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The Development of Bob Brookmeyer's Compositional Style: A Comparative Study of Six Works for Jazz Ensemble

Ryan Patrick Middagh

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THE DEVELOPMENT OF BOB BROOKMEYER’S COMPOSITIONAL STYLE: 
A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF SIX WORKS FOR JAZZ ENSEMBLE

A Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment 
of the Requirements for the Degree of 
Doctor of Arts

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College of Performing and Visual Arts
School of Music
Jazz Studies

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This Dissertation by: Ryan Middagh

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has been approved as meeting the requirement for the Degree of Doctor of Arts in College of Visual and Performing Arts in School of Music, Program of Jazz Studies.

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ABSTRACT


This study examines six pieces for large jazz ensemble written by Bob Brookmeyer in order to trace his compositional development over time. My analyses of melody, rhythm, form, structure, voicings, harmony, and orchestration illustrate how Brookmeyer’s compositions fell into three distinct periods: early, middle, and late. In Brookmeyer's early period, his compositions exhibit a strong influence from the Count Basie band, conventional chord progressions, and eight- or twelve-measure phrases. His middle period compositions are defined by harmonic extremes and the use of indeterminacy, whereas he returned to simpler harmonies and added greater weight to counterpoint in his late period. Findings provide insight into Brookmeyer’s compositional style and add to the understanding and proliferation of his music and legacy.
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CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

Born in Kansas City, Missouri, Bob Brookmeyer started arranging at an early age, and became a professional arranger and copyist at the age of fourteen while playing in local dance bands. Early on, he was inspired by the Count Basie Orchestra, which Brookmeyer heard for the first time in 1941. In a 2006 *New York Times* interview, Brookmeyer reflected on the experience, saying, “I melted…It was the first time I felt good in my life.” Later, Brookmeyer attended the Kansas City Conservatory (which joined the University of Kansas City in 1959 and is now the University of Missouri-Kansas City Conservatory of Music and Dance) and studied composition and piano. In 1951, Brookmeyer joined the Tex Beneke band playing piano, touring with the group until 1952 when he left the band to begin a free-lance career. During Brookmeyer’s early professional life, he played trombone, composed, and arranged for Woody Herman, the Terry Gibbs Orchestra, the Gerry Mulligan Concert Jazz Band, and the Maynard Ferguson Orchestra, and led his own groups. His early compositions exhibit a strong influence from the Basie band, conventional chord progressions, and eight- or twelve-measure phrases.

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In 1965, Brookmeyer became a founding member of the Thad Jones / Mel Lewis Orchestra, and played trombone with and wrote for the group until 1968. When Thad Jones left in 1978, it became known as Mel Lewis and the Jazz Orchestra, and Brookmeyer rejoined as the music director in 1979. His compositions and arrangements during this time are marked by experimentation, the use of indeterminacy, and a growing influence from classical composition techniques. Brookmeyer remarked:

Writing and arranging for Thad’s band had forced me into a new kind of language. In that band, you were tacitly invited to be more than you could be, to try new things. And I did.³

During the decade-long gap in Brookmeyer’s tenancy with the Thad Jones / Mel Lewis Orchestra (later Mel Lewis and the Jazz Orchestra), he worked as a studio musician in Los Angeles, and struggled with a drinking problem that resulted in two rehabilitations.⁴ He did little composing during this period. After becoming sober, Brookmeyer returned to New York in 1978 and began studying with the modern classical composer Earle Brown. This coincided with the peak of his interest in twentieth-century concert music.

Through his studies of twentieth-century concert music, Brookmeyer developed a compositional philosophy according to which the improvised solo became secondary to the jazz ensemble composition:

My first rule became: The first solo only happens when absolutely nothing else can happen. You don’t write in a solo until you’ve completely exhausted what you have to say. If you give a soloist an open solo for 30 seconds, he plays like he’s


⁴ Wayne Enstice and Paul Rubin, Jazz Spoken Here: Conversations with Twenty-Two Musicians (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1992), 63.
coming from the piece that you wrote. Then he says, “What the hell was that piece that I was playing from?” And the next 30 seconds is, “Oh, I guess I'll play what I learned last night.” And bang! Minute 2 is whoever he likes, which is probably Coltrane. I never think about a soloist when I'm writing a piece. I just think about the piece and say, O.K., maybe it would be a good place to have a little release. Keep your hand on the soloist, somehow, with long tones, chords, punches. Keep your hand on him, because he needs it.5

As Brookmeyer’s continued experimenting with the twentieth-century techniques and his compositional style developed, he did not see the Mel Lewis Orchestra as a good fit for his music.

I finally told Mel, “I think I’ve written myself out of the band. I think I have to go work for classical people.” So I left the band and went to Europe, to the radio stations in Cologne and Stockholm, and worked with their orchestras and producers. I even began writing electronic things and a double concerto.6

Brookmeyer left the Mel Lewis Orchestra in 1982, and began multiple long-term projects in Europe, including work with the WDR Big Band (Cologne, Germany), the Radioens Big Band (Copenhagen, Denmark), and the Stockholm Jazz Orchestra.

Brookmeyer also formed his own ensemble, the New Art Orchestra, which he led from 1997 until his death in 2011. He held multiple teaching posts during the 1980s and 1990s, most notably at the New England Conservatory.7 Compositions from the late period are defined by increased use of counterpoint and small motivic cells.

7 Ibid.
Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to provide insight into Brookmeyer’s compositional style and how it developed over his career. To accomplish this, six compositions by Brookmeyer were selected for analysis, representing each of the three distinct time periods of his career. The three periods were divided as follows:

Early Period, 1955-1965
- *Just Plain Meyer* (1956), composed for the Terry Gibbs Dream Band
- *Mt. Everest* (1958), composed for the Woody Herman Orchestra

Middle Period, 1965-1968, 1979-1982
- *Samba Con Getchu* (1967), composed for the Thad Jones/Mel Lewis Orchestra
- *Ding Dong Ding* (1979), composed for the Thad Jones/Mel Lewis Orchestra

Late Period (Europe), 1982-2011
- *Boom Boom* (2002), composed for Brookmeyer’s New Art Orchestra

Analysis focused on compositional elements including melody, rhythm, harmony, voicings, orchestration, and form. These elements, as well as the complete compositions were compared to examine how Brookmeyer’s compositional style changed over the course of his career.

Need for the Study

Though Brookmeyer is well-known and acknowledged as one of the greatest jazz composers, an in-depth analytical study of the development of his writing style had not been undertaken. The goal of this study was to add to the understanding and proliferation of Brookmeyer’s music and legacy.

Scope and Limitations

This study included only the selected compositions for large jazz ensemble. Works outside the scope of this study included small group compositions (for example,
“Upstairs with Beatrice” from the album Island); arrangements of pieces by other composers (for example, “Skylark” from the album Bob Brookmeyer, Composer, Arranger); and compositions for classical ensembles (for example, “Wood Dance” from Music for String Quartet and Orchestra). Previously-analyzed Brookmeyer compositions (for example, “ABC Blues” from Inside the Score) were referenced only to help solidify conclusions regarding his compositional style.
CHAPTER II
LITERATURE REVIEW

Primary Materials

Scores

Scores that were studied included some that were commercially available (published by ejazzlines, Kendor Music, Advance Music, and Artist Share) and some that were unpublished, but in Brookmeyer’s handwriting (available through the Robert Brookmeyer Collection in the LaBudde Special Collections library at the University of Missouri-Kansas City).

“Just Plain Meyer,” is an edited score from the Terry Gibbs library published and distributed by Jazz Lines Publications. Brookmeyer’s handwritten score of “Mt. Everest” is found in his repository at the University of Missouri-Kansas City.

“Samba Con Getchu” and “Ding Dong Ding” are both published and distributed by Kendor Music Inc. The Robert Brookmeyer Collection at the University of

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9 Bob Brookmeyer, *Mt. Everest*, composer’s score, 1958, LaBudde Department of Special Collections, Miller Nichols Library, University of Missouri-Kansas.
Missouri-Kansas City has handwritten scores of “Samba Con Getchu” and “Ding Dong Ding.”

“Boom Boom” is published and distributed through Advance Music and “Spirit Music: Happy Dance” is self-published and distributed through ArtistShare.

Recordings

Recordings of the compositions included are integral to this study. In addition, recordings of other compositions are important for informing conclusions about Brookmeyer’s compositional style during each period and the development of his compositional language the course of his career.

“Just Plain Meyer” was recorded in October, 1956 by Terry Gibbs and His Orchestra (released on the album Swingin’), and again in March of 1959 by the Terry Gibbs Dream Band (on the album Flying Home). In the later recording, Gibbs’ solo is two choruses in length, in contrast to the early recording, which contains only one chorus of solo from the vibraphonist. The 1959 recording of “Just Plain Meyer” is the one referenced in this study, as it is of higher sound quality. “Mt. Everest” was recorded by Chubby Jackson in 1958 (on Chubby Takes Over).

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11 Bob Brookmeyer, Samba Con Getchu, composer’s score, 1967, LaBudde Department of Special Collections, Miller Nichols Library, University of Missouri-Kansas.
12 Bob Brookmeyer, Ding Dong Ding, composer’s score, 1979, LaBudde Department of Special Collections, Miller Nichols Library, University of Missouri-Kansas.
13 Terry Gibbs and his Orchestra, Swingin’, EmArcy MG 36103, LP, 1956.
“Samba Con Getchu” was recorded in 1967 by the Thad Jones/Mel Lewis Orchestra (released on the album *Live at the Village Vanguard*). “Ding Dong Ding” was recorded in 1980 by Mel Lewis and the Jazz Orchestra, on the album *Bob Brookmeyer, Composer, Arranger* (also titled *Bob Brookmeyer/Mel Lewis and the Jazz Orchestra*). Brookmeyer’s compositions “First Love Song,” “Hello and Goodbye,” “El Co,” and “The Fan Club” are also included on this album.

“Boom Boom” was recorded in 1997 by Brookmeyer’s New Art Orchestra (on *New Works*), *New Works* is comprised of a multi-movement work “Celebration Suite,” dedicated to Brookmeyer’s long time collaborator Gerry Mulligan. “Happy Dance” was recorded in 2006 (on the album *Spirit Music*), Brookmeyer’s final large jazz ensemble album as a leader.

“Still Water Stomp,” Brookmeyer’s first recorded composition was recorded September 8, 1956 by Maynard Ferguson (on the album *The Birdland Dreamband*). The next recording date that included his compositions for jazz ensemble took place a week later and resulted in the album *Brookmeyer*. His compositions on this date were “Oh, Jane Snavely” and “Open Country.” Brookmeyer’s 1961 album *Gloomy Sunday*

and Other Bright Moments serves as a representative recording from his late-early period.\textsuperscript{21}

The following serve as representative recordings from his middle period: “ABC Blues” was recorded in May, 1966 (on Presenting Thad Jones/Mel Lewis & "The Jazz Orchestra"), “Nasty Dance,” “Make Me Smile,” “Nevermore,” “McNeely’s Piece” and “Goodbye World” recorded January, 1982 by Mel Lewis and the Jazz Orchestra (on Make Me Smile and Other New Works by Bob Brookmeyer), and “American Express” was recorded March, 1985 (on 20 Years At the Village Vanguard).\textsuperscript{22}

The albums Dreams (recorded in 1989 by the Stockholm Jazz Orchestra), Electricity (recorded in 1991 by the WDR Big Band), and the New Art Orchestra albums Waltzing with Zoe (2001) and Get Well Soon (2002) serve as recordings from Brookmeyer’s late period.\textsuperscript{23}

Interviews

Brookmeyer gave many interviews over his lifetime, which serve as valuable primary source material regarding his thoughts on composition specifically, and music in general.

\textsuperscript{22} Mel Lewis and the Jazz Orchestra, Make Me Smile & Other New Works By Bob Brookmeyer, Finesse Records 37987, LP, 1982; The Mel Lewis Orchestra, 20 Years at the Village Vanguard, Atlantic 81655-1, LP, 1986.
A 1980 interview with Brookmeyer collected in the book *Jazz Spoken Here: Conversations with Twenty-Two Musicians* by Eayne Enstice and Paul Rubin focuses on his career during the 1960s and 1970s. The interview begins with his then-current association with Mel Lewis and the Orchestra and goes on to discuss his hiatus in California from 1968-78. He also reveals early influences as a musician and touches on his tenure with the Gerry Mulligan Concert Jazz Band.


In a 1999 interview published in *Cadence* in March 2001, Brookmeyer explores composition, teaching of composition, and horizontal/linear approaches to composing. In addition, he compares the jazz music scene and jazz musicians of Europe and New York, and how the differences have affected him as a composer. This interview also supplies greater detail about his time away from music in the 1970s.

A 2004 interview by Edward Partyka published in the *ITA Journal* covers many parts of Brookmeyer’s music career and reinforces biographical elements that are found in other interviews. This interview provides Brookmeyer’s thoughts on his New Art Orchestra and the state of the large jazz ensemble in the twenty-first century.

A 2006 interview by Ben Ratliff, originally published in the *New York Times*, provides Brookmeyer’s broader philosophies and feelings on music while collecting

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some biographical material. The interview is conducted paired with selected recordings including Count Basie’s “9:20 Special,” Bill Harris’ recording of “Lady Be Good,” and contemporary concert composer Witold Lutosławski’s cello concerto. This interview is also available in the book *The Jazz Ear: Conversations Over Music*. 28

A five-part interview by Marc Myers from 2009 encompasses Brookmeyer’s prolific and multifaceted career. 29 It includes information on his early life up to his final projects as a composer and bandleader. Brookmeyer gives insight into his thoughts on composition, and on how his writing changed during his time with Mel Lewis. The interview is available on Myers’ website, jazzwax.com.

**Secondary Materials**

**Books**

Rayburn Wright’s book *Inside the Score: A Detailed Analysis of 8 Classic Jazz Ensemble Charts by Sammy Nestico, Thad Jones, and Bob Brookmeyer* is significant to this project for two reasons. It is often referenced as the standard for how to analyze compositions for large jazz ensemble and will be used as a basis for methodology. In addition, it includes analyses of “ABC Blues” and “First Love Song,” which will serve as additional resources regarding Brookmeyer’s middle period. 30


Fred Sturm’s book *Changes Over Time: The Evolution of Jazz Arranging* is a comparative study that traces the development of jazz arranging, specifically examining the elements of melody, rhythm, harmony, voicings, orchestration, unifying components, and form. Sturm presents thirty-five arrangements of four songs (“King Porter Stomp,” “Chant of the Weed,” “All of Me,” and “Take The ‘A’ Train”) to demonstrate his findings. Included in Sturm’s study are two different arrangements by Bob Brookmeyer of “King Porter Stomp”. The first arrangement is from the 1958 Zoot Sims-Bob Brookmeyer Octet album *Stretching Out*, and the second was commissioned by Sturm in 1994 and illustrates, according to Sturm, Brookmeyer’s “own dramatic evolution as an arranger.” *Changes Over Time: The Evolution of Jazz Arranging* provides a model for a comparative study in jazz writing that isolates changes in musical elements.

**Articles**

There are many articles on Bob Brookmeyer; however, very few supply information that is not found in interviews with the composer. The Brookmeyer *New Grove Dictionary of Jazz* entry by Bradford J. Robinson and Barry Kernfeld provides a concise and inclusive look at Brookmeyer’s complete career.33

Ken Schaphorst, Chair of Jazz Studies and Improvisation at the New England Conservatory, wrote an article “It’s All About the Line: The Pedagogy of Bob Brookmeyer.”

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Brookmeyer,” published in the March 2013 issue of *JAZZed: Practical Ideas & Techniques for Jazz Educators*. The article addresses Brookmeyer’s thoughts on composition and how he taught it. The article is divided into three assignments: diatonic line writing, chromatic line writing, and form. Schaphorst discusses how Brookmeyer taught these concepts in lessons. These concepts also provide insight into Brookmeyer’s compositional style while he was teaching at the New England Conservatory.

**Dissertations**

*ProQuest Dissertations and Theses* and *Doctoral Dissertations in Musicology-Online* yield no dissertations or theses, either completed or in progress, with Bob Brookmeyer as the main topic. Brookmeyer is present as a secondary topic in multiple academic papers or is listed as a compositional influence for dissertations/theses where a composition was the project.

Some of the academic papers with Brookmeyer as the secondary topic are helpful for this research. Tyler Dennis’ undergraduate honors thesis from the University of Southern Mississippi, *Inside the Score in the 21st Century: Techniques for Contemporary Large Jazz Ensemble Composition*, is very similar in methodology to this dissertation. Dennis’ thesis analyzes compositions by Brookmeyer protégés Jim McNeely, John Hollenbeck, Darcy James Argue, and Maria Schneider. Dennis also analyzes Brookmeyer’s composition “Over Here,” which was recorded on the album *Get Well*

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35 Tyler Dennis, “Inside the Score in the 21st Century: Techniques for Contemporary Large Jazz Ensemble Composition” (Honors Theses, University of Southern Mississippi, 2012).
Soon. Similar to Fred Sturm’s book *Changes Over Time*, Dennis’ thesis divides his analyses into compositional elements.

Joseph William Carucci’s dissertation from the University of Kentucky entitled *The Contribution of Gerry Mulligan’s Concert Jazz Band to the Jazz Tradition* presents Bob Brookmeyer as a prominent secondary topic.\(^3^6\) This dissertation helps to track Brookmeyer’s early compositional period, when he was most closely associated with baritone saxophonist Gerry Mulligan and co-led Mulligan’s Concert Jazz Band. This dissertation also contains primary information from phone interviews that Carucci conducted with Brookmeyer.

Christopher James Smith’s dissertation from the University of Northern Colorado *The View from the Back of the Band: The Career of Mel Lewis* (now a revised and published book entitled *The View from the Back of the Band: The Life and Music of Mel Lewis*), is a useful source for tracing much of Bob Brookmeyer’s middle period when he was closely associated with the Thad Jones/Mel Lewis Orchestra.\(^3^7\) In addition, the dissertation supplies a lot of information on Brookmeyer’s early professional career, as Mel Lewis and Brookmeyer were long-time professional collaborators and friends.

The centerpiece of Jesse Milliner’s dissertation from the University of Miami, *Quo Vadis: Exploring Musical Forms in Jazz*, is an original composition, but contains survey responses from notable musicians Django Bates, Bill Dobbins, Clare Fischer,


Peter Herborn, David Liebman, Jim McNeely, Pat Metheny, Bob Mintzer, Chuck Owen, Maria Schneider, and Bob Brookmeyer. Milliner’s survey and Brookmeyer’s response cover his ideas on musical form in jazz and his compositional influences.

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38 Jesse Milliner, Quo Vadis – Exploring Musical Forms in Jazz (DMA Essay, University of Miami, 2006).
CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Six compositions were chosen for in-depth analysis, two from each period of Brookmeyer’s career. The analyses were modeled on the methodologies and styles used in Fred Sturm’s Changes Over Time: The Evolution of Jazz Arranging and Rayburn Wright’s Inside the Score.

As in the Sturm text, each composition was studied using the following six categories: melody and rhythm; form and structure; voicings and vertical sonorities; harmony; orchestration; and unifying components. Linear embellishment, rhythmic variation, and theme and development were additional compositional elements that were analyzed; Sturm presented these elements as subcategories of his melody and rhythm chapter.

When the melodies were analyzed, each was presented in a lead sheet format in order to isolate the musical element from the rest of the aspects of the composition. The range, contour, phrasing, and structure were studied, in addition to any use of motifs and motivic development.

Rhythmic components studied included the subdivision of the beat (straight eighth or swing), motives and their permutations (expansion/diminution), repetition, displacement, and hemiola. These rhythmic elements were analyzed on the lead sheet as well as on the reduction of the score.
In the style of the Wright text, a recreation and reduction of the original score showing saxophone, brass and rhythm sections was created with an additional staff dedicated to harmonic detail. These reductions notated the harmonic rhythm and progression of the piece and provided a clear avenue to study voicings and vertical sonorities. When the voicings and vertical sonorities of the compositions were studied, the intervallic relationships, use of chord tones and extensions, and the treatment of passing chords were analyzed. In addition, common voicings for instrument families and how the families interact were analyzed.

The study of the orchestration in each piece made note of instrumentation, instrument combinations, and registration. Form was studied, noting the formal structure, significant events (tutti/solos), orchestration, time feel, and intensity. It was also noted if the compositions were strophic or through-composed in form.

Unifying concepts, such as the re-use of melodic, motivic, rhythmic, and harmonic material were noted in the analyses, as these concepts supply continuity to the compositional ideas. Other methodologies were used as deemed relevant to the individual compositions as they are analyzed.

“Just Plain Meyer” and “Mt. Everest” were chosen due the availability of scores, as most of Brookmeyer’s compositions from his early period were unavailable. In addition, these two compositions helped in the formation of an opinion of Brookmeyer’s personal style at the time, since they were composed for two different jazz ensembles.

“Samba Con Getchu” and “Ding Dong Ding” were selected from Brookmeyer’s middle period due to the availability of published scores as well as handwritten scores. Since this middle period was divided into two sub-periods, one from each was included.
“Boom Boom” and “Spirit Music: Happy Dance” were chosen to represent Brookmeyer’s late compositional period. These pieces were selected as “Boom Boom” was from Brookmeyer’s first recording project with the New Art Orchestra, and “Spirit Music: Happy Dance” was from his final recording project with the ensemble.

Reference to other Brookmeyer compositions and their available analytical commentary were included to confirm the representative nature of the six compositions in this study. The analysis of these six pieces informed conclusions regarding the development of his compositional style throughout his career.
CHAPTER IV

ANALYSIS

*Just Plain Meyer*

Melody and Rhythm

The melody of “Just Plain Meyer” has an AA₁BC form. The A, A₁, and B sections are each eight measures; the C section is twelve measures and includes a sendoff for Terry Gibbs’ vibraphone solo. The melody in the A sections is constructed predominately by the interval of a major sixth. C section material is a small variation on A section material. The B section has a contrasting, independent theme, giving the composition two main themes.

Ex. 1: A section theme of “Just Plain Meyer”

Ex. 2: B section theme of “Just Plain Meyer”

Voice leading plays an important structural role. In the first A section, two voices are implied, outlining significant harmonic points. Starting with the first note of the melody, there is a strong descending line from F to E and then to E♭ in the sixth measure. The other voice starts on the third beat of the melody and employs a strong descending line starting from D to the G in the sixth measure. In the A₁ section,
Brookmeyer presents a variation on the A section material. While still outlining the harmonic structure, the A1 section has an ascending melodic line and the third beat of the theme accentuates the raised fifth in the augmented dominant chords.

The composition employs the use of a perfect fourth relationship in multiple ways. In the A1 section, the melody begins transposed up a fourth from the first A section. In measures 18-20 of the melody, the brass and saxophone sections perform a repeated rhythmic figure that when answered in the saxophone section is a perfect fourth above/below the original. These melodic relationships of a perfect fourth are reflected on a larger scale when the composition modulates from B♭ major to E♭ major.

There is a great deal of rhythmic continuity in the melody, especially in the A section material. The three consecutive downbeats presented in the A theme permeate the melodic statement, but this becomes obscured in the remainder of the composition.
Ex. 3: Melody of “Just Plain Meyer”
Form and Structure

The composition is four and one-half choruses in length with an eight-measure introduction, a four-measure extension at the end of the first chorus, and a four-measure transition into the ten-measure ending shout. After the eight-measure tutti introduction, the tenor and baritone saxophones present the melody with brass punctuations at the ends of phrases. The A₁ section has the saxophones presenting a harmonized melody leading into the B section where the brass and saxophone sections trade melodic statements. The C section begins with harmonized saxophones playing the melody, they are soon joined by the brass to execute the sendoff for Terry Gibbs’ vibraphone solo.

The second chorus begins with a continuation of the sendoff for the first three measures and the vibraphone solo continues for the remainder of the second chorus and into the third chorus. Saxes and trombones support the vibraphone solo with backgrounds, leading into the A₁ of the third chorus later joined by trumpet backgrounds leading into the B section.

The first modulation occurs at the beginning of the fourth chorus, modulating from B♭ major to E♭ major. There is a tutti shout for the first sixteen measures followed by a tenor saxophone solo starting at the bridge, finishing out the chorus accompanied by backgrounds in the trumpets and trombones. Similar to the fourth chorus, the fifth chorus begins with a modulation of a perfect fifth, from E♭ major to A♭ major, and features a sixteen-measure shout section with saxophone and brass sections playing opposite of each other. After the sixteen-measure shout, there is a four-measure transition which features the vibraphone soloist and flows into a modulation back to E♭ major for the final ten-measure tutti shout.
The climax of the composition does not come until the final ten-measure shout chorus at the very end. The tutti ensemble execution paired with modulation and the trumpets echoing octave leaps provide a satisfying climax and ending to the piece. The Terry Gibbs recording differs from the score, where in the score, following Terry Gibbs’ first solo chorus there is an open, repeated section for additional or extended solos. This additional chorus and repeats are not executed in the original 1956 recording or in the later 1959 recordings.

Voicings and Vertical Sonorities

The saxophone voicings are predominately four-part closed, four-part drop two, and chorale. These voicings are employed when the saxophone section plays tutti with the brass, but in some cases the saxophone section fills in the gap between the trumpet and trombone sections (see example 5), especially when the lead trumpet plays above the staff.

Ex. 4: Saxophone voicings. Four-part closed, four-part drop two, and chorale.

For the entirety of the composition, the trumpet voicings are closed, predominately four-part, but occasionally Brookmeyer uses triads that allow the trombone section to double the complete trumpet voicing at the octave. It is not until the final shout that the fourth trumpet doubles the lead trumpet at the octave. This helps in giving the final ten-measure shout more power and finality. In a few instances, there is
only a major second between the first and second trumpets, which can make the lead note unclear.

The trombone section, comprised of three trombone parts, often doubles the trumpets at the octave, usually omitting the second, third, or fourth pitch in the trumpet voicing. The lead trombone usually doubles the lead trumpet at the octave when the lead trumpet is playing in the staff. Occasionally the trombone section will provide an important third or seventh in the chord that has been omitted in the trumpet voicing. In a few cases, the trombone voicing will become spread, and in these cases the saxophone section fills in the space between the trumpet and trombone sections.

Ex. 5: Brass voicings of “Just Plain Meyer”

Harmony

The harmony of the piece is predominately four-part with occasional moments of five-part harmony. As the composition progresses, Brookmeyer makes use of more sophisticated harmony and utilizes up to six-part harmony. The raised fifth is an accentuated part of the melody and this is reflected in the harmony throughout the composition as a part of augmented dominant chords. The raised fifth is also used in a minor sonority in measure 47. In other treatments of minor sonorities, Brookmeyer often adds the eleventh of the chord to the minor-seventh chord. This frequent use of the minor-seventh chord with the added eleventh will be seen in Brookmeyer’s future compositions.
Diminished passing chords are utilized in the composition. When the diminished passing chord is longer than an eighth-note, the sonority is reflected in the chords of the piano part. The composition makes use of diatonic and chromatic planing. The chromatic planing is fleeting and pulls towards a resolution on the downbeat of the following measure; the instances of diatonic planing are often reflected in the chords notated in the rhythm section.

Ex. 6: Passing and planing chords in “Just Plain Meyer”

Rhythm Section

The rhythm section for the composition is vibraphone, piano, bass and drum set, with the vibraphonist as a featured soloist. With the exception of one Basie-like injection in the second measure, the piano plays a comping role throughout, and the part indicates chord symbols with slash notation. The bass part employs a walking bass texture throughout; Brookmeyer indicates specific notes for the majority of the piece, but does notate slashes and chord symbols in the solo sections. In most sections where the walking bass is notated, the piano part includes the walking bass line notated in the bass clef staff, but is not played in the recording. The drum part includes primarily slash notation, specific rhythmic figures to accentuate gestures in the brass.
Orchestration

In contrast to the other pieces in this study, “Just Plain Meyer” is scored for only three, not four trombones. The three trombone parts result in the occasional use of spread voicings to create a fuller brass sound. Also distinctive is the inclusion of the vibraphone as a featured solo instrument in the piece. There are no exaggerated ranges in the instruments, and the lead trumpet’s highest note is a F-5, which is reserved for the end of the composition.

Unifying Components

Though there is a well-constructed melodic statement with many unifying components, Brookmeyer abandons his themes in favor of other melodic statements as the composition progresses into solo backgrounds and shout sections. These solo backgrounds and shouts are satisfying and idiomatic but have little relation to the melody or rhythm of the initial melodic statement. In the solo backgrounds at letter G, the brass hits echo the “Charleston rhythm” of the B section theme, and the brass anacruses to the modulations at I and M are similar in shape and rhythm to the tutti sendoff at letter E. Starting at M, Brookmeyer presents a new theme that is repeated four times with slight variation and informs the melodic content of the ending of the composition.

Ex. 7: “Just Plain Meyer” Ending Theme
Mt. Everest

Melody and Rhythm

The melody does not have the same motivic economics of Brookmeyer’s later works. The initial presentation of the melody contains themes that are repeated, however these short themes are quickly abandoned for shouting tutti passages. The theme in example 8 is present in the two A sections of the melody, and does not return after its initial introduction. The theme in example 9 is passed between the trombones and trumpets over the B section of the melody. The rhythmic content of the B section theme is developed later in the piece, most notably in the final tutti statement. The C section has its own melodic theme which is transposed and reused in variations in the tutti shout choruses.

Similar to “Just Plain Meyer,” the shout sections are melodically satisfying and idiomatic, however have little relation to the melody or rhythm of the initial statement. Much of the shout content begins with variations of a two-note melodic and rhythmic cell.

Ex. 8: A section theme of “Mt. Everest”

Ex. 9: B section theme of “Mt. Everest”
Ex. 10: C section theme of “Mt. Everest”

Ex. 11: Shout section theme of “Mt. Everest”
Ex. 12: Melody of “Mt. Everest”
Form and Structure

The composition is two full choruses and two half choruses in length with an eight-measure introduction and a six-measure ending shout. A seventeen-measure transition separates the two complete and two half choruses. Following the eight-measure introduction, the thirty-two bar form is presented in the key of G. The melody is played by the saxophone section with brass comping gestures in the A sections, and the trombones exchange the melody with saxophones and trumpets in the B section. Following a melodic statement from the saxophones in the C section, the brass have chromatically descending diminished chords that set up a modulation to the key of C.

The second chorus is a tutti shout in C major. Following the first two choruses of the piece, the transition utilizes pedal point (a device that will be seen in the later compositions of Brookmeyer). A G pedal creates a nine-measure phrase, modulating to a pedal on A♭ for eight-measures. Following the transition, two A sections are presented in the key of G♭ before modulating to B♭ for two A sections of tutti shout. The piece concludes with a six-measure phrase in the key of B♭. This constant modulation gives the piece a sense of direction while having harmonic continuity. There is no solo section in the composition.

There are differences between Brookmeyer’s handwritten score and the Chubby Jackson recording. The most significant is at rehearsal letter M the score indicates a modulation to B♭; on the recording the modulation is to A♭. In measures 94 and 95; the lead trumpet changes his octave leap in the score to a rhythmically charged written high E♭ on the recording. The brass unison-octave melodic statement in measures 103-105 becomes an octave unison shake on the recording.
Voicings and Vertical Sonorities

Many of the voicings from this composition are derived from what Rayburn Wright calls the classic Basie four-part voicing, where all lead voices double each other at the octave and the same four-part chord is mirrored in the saxophone, trumpet, and trombone sections. An extension of the Basie four-part voicing, a fifth trumpet voice is occasionally employed in the composition to double the lead trumpet down the octave. In many cases this allows the melody to be tripled by lead trumpet, fifth trumpet, and fourth trombone. In addition to these closed position voicings, Brookmeyer uses the trombone section in chorale-style voicings paired with closed voicings in the trumpets, especially early in the composition. There are signs of Brookmeyer’s middle and late style of composition. This includes use of quartal structures, clusters, and the use of the minor ninth interval in voicings. These voicings occur less frequently in this piece than Brookmeyer’s later works.

Ex. 13: Voicings from “Mt. Everest”

Ex. 14: Use of quartal structures, clusters, and minor ninth voicings

Harmony

Similar to that of “Just Plain Meyer,” the harmony of “Mt. Everest” is predominantly four-part harmony with occasional moments of five-parts. As the composition progresses, Brookmeyer more sophisticated harmonies are employed, up to six-part harmony. Also similar to “Just Plain Meyer,” Brookmeyer often adds the eleventh of the chord to the minor-seventh chord.

During the composition’s seventeen-measure transition and pedal, Brookmeyer demonstrates the beginnings of the harmonic sophistication seen in his later works. Example 7 is the conclusion of the first pedal point section on G. During the first half the pedal point, Brookmeyer maintains an F major seven sonority over the G pedal, resulting in a suspended dominant sound (seen frequently in Brookmeyer’s later works). Gradually, the harmonies move farther away from this sonority and builds tension until the resolution on the C major chord at the end of the G pedal. Tension builds further by speeding up the harmonic rhythm towards the resolution.
Ex. 15: “Mt. Everest” pedal measures

Rhythm Section

With exception of one Basie-like injection in the eighth measure, the piano plays a comping role throughout, and the part indicates chord symbols with slash notation. When the walking bass is notated, the piano has the walking bass line notated in the bass clef staff but is not played in the recording. The bass part employs a walking bass texture throughout; Brookmeyer indicates specific notes for the entirety of the piece. The drum part includes cues to accentuate syncopated brass figures, which are more frequent in this piece versus “Just Plain Meyer.” The drum part is more detailed, even notating some of the solo fills. The rhythm section roles and notation for the composition are very similar to “Just Plain Meyer.”

Orchestration

The piece is scored for five trumpets and four trombones. This larger orchestration creates a fuller sound with the melody often being doubled or tripled. There is no vibraphone in this composition, or soloist that Brookmeyer orchestrates to
feature. Without the vibraphone, the rhythm section provides a comping role for the melody and shout choruses. Identical to “Just Plain Meyer,” and the lead trumpet’s highest note on the recording is a F-5, which is reserved for the end of the composition.

Unifying Components

Similar to “Just Plain Meyer,” the composition presents a well-constructed melodic statement with many unifying components, but Brookmeyer abandons these themes in favor for other melodic statements as the composition progresses. When the composition modulates to C major, Brookmeyer presents the shout theme (example 11), which informs much of the melodic content of the end of the composition. When not using the shout theme, a repeated melodic idea is presented within short succession. For example, a different melodic idea materializes at rehearsal letter K, and is repeated eight measures later at rehearsal letter L to unify the statement. At rehearsal letter M, Brookmeyer continues to present variations on the shout theme.

Samba Con Getchu

Melody and Rhythm

The melody has an AA₁BA₁ form. The A section is eighteen measures in length, and the A₁ sections are eighteen measures in length with a four-measure transition in the first A₁ section and a four-measure solo break in the second A₁ section. The melody in the A and A₁ sections is constructed predominately by ascending stepwise motion, beginning with a leap of a perfect fourth and concluding with a leap of a perfect fifth. Measures 8-11 present a contrasting stepwise motivic cell, which is repeated, transposed
down by a diatonic second. Thad Jones plays this melodic gesture in the original recording.\textsuperscript{40}

Continuing in stepwise motion, the B section provides contrast as the melody implies triple meter and contains longer melodic phrases. The B section, thirty-four measures in total, can be divided into three sections. The first fourteen measures feature a solo flugelhorn line followed by an eight-measure section of hits behind an ad-libbed flugelhorn line. The final twelve measures of the B section contain a dissonant pyramid for four measures, resolving to a four-octave unison C. Resolving to octave unison is a technique that will be seen in other compositions studied, and is characteristic of Brookmeyer’s middle and late periods. This third part of the B section functions as a transition to restate the A\textsubscript{1}.

Unlike “Just Plain Meyer” and “Mt. Everest,” the background and shout materials in “Samba Con Getchu” are derived from rhythmic and melodic materials presented in the melody. The rhythmic motive presented in the A\textsubscript{1} section is used as source material for many of the backgrounds in the solo sections.

\begin{figure}
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{samba_con_getchu}
\caption{A section theme of “Samba Con Getchu”}
\end{figure}

\begin{figure}
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{thad_motive}
\caption{Thad’s motive of “Samba Con Getchu”}
\end{figure}

\textsuperscript{40} Thad Jones and Mel Lewis, \textit{Live at the Village Vanguard}, Solid State 18016, LP, 1967.
Ex. 18: B section theme of “Samba Con Getchu”

Ex. 19: Rhythmic motive from A1 section of “Samba Con Getchu”
Theme A: Transposed down major 2nd

Bm7 Cm7 D D7b9 A7b9 D7b9

Gm7 Bm7 Bb7 A7 Dm7 Dm7/C Bm7b5 E7 Bb7b5

Am7 Abm7 Db7 Gm7 C13 Dm7 Dim7

Theme A: Transposed down major 2nd

Bm7 Cm7 D D7b9 A7b9

Gm7 A7b6 Bm7 (9) Bb7 Abm7 Abm7 Abm7(D7b9) Gm7

Am7 Abm7 D7b9 C13b9

(F)

Transition: Drum Solo
Ex. 20: Melody of “Samba Con Getchu”
Form and Structure

The composition contains one complete chorus. The statement of the melody alternates between tutti horn section and flugelhorn soloist. The B section of the melody, focusing more on the soloist, metrically modulates to three. The melody closes with a reiteration of the A1, which leads into the first solo section. After the statement of the melody, ninety-two measures in total, the first solo section is truncated into a thirty-two-bar form. After the first solo section, a thirty-two-measure transition and sendoff occurs into the remaining solo sections, which are open over static harmony or no harmonic structure. On the 1967 recording, this solo section includes alto saxophone, piano, and flugelhorn solos. The trumpet and saxophone backgrounds notated at rehearsal letter I are not used on the recording. Similar to “Just Plain Meyer” and “Mt. Everest,” “Samba Con Getchu” has an eight-measure introduction, but unlike the other compositions, this introduction is solo drums. The restatement of the melody is a da capo coda and includes the eight-measure introduction, A, and A1 sections. The coda is a repeated four-measure section for drum solo, with a gradual ritardando into a tutti fermata chord.

There are no major differences between Brookmeyer’s handwritten score and the published score, but Brookmeyer’s handwritten score shows more economy of musical ideas and repetition than in the earlier compositions, in many cases writing “col” for entire sections of the composition. The handwritten score makes it clear that Brookmeyer is composing with certain musicians in mind, the solo flugelhorn being labeled “Thad” and page twenty-two of the handwritten score reads “Jerome solos with Mel,” referring to
saxophonist Jerome Richardson and drummer Mel Lewis. The solo section for the piano is noted in Brookmeyer’s handwritten score, but is not present in the published score.

Voicings and Vertical Sonorities

The saxophone voicings in the piece are predominantly five-part harmony, and typically in closed position. Occasionally, the saxophone voicings will spread out farther into a drop-two, drop-two and four, or chorale-style voicing. At the end of the A1 sections of the melody, saxophones are voiced in four-part harmony in closed position, the baritone saxophone doubling lead alto saxophone down the octave. Playing tutti with the brass section for much of the composition, the saxophones fit inside brass voicing and will often supply one or two tones not represented at the registered octave played by saxophone, and occasionally supply a color tone.

Ex. 21: Saxophone voicings from “Samba Con Getchu”

The trumpet voicings are primarily upper structure triads with one additional note, typically the added sixth or ninth, with the fifth trumpet doubling the lead trumpet down the octave. When trumpets deviate from upper structure triads, the voicings create clusters as a section or in combination with saxophones and trombones. The backgrounds at rehearsal letter E deviate from the upper structure triads, and are comprised of five-part closed voicings.
The trombone section is in chorale-style voicing for much of the melodic statement, and similar to the saxophone section, are voiced in four-part closed for the end of the A₁ sections. The four-part closed voicing continues at rehearsal letter E and is prominent for the remainder of the composition. Within these four-part closed voicings, the trombones are occasionally voiced in clusters, either on their own or in combination with trumpets and/or saxophones.

Ex. 22: Brass voicings from “Samba Con Getchu”

Harmony

In “Samba Con Getchu” there is increased use of the minor ninth interval than in previous compositions in this study. The minor ninth clash is placed in prominent parts of the brass voicing, lead trumpet and lead trombone, and also in significant portions of the composition. At rehearsal letter A, the minor ninth interval moves in parallel motion, accentuating the tension of the voicing. The backgrounds behind the tenor saxophone solo contain two minor ninth intervals. Creating additional tension and instability, these double-minor ninths also move in parallel motion.

The minor second interval is also used in voicings to build tension. This is apparent in the trumpet voicing at rehearsal letter B9, where there are two minor second intervals, one of which is between the lead and second trumpet. In this composition, there is more frequent use of clusters, measures 63-64 demonstrate the cluster created.
between the saxophone and brass sections, measure 64 having a voicing the incorporates
the altered and natural ninths of the chord. Brookmeyer frequently makes use of six- to
eight-part harmony, and on occasion up to nine-part harmony.

Rhythm Section

Parallel to “Just Plain Meyer” and “Mt. Everest,” the piano plays a comping role
throughout, the part indicating chord symbols with slash notation. In most sections
where the bass is notated, the piano has the bass line notated in the bass clef staff but is
not played in the recording. Brookmeyer indicates specific notes for the majority of the
piece, but does notate slashes and chord symbols in the solo sections. The drum set is
given more liberty, with phrases of solo space with only slash notation acting as the
introduction and transitions.

Orchestration

Similar to “Just Plain Meyer,” the orchestration of “Samba Con Getchu” requires
Brookmeyer to orchestrate for a featured soloist, in this case, Thad Jones on flugelhorn.
The brass and woodwinds are tutti for the majority of the composition, exceptions being
the beginning of the bridge section, the pyramid leading into the final A section, the
beginning of the backgrounds behind the tenor saxophone solo, the first three measures of
the send-off figure for the alto saxophone solo, and the sectionalized backgrounds at
rehearsal letter I. At the start of the bridge, trombones are in a comping role providing
harmonic detail, and trumpets and saxophones are in section unison, playing counter lines
to Thad Jones’ melody. The backgrounds and send off for the saxophone solos briefly pit
the saxophones against the brass section, but the sections quickly become tutti again. The
sectionalized backgrounds at rehearsal letter I demonstrate sectional independence but
only the trombone backgrounds are executed on the recording. In this composition, pyramids are utilized as a compositional device, a technique he will use throughout his middle period.

Unique to this composition in Brookmeyer’s work, there is an option for all parts to play Latin percussion instruments. This is heard on the recording, in addition to calls and yells from the ensemble. The lead trumpet range is slightly more conservative than the earlier compositions studied with a written D-5 as the highest pitch.

Ex. 23: Pyramid from “Samba Con Getchu”

Unifying Components

Unlike the previous compositions in this study, Brookmeyer reuses the material presented in the melody. The stepwise half-note motion presented in the melody is reused in the backgrounds behind the tenor saxophone solo, and varied to help constitute the material at the beginning of the send-off figure. The rhythmic motive presented in the A₁ section of the piece is used in the later half of the send-off figure for the alto
saxophone solo, and in the backgrounds at letter I, which are executed on the recording by the trombone section.

**Ding Dong Ding**

Melody and Rhythm

The melodic construction of the composition is based off of a two-measure melodic cell and its variations that are presented in the initial statement of the melody. Brookmeyer is able to keep the interest in the piece through canonic treatments of the melody and changes in texture where the melody is presented. The melody is sixteen measures in length; however, the ending of the statement is treated differently in the composition, sometimes having a one-, two-, or four-measure extension. The initial melodic statement is entirely comprised of the rhythm of a half-note, dotted quarter-note, and eighth note tied to a whole note.

There are moments that the composition deviates from the melodic material. This occurs at rehearsal letter B, leading into the modulation to D♭, and rehearsal letter G between the solo sections. This transitional material is a variation on the motivic cell, and breaks up the monotony of the melodic rhythm and intervallic relationship, containing consecutive half notes and stepwise motion. Though rehearsal letters B and G are similar in melodic gesture and rhythm, they are harmonically and melodically different, and when rehearsal letter B is restated on the D.S., the material functions as background material to the soprano saxophone soloist. Unlike the previous compositions studied, the remainder of the background material in “Ding Dong Ding” is not melodic, and consists of densely voiced pads. The tutti sections at rehearsal letters K and L are rhythmic augmentations of the initial motivic cell.
Ex. 24: Melody of “Ding Dong Ding”

Ex. 25: Melodic material from rehearsal letter B of “Ding Dong Ding”

Form and Structure

The form of the composition is constructed on eight-measure phrases with one- or two-measure extensions on occasion, especially during the tutti passages. Larger key centers are utilized throughout the piece. Starting in C major, the composition begins with a four-measure introduction with an open-fifth piano ostinato (similar piano ostinatos are seen in Brookmeyer’s later compositions). The piano states the sixteen-measure melody and adds a four-measure extension; this material is repeated with a pyramid in the horn section unfolding into a sustained polychord. There is a twenty-four-measure transition including an eight-measure drum solo and sixteen measures of bass pedal. The soprano saxophones state the melody with a one-measure extension for a
seventeen-measure phrase. A tutti and transitional section, rehearsal letter B is eighteen measures, consisting of two eight-measure phrases and a two-measure extension. The piece modulates and presents a melodic statement in the key of D♭ with the melody in canon.

A six-measure transition modulates back to the key of C for the solo section, which is a twenty-four measure form repeated five times. Reflecting the modulation that occurs in the composition, the solo section modulates to D♭ for sixteen measures, an eight-measure section that is repeated. The material at rehearsal letter G reflects the material at rehearsal letter B, but the form extends further with a four-measure solo break for the soprano saxophone. Soprano saxophone and piano solos dovetail in a repeated section where both are given rhythmic notation and instructed to “ad lib notes like melody.” At the transition into the piano solo, Brookmeyer’s instructions are “Unaccompanied piano solo, about 1 minute – In tempo based on the tune if desired. End the solo with 1st 16 bars of the tune, music-box style, like at the beginning.” The pianist on the 1980 recording, Jim McNeely, solos for one minute and forty seconds, including a final gesture similar to the opening melodic statement. Though the D.S. al Coda goes to the eight-measure drum solo, the instructions Brookmeyer gave the pianist gives the piece a sense of melodic recapitulation before the transitional material.

The coda occurs on the modulation to D♭, and after presenting tutti melodic passages for sixteen measures, the piece modulates to F major where it presents tutti passages in eight-measure phrases. If viewed from a large scale, (the modulations from C to D♭ and finally F major), these tonal centers are an inverted macrocosm of the initial
motivic cell. Their intervallic relationship can be considered an ascending sixth followed by a descending second.

\[ \text{F major} \quad \text{D major} \quad \text{C major} \]

Ex. 26: Key area macrocosm of “Ding Dong Ding”

Voicings and Vertical Sonorities

The saxophone voicings are much more spread than in the previous compositions studied. Brookmeyer makes use of five-part, four-part, and three-part voicings. The three-part voicings are used primarily during the soprano saxophone solo, with the baritone saxophone doubling the second soprano saxophone down the octave. When using four-part voicings, chorale-style or closed voicings with the soprano saxophones in unison are employed. The five-part voicings are much more spread than the three- or four-part voicings, and often mirror the lower brass voicings with the first soprano saxophone doubling the lead trumpet in unison.

Ex. 27: Saxophone voicings from “Ding Dong Ding”

Similar to “Samba Con Getchu,” the trumpet voicings are upper structure triads with one additional note, typically the added sixth or ninth, with the fifth trumpet
doubling the lead trumpet down the octave. Also similar to “Samba Con Getchu,”
trumpets are voiced in clusters as a section or in combination with saxophones and
trombones; however, the trumpet clusters are more frequent in “Ding Dong Ding.”
Three-part trumpet voicings are used from measure 175 to 183, and contain a minor ninth
interval with the trombone section, however not in parallel motion as in “Samba Con
Getchu.”

Also similar to “Samba Con Getchu,” the trombone section is in chorale-style
voicing for much of the composition. When not in chorale, the trombones are in quartal-
based voicings or clusters, either on their own or in combination with other sections of
the ensemble. As an ensemble, the opening pyramid of the composition results in an
eleven-part voicing, when including the open-fifth ostinato in the piano. This type of
voicing is unlike anything in the previous compositions studied.

Ex. 28: Brass voicings from “Ding Dong Ding”

Harmony

Similar to “Samba Con Getchu,” there is more frequent use of the minor ninth
interval than in compositions studied from Brookmeyer’s early period. The minor ninth
clash is placed in prominent parts of the brass voicing, lead trumpet and lead trombone,
but also placed in other voices throughout the composition. The minor ninth interval
moves in parallel motion, between lead trumpet and lead trombone during the tutti
statement at measure 74. At rehearsal letter E, the backgrounds behind the tenor saxophone solo contain two minor ninth intervals. Unlike previous compositions studied, “Ding Dong Ding” has greater use of suspended dominant sonorities, and in many cases, Brookmeyer includes the third of the chord in these suspended dominant sonorities.

There are special moments that Brookmeyer makes use of polychords, most notably the resulting chord of the initial pyramid of the composition. This polychord’s relationship to the previously introduced C major melody and accompaniment in the piano adds further clashes to the sonority.

Ex. 29: Opening Pyramid from “Ding Dong Ding”

Rhythm Section

The piano begins to take on a melodic, ensemble, and comping role. Unlike previous compositions studied, the piano makes the initial melodic statement, and participates in a counter melody with the soprano saxophone later in the composition. The piano also plays as part of the tutti ensemble where Brookmeyer notates specific
voicings to be executed with the winds. Analogous to the previous compositions, he has the notated bass lines in the bass clef staff. The bass is notated throughout the entire composition, and is ostinato oriented. The drum set is notated throughout and plays a more orchestral role during the introduction.

Orchestration

Similar to “Samba Con Getchu,” the brass and woodwinds often play tutti passages. When the ensemble is not playing tutti, Brookmeyer makes use of pyramids, both at the beginning and the end of the composition. Unlike previous compositions studied, counterpoint is utilized through canonic treatment of the melody.

Beginning the composition with solo piano, Brookmeyer gradually adds density to the composition. By the final melodic statements of the piece, an ensemble ad lib. section is indicated at rehearsal letter K, using an augmentation of the melodic rhythm creating an extremely dense texture. In concluding the composition, Brookmeyer releases this dense texture with an octave unison F. This approach of orchestration gives a large-scale sense of tension and release in addition to order and chaos.

There are no alto saxophones in the composition, the top two woodwind instruments are assigned to soprano saxophone, resulting in a more spread woodwind section voicing, and allowing the soprano saxophone to double the lead trumpet at the octave in a higher register.

Unifying Components

Building on his reuse of material seen in “Samba Con Getchu,” the composition is constructed on the development and reuse of a two-measure motivic cell. This motivic cell is displaced, augmented, and inverted to create nearly all of the melodic content of
the composition. In contrast to this motivic cell, there is stepwise half-note motion
presented at rehearsal letters B and K. Brookmeyer’s use of pyramids to begin and end
the composition, also tie together elements of the composition.

**Boom Boom**

Melody and Rhythm

A multi-sectional and through-composed piece, the work relies more on the use of
counterpoint than the previous compositions studied. The melody is comprised of two
main themes, both of which are two-measure motivic cells that are embellished and
sequenced, comprising the melodic material of the composition. The first theme often
concludes with an augmentation of the second half of the motivic cell, this augmentation,
seen in measure 26 of the composition, is used as the main rhythmic device at the
conclusion of the composition. The second theme of “Boom Boom,” like the
composition’s first theme, is composed using a two measure melodic cell. The cell is
mostly syncopated quarter notes and has an evenly distributed ascending and descending
arc on a C dorian mode. Accompanying the second theme is a rhythmic augmentation
of the motivic cell. This augmentation is used as melodic material in tutti passages of the
piece, including measures 82 through 88, as well as a rhythmically displaced variation in
measures 196 through 226. The initial presentation of the second theme in measures 31
through 41 has a unison answer in the trumpets that melds the first and second themes.
The answer begins with a syncopated quarter-note figure derived from the second theme,
and is then concluded with a variation of the first two beats of the motivic cell from the
first theme. A reoccurring rhythmic device used in “Boom Boom” is consecutive
syncopation on the upbeat of two and the up beat of four. This can be seen in the
trombone accompaniment of the second theme, in the solo section, and in select tutti sections of the composition.

Ex. 30: Melodic material of “Boom Boom”

Form and Structure

The composition begins with a seven-measure rubato trombone solo accompanied by the rhythm section concluding on an F dominant chord. An eight-measure repeated
section with developing backgrounds on a B♭ pedal point follows the introduction. The eight-measure phrases set up an expectation for the listener, which is broken by the presentation of the first and second themes, and subsequent counterpoint, which consists of irregular phrases ranging from four to thirteen measures in length. These irregular phrases, with the presentation and development of the first and second themes alternate between B♭ pedal, and constantly shifting minor-seven and dominant chords.

The solo section continues this alternation between B♭ pedal and harmonic shifts, and uses two consecutive twelve-measure phrases, two eight-measure phrases, a nine-measure phrase, and a final eight-measure phrase for the soloist and the drummer. The tutti passage before the D.S. al Coda, is comprised of eight-measure phrases, concluding with a ten-measure phrase of group ad lib. (similar to the ab lib. used in “Ding Dong Ding”). The D.S. returns to the beginning of the solo section for an additional soloist.

The coda of the piece begins with a strong arrival and development of F, the dominant key area, resolving to B♭ in measure 262. The coda is comprised of eight-measure phrases, returning to the expectations that were set up for the listener at the beginning of the piece. Along with the full orchestration, tutti passages, and the strong dominant to tonic resolution, these eight-measure phrases give the piece a sense of stability and finality to conclude the composition.

Voicings and Vertical Sonorities

The voicings include quartal structures, clusters, chorale, and classic Basie four-part voicings. Similar to the compositions in his middle period, Brookmeyer incorporates the minor ninth interval in voicings, and occasionally uses two minor ninths in the same voicing. In sections of the composition where the ensemble is not completely
harmonized, the harmonic detail is often given to the trombone section, supporting unison melodies in the trumpets or saxophone sections.

Measure 53 through 56 is the only occasion in “Boom Boom” where the saxophone section is independent of the brass, and the saxophones are in a chorale-style voicing. When paired with the brass section, the saxophone voicings include chorale, four-part closed with the baritone saxophone doubling the lead alto down the octave, five-part drop two, and quartal voicings. In “Boom Boom,” the baritone saxophone plays as part of the trombone section more than the saxophone section, often doubling the bass trombone and occasionally the first trombone. The saxophone section spends much of the composition in unison, playing melodic lines in counterpoint with other sections of the ensemble.

Ex. 31: Saxophone voicings from “Boom Boom”

Throughout “Boom Boom,” the trumpet section has unison melody lines, two-part counterpoint, three- and four-part closed chords, and clusters. Unlike the previous compositions studied, the lead trumpet is doubled at the octave throughout the entire composition, often doubled by the second trumpet. The trombone section, spending most of the composition harmonized, utilizes chorale-style, quartal, closed, and spread voicings. In a few instances, the trombones are in unison, creating additional counterpoint with descending diatonic lines.
The composition contrasts between pedal sections and parts of fast harmonic movement. The sections of fast harmonic movement contain more traditional minor-seventh and dominant harmonies, resolving to the home key of B♭ major. In the areas of pedal point, the harmonic rhythm moves more slowly, and Brookmeyer makes use of moving major-seven and minor chords over the B♭ pedal. In some sections of counterpoint, where neither the rhythm section nor any wind section is harmonized, harmony is implied through counterpoint. Similar to “Samba Con Getchu” and “Ding Dong Ding,” the minor ninth interval appears in the harmony; however, it appears less frequently and in less prominent areas of the composition.

Brookmeyer uses a broad spectrum of harmonic densities, however, it is important to note that a change of density does not always correlate to a change in intensity. According to Rayburn Wright, “Sometimes Brookmeyer decreases the density and achieves greater intensity, or increases the density and achieves less intensity.” An example of this technique can be found at the coda of the piece, measure 238, when

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41 Rayburn Wright, Inside the Score: A Detailed Analysis of 8 Classic Jazz Ensemble Charts by Sammy Nestico, Thad Jones, and Bob Brookmeyer (Delevan, NY: Kendor Music, 1982)
Brookmeyer concludes the solo section with three tutti punctuations, the final of which is an octave unison for the horn section. This final punctuation is the most intense section of the passage, if not the entirety of the piece.

Ex. 33: Measures 235 through 238 of “Boom Boom”

Rhythm Section

The synthesizer, piano, and guitar are used as an extension of the woodwind and brass section of the ensemble, often reinforcing their melodic and harmonic material and adding to the texture. Even when these instruments go into a traditional comping role during the trumpet solos, they are given rhythmic notation to execute.

Orchestration

The addition of synthesizer to the rhythm section, which is a hallmark of Brookmeyer’s later work, reinforces the woodwind and brass sections of the ensemble. There are five trumpets and five trombones, the second trumpet often doubling with the lead trumpet resulting in a very clear, brassy melody. The fifth trombone part is a solo part for Brookmeyer to perform, and is absent from the piece after the solo concludes in the sixteenth measure. Unlike previous compositions studied, “Boom Boom,” though filled with tutti passages, has contrasting sections of counterpoint. Unlike the works studied in his middle period, “Boom Boom” does not have a pyramid.
Unifying Components

Brookmeyer’s use of B♭ pedal throughout the composition creates a unifying component as well as a clear point of resolution, tension, and release. Consecutive dotted quarter-note rhythms are present throughout the entire composition, and become the centerpiece of the conclusion of the composition.

Spirit Music: Happy Song

Melody and Rhythm

Similar to “Boom Boom,” “Happy Song” relies much more on the use of counterpoint than compositions studied from Brookmeyer’s early and middle career. Unlike “Boom Boom,” the contrapuntal material is occasionally cross-sectional, instead of being sectionalized in the saxophone and trumpet sections. The opening melodic statement employs cross-sectional counterpoint, and when looking at a composite of the melodic content, it is evident that the piece is based on variations and embellishments of short motivic cells. The first eight measures of the composition contain a rhythmic motive that is defined by a perfect fourth interval. The following eight-measure phrase contains a rhythmic motive that is primarily defined by stepwise motion. In the opening melodic statement and as the composition develops, this second rhythmic motive contains the interval of a third, which often acts as an enclosure. The opening melodic statement concludes with a more sustained twelve-measure phrase and a reiteration of the second motive and a concrete melodic resolution to the tonic key of C.

The piece also has a prominent accompaniment theme that is present in the trombones and rhythm section during the opening melodic statement and consists of
stepwise motion on beat one and beat four. This theme reoccurs, is varied, and is elongated throughout the composition.

Ex. 34: Opening melodic composite of “Happy Song”

Ex. 35: Accompaniment theme of “Happy Song”
Ex. 36: Variation of accompaniment theme of “Happy Song”

Form and Structure

The piece is through-composed and begins with a melodic statement of two eight-measure phrases and one twelve-measure phrase. The entire piece is primarily constructed on eight-measure phrases, but extended phrases are used in sections to give a sense of resolution. After the opening statement, there is an open trumpet solo over a four-measure vamp between D minor and E minor sonorities. Unison lines in the saxophones and trumpet sections form backgrounds for the final twenty-four measures of the trumpet solo. An additional eight-measure phrase of unison saxophone and trumpet counterpoint concludes this section followed by the entrance of harmonized trombones, as the composition shifts in stepwise motion to a B♭ minor key area for twelve measures. The key center quickly returns to twelve measures of the D minor to E minor motion as heard during the trumpet solo.

The harmony once again shifts in ascending stepwise motion arriving to D minor for five consecutive descending ensemble punctuations on beat four, the peak of which is a unison octave G. This strong arrival to G sets up a strong resolution to the home key of C, with an ostinato in the synthesizer and piano. Six eight-measure phrases of counterpoint between the saxophones and trumpet section with melodic material derived from diatonic stepwise motion are supported by variations of the accompaniment theme in the trombone section. Eight-measure descent returns the key area to G to setup a
resolution to C, and the return of the piano and synthesizer ostinato to accompany the soprano saxophone solo.

The soprano saxophone soloist is given two open eight-measure vamps with an eight-measure interlude in between. Following the second open section, twelve-measures of backgrounds behind the soprano saxophone solo leads the composition into an open section of trading between the piano and synthesizer. Similar to the soprano saxophone, the keyboard soloists have an interlude between solo sections. However, these interludes briefly move to a G pedal, where interludes for the saxophone solo remain in C. There is a final twelve-measure statement from the winds that resolves to a unison C, and the composition closes with a fadeout of the keyboard ostinato.

Voicings and Vertical Sonorities

Thinner voicings are present in the composition, utilizing open-fifths and unisons with more complicated voicings reserved for choice sections of the composition.

The saxophone section spends the majority of the composition in unison, playing melodic lines in counterpoint with other sections of the ensemble. When harmonized, the saxophone section is paired with the brass, and is often in open-fifths or chorale-style voicings. Occasionally, the saxophone section adds an additional tone to the trombone voicing, often times in the first tenor part. The saxophone section also reinforces the ostinato pattern in the keyboards. Similar to “Boom Boom,” the baritone saxophone functions as part of the trombone section more than the saxophone section, often doubling the bass trombone occasionally adding a tone to the trombone voicing.
Ex. 37: Saxophone voicings from “Happy Song”

Similar to the saxophone section, the trumpet section is playing unison counterpoint for a substantial portion of the composition. When harmonized, the trumpets are in three parts, often with second trumpet doubling lead trumpet, and fifth trumpet doubling fourth trumpet. Similar to “Boom Boom,” the lead trumpet is doubled at the octave for almost the entire composition. When the trumpets are in three-part voicings, the voicing is occasionally doubled down the octave by the trombone section. The three-part trumpet voicing can also pair with the trombone section to create five- or six-part voicing. In both of these instances, the voicing is accompanied by an open-fifth in the third and fourth trombone. In cases where the trumpet section is in a four-part voicing, it is in closed position, and occasionally the lead trombone doubles the fifth trumpet at the octave. The trombone voicings are very spread, utilizing intervals of fourths, fifths, and sixths. The baritone saxophone completes the trombone voicing throughout the composition.

Ex. 38: Brass voicings from “Happy Song”
Harmony

The harmony in the composition is the result of counterpoint lines in the unison saxophone and trumpet passages. The resulting harmonies from the counterpoint sections of the composition include open-fifth chords, suspended chords, and major sixth chords. When harmony is present, Brookmeyer often uses the harmony of a minor-seventh chord with an added eleventh. Similar to “Boom Boom,” the harmonic construction of “Happy Song” contrasts between fast-moving harmonies resolving to extend pedal areas. Also similar to “Boom Boom,” the harmonic density does not always correlate to a change in intensity. An example of this technique can be found in the approach to the unison octave G in measures 104 through 108. Very similar to a figure in “Boom Boom,” this final punctuation is the most intense section of the passage, if not the entirety of the piece.

Ex. 39: Measures 104 through 108 of “Happy Song”

Rhythm Section

The synthesizer and piano in this piece are used as an extension of the woodwind and brass sections of the ensemble, often reinforcing their melodic and harmonic material and adding to the texture. Even when these instruments go into a traditional comping role during the trumpet and soprano saxophone solos, they are given very specific voicings and rhythms to execute. There is a keyboard ostinato, which is a part of the
composition, and an accompaniment figure behind the soprano saxophone solo. Similar to the keyboards, the bass and drum set have meticulously notated parts. The bass is sustaining in the upper register for much of the composition.

Ex. 40: Keyboard ostinato from “Happy Song”

Orchestration

As in “Boom Boom,” the synthesizer is added to the rhythm section, but in this piece the guitar part is absent. There are five trumpets and four trombones, the lead trumpet often being doubled by another trumpet in the section. Building on the reed instrumentation seen in “Ding Dong Ding,” the upper three saxophones double on soprano saxophone. Unlike previous compositions studied, this piece makes use of cross-sectional writing in unison lines. Unlike the compositions from Brookmeyer’s middle period, “Happy Song” does not have a pyramid.

Unifying Components

Brookmeyer reuses both rhythmic and melodic material. The diatonic stepwise gesture seen in the initial melodic statement is used throughout the composition, as well as the accompaniment figure initially seen in the trombones, low reeds, and keyboards. The keyboard ostinato initially presented in measure 120 departs and returns in the composition on four separate occasions. As in “Boom Boom,” use of pedal throughout the composition creates a unifying component as well as a clear point of resolution, tension, and release.
CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS

Melody and Rhythm

Brookmeyer’s early period is defined by well-constructed melodies, with solo backgrounds and ensemble material having little relation to the original melody. The melodies of “Just Plain Meyer” and “Mt. Everest” both are AA1BC forms. The initial presentations contain repeated themes and motives giving rhythmic and melodic continuity.

Similarly, the melody of “Samba Con Getchu” follows a four-part form, though in this case it is much longer. “Ding Dong Ding,” however does not follow a strophic structure. In this middle period, Brookmeyer became more economical in melodic construction. A handful of themes inform melodic and rhythmic content within individual compositions, and certain melodic and rhythmic figures appear in multiple pieces. Comparing “Samba Con Getchu” and “Ding Dong Ding” shows evidence of rhythmic and melodic elements that are Brookmeyer’s personal compositional style.

Ex. 41: Melodic fragments from “Samba Con Getchu” and “Ding Dong Ding”
Unlike compositions from the early period, background and shout materials in compositions from his middle period are derived from rhythmic and melodic elements presented in the original melody.

In the late period, compositions are through-composed and developed from short motivic cells. A continuing component of his language from the middle period, these compositions incorporate much more counterpoint than the compositions from his early and middle period, similarities can be seen in his melodic construction between “Boom Boom” and “Happy Song.”
Ex. 44: Melodic lines from “Boom Boom” and “Happy Song”

These compositions incorporate much more counterpoint than the compositions from his early and middle period. Demonstrated in “Boom Boom” and “Happy Song,” Brookmeyer’s counterpoint writing transforms from being by section to being cross sectional.

Ex. 45: Counterpoint in “Boom Boom”

Ex. 46: Cross sectional counterpoint in “Happy Dance”
Form and Structure

Both “Just Plain Meyer” and “Mt. Everest” are strophic in form, “Just Plain Meyer” being four and one-half choruses in length, and “Mt. Everest” having two complete choruses and two half choruses. Both have an eight-measure tutti introduction. Both modulate multiple times, with the first modulation by a perfect fifth. “Just Plain Meyer” continues to modulate in perfect fifths, and “Mt. Everest” moves to other key areas via the use of pedal point. Both employ short transitions as vehicles for modulation: a four-measure vibraphone solo in “Just Plain Meyer,” and a seventeen-measure pedal point in “Mt. Everest.”

Similar to early-period compositions, “Samba Con Getchu” is strophic, but with a much longer form (ninety-two measures) containing just one and one-half choruses in total. “Ding Dong Ding” instead employs eight-measure phrases with one- or two-measure extensions, and utilizes larger key areas with extended pedal sections in C and Db. Both contain introductions, but these are presented by solo rhythm section instruments rather than the full ensemble. Reuse of material and form is significant in both, accomplished in part by the use of a da capo al coda in “Samba Con Getchu” and a del segno al coda in “Ding Dong Ding.”

Unlike early-period compositions, “Samba Con Getchu” does not modulate, but “Ding Dong Ding” modulates between C and D♭, and ends in the key of F. The relationship between C and F key areas in “Ding Dong Ding” reflect the perfect fifth relationship in modulations seen in early-period compositions.

“Boom Boom” and “Happy Song” are both through-composed pieces. Similar to compositions from the early and middle periods, “Boom Boom” has an introduction, but
is rubato and uses just rhythm section and trombone soloist; there is no introduction in “Happy Song.” Both compositions make use of eight-measure phrases, but “Boom Boom” later makes use of irregular phrases, and “Happy Song” adds extensions to some phrases to give a sense of resolution. Both compositions alternate between sections of pedal point and sections of increased root and harmonic movement. Like “Ding Dong Ding,” “Boom Boom” has a del segno al coda, but here it is used for an additional soloist. Both compositions have development sections with accentuation of the dominant key area resolving to tonic.

The form, harmony, placement, and instructions of solo sections changed over time. “Just Plain Meyer” has a repeated strophic solo section, with later solo injections from the tenor saxophone and vibraphone, as opposed to “Mt. Everest,” which has no solo section. The solo sections in his middle period become more clearly defined where “Samba Con Getchu” and “Ding Dong Ding” both have the first solo section over a form, with remaining solo sections open over a vamp.

The later solos in middle-period compositions are open over static harmony or no harmonic structure. In the late-period compositions, Brookmeyer still employs static harmony in solo sections, but in contrast, the second solo section in “Boom Boom” is a balance between B♭ pedal and constant harmonic shifts with rhythmic anticipations of harmony notated in the rhythm section.

The solo sections in the late period differ from the middle period in placement. Solo sections in “Boom Boom” and “Happy Song” are placed early in the composition, where in the middle period the solo sections occur after long melodic statements.
In “Ding Dong Ding,” Brookmeyer gives explicit instructions to the soloists, such as “ad lib notes like melody,” and “Unaccompanied piano solo, about one minute – In tempo based on the tune if desired. End the solo with first sixteen bars of the tune, music-box style, like at the beginning.” Similar instructions are given in “Happy Song” during the soprano saxophone solo (“Begin Diatonic”), and the keyboard solos (“Trade fours then wind up together”). Instructions like these are absent in “Boom Boom,” but may not have been necessary since Brookmeyer himself was the featured soloist.

Over the course of Brookmeyer’s career, it appears the climax point of his compositions shift. In “Just Plain Meyer” and “Mt. Everest,” the climaxes occur at the very last chord, where in “Samba Con Getchu” and “Ding Dong Ding” they occur just before the end of the composition. The highpoint of “Boom Boom” occurs approximately two-thirds through the composition on an octave unison B♭. The climax of “Happy Song” occurs one-third through the composition on an octave unison G, a very similar gesture to the climax of “Boom Boom.”

Ex. 47: Climax points of “Boom Boom” and “Happy Song”
Voicings and Vertical Sonorities

In Brookmeyer’s early period, the majority of the voicings are derived from what Rayburn Wright calls the classic Basie four-part voicing. In “Just Plain Meyer” three-note trumpet voicings are occasionally used and the three-member trombone section can double the trumpet voicing down the octave. In “Mt. Everest” the presence of a fourth trombone and fifth trumpet allow for the lead voice to be reinforced at the octave. Quartal structures, clusters, and the minor ninth interval in voicings are present, but occur less frequently than in later works.

Ex. 48: Early-period voicings

In the middle period, more complex and dissonant voicings were favored. Use of the minor ninth interval is more prevalent, and is occasionally found in pairs moving in parallel motion (see example 49). Clusters become more frequently used as seen in both “Samba Con Getchu” and “Ding Dong Ding.”

Ex. 49: Middle-period voicings
In Brookmeyer’s later work, voicings become simplified, with the use of open-fifths and greater reliance on unison lines in counterpoint. He incorporates quartal structures, clusters, chorale, and classic Basie four-part voicings. Similar to the compositions of the middle period, Brookmeyer makes use of the minor ninth interval in voicings, and occasionally uses two minor ninths in the same voicing.

Ex. 50: Late-period voicings

Employing mostly Basie four-part voicings in early-period compositions, the middle period went to harmonic extremes. Voicings in later works thinned out, but Basie-style voicings were still incorporated. Use of clusters and the minor ninth interval in voicings appear in compositions throughout Brookmeyer’s career.

Ex. 51: Minor ninth intervals in Brookmeyer’s voicings
Ex. 52: Clusters in Brookmeyer’s voicings

Harmony

In the early period, Brookmeyer predominantly uses four-part harmony with occasional moments of five-part harmony. In the case of “Just Plain Meyer” and “Mt. Everest,” as the composition progresses, the harmony becomes more sophisticated, utilizing up to six-part harmony. In minor sonorities, Brookmeyer often added the eleventh to the minor-seventh chord. These pieces also make use of diminished passing, chromatic planing, and diatonic planing techniques.

Brookmeyer’s middle period can be defined harmonically by the frequent use of six- to eight-part, and occasionally up to nine-part harmonies with multiple extensions present, occasionally with natural and altered extensions happening concurrently. The compositions in his middle period also make greater use of suspended dominant sonorities, occasionally still including the third of the chord. Brookmeyer also incorporates poly chords in his compositions, most notably the resulting chord of the initial pyramid of “Ding Dong Ding.”

“Boom Boom” contrasts between pedal sections and parts of fast harmonic movement. In the areas of pedal point, the harmonic rhythm moves slower, and Brookmeyer makes use of moving major-seven and minor chords over the B♭ pedal. The sections of fast harmonic movement contain more traditional minor-seventh and
dominant harmonies resolving to the home key of B♭ major. In some contrapuntal sections, where neither the rhythm section nor any wind section is harmonized, the harmony is implied rather than clearly stated.

Brookmeyer’s harmonic vocabulary progressed through his career, gradually adding density up through his middle period. The compositions of his late period turned away from dense harmonies and Brookmeyer favored counterpoint. Consistent throughout his career was the frequent addition of the eleventh to minor sonorities.

Ex. 53: Select minor chords in Brookmeyer’s compositions

Rhythm Section

In the rhythm section writing from his early period, the piano plays a comping role with chord symbols and slash notation and the notated walking bass line in the bass clef staff. The bass lines are notated throughout the compositions, and the drum set is given slashes with some notated figures to accentuate syncopated brass figures.

The piano in Brookmeyer’s middle-period compositions continues to play a comping role with chord symbols and slash notation with the bass line notated in the bass clef. In “Ding Dong Ding” the piano plays a melodic role and participates in ensemble figures. Just as in his early-period compositions the bass part is notated in its entirety outside of solo sections, but in the middle period departs from standard walking bass lines. The drum set is given more liberties in “Samba Con Getchu” versus meticulous
notion in “Ding Dong Ding,” but in the middle period, the drum set becomes a transitory instrument with phrases of solo space to set up new sections of the compositions.

The addition of the synthesizer to the rhythm section helps define Brookmeyer’s late period, and paired with piano, bass, and the occasional guitar part, the rhythm section acts as an extension of the woodwind and brass section of the ensemble, often reinforcing their melodic and harmonic material and adding to the texture. Even when these instruments go into traditional comping roles, they are given very specific notation, or at least rhythmic notation to execute. The drum set parts in Brookmeyer’s late period are meticulously notated, but similar to his middle period, the instrument creates transitions between sections of the composition.

Brookmeyer’s rhythm section writing becomes more specific and notated over the course of his career. After his early period, he appears to depart from a standard walking bass line in favor of pedal points and ostinato patterns. The piano ostinatos in “Ding Dong Ding” and “Happy Song” share a striking resemblance, and this kind of gesture may help define Brookmeyer’s compositional style.

Ex. 54: Piano ostinatos from “Ding Dong Ding” and “Happy Song”

Orchestration

In the early period, the band Brookmeyer was composing for defined the orchestration of the composition. The Terry Gibbs Dream Band only had three
trombone players, and the addition of a vibraphone, which was expected to be a featured soloist. The project with Chubby Jackson had a larger orchestration of five trumpets and four trombones. In both “Just Plain Meyer” and “Mt. Everest” the highest lead trumpet note is a high F, reserved for the end of the compositions.

During Brookmeyer’s middle period, composing for the Thad Jones / Mel Lewis Orchestra, the brass and woodwinds are often playing tutti, instead of the woodwind section playing opposite the brass section. Brookmeyer begins experimenting with doubles, including the option for all parts to play Latin percussion instruments on “Samba Con Getchu” and using two soprano saxophones on “Ding Dong Ding.” It is during this period that Brookmeyer is using pyramids as a compositional device. In “Ding Dong Ding,” Brookmeyer indicates an ensemble ad lib. section, creating an extremely dense texture. During this period, Brookmeyer also uses octave unisons in his compositions, which is also seen in his later work.

The addition of synthesizer to the rhythm section helps define the orchestration of Brookmeyer’s late period. During this period, Brookmeyer writes for five trumpets, the lead trumpet often being doubled by another trumpet in the section resulting in a very clear, brassy melody. Compositions during this period, though including tutti passages, in contrast have sections of counterpoint. Brookmeyer’s use of doubles continues in “Happy Song” with three soprano saxophones in the woodwind section. The two compositions in studied from the late period do not contain pyramids like the works from the middle period.
Unifying Components

Compositions from Brookmeyer’s early period contained well-constructed melodic statements with many unifying components, but he abandons his themes in favor of other melodic statements as the compositions progress. In both “Just Plain Meyer” and “Mt. Everest,” Brookmeyer presents a new theme that is repeated with slight variation, and the new theme informs the melodic content of the ending of the composition.

Middle-period compositions show a greater use of material, including melodies, rhythms, and voicings. Development and reuse of short melodic fragments and motivic cells become Brookmeyer’s main approach to composition. Brookmeyer’s use of pyramids also ties together elements of the compositions.

Brookmeyer’s use of pedal point throughout his late-period compositions creates a unifying component as well as a clear point of resolution, tension, and release. Variations on short rhythmic and melodic cells resulting in predominately diatonic eighth note stepwise melodies define this period.

Over the course of his career, Brookmeyer became more economical with his melodic and rhythmic content, favoring short motivic cells in his middle and late periods. Starting his composition career inspired by the Count Basie orchestra many of his voicings and harmonies reflect the music of the Basie orchestra. In his middle period he went to harmonic and voicing extremes with numerous extensions, use of multiple minor ninth intervals, and extreme density. In his late career, he stripped down to more simple and open harmonies, relying more on counterpoint, and saving more dense complicated voicings for specific sections of the compositions.
Brookmeyer’s interest in doubles is apparent in his middle and late career, especially with the addition of the synthesizer in the rhythm section. His rhythm section notation became more detailed over time and after his early period; he abandoned standard walking bass lines.

By tracing the continuity and change over the course of Brookmeyer’s career, this research has brought new insight into his compositional style, adds to the understanding and proliferation of his music and legacy, and provides tools for studying and listening to his compositions. The recognition of Brookmeyer’s periodization and stylistic diversity will allow jazz musicians and ensemble leaders to make more informed decisions about programming should they choose to perform his works.
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Recordings


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Secondary Materials


APPENDIX

SCORE REDUCTIONS
Just Plain Meyer

Sax

Brass

Rhythm

Harmonic Detail
Just Plain Meyer

SECOND COLUMNS

Chromatic Pattern
Mt. Everest Analysis

Presence of minor and absent 5th

BASS

TRUMPET FEAT.

BRASS

RHYTHM

HARMONIC DETAIL

SAX

BASS

BRASS

RHYTHM

HARMONIC DETAIL
Samba Con Getchu

Sax

Trumpet

Rhythm

Harmonic Detail

Sax

Trumpet

Rhythm

Harmonic Detail
Samba Con Getchu
Samba Con Getchu

Sax

Brass

Rhythm

Harmonic

Detail

25

Sax

Brass

Rhythm

Harmonic

Detail
Ding Dong Ding
Ding Dong Ding
Ding Dong Ding
Boom Boom

Bob Brookmeyer New Art Orchestra "New Works"

Tempo (♩= 80)

Sax

Brass

Rhythm

Harmonic Detail

Repeat until cue (or 6 times)
Boom Boom

Saxes

Brass

Rhythm

Harmonic Detail

Saxes

Brass

Rhythm

Harmonic Detail
Spirit Music: IV. Happy Song