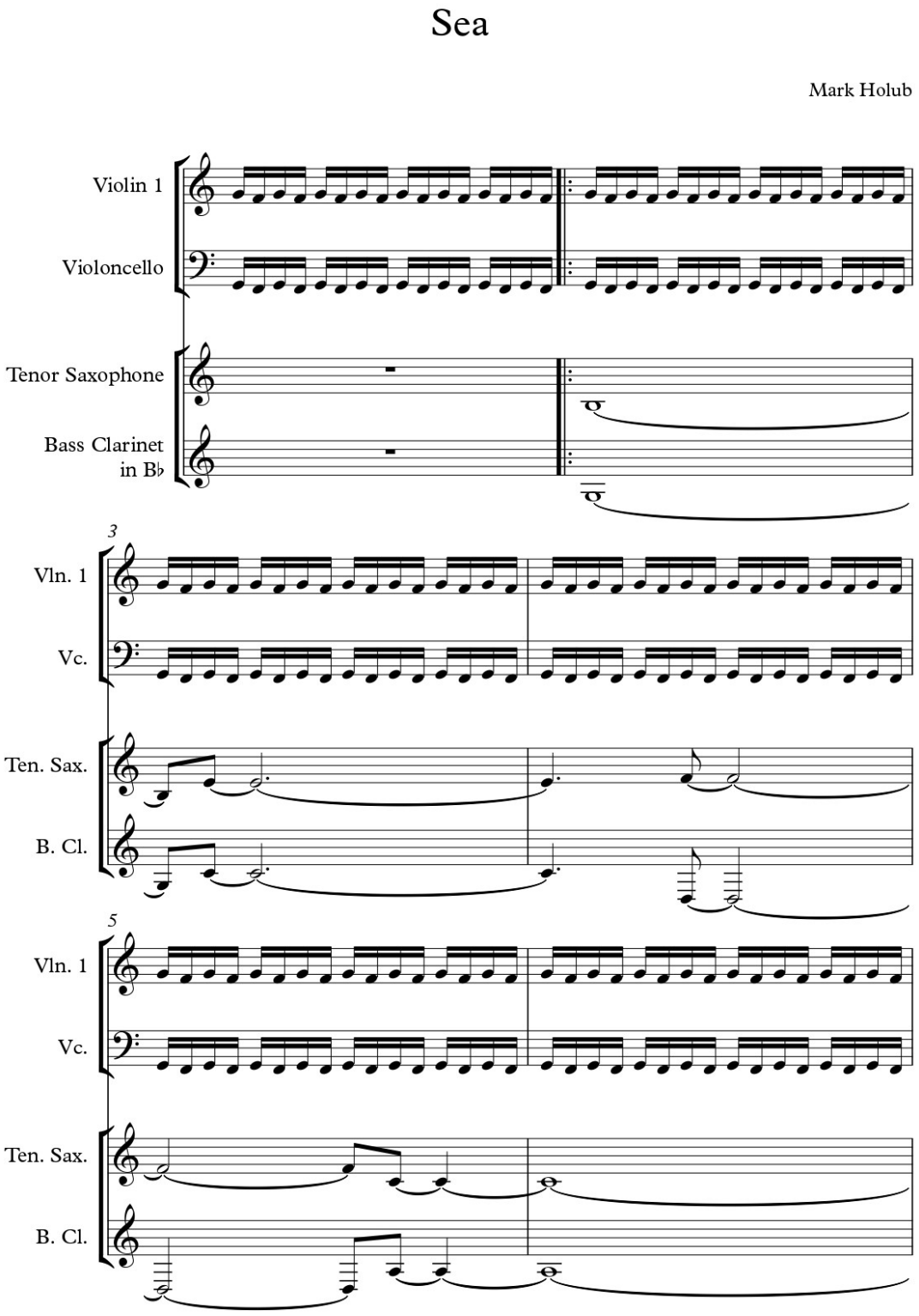
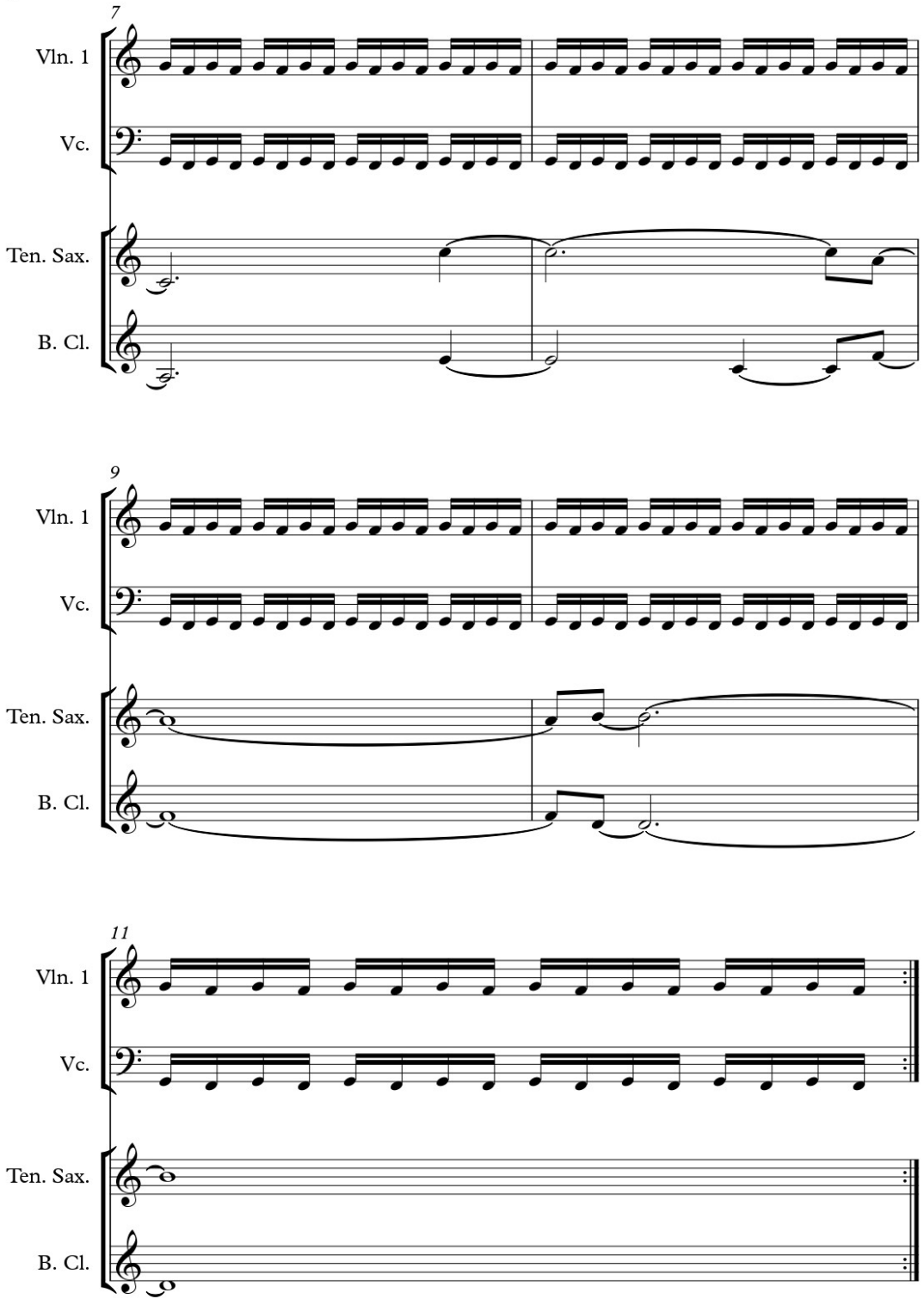
APPENDIX F – Experiential Themes

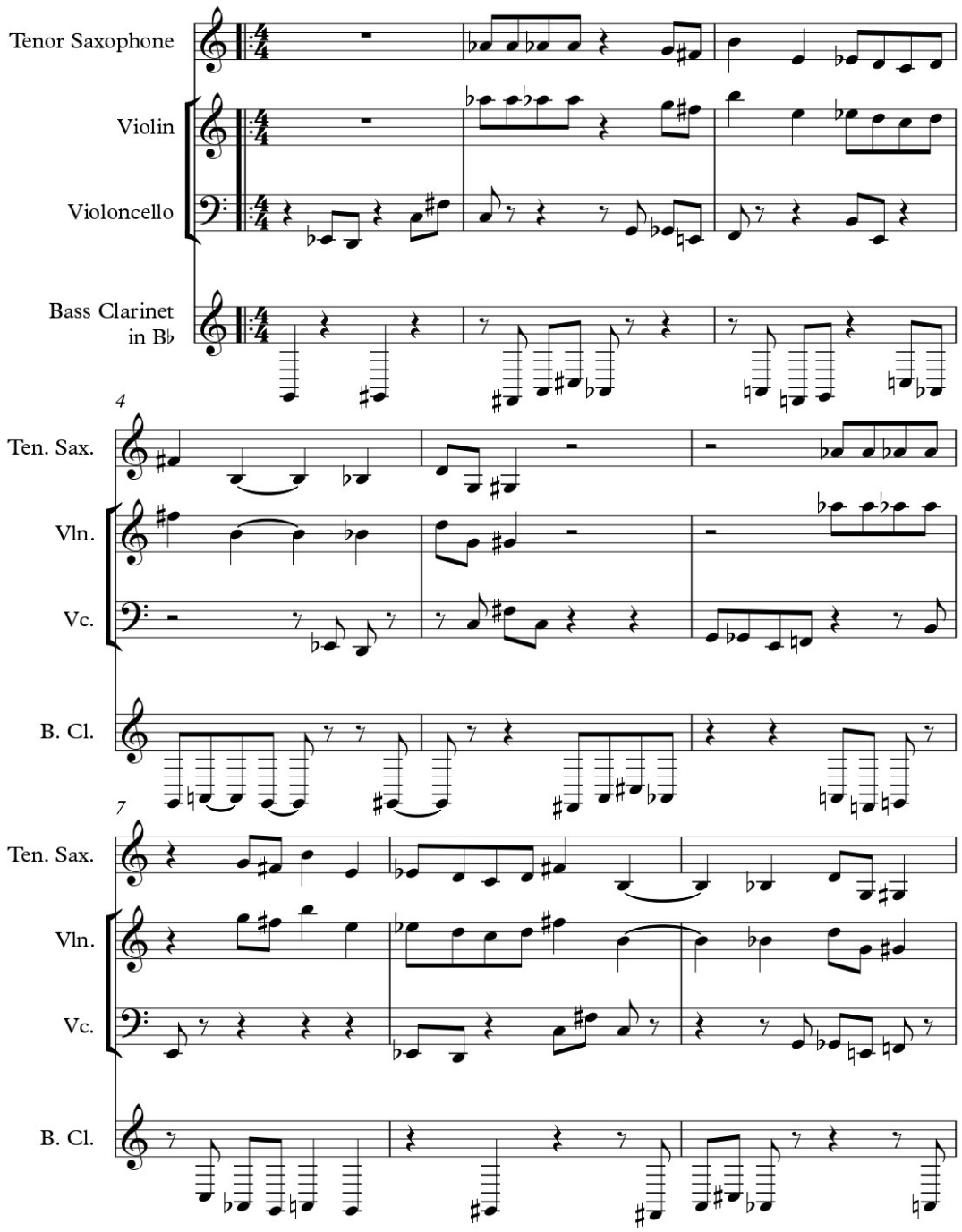
APPENDIX G – Anthropods Scores

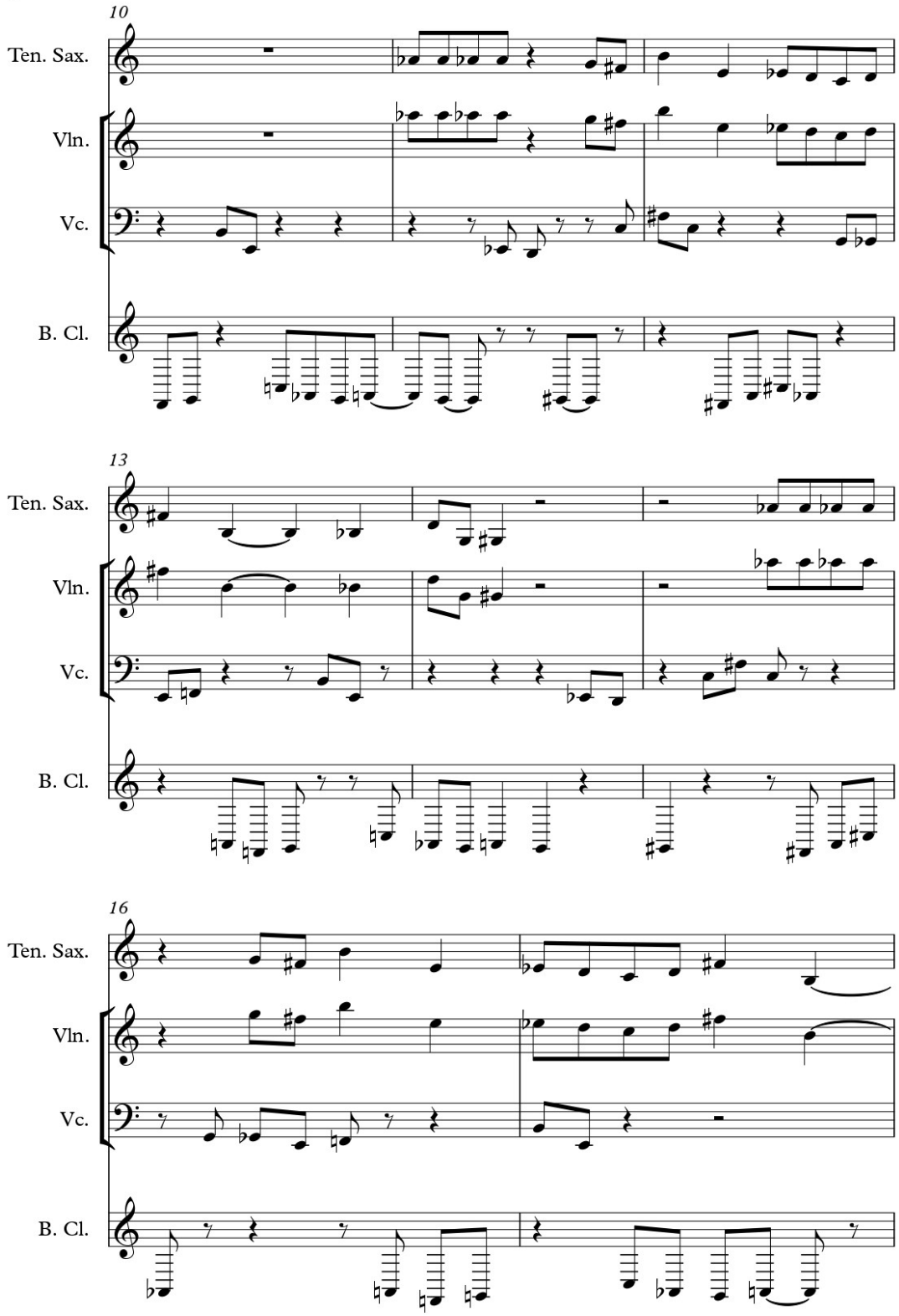



7
Vln. 1
Vc.
Ten. Sax.
B. Cl.
9
Vln. 1
Vc.
Ten. Sax.
B. Cl.
11
Vln. 1
Vc.
Ten. Sax.
B. Cl.

One Way

Mark Holub

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Vln.
Vc.
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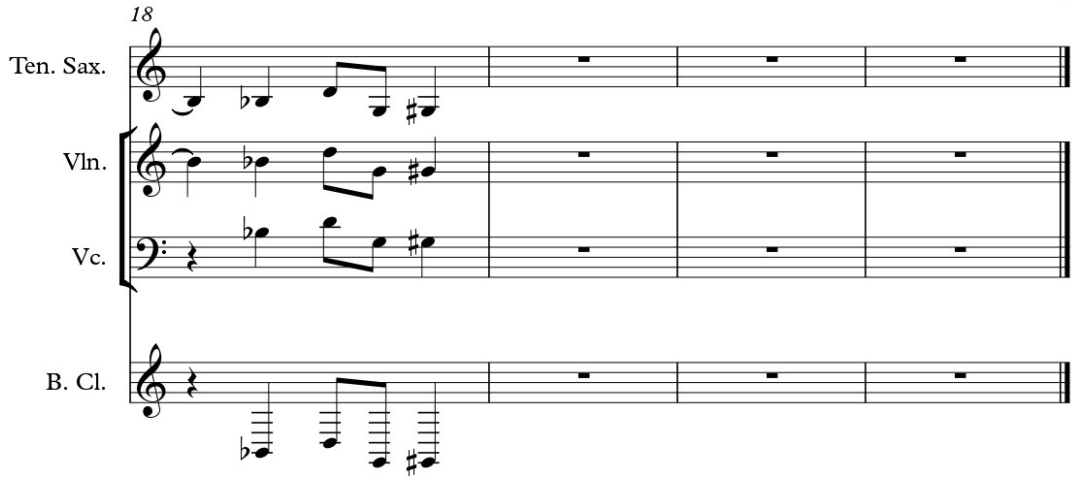
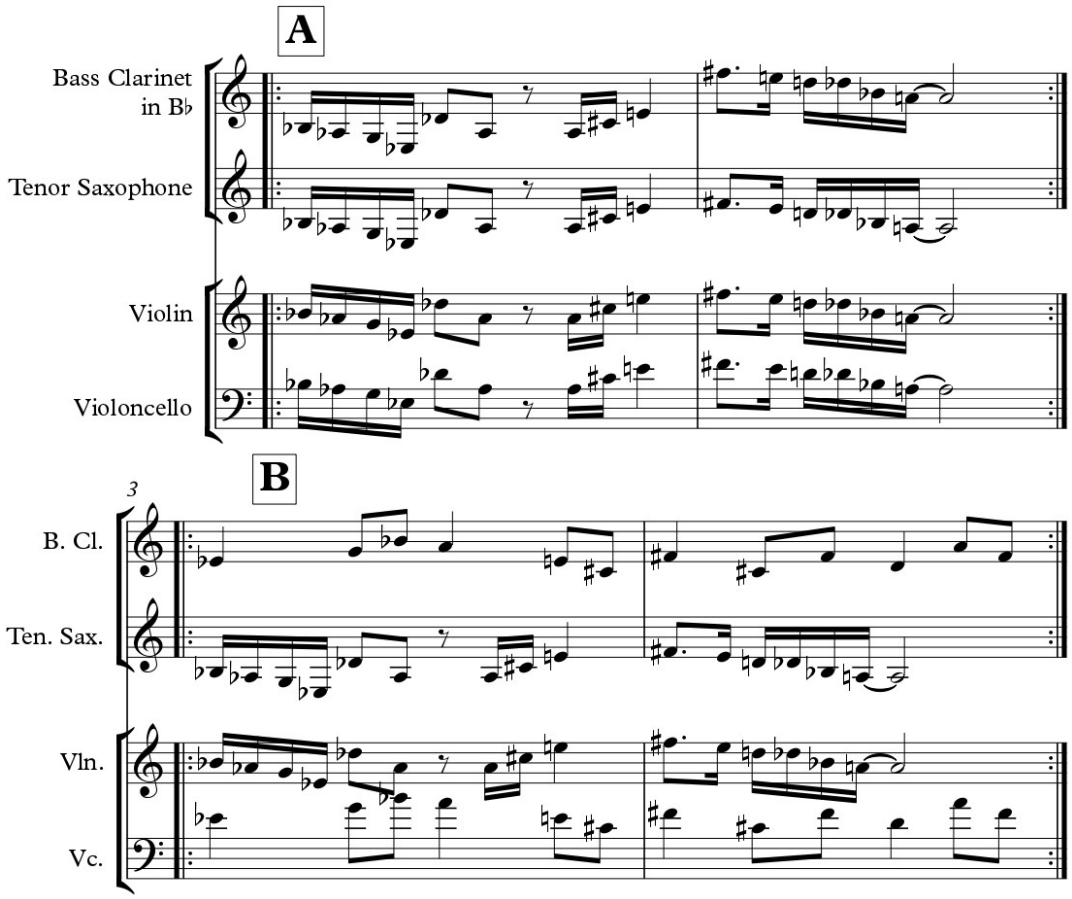
Vc.
B. Cl.


18
Ten. Sax.
Vln.
Vc.
B. Cl.

Lunges

Mark Holub



Home

Mark Holub