

Fundamental Approach for Reed Quintet:
A Method Book for Developing Chamber Musicians

by

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A Research Paper Presented in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Musical Arts

Approved November 2023 by the
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ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY

December 2023

ABSTRACT

The reed quintet is an intriguing and innovative chamber ensemble that offers a distinctive soundscape to the genre of chamber music. Through significant efforts to legitimize the ensemble, the reed quintet now exists as a viable option for chamber musicians. However, a significant challenge remains in the limited accessibility of repertoire suitable for developing musicians interested in reed quintets. *REED REVOLUTION: A Fundamental Approach to Reed Quintet* represents a comprehensive solution, offering aspiring student chamber musicians the essential pedagogical tools and materials needed to excel in a reed quintet setting.

This method book encompasses a wide array of strategies aimed at fostering a functional and collaborative ensemble, establishing foundational chamber music skills, and introducing five original compositions commissioned specifically for this project. With *REED REVOLUTION*, student reed quintets can begin their chamber music journey equipped with tools to become a successful ensemble prepared to explore the existing reed quintet repertoire. Additionally, the method book includes a collection of online resources and recordings, performed by the Arcane Reed Quintet, produced by Dr. Joshua Gardner, and recorded by Jin Studios, LLC. These resources include reference recordings and practice tracks for each instrument and the ensemble, serving as invaluable aids in the learning process.

DEDICATION

To my life-long partner and loving wife, Audrey. Your willingness to sacrifice during my academic career means more than I can say. I'm so excited to build the next chapter of our lives, hand in hand.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My deepest thanks to each of my mentors during my academic studies: Professor John Nichol, Dr. Jonathan Nichol, and Dr. Christopher Creviston. Your consistent guidance and willingness to walk alongside me on my journey shaped me into the person and musician that I am. It is such a gift to know that you will always be willing to give me continued support and encouragement as I embark on my future career and life journey. I would also like to extend my thanks to my committee members Dr. Joshua Gardner and Dr. Nicholas Shea.

The musical collaborations I've had the privilege to be part of are among the most cherished experiences of my life. I want to express my heartfelt gratitude to my dear friends and fellow members of the Zenith, Codex, and Flora Quartets: Parker Fritz, Diego Kieliszewski, Taylor Huitema, Alexis Seah, Jacob Nance, Jared Waters, Jade Deatherage, and Bonson Lee.

I would also like to offer special thanks to the members of the Arcane Reed Quintet: Lauren Glomb, Michael Robinson, John Harden, and Bradley Johnson. Our time as an ensemble served as the true catalyst for the creation of this method book. Thank you for your friendship and for your vital roles in bringing this project to fruition.

The five composers who generously agreed to contribute to this project are not only outstanding musicians but also wonderful individuals: Tyler Mazone, Jenni Watson, Josh Trentadue, Chris Hass, and Parker Fritz. Each of them made a significant contribution to the reed quintet repertoire, and it was a joy to collaborate with them. Additionally, a big thank you to Leon Jin and Dr. Joshua Gardner, whose masterful

recording and producing work brought these new pieces to life and played a crucial role in creating valuable resources for students.

Lastly, I am eternally appreciative of each of my family members. The love and support I have received from Tennessee and Michigan have been a strong and unwavering presence in my life and Audrey's. Your support has served as a foundational pillar for both of us, and we are forever grateful.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
LIST OF TABLES	viii
LIST OF FIGURES	ix
CHAPTER	
1 INTRODUCTION	1
2 REED QUINTET BACKGROUND	4
3 REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE	6
Reed Quintet Repertoire	6
Method Books	9
4 <i>REED REVOLUTION</i> DESIGN	12
Intent and Design	12
Preface	14
Chapter 1: Chamber Music 101	17
Chapter 2: Rehearsal Techniques	19
Chapter 3: Cueing and Non-Verbal Communication	20
Chapter 4: Tone and Intonation	23
Chapter 5: Balance and Blend	26
Chapter 6: Matching Articulation	28
Chapter 7: Reed Quintet Pieces	30
5 <i>THE POWER OF "YET"</i> (GRADE 2)	33
Composer Biography	33
Program Notes	33

CHAPTER	Page
Performance Guide	33
6 <i>THE PULL</i> (GRADE 2.5).....	36
Composer Biography	36
Program Notes	37
Performance Guide	37
7 <i>TURBULENT CYCLES</i> (GRADE 3).....	40
Composer Biography	40
Program Notes	40
Performance Guide	41
8 <i>ETERNAL ASCENT</i> (GRADE 3.5)	45
Composer Biography	45
Program Notes	45
Performance Guide	46
9 <i>CELEBRATION LOOPS</i> (GRADE 4).....	50
Composer Biography	50
Program Notes	51
Performance Guide	51
10 DIGITAL RESOURCES	55
11 CONCLUSION	57
BIBLIOGRAPHY	58

CHAPTER	Page
APPENDIX	
A ONLINE RESOURCE LIST.....	60
B <i>REED REVOLUTION: A FUNDAMENTAL APPROACH TO REED QUINTET</i>	64

LIST OF TABLES

Table	Page
1. Standard Reed Quintet Instrument Information	16

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure	Page
1. Breath Cue Visual.....	21
2. Excerpt from the “Reading Cues” Exercise.....	22
3. Just Intonation Diagram	25
4. Excerpt from the “Half-Step Descent” Exercise	28
5. <i>Celebration</i> Loops, Optional Bass Clarinet Notes, mm. 114-117	31
6. <i>The Power of “Yet,”</i> Instances of Unison Articulations, mm. 21-26.....	35
7. <i>The Pull</i> , Passing Figure between Instruments, m. 41	38
8. <i>The Pull</i> , Audible Breath Motive, mm. 47-48.....	39
9. <i>Turbulent Cycles</i> , Passing Sixteenth-Note Figure, m. 23-26.....	42
10. <i>Turbulent Cycles</i> , Optional Growl Technique, mm. 51-53.....	43
11. <i>Eternal Ascent</i> , Section of Multiple Tempo Changes, mm. 41-48	48
12. <i>Celebration</i> Loops, Implied Seven-Four Time Feel, mm. 1-4.....	52
13. <i>Celebration</i> Loops, Hocket Rhythm Section, mm. 178-183.....	53

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This project was devised not only with students in mind but also as a valuable resource for public school music educators. I envision the dedicated band director who wants the best for their students, but whose energy and time is consumed by zero-hour jazz band rehearsals, after school marching band practices, parent band booster meetings, holiday parade planning, annual band trip fundraising, and the end of semester concert preparations. Even if this director acknowledges the immense benefits that chamber music can offer their students, they often lack the time or resources required to implement such a program.

Chamber music provides an ideal platform for students searching for an extra musical challenge or an opportunity to connect with their peers. Within a smaller, more intimate chamber music setting, students can further develop their playing abilities and interpersonal skills. Students often develop a strong sense of ownership within their ensemble, which in turn, enhances their motivation to improve as musicians and individuals. Additionally, the communication and independence skills gained through chamber music often extend to other facets of a student's life. It is with this in mind that I embarked on a mission to create a resource for these students and educators, offering them a comprehensive approach to chamber music through the reed quintet.

REED REVOLUTION: A Fundamental Approach to Reed Quintet serves as a chamber music method book designed to equip students with necessary skills to form and thrive in a reed quintet. Imagine the band director mentioned previously — they can take five of their woodwind section leaders, place them in a room with *REED REVOLUTION*,

and leave them with nothing more. With this method book, these students will possess all the tools necessary to create a high-level chamber music experience for themselves.

This method book has been carefully crafted to provide students with a streamlined approach to performing in a reed quintet. Whether students are experienced chamber musicians or newcomers to chamber music, *REED REVOLUTION: A Fundamental Approach to Reed Quintet* is designed to meet them at their current level and provide the framework needed to excel in a reed quintet. The book begins with suggestions and strategies to help students collaborate effectively with one another. These early chapters address common interpersonal challenges that can prove to be detrimental to any chamber ensemble. The initial chapters are meant to be studied without instruments, offering social strategies that facilitate the development of meaningful relationships among quintet members.

Next, the book introduces exercises and content aimed at establishing a strong foundation in chamber music skills, including tone, intonation, blend, balance, and articulation. These exercises are intended to be continuously referenced and utilized throughout a quintet's musical development. Each exercise focuses on a specific technique or skill, while still including elements developed in earlier chapters of the book.

Thus far, the focus of the reed quintet has been to establish its place within the chamber music community, transitioning from a novelty to a recognized and appreciated chamber ensemble. This shift has been fueled by the efforts of professional reed quintets like Calefax and Akropolis Reed Quintet, who achieved such through recordings, commissions, special projects, and competition successes.

I argue that the primary goal of reed quintets must now shift to address the level of accessibility of the ensemble. Currently, most compositions for reed quintets are geared towards graduate-level students or professionals, rendering the existing repertoire largely inaccessible to developing chamber musicians. With this issue in mind, I commissioned five diverse, international composers to write pieces that form the final chapter of this method book. These compositions are designed to align with the band rating system, spanning Grades 2, 2.5, 3, 3.5, and 4. As students progress through the workbook and master each of the five provided pieces, they will acquire the essential skill and experience needed to perform the existing repertoire for reed quintet. The five composers commissioned for this project are Tyler Mazone, Jenni Watson, Josh Trentadue, Chris Evan Hass, and Parker Fritz.

Lastly, *REED REVOLUTION* includes a free online resource for students that includes professional recordings of each of the five works performed by the Arcane Reed Quintet. These recordings will serve as reference recordings for any student ensemble working on these pieces. Additionally, this online resource will offer multiple practice tracks for students to utilize while learning and practicing the compositions. These practice recordings will include tracks where each of the instrument's volume is digitally amplified or reduced. This versatility will allow students to practice with a primary focus on their own part or to perform primarily while listening to the other four instruments.

CHAPTER 2

REED QUINTET BACKGROUND

A wind quartet from the Netherlands consisting of oboe, two saxophones, and bassoon began their chamber music journey by commissioning a composition for their novel ensemble, enlisting the talents of composer Willem van Manen. However, their expectations were met with an unexpected twist when van Manen composed a work for a quintet, introducing the B-flat clarinet into their ensemble. This change markedly enriched the palette of colors in the ensemble.¹

Notably, the quintet encountered a challenge related to the balance within the ensemble. The presence of two saxophones proved to be overpowering, prompting one of the members to make a pivotal switch to the bass clarinet.² This modification was ultimately adopted as the standard instrumentation for what we now recognize as a *reed quintet*: oboe, B-flat clarinet, alto saxophone, bass clarinet, and bassoon.

In 1985, the group adopted the name Calefax, and they are widely recognized as the first established reed quintet.³ Calefax quickly embarked on a pioneering journey, establishing the identity of this new chamber ensemble. The ensemble's impact was a result of their extensive concertizing, commissioning new works, arranging historic pieces, and recording professional albums. They have become synonymous with the reed quintet's growth, boasting an impressive catalog of over 180 original compositions dedicated to the ensemble.⁴ In crafting their concert programs and recording projects,

¹ "Calefax," Short History, Accessed September 1, 2023, web.archive.org/web/20150912015536/calefax.nl/en/biography-2/shorthistory/

² Ibid.

³ "The Rise of the Reed Quintet," Chamber Music America, Accessed September 1, 2023, chambermusicamerica.org/articles/the-rise-of-the-reed-quintet/.

⁴ Ibid.

Calefax drew inspiration from a diverse range of musical genres, including classical, jazz, and improvisation. Additionally, their repertoire included approximately 250 arrangements for reed quintet, including renowned compositions such as Ravel’s “Le Tombeau de Couperin” and Bach’s “Goldberg Variations.”⁵

Calefax’s creative pursuits eventually inspired musicians from around the globe to form their own reed quintets. These newly formed ensembles continued to contribute to the growth and recognition of the reed quintet as a legitimate chamber music ensemble. Notable among them are the Akropolis Reed Quintet, Paradise Winds Reed Quintet, and Splinter Reed Quintet, all of which have left significant marks on the reed quintet discography, expanded its repertoire, and garnered widespread recognition.⁶

The efforts of modern composers have also played a pivotal role in legitimizing the reed quintet. Established composers including Marc Mellits, David Biedenbender, Stacy Garrop, and Gregory Wanamaker have all composed for the reed quintet, significantly contributing to its recognition within the chamber music community. Their compositions have enriched the repertoire and further solidified the reed quintet as a noteworthy choice for contemporary chamber music.

For any chamber ensemble to establish itself within the musical landscape, a robust and diverse repertoire is essential. Through the visionary efforts of pioneering reed quintets, the available literature for the reed quintet has steadily expanded. This growth includes the inclusion of high-quality compositions that have added substantial value to the chamber music community, cementing the reed quintet as a respected and vital ensemble in the chamber music genre.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid.

CHAPTER 3

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Reed Quintet Repertoire

As the reed quintet embarked on its journey to establish a firm foothold in the chamber music genre, it became evident that the existing repertoire, developed through commissions and arrangements, primarily catered to professional or graduate-level musicians possessing the high-level skills required for successful performances. However, a noticeable void currently exists in the reed quintet repertoire, leaving early-stage chamber musicians without suitable options for meaningful participation in student reed quintets.

For the reed quintet to become more accessible to beginning chamber musicians, it is imperative to expand the existing list of works with repertoire tailored to their proficiency levels. Weatherly emphasizes that it is the responsibility of the music educator to offer appropriate repertoire for beginning chamber musicians.⁷ When students embark on their journey as chamber musicians, it is crucial to nurture their enjoyment and familiarity with the music they encounter. Zelenak encourages educators to “refrain from requiring students to perform music beyond their ability level. This practice may have a negative influence on student self-efficacy resulting in poor performances and a lack of interest in music.”⁸ Beginner and intermediate-level repertoire can play a pivotal role in honing essential skills like intonation, collaboration, blend, and more. The true

⁷ Katie I.C. Ho Weatherly, “Chamber Music for All: Highlighting the Voices of Beginner Musicians,” *The Strad*, February 17, 2022, <https://www.thestrاد.com/education-hub/chamber-music-for-all-highlighting-the-voices-of-beginner-musicians/14487.article>.

⁸ Michael S. Zelenak, “Measuring the Sources of Self-Efficacy Among Secondary School Music Students,” *Journal of Research in Music Education* 62, 4 (2015): 389–404, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022429414555018>.

challenge for educators and composers lies in crafting works that match students' levels while upholding musical quality and artistic integrity. Without a reservoir of quality, accessible repertoire for developing reed quintets, this ensemble will remain out of reach for student-level musicians, hindering the growth and trajectory of the reed quintet as a chamber ensemble.

In assessing the existing reed quintet repertoire, Szabo's comprehensive bibliography of reed quintet works stands as a valuable resource.⁹ It comprises an extensive database of compositions written for reed quintets, offering program information, concise discussions of form and style, and difficulty level assessments for each of the 111 documented works. Szabo has meticulously categorized the works into four ability levels: Beginning, Intermediate, Advanced, and Professional.¹⁰ However, even with a category designated for "Beginning" works, Szabo astutely notes, "At this time, there are very few beginning level pieces for reed quintet, and none of them are included in this document."¹¹ This observation by Szabo highlights a fundamental issue within the reed quintet repertoire: the lack of pieces tailored for beginning reed quintets, despite the apparent need. Szabo's bibliography comprises 37 intermediate, 63 advanced, and 11 professional works for reed quintet.¹² This unmistakably highlights a substantial gap in the reed quintet repertoire which excludes numerous student chamber musicians from engaging with this ensemble. Szabo states, "Having beginning repertoire will help reed quintets propagate in more school, educational and amateur performance settings."¹³

⁹ Natalie Szabo, "An Annotated Bibliography of Original Reed Quintet Repertoire," DMA diss., (Florida State University, 2016), http://purl.flvc.org/fsu/fd/FSU_2016SP_Szabo_fsu_0071E_13043.

¹⁰ Szabo, "Annotated Reed Quintet Bibliography," 4.

¹¹ Szabo, "Annotated Reed Quintet Bibliography," 5.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Ibid.

Addressing this gap is pivotal in ensuring that the reed quintet continues to flourish as a viable and inclusive chamber music option for students and musicians of varying skill levels.

Method Books

There are currently no existing method books written for reed quintets. In general, very few method books or educational material written to address the topic of chamber music specifically. Nonetheless, multiple resources were used as references throughout the development of *REED REVOLUTION: A Fundamental Approach to Reed Quintet*, including method books and educational documents designed for either instrument solo studies, chamber ensembles, or wind band. These references provided valuable insights, exercises, and unique methods that underpinned the foundational skills necessary for collaboration and performance in developing musicians. Analyzing existing literature revealed standard best practices, offering essential guidance and inspiration for the creation of *REED REVOLUTION*.

A pivotal consideration while crafting *REED REVOLUTION* was achieving the right tone and ensuring the readability of the text. Because this book is intended to be a holistic method for students who may or may not have a chamber music coach, it was very important to me that the exercises and methods were written in such a way that students could decipher and implement the content into their rehearsals without further explanation. *Voicing: An Approach to the Saxophone's Third Register* by Donald Sinta is written in an accessible way, regardless of experience level.¹⁴ This text, regardless of the reader's experience level, offers clear, concise, and easily understood explanations for each exercise. Furthermore, the progression of difficulty throughout the book's exercises is consistent and accessible. Similar accessibility was sought when crafting each exercise and accompanying explanations in *REED REVOLUTION*. The overall design and

¹⁴ Donald J. Sinta, *Voicing: An Approach to the Saxophone's Third Register* (Blaris Publications, 2008).

sequencing of exercises in *REED REVOLUTION* parallel the logical progression found in Sinta's method book. As students work through *REED REVOLUTION*, they gradually build their collaborative skills, develop the foundational elements of chamber music performance, and ultimately apply these skills to a set of pieces specifically designed for their current proficiency level.

The Sinta Quartet released their saxophone quartet method in *Chops 3*, an in-depth exploration into practical exercises and necessary skills for any saxophone quartet, regardless of age or skill level.¹⁵ The depth of topics and exercises in *Chops 3* challenged me to review the exercises I included and developed in *REED REVOLUTION*. It prompted a critical review of the exercises and compelled the inclusion of a more comprehensive range of exercises and explanations in various topics. For example, in the early stages of development of my method book, Chapter Three: Cueing and Non-Verbal Communication was underdeveloped and did not include nearly as much of the valuable information that it does now. It was through the review of *Chops 3* that allowed me to see the importance of including a deeper level of exercises and explanation into each topic.

The Rubank Educational Library's method books were another valuable resource during the development of *REED REVOLUTION*.¹⁶ In the Rubank Elementary, Intermediate, and Advanced Methods, the inclusion of duets in each book emphasizes the importance of collaboration and ensemble playing in a student's musical development, regardless of their current skill level.¹⁷ These methods also offered a proven approach of

¹⁵ Dan Graser, et al, *CHOPS 3: The Sinta Quartet Method* (Conway Publications, 2021).

¹⁶ N. W. Hovey, et al., *Rubank Educational Library* (Hal Leonard Corporation, 1933-1993).

¹⁷ Ibid.

introducing new concepts in a sequential manner, building upon previously acquired skills.

Finally, educational resources and methods for wind bands provided examples of foundational skills essential for group music making. Many of the topics addressed in wind band methods, such as intonation, balance, blend, technique, and articulation, seamlessly transfer to the chamber music setting, further enriching the content and approach of *REED REVOLUTION*. In Heavner's analysis of beginning band method books, a thorough examination was conducted on five popular band method books using a "comprehensive musicianship" model.¹⁸ This model consists of five categories: concepts, content, activities, instructional literature, and evaluation. Ultimately, Heavner finds that the "...*Standard of Excellence* matched the theoretical comprehensive musicianship curriculum model in overall comprehensive musicianship scores."¹⁹ This notion of overall musicianship, as explored by Heavner, significantly influenced the overarching design and extensive content of *REED REVOLUTION*.

¹⁸ Heavner, Tracy Lee., "An Analysis of Beginning Band Method Books for Principles of Comprehensive Musicianship.," (Order No. 9542099, University of Northern Colorado, 1995), 143.
<http://login.ezproxy1.lib.asu.edu/login?url=https://www.proquest.com/dissertations-theses/analysis-beginning-band-method-books-principles/docview/304225036/se-2> (accessed October 3, 2023).

¹⁹ Ibid.

CHAPTER 4

REED REVOLUTION DESIGN

Intent and Design

The primary objective of *REED REVOLUTION* is to serve as a comprehensive resource, guiding students through a holistic approach to develop a group of young chamber musicians into a thriving reed quintet. This method book addresses aspects of performing and collaborating within a chamber ensemble. It not only places significant emphasis on carefully designed exercises to enhance the students' playing abilities but also instructs the ensemble on how to collaborate effectively.

The initial portion of this method book is dedicated exclusively to guiding students through the process of effective collaboration within their quintet. These chapters do not contain musical examples, but instead consist of written guides and aimed at developing interpersonal skills. Without the ability to connect, resolve disagreements, and assume individual responsibilities, technical exercises alone cannot remedy a reed quintet's inability to collaborate. In addition to building a healthy, collaborative environment, students will also learn the fundamentals of conducting effective chamber music rehearsals.

The focus of *REED REVOLUTION* transitions to developing the students' foundational chamber music skills. As the ensemble progresses through each chapter and consistently refers to these exercises during rehearsals, they will refine their tone, group sound, intonation, cues, balance, blend, and articulation. Students are challenged throughout the book to focus on the primary goal of each exercise while simultaneously attending to other foundational skills. For instance, students must strive for excellent

intonation while working through an exercise intended to improve overall group balance and blend. These exercises are designed to improve individual performance while also emphasizing group cohesion.

In response to the evident need for appropriately leveled repertoire for student reed quintets, the final section of *REED REVOLUTION* offers students a selection of pieces composed specifically for this method book. These compositions progressively increase in difficulty and length, targeting the students' current stage of musical development. Each composer involved in this commission project was assigned a specific grade level for their composition, following the American band grading system, which ranks pieces on their level of difficulty. While it's important to note that there is no standardized grading system across publishers, the band grading system typically categorizes pieces by difficulty rather than by student age, allowing for flexibility in selecting repertoire. In her review of current American band grading systems, Baugher writes:

It is somewhat challenging to define what makes up each grade in the grading system because there are multiple grading systems in use. Some only go from 1-5, other 1-6, and others use a .5 to split the difference in grade level. There is not an agreed upon grading system and often one piece will be graded differently by different publishers.²⁰

With no standardized grading system, the composers referenced various sources and drew from their previous experiences in composing for student musicians when crafting these works. The overarching goal to create an accessible collection of reed quintet pieces will enable students to apply and enhance their chamber music skill sets.

²⁰ Grace E. Baugher, "Finding the Sun: An exploration of the band grading system through an original work in three levels for concert band," Master's Thesis, (University of Tennessee, 2017), 16. https://trace.tennessee.edu/utk_gradthes/6064.

Baughner states, “In general, the lower end of the system (0.5-2) is played by elementary and middle school bands. The middle range (3-4) can be played by high school bands and the high range (4-6) by collegiate bands.”²¹

The intent of including works graded between 2-4 aims to provide students to start with a progression from lower level, accessible pieces to higher level, more advanced compositions. Once students work through the entirety of *REED REVOLUTION*, they will have cultivated a collaborative environment, honed foundational chamber music skills, and performed multiple pieces, thus preparing them to delve into existing reed quintet repertoire with confidence.

Lastly, the online resources that accompany *REED REVOLUTION* offer students valuable tools to aid in their learning process. The online resources include a reference recording for each piece. Additionally, students have access to play-along tracks that amplify or reduce each individual instrument in the recording. Students can perform alongside a recording of their part at an amplified volume or perform alongside recordings of the other instrument parts. These online materials enhance the learning experience, providing students with additional support as they work through the method book and the accompanying pieces.

Preface

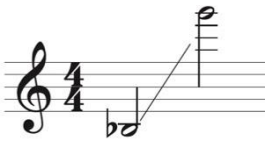





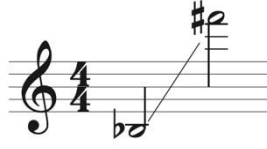





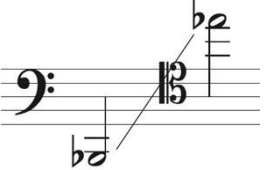

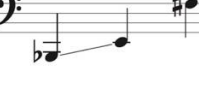
The main objective of the preface in *REED REVOLUTION* is to provide standard information pertinent to any student reed quintet or reed quintet coach. This section offers valuable insights into the standard practices and knowledge required for the effective functioning of a reed quintet. Key elements covered in the preface include the standard

²¹ Ibid.

instrumentation, the physical arrangement of instruments, and a table detailing the range and general tuning tendencies for each instrument within the reed quintet as seen in Table 1.

It is emphasized that the information regarding each individual instrument should only be considered standard and not universally applicable to every musician. It is imperative that each musician in the quintet familiarize themselves with their own personal instrument and unique playing tendencies and communicate that information in a chamber setting.

Table 1: Standard Reed Quintet Instrument Information

	Written Range	General Tuning Tendencies - Sharp Notes	General Tuning Tendencies - Flat Notes
Oboe			
Bb Clarinet			
Eb Alto Saxophone			
Bb Bass Clarinet			
Bassoon			

Chapter 1: Chamber Music 101

The first chapter of *REED REVOLUTION*, somewhat unexpectedly, does not include musical exercises but instead places a strong emphasis on developing interpersonal skills, which is arguably the most crucial investment for a beginning chamber ensemble. Rather than immediately immersing students in fundamental exercises or pieces of music, this chapter guides reed quintet members on how to create meaningful connections and build rapport with one another. It underscores the notion that the time and effort dedicated to nurturing deep relationships among quintet members will yield significant dividends once the group begins rehearsals and music-making. To facilitate this process, the method book offers an extensive list of possible activities for the quintet to engage in as they establish and strengthen their bonds.

Next, the chapter shifts its focus from the group to the individual responsibilities that each quintet member must recognize and uphold for the success of the reed quintet. It is very important that all members of a reed quintet understand that they are making a commitment to their fellow quintet-mates and must uphold their individual responsibilities. These include diligently preparing their individual parts, maintaining focus during rehearsals, and fostering clear and consistent communication with their ensemble.

The chapter proceeds to equip students with the essential skill sets required to both offer and receive valuable, appropriate feedback within a rehearsal setting. Chamber ensembles that develop an ability to speak to each other with respect, while still providing effective feedback and criticisms, will ensure the group's longevity and success. The book highlights the importance of delivering constructive feedback tactfully,

emphasizing that one's words carry significant influence. As developing chamber musicians, students will likely need regular practice in these skills to foster a healthy ensemble culture. Similarly, the chapter discusses that in addition to speaking respectfully to one another, chamber musicians must also develop skills to listen to their fellow collaborators with respect. It is crucial for all reed quintet members to set aside personal ego during rehearsals, creating an environment where each member feels comfortable providing input into one another's playing. This requires a certain degree of vulnerability, which is easier to allow when interpersonal relationships have been developed.

Unfortunately, no amount of interpersonal work will prevent 100% of conflicts from inevitably arising within the ensemble. Therefore, the final section of Chapter 1 is dedicated solely to conflict resolution. It educates developing chamber musicians on the importance of promptly addressing and communicating about problems within the ensemble. Additionally, the medium of communication is emphasized, with a strong preference for face-to-face interaction when resolving conflicts. The book encourages quintets to hold regular meetings outside of rehearsal settings, providing all members with an opportunity to discuss their current experiences within the reed quintet.

Chapter 1 of *REED REVOLUTION* introduces students to the notion that it is the human element of music that makes chamber music so special. It emphasizes the importance of investing valuable time and energy into cultivating a healthy ensemble culture, recognizing that strong interpersonal bonds among quintet members are the cornerstone of a successful reed quintet.

Chapter 2: Rehearsal Techniques

Before a reed quintet begins their first rehearsals it is important that they become familiar with effective rehearsal strategies. The topics discussed in Chapter 2 will prepare the ensemble on how to run their rehearsals efficiently, extending the emphasis on open discussion from Chapter 1. First, each ensemble member must adopt the principle that they should actively contribute to group discussions during rehearsals. All five musicians in the reed quintet possess valuable and unique perspectives that can enhance the group's music-making. Conversely, those who are naturally comfortable speaking in a group setting should be mindful not to dominate conversations or rehearsals. They should actively encourage ensemble members who may not express their thoughts as frequently to contribute their opinions to the discussion, fostering an inclusive atmosphere.

In addition to making meaningful contributions when in rehearsals, chamber ensembles should establish early how they intend to plan for each rehearsal. The process for creating an effective rehearsal plan will vary depending on the ensemble and what they find works best for them. Some ensembles may require a highly detailed, written plan for each rehearsal, while others may operate best with simply knowing what piece will be focused on in the next rehearsal. Either approach is acceptable if all members agree on the planning method and are aware of what to prepare individually before the next rehearsal. This chapter provides a sample rehearsal plan that includes warm-up exercises for the ensemble and one of the five pieces provided in the last section of the book.

As students develop their individual skills as chamber musicians, it's also important to foster collective growth within the reed quintet. This includes reviewing

existing recordings of existing reed quintets and critically analyzing what the ensemble enjoys and dislikes about the quintet's recording. Given that students may not all be familiar with how to listen analytically, this chapter offers guided questions that the quintet should consider while listening. Students are also encouraged to listen to other chamber ensembles outside of reed quintets. Additionally, students are encouraged to frequently record themselves on personal tablets or cell phones and review their recordings as a group. Musicians often experience the music they are performing differently while playing as opposed to listening. By critically listening to their own performances without the distractions of playing their instruments, students can identify areas for improvement.

Lastly, this chapter emphasizes the importance of utilizing duo, trio, and quartet playing within reed quintet rehearsals. This approach allows at least one musician to actively listen and provide valuable feedback while the others perform. Student ensembles may not always have a coach present during their rehearsals, making it essential for quintet members to assume the role of a "coach" when they are not actively playing their instruments.

Chapter 3: Cueing and Non-Verbal Communication

Chapter 3 introduces the start of a new section in the method book, transitioning the focus towards developing the reed quintet's playing abilities. To perform the exercises throughout the upcoming chapters, students must first become familiar with how to cue and physically communicate effectively and clearly. Students will need to have a firm understanding of how to communicate with each other while playing to successfully rehearse and perform.

First, this chapter introduces the concept of cuing, emphasizing that cuing involves physical motions that convey information about timing, style, and the initiation or release of a note. It is important that students understand the amount of variety that exists within cueing. The reed quintet is encouraged to experiment with various cueing methods and discuss the interpretations they perceive from each cue. In addition to the physical movement of a cue, the breath is a critical aspect that must be practiced and understood to cue clearly. The coordinated breath occurs simultaneously with the raise of the cue and is in the tempo of the music that is being cued. Likewise, the downward motion of the cue aligns with the start of the note. Figure 1 provides a visual depiction of a clear cue with upward and downward movements.

After students are introduced to the concept of cues and become comfortable moving and breathing together, the ensemble is encouraged to experiment with the different styles of cues. The musician cueing is challenged to convey the musical character and style of the piece they are cueing. A cue for a loud and fast musical passage will inherently differ from a cue for a slow and soft musical phrase. Ultimately, it is essential for the ensemble to engage in open communication about how each musician's cueing is perceived by the others. Any inherent differences between individuals when cueing are acceptable if the communication of style and timing is clear.

Figure 1. Breath Cue Visual.



The first exercise of *REED REVOLUTION*, “Reading Cues,” is introduced to the reed quintet. “Reading Cues” is designed for each ensemble member to have the opportunity to experiment with cueing in a style of their choosing. As the quintet takes turns cueing, the musician envisions the quintet’s execution of the sustained note and communicates these directions solely through their cues. While the exercise provides an initial example style and dynamic level for the oboist, who is tasked with cueing an accented sustained note at a forte dynamic level, subsequent musicians are prompted to select their own style and dynamic level for the sustained pitch as shown in Figure 2. The most important aspect of “Reading Cues” lies in the discussions that occur within the ensemble following the exercise. Quintet members must communicate with each other about how their cues were interpreted, what went well, and what adjustments should be made.

Figure 2. Excerpt from the “Reading Cues” Exercise.

The first cue has been provided with an example dynamic level and style. Create your own for the following cues.

1) Reading Cues

The musical score is written for five instruments: Oboe, Clarinet in B \flat , Alto Sax, Bass Clarinet, and Bassoon. The time signature is 4/4. The Oboe part begins with a cue note (quarter note, G4) marked with a dynamic of *f* and the instruction "Cue Start and Release". This is followed by rests and then a series of sustained notes (half notes) on G4, B4, G4, and B4. The other instruments have similar patterns of rests and sustained notes, with their own cues marked "Cue Start and Release" at various points. The Bassoon part starts with a dynamic of *f*.

The chapter then shifts its focus to emphasize the importance of non-verbal communication among ensemble members during performances. The musicians are encouraged to move freely while performing to facilitate the communication of dynamics, style, time, musical coordination, phrasing, and more. This section also delves into the benefits of establishing eye contact with fellow ensemble members during performances. This not only allows for easier non-verbal communication, but also can resonate positively with audiences. The act of musicians connecting on stage, such as making eye contact while performing, often adds an engaging element to the performance. In a study on the impact of different types of communication in music performances, Kawase found audience members determined “sound, breath, and gaze were rated highest in performances...”²² Additionally, chamber ensembles are more likely to play accurately together, match style, and dynamics if they look up from their sheet music more often. This section provides concrete suggestions for practicing eye contact, including lowering music stands, minimizing the reliance on sheet music, initiating pieces by looking at the cuing musician, marking in the music when to make eye contact, memorizing moments for eye contact, and rehearsing the art of maintaining eye contact with other ensemble members.

Chapter 4: Tone and Intonation

In this chapter, the reed quintet focuses on an inarguably important foundational aspect of chamber music performance: tone and intonation. The interrelationship between tone and intonation is a key concept for students to grasp. Efforts spent towards

²² Satoshi Kawase, “Importance of Communication Cues in Music Performance according to Performers and Audience,” *International Journal of Psychological Studies*; Vol. 6, No. 2 (2014): 59, Accessed November 1.
<https://www.academia.edu/download/93292415/d12b6a2ab700eedf1819bad05d411e26615b.pdf>.

improving one of these two concepts often improves the other. The chapter begins by providing the reed quintet with the default tuning pitches for their individual instruments.

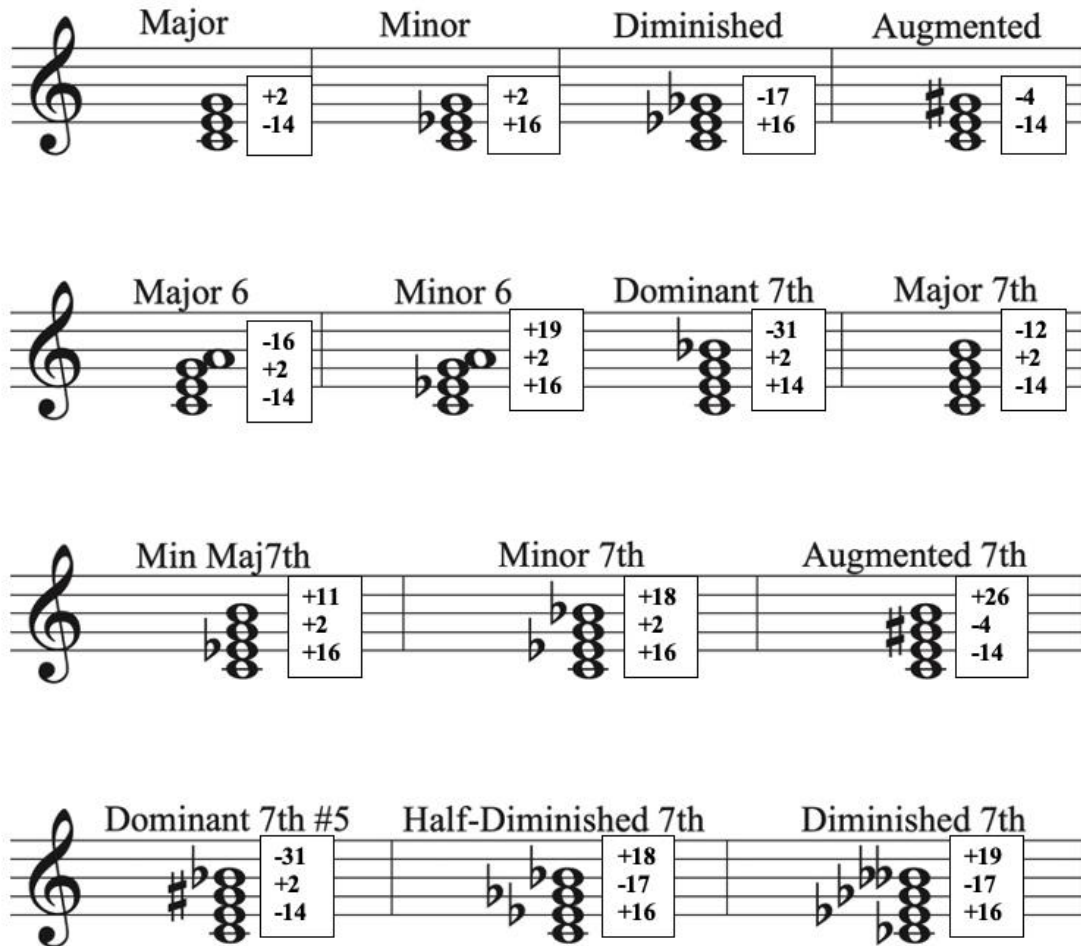
The first exercise in *REED REVOLUTION* is “Unison Scales,” a fundamental exercise that aims to develop a mature, unified tonal concept while ensuring precise intonation. The method book provides the quintet with all twenty-four major and minor scales, played in octaves. During the exercise, the ensemble members are encouraged to mentally note which notes require intonation adjustments after completing the scale.

After the quintet becomes familiar with tuning the major and minor scales, the chapter introduces the “Tuner Test.” This exercise gives each ensemble member the opportunity to check their individual intonation tendencies while playing in the context of a reed quintet. Additionally, this exercise encourages the development of audiation skills. Students first place a digital tuner on a music stand where it is visible to all five players. Next, the quintet begins playing in unison, striving to achieve perfect intonation. When ready, the first musician cues the release of the note for the other members while continuing to hold the pitch. This musician can then check their intonation on the held note and make any necessary adjustments. While the solo musician sustains the note with the correct intonation, the other members should audiate the same pitch internally. Once each musician feels confident in hearing the pitch in their mind, they should gently join in, hopefully playing in tune. The next member in the ensemble then cues the release of the same note, checks their individual intonation, and then continues the process.

Thus far, the ensemble has focused on matching pitch exactly in unison or octaves. The next section introduces the concept of adjusting different chord tones to correctly tune chords using just intonation. The text provides a chart, as seen in Figure 3,

of commonly found chords in Western Tonal Art Music and the necessary cent adjustments for each chord tone. Students are also briefly guided through the necessary steps to determine the quality of a chord by comparing the third of the chord to its root.

Figure 3. Just Intonation Diagram.



The next exercise, “Major, Minor, Diminished,” challenges students to apply their knowledge of just intonation. This exercise begins with the ensemble playing a major chord while one instrument plays the third of the chord. The chord tones are then adjusted one at a time to transform the major chord into a minor chord, the minor chord into a diminished chord, and finally, the diminished chord returns to a major chord a half-step

lower. There are five different versions of this exercise, each allowing one of the instruments to perform the role of the third. It is important that all members of the quintet can play each of the necessary chord tones, including the lower-voiced instruments. In this exercise, the third requires the greatest change and manipulation when changing the quality of the chord. The exercise requires that the root of each chord be tuned to “0.0” cents sharp or flat. The fifth and third of each chord are provided the necessary adjustments in cents throughout the exercise. This exercise forces students to practice adjusting chord tones outside of a musical context, which proves highly beneficial when they transition to actual pieces of music, enabling them to identify chord qualities both visually and aurally.

Chapter 5: Balance and Blend

Chapter 5 of *REED REVOLUTION* introduces the concepts of balance and blend within a reed quintet, building on the foundation of accurate intonation developed in the previous chapter. While the terms “balance” and “blend” are often used together, the chapter begins by providing clear definitions for each concept individually.

Balance regarding chamber music is illustrated through the analogy of a counterweight scale. To achieve balance, there must be an equal sonic representation from each individual voice within the ensemble. This means that ensembles should avoid merely playing at the same volume, even when marked with the same dynamic level. Individual musicians may need to adjust their contributions to the overall group sound, considering their own tendencies and instrument characteristics. The chapter introduces the idea of a “balance pyramid,” where the lower instruments, such as the bassoon, provide the foundational sound on which the other instruments can build. The middle

voices fill in, and the higher voices rest atop this balanced pyramid. Special attention is drawn to the saxophonist in the ensemble, as the saxophone's large dynamic range can easily overpower other ensemble members. Saxophonists are encouraged to focus on balance and avoid unintentionally covering up other voices. Ensembles are encouraged to demonstrate their individual dynamic range and work to develop a cohesive group blend.

Blend, on the other hand, refers to the degree to which the ensemble sounds like one unified voice rather than a collection of individuals playing simultaneously. It is crucial that all members agree on the core aspects of the ideal group sound for the reed quintet, as blend can suffer if one member plays with a different tonal concept than the others. The concepts of balance and blend often influence each other, making it essential for students to dedicate rehearsal time to developing both aspects of successful reed quintet playing. While the exercises in this chapter target balance and blend specifically, students are encouraged to continue refining their intonation and overall group sound during these exercises.

The first exercise in this chapter, "Consistent Intervals," challenges students to maintain a balanced and well-blended sound while switching between the two notes of different intervals. The quintet is divided into two groups, with each group playing one of two notes that form a specific interval. The two groups then simultaneously switch to the note of the other group, changing the interval. Inherently, the interval will sound altered with different instruments playing the two notes. However, throughout these transitions, the balance and overall blend of the reed quintet should be maintained with minimal discrepancies between the two versions of the interval. This exercise utilizes perfect

intervals of a fourth and a fifth, descending chromatically for students to experiment with their balance and blend on multiple different notes.

The “Half-Step Descent” exercise further challenges the ensemble to maintain balance, blend, and intonation across various registers of each instrument. The exercise spans a full octave and requires the ensemble to play in octaves while holding a held note and descending chromatically. With each lowered half-step, the ensemble returns to the original starting note as seen in Figure 4. Additionally, this exercise encourages students to audiate the upcoming interval change while sustaining the initial starting note, enhancing their ability to anticipate and adjust their intonation in real-time.

Figure 4. Excerpt from the “Half-Step Descent” Exercise.

The musical score for Figure 4 is a 4/4 time piece featuring five instruments: Oboe, Clarinet in B \flat , Alto Sax, Bass Clarinet, and Bassoon. Each instrument part consists of six half-note measures. The notes for each instrument are as follows:

Instrument	Measure 1	Measure 2	Measure 3	Measure 4	Measure 5	Measure 6
Oboe	G 4	F \sharp 4	E 4	D \sharp 4	C \sharp 4	B 3
Clarinet in B \flat	G 3	F \sharp 3	E 3	D \sharp 3	C \sharp 3	B 2
Alto Sax	G 4	F \sharp 4	E 4	D \sharp 4	C \sharp 4	B 3
Bass Clarinet	G 3	F \sharp 3	E 3	D \sharp 3	C \sharp 3	B 2
Bassoon	G 2	F \sharp 2	E 2	D \sharp 2	C \sharp 2	B 1

Chapter 6: Matching Articulation

Chapter 6 is dedicated to the crucial skill of matching articulation within a reed quintet. This skill is often what distinguishes a developing reed quintet from a mature, high-level ensemble. Students are tasked with reflecting on their own articulation abilities

and developing the critical listening skills required to match the length and style of each other's articulations.

A key point emphasized in this chapter is the awareness that the most significant discrepancies in articulation often occur between the lowest and highest voices in the quintet, specifically between the bass clarinetist and the oboist. Smaller, higher-pitched instruments naturally have an easier time producing very short articulations, while larger, lower-pitched instruments may struggle to match that level of shortness. Thus, it is essential for the reed quintet to engage in frequent discussions about articulation and come to a consensus on the overall length and style of articulations. In many cases, this will require compromise, with the lower instruments playing as short as possible, and the higher-pitched instruments adjusting to match that length. The primary goal is to achieve a unified and consistent approach to articulation within the ensemble, rather than being fixated on one approach to articulation style.

In the first exercise, the “Rhythm Expansion,” the reed quintet is presented with a variety of rhythms, each requiring a different articulation. The exercise is intended to be performed at various tempos to allow quintet members to experience the differences in articulations at different speeds. This exercise helps students develop a broader range of articulation skills and adapt them to different rhythmic contexts.

The second exercise, “Articulation Pass Off,” involves the quintet performing a “broken” rhythmic line in which each musician plays one or two beats of the overall line. The goal is to pass the rhythmic figure smoothly from one instrument to the next while matching articulations. This exercise allows the quintet to evaluate how each member individually performs a variety of articulations and assess how effectively they can pass a

musical figure between instruments. “Articulation Pass Off” enhances the ensemble’s ability to maintain consistency in articulation throughout a piece of music.

Chapter 7: Reed Quintet Pieces

The final chapter of *REED REVOLUTION* marks the culmination of the students’ journey in developing their reed quintet skills. In this chapter, students are presented with a set of five pieces that have been specially commissioned for this method book project. These pieces are composed by a diverse group of international composers, each bringing their unique perspectives, writing styles, and backgrounds to the project. Notably, four out of the five composers are contributing to the reed quintet repertoire for the first time, making this a significant addition to the chamber music genre and introducing these composers to the reed quintet.

This commissioning process began with collaborative discussions between the composers and me as the author of the method book. Together, we all outlined the roles each composer would play in creating a cohesive set of pieces. The composers were given the freedom to choose which of the five graded pieces they would contribute to, aligning with their compositional strengths and preferences. Additionally, they shared conceptual and musical details with each other, ensuring that the pieces would fit together seamlessly. Regular communication between myself and the composers ensured that the compositions aligned with the assigned grade levels, considering instrument ranges, musical complexity, part independence, and rhythmic intricacy.

This set of pieces serves as a practical application of the concepts and techniques discussed in previous chapters of the book. The five works are intentionally designed to be progressively more challenging and longer in duration, providing the students with

appropriately leveled works regardless of their current developmental stage. Furthermore, the composers have thoughtfully incorporated optional higher or lower notes to address potential challenges related to instrument range or students' playing capabilities as seen in Figure 5. These accommodations also consider the limitations often associated with student model instruments, thus enhancing the educational value of the pieces.

Figure 5. *Celebration Loops*, Optional Bass Clarinet Notes, mm. 114-117.

The image shows a musical score for five instruments: Oboe (Ob.), Clarinet in Bb (Cl. in Bb), Alto Saxophone (A. Sax.), Bass Clarinet (B. Cl.), and Bassoon (Bsn.). The score is in 4/4 time and spans measures 114 to 117. The Oboe and Clarinet in Bb parts feature a melodic line with a dynamic marking of *fp* (fortissimo piano) and a *p* (piano) dynamic. The Alto Saxophone part has a *fp* dynamic. The Bass Clarinet part has a *p* dynamic. The Bassoon part has a *fp* dynamic. The score includes various musical notations such as slurs, accents, and dynamic markings.

Upon completing the Grade 4 piece, students will have not only developed a healthy, collaborative chamber music environment but also established foundational chamber music skills. They will have performed five distinct reed quintet works, equipping them with the experience and confidence to explore existing reed quintet repertoire and continue their growth as a chamber music ensemble.

For each piece in this chapter, a list of specific exercises from previous chapters is provided, highlighting their relevance to the piece. Additionally, a brief performance guide outlines essential aspects of each work, helping the reed quintet focus on the specific challenges and nuances presented in the music during their ensemble rehearsals.

These resources are designed to support the students as they engage with and perform the commissioned repertoire, marking a significant achievement in their chamber music journey.

CHAPTER 5

THE POWER OF “YET” (GRADE 2)

All biographies and program notes were written by the composers and provided to me directly via each composer’s personal website.

Composer Biography

Tyler Mazone is a deaf and neurodivergent bass clarinetist and composer from Michigan. He is working towards a Doctorate in Composition at Michigan State University and is a graduate of there and the Crane School of Music. Tyler advocates for accessibility in music in small and large ensembles alike by molding his work for the performers and educators he composes for. Something Tyler enjoys is actively being a part of new clarinet consortiums. His commissions and performances have included The _____ Experiment, Diversify the Stand, The Royal Irish Academy of Music, the Crane Bands, Michigan State University Bands and Orchestras, Christopher Keach, Major Fifth Music, and Jen Oliverio. Tyler is also published on his website and with various publishers such as CAMCo and Randall Standridge Music. Outside of composition, you’ll find Tyler hiking, reading a book, listening to music, or playing video games!²³

Program Notes

I had a conversation recently with a friend about the effectiveness of the word “yet.” “I can’t do this...yet.” “I don’t know this...yet.” These and similar statements are powerful because they show learners that they have the potential to do something that they may not be comfortable with...yet. There is always room to grow, which is why I felt this was a fitting title and piece for the first in the method book *REED REVOLUTION: A Fundamental Approach to Reed Quintet Music!*²⁴

Performance Guide

In the first piece of the commissioned set, *The Power of “Yet,”* composed by Tyler Mazone, students are presented with a Grade 2 introductory work that provides an ideal platform for applying their newly developed chamber music skills. This piece offers song-like melodies for each instrument within a collaborative setting, ensuring that

²³ Tyler Mazone, “Home,” Tyler Mazone, Accessed 1 Oct. 2023, <https://www.tylermazone.com>.

²⁴ Tyler Mazone, *The Power of “Yet”* (2023).

students can engage with accessible parts while enjoying a musically rewarding experience.

The Power of “Yet” is written in B-flat Major, a key area familiar to developing band musicians. The composition includes moments throughout where ensemble members will share notes with one or more other instruments in octaves or unison. To play these shared notes in tune, students are encouraged to refer to the exercises in Chapter 4 of *REED REVOLUTION*. By studying the score, the ensemble can identify instances where they play in octaves or unison with other instruments and focus on achieving perfect pitch alignment. For example, the piece begins with octaves for the oboe and bassoon (concert B-flat) and the clarinet and bass clarinet (concert F), highlighting the importance of precise intonation.

To maintain clear musical phrasing and breath control, the piece includes group breath marks that separate distinct musical phrases. Effective execution of these group breaths relies on clear cues and cut-offs from the quintet. The readings and exercises in Chapter 3, which emphasize clear cues and communication, will prove valuable in ensuring that the group breaths are performed in unison. Additionally, the piece features ritardando passages, such as measures 17 and 29, and a slower tempo marking in measure 44. These sections will require meticulous communication of time, highlighting the relevance of the concepts explored in Chapter 3.

Lastly, *The Power of “Yet”* includes staccato and sforzando articulations that must be matched across all instruments. Multiple instances in the piece demand precise articulation alignment among the quintet members as seen in Figure 6. The articulation skills and discussions introduced in Chapter 6 will serve as important resources for the

ensemble, helping them achieve accurate articulation matching and a cohesive performance.

Figure 6. *The Power of “Yet,”* Instances of Unison Articulations, mm. 21-26.

The image displays a musical score for five woodwind instruments: Oboe (Ob.), Clarinet in B-flat (Cl. in Bb), Alto Saxophone (A. Sax.), Bass Clarinet (B. Cl.), and Bassoon (Bsn.). The score covers measures 21 through 26. The key signature is B-flat major (two flats). The Oboe staff begins at measure 21 with a dynamic marking of *p* and a crescendo leading to *f*. The Clarinet in B-flat, Alto Saxophone, Bass Clarinet, and Bassoon all begin at measure 21 with a dynamic marking of *f*. The score features unison articulations across all instruments, with dynamic markings of *sf* (sforzando) appearing in measures 22 through 26. Articulation symbols, including accents and slurs, are used throughout the passage. A box containing the number '26' is located above the Oboe staff in the sixth measure.

CHAPTER 6

THE PULL (GRADE 2.5)

Composer Biography

Jenni Watson is a Saxophonist, Composer, and multi-instrumentalist (UK). Bringing her predominantly Classical music background together with a love of many wide-ranging styles, she merges several genre boundaries and is popular for composing in an aesthetic, emotional and accessible style.

With several albums to her name, as performer and/or composer, she continually explores new avenues, with a passion for bridging technicality with musicality in her melodic content.

Increasingly her works explore the marriage of her acoustic multi-instrumental recordings with an exploration into electronic manipulation and found sound.

The demand for new Saxophone repertoire from Jenni continually increases, with regular commissions from across the international Saxophone community, including recently for the online USA-based Saxophone Academy, Arizona and Pennsylvania State Universities, UK classical charts-rating Vandoren artist Huw Wiggin, the renowned Apollo Saxophone Quartet, and large scale works for Yamaha Australia Artist Erin Royer.

Jenni has been approached for several commissions that reflect on aspects of climate change awareness or societal changes, often focusing on giving a positive take-away, most notably *Gone Tomorrow* (for Pivot duo, on coastal erosion), *Bleaching* (for Erin Royer, on coral bleaching), and the full album *Adjusting Parameters* (for Erin Royer and 40 Consortium members, on various aspects of societal change).

Selected works have been broadcast on BBC Radio 3 and Scala Radio, and can be found in the British Library. Her arranging talents were also utilized in the Channel 4 program “Orchestra United”.

2020 saw the creation of #lockthesaxdown with Selmer/ Vandoren/ KeyLeaves Artist Emma McPhilemy. #lockthesaxdown is a social media series which has so far seen over 80 players from 14 countries take part in performing selections of Jenni’s music, with a wealth of direct feedback citing the high level of motivational help it provided for players across all ages and abilities, engaging in music that players emotionally connected to. The series subsequently led to an album (*Unlocked*), funded by a successful Kickstarter campaign.

All works and more info can be found at www.jenniwatson.com.²⁵

Program Notes

Commissioned by Ben MacDonald (USA) for the method book *REED REVOLUTION: A Fundamental Approach to Reed Quintet*.

As ensemble playing is so dependent on teamwork and listening/responding to each other's needs (focusing less on an individual part and more on the collective goal), this could be likened to an imagined scenario of a group climbing an unfamiliar mountain, pulling each other along and supporting each other, physically and mentally.²⁶

Performance Guide

The Pull by composer Jenni Watson offers students an opportunity to engage with accessible music that still showcases Watson's distinctive approach to harmony and melodic development. The initial challenge of this work will likely emanate from tuning the perfect intervals in the opening section. The "Consistent Intervals" exercise found in Chapter 5 of *REED REVOLUTION* will help students become acquainted with the tuning tendencies and required balance of these perfect intervals.

Throughout *The Pull*, there are moments where the quintet must execute crescendos and diminuendos collectively without relying on a rhythmic motor or timekeeper. Clear communication of time within the ensemble will be essential to ensure that they maintain a consistent tempo during these sustained notes. This emphasizes the importance of the reed quintet's ability to communicate effectively, a skill addressed in Chapter 3.

The piece transitions to a more rhythmic and accentuated section where the quintet plays in rhythmic unison. The "Rhythm Expansion" exercise in Chapter 6 equips

²⁵ Jenni Watson, "Bio and Commissions," Jenni Watson, Accessed 1 Oct. 2023, <https://www.jenniwatson.com/bio>.

²⁶ Jenni Watson, *The Pull* (2023).

students with the necessary skills to perform these articulations in a uniform style across the ensemble. They will need to accentuate offbeats, which may present a challenge, but the unison performance makes it more accessible and appropriate for this grade level. Similarly, the piece includes instances where students pass a musical figure among themselves, as seen in Figure 7, which aligns with the concepts introduced in the “Articulation Pass Off” exercise.

Figure 7. *The Pull*, Passing Figure between Instruments, m. 41.

The musical score for Figure 7 shows five staves: Ob., Cl., Alto Sax., B. Cl., and Bsn. The music is in 2/4 time with a key signature of one sharp (F#). Measure 41 is marked with a 'C' in a box above the staff. The tempo marking 'molto rit.' is present. Dynamics include 'f' (forte) and 'mf' (mezzo-forte). Performance instructions include 'smooth' and 'mf smooth'. The score shows a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes being passed between instruments.

An intriguing feature of *The Pull* is the instruction for the ensemble to audibly “inhale together,” as shown in Figure 8. This unique, contemporary compositional element showcases Watson’s distinctive style even within a Grade 2.5 work, adding interest for both students and audience members.

Figure 8. *The Pull*, Audible Breath Motive, mm. 47-48.

A Tempo
♩=120
Audible inhale together

Ob.
Cl.
Alto Sax.
B. Cl.
Bsn.

The composition proceeds with the passing of a concert D between instruments, highlighting the need for accurate pitch alignment. The “Tuner Test” exercise will be valuable in training students to perform this pitch accurately. The piece then continues to develop the passing material between instruments, with the breath motive returning in pairs of instruments while the others continue the rhythmic passing motor. Finally, *The Pull* concludes by revisiting the initial musical material, emphasizing the importance of clear ensemble time communication.

CHAPTER 7

TURBULENT CYCLES (GRADE 3)

Composer Biography

JOSH TRENTADUE (b. 1994; he/they) is a composer who explores within his work philosophical and spiritual views of humanity, nature, and life itself. Balancing electrifying, turbulent rhythms with dramatic, ethereal lyricism, they seek to provide immersive, engaging, and transformative experiences for performers and audiences everywhere.

Trentadue's compositions and arrangements have been performed at The Midwest Clinic, the Cortona Sessions for New Music, the CBDNA Southern Conference, the North American Saxophone Alliance Conference, the Minnesota Fringe Festival, the Michigan Music Conference, and the Percussive Arts Society International Convention. A Finalist for the ASCAP Foundation Morton Gould Young Composer Awards, their works have received awards and recognition from Fifteen-Minutes-of-Fame, the Columbia Summer Winds Outdoor Composition Contest, the Dallas Winds Brass Fanfare Competition, the New York University Orchestra and Percussion Ensemble Calls for Scores, and the Michigan State University Jere Hutcheson Large Ensemble Composition Competition. Several of Trentadue's arrangements are additionally JWPepper Editors' Choice selections.

Trentadue is the Executive Director of the Millennium Composers Initiative; the Production Editor for TUX People's Music; a member of the Aurora Tapestry Collective with fellow composers Kevin Day, Harrison J. Collins, and Katahji Copley; and, a Music Copyist and Engraving Assistant for Tiberio Music Design and Publishing. He holds a Master of Music Degree in Composition, Screen Scoring from New York University (where they studied with John Kaefer, Irwin Fisch, and Ira Newborn), and a Bachelor of Music Degree in Composition from Michigan State University (where they studied composition with David Biedenbender and Jere Hutcheson, as well as screen scoring with Zhou Tian).

Trentadue's works are published through Murphy Music Press, TUX People's Music, and his self-publishing company M.O.T.I.F. - Music of the Introspective Fields.²⁷

Program Notes

Turbulent Cycles is a gritty, robust, and mechanical-sounding reed quintet intended to introduce younger players to the world of performing chamber music. The piece is directly inspired by the idea of facing various obstacles while

²⁷ Josh Trentadue, "Biography," Josh Trentadue, Accessed 1 Oct. 2023, <https://joshtrentadue.com/bio>.

climbing a mountain, such as turbulent winds pummeling this majestic force of nature and shaping it from time to time. On one hand, the higher one climbs, the greater the dangers become. On the other hand, the higher one climbs, the closer they are to the peak of the mountain and a precious, breathtaking view of our natural world.

Written at an intermediate difficulty level, the quintet is given rigid-sounding melodies, dissonant harmonies, and rhythmic structures to interact with. Sixteenth note runs permeating throughout the piece are mainly based on scale patterns, evoking the swirling wind gusts. The players are therefore engaged to listen to each other intently in order to lock in these different patterns together at the correct time. A few brief moments of optional growling/flutter tonguing are included to tie the conceptual ideas of “Turbulent Cycles” together, intended to introduce players to the extended technique and add some additional contrast to the piece.

My sincerest gratitude to Ben MacDonald for commissioning this work for his method book *REED REVOLUTION: A Fundamental Approach to Reed Quintet*.²⁸

Performance Guide

Turbulent Cycles by composer Josh Trentadue provides students with a distinct contrast to the preceding pieces, presenting them with a mechanical and driving composition that sounds impressive and challenging while maintaining accessibility and appropriateness for Grade 3 students. This piece introduces more demanding runs of sixteenth notes, complex dynamic markings, and a variety of articulations, challenging the reed quintet to maintain precision and cohesion in their performance.

The ensemble frequently plays short, accentuated notes that must match precisely across all instruments. *Turbulent Cycles* includes a diverse range of articulations that the reed quintet must perform in unison, making the exercises in Chapter 6 particularly relevant for this piece. To master these articulations, students will need to focus on communication, rhythmic coordination, and precise execution.

²⁸ Josh Trentadue, *Turbulent Cycles* (2023).

Melodic material is initially presented by the bass clarinet and bassoon, then passed to the oboe and alto saxophone immediately after. These two groups must match stylistically when performing the same or similar musical material, emphasizing the importance of musical discussions and decisions within the ensemble.

Throughout the piece, the musicians are required to execute independent rhythmic figures that are passed between instruments, creating an interesting panning effect as seen in Figure 9. It's crucial for the ensemble to count precisely, subdivide effectively, and practice passing rhythms between instruments. Exercise 9, "Articulation Pass Off," will be a valuable resource for developing this skill.

Figure 9. *Turbulent Cycles*, Passing Sixteenth-Note Figure, m. 23-26.

The musical score for Figure 9 consists of five staves. The top staff is for Oboe (Ob.), the second for Bass Clarinet (Bb Cl.), the third for Alto Saxophone (A. Sax.), the fourth for Bass Clarinet (B. Cl.), and the fifth for Bassoon (Bsn.). The score begins at measure 23. The Oboe and Bass Clarinet parts play a complex sixteenth-note figure that is passed between them. The Alto Saxophone part consists of sustained notes. The Bass Clarinet and Bassoon parts feature long, sustained notes with a 'legato if possible' instruction. The score includes dynamic markings such as 'p' and 'legato if possible'.

Trentadue incorporates the contemporary technique of growling into *Turbulent Cycles* to capture the tumultuous aesthetic of the piece as seen in Figure 10. Growling involves humming or singing while playing a wind instrument, resulting in a distorted, multiphonic-like sound. While growls are typically reserved for more advanced pieces, they are marked as optional in this composition. The performance guide in *REED REVOLUTION* instructs students on how to approach growling, providing step-by-step

instructions. Growling adds a unique sonic dimension to the piece but can be omitted if students are not yet comfortable with the technique.

Figure 10. *Turbulent Cycles*, Optional Growl Technique, mm. 51-53.

The image displays a musical score for five woodwind instruments: Oboe (Ob.), B-flat Clarinet (Bb Cl.), Alto Saxophone (A. Sax.), Bass Clarinet (B. Cl.), and Bassoon (Bsn). The score is for measures 51, 52, and 53. Measure 51 is marked with a '51' above the staff. The time signature is 3/4. The key signature has one flat (B-flat). The instruments are arranged in five staves. The notation includes rests in measures 51 and 52, followed by notes in measure 53. Dynamic markings include *ff* (fortissimo) and *fff* (fortississimo). The phrase 'growl (optional)' is written above the staves for each instrument in measures 52 and 53. The notes in measure 53 are: Ob. (Bb4), Bb Cl. (Bb4), A. Sax. (B4), B. Cl. (Bb4), and Bsn. (Bb3). The notes are beamed together and have a fermata-like shape above them.

The final four bars of the piece require the ensemble to play multiple figures in rhythmic unison after several beats of rest. Clear cues will be essential for the ensemble

to start each figure together. Chapter 3 provides detailed readings and suggestions on how to develop clear and readable cues for all ensemble members.

Turbulent Cycles, due to its key area, requires the oboist to transition between the notes D-flat and E-flat regularly throughout the piece. This sequence of notes can prove to be extremely difficult for student oboists who do not yet have an oboe with the left-hand E-flat key. Many student model oboes do not have this key which allows for easier facilitation between D-flat and E-flat. Therefore, an alternate version of *Turbulent Cycles* was written in G minor to accommodate any students who do not have access to an intermediate or professional level oboe with the left-hand E-flat key. This version of the piece is available digitally with purchase of *REED REVOLUTION*.

CHAPTER 8

ETERNAL ASCENT (GRADE 3.5)

Composer Biography

Chris Evan Hass (b. 1993) is a composer, arranger, and conductor hailing from Ann Arbor, Michigan. Chris' music has been performed throughout the United States and has received international recognition with performances in 5 of the 7 continents. His music has been performed by prestigious chamber ensembles including the New York Philharmonic Principal Brass Quintet, the Sinta Saxophone Quartet, the Third Coast Trombone Choir, and the Eastman Saxophone Project.

Chris has had compositions featured at new music festivals including Indiana State University's Contemporary Music Festival, New Music Detroit's Strange Beautiful Music Festival, Penn State's International New Music Festival, and various Society for Composers Inc. conferences. He has also had performances at conferences ranging from the Midwest Band and Orchestra Clinic and the National Fischhoff Chamber Music Competition, to specific instrumental showcases like the International Trombone Festival and the US Navy Band International Saxophone Symposium. As a clinician, Chris has traveled throughout North America to conduct and rehearse students of all ages (5th graders to doctoral students) through his compositions.

Chris holds degrees in Composition from Central Michigan University (M.M.) and Western Michigan University (B.M.). His primary teachers include David Gillingham, Evan Ware, and Christopher Biggs. Chris currently resides in Jackson, MI, where he works as a freelance composer and arranger, as well as a private teacher for low brass, composition, and music theory.²⁹

Program Notes

Eternal Ascent portrays the Greek myth of Sisyphus, who was punished by the Gods and sentenced to roll a large boulder up a hill every day, only for it to fall back down when it neared the top.

This constant and arduous task symbolizes the more frustrating side of learning to play an instrument, the stretches of time where no progress is being made or even periods of regression. The music reflects this anguish through its dark and somber tone, with moments of ascending hope anticlimactically returning to the same introductory material, starting this relentless journey over once more.

²⁹ Chris Hass, "Bio," Hass Music, Accessed 1 Oct. 2023, <https://hassmusic.com/biography/>.

Though this myth can be a daunting one, we can all be hopeful that we have the ability to push the metaphorical boulder to the top of the mountain with enough work and persistence.³⁰

Performance Guide

Chris Hass's *Eternal Ascent* serves as the slower, more melodic focused piece within the set of works commissioned for *REED REVOLUTION*. This composition provides students with the opportunity to explore musicality, phrasing, and expressive performance through its song-like melodies.

One prominent feature of *Eternal Ascent* is the presence of solos throughout the piece, often accompanied by the other instruments in the reed quintet. It is crucial for all ensemble members to be aware of when each instrument has its respective solo, and students will be challenged to actively listen and evaluate the ensemble's overall balance in real time. Adjustments may be necessary to ensure that the soloist's voice is the most prominent, regardless of the instrument. Smooth transitions between solos, with wordless communication as described in Chapter 3, will be essential for the seamless exchange of solos between instruments.

The piece also incorporates many changes in tempo, with a specific instruction to slow the tempo by 20 beats per minute and then immediately accelerate back to the original tempo in measures 22-26. The ensemble's ability to communicate the pulse and time physically and effectively will be critical to execute these tempo changes accurately and convincingly.

Rehearsal marking "D" introduces a slightly faster tempo marking and a "broken" rhythmic melody that passes between each of the five instruments. Clear communication

³⁰ Chris Hass, *Eternal Ascent* (2023).

among the musicians will be essential to accurately perform this section. Additionally, duets and melodic passages between instruments, such as the bassoon and alto saxophone, require discussion of phrasing and coordination to ensure a cohesive performance.

The quintet will be required to continue to navigate the push and pull of time through accelerandos and ritardandos, maintaining coordination and accurate timing. From measures 41-48, the music changes tempo every two to three measures as seen in Figure 11. This amount of tempo changes will require clear communication between all the ensemble members.

Figure 11. *Eternal Ascent*, Section of Multiple Tempo Changes, mm. 41-48.

The musical score is divided into two systems. The first system, labeled '6' in the top left, covers measures 41 to 44. It begins with an 'accel.' marking and a rehearsal mark 'F' indicating a tempo change to 'Tempo I' with a quarter note equal to 72-80. The instruments are Oboe (Ob.), Clarinet (Cl.), Alto Saxophone (Alto Sax.), Bass Clarinet (B. Cl.), and Bassoon (Bsn.). Dynamics range from *f* to *ff* and *p*. The second system, labeled '6' in the top left, covers measures 45 to 48. It begins with a 'poco accel.' marking and a rehearsal mark 'G' indicating a tempo change to 'Più mosso' with a quarter note equal to 80-88. Dynamics range from *mp* to *f*. The score includes various musical notations such as slurs, accents, and dynamic hairpins.

Starting at rehearsal marking “G,” a rhythmic ostinato in the lower voices establishes a figure that demands precise matching in terms of time, blend, and articulation style. The ensemble will need to work together closely to maintain this rhythmic accompaniment while other instruments play melodic phrases.

Measures 63-64 involve careful placement of time and individual rhythmic statements as the ensemble increases and then immediately decreases the tempo, culminating in a climactic release at the end of measure 64. The piece concludes with a broken rhythmic idea split among all five instruments, requiring additional coordination and precision.

Overall, *Eternal Ascent* provides students with a wonderful opportunity to explore expressive phrasing and the use of tempo as a musical tool. However, it also demands a high level of coordination, communication, and precise timing from the ensemble to perform successfully.

CHAPTER 9

CELEBRATION LOOPS (GRADE 4)

Composer Biography

Parker Fritz (b. 1997) is an American saxophonist and composer.

As a saxophonist, Parker frequently performs chamber music concerts, solo recitals, and outreach/educational programs. He has participated and surfaced in numerous national chamber music and solo competitions such as the Music Teachers National Association Chamber Music Competition, the Fischhoff National Chamber Music Competition, Coltman Chamber Music Competition, and the North American Saxophone Alliance Quartet Competition. Parker Fritz is featured on several commercial recordings as a member of the University of Oklahoma Wind Symphony, the Michigan State University Wind Symphony, and the Codex Quartet. In 2021, he was featured as soprano saxophonist on *Convergence*, the debut album of the Zenith Saxophone Quartet and Zen Duo.

As a composer, Parker's music has been performed nationally and internationally by freelance professional musicians, collegiate instructors, and high school/university large ensembles. His percussion ensemble piece *Prevernal*, composed under the guidance of David Gillingham, is published by C. Alan Publications, and his orchestra piece *Hewn from Rough Edges* won first place in Central Michigan University's Orchestra Composition Competition. His sonata for baritone saxophone and piano, *Power Through*, was commissioned by a consortium of 25 undergraduate, graduate, and professional saxophonists. *Skyrunning*, for solo piano, was selected as the first place national winner of the 2021-22 Music Teachers National Association Young Artist Composition Competition. Parker regularly receives commissions from established professionals and rising artists. Most recently, his trio for two saxophones and piano, *Towering*, was commissioned by a consortium led by AJ Nguyen and Abraham Nunez of Ako2.

Parker received several academic and scholarly awards as an undergraduate, including the Presser Foundation Undergraduate Scholar Award, Provost's Award for Undergraduate Research and Creative Accomplishment, and Centralis Gold Scholarship.

Parker holds a Bachelor of Music degree summa cum laude from Central Michigan University and master's degrees in saxophone performance and composition from the University of Oklahoma. He is currently pursuing doctoral degrees in saxophone performance and composition at Michigan State University.

His mentors include John Nichol, Jonathan Nichol, Joseph Lulloff, Evan Ware, Marvin Lamb, and Ricardo Lorenz.³¹

Program Notes

Celebration Loops serves as the final (grade 4) work for Ben MacDonald's method book on reed quintet pedagogy.

The music is jovial and light, taking influence from minimalism and dance forms. Many rhythmic motives, doublings, and articulations were selected to give the players the opportunity to communicate in real-time across the ensemble. Ultimately, the work is a celebration of each musicians' growth and the ensemble's developing maturity.³²

Performance Guide

The final piece in *REED REVOLUTION*, *Celebration Loops* by Parker Fritz, serves as a celebratory and challenging Grade 4 level work for the reed quintet. This composition provides students with an opportunity to showcase their advanced skills and musicianship.

One immediate challenge presented by *Celebration Loops* is the frequent time changes, which create an implied seven-four time feel without utilizing the potentially unfamiliar and confusing time signature as seen in Figure 12. Students will need to pay close attention to counting accurately and playing their short interjections precisely in time.

³¹ Parker Fritz, "About," Parker A Fritz, Accessed 1 Oct. 2023, <https://www.parkerafritz.com/about>.

³² Parker Fritz, *Celebration Loops* (2023).

Figure 12. *Celebration Loops*, Implied Seven-Four Time Feel, mm. 1-4.

Energetic, but steady ♩ = 160

Oboe

Clarinet in Bb

Alto Saxophone

Bass Clarinet

Bassoon

Another significant aspect of this piece is its extensive variety of articulations, which includes most traditional articulations. Therefore, students must listen attentively to each other to ensure that their articulations match across the ensemble. Furthermore, the subtle differences between articulations, such as staccato notes and staccato-accented notes, must be clearly audible to the audience. This requires students to develop a nuanced understanding of articulation markings and how they relate to the musical context.

Throughout the composition, there are moments when the ensemble suddenly aligns on a shared sforzando note. Achieving precise alignment in these instances is crucial, and students should be able to subdivide their parts accurately to play together.

The passing of rhythmic or melodic material between instruments is a recurring element in *Celebration Loops*, requiring a high level of communication and coordination within the ensemble. This includes passing ostinato grooves and the exchange of long, swelling notes that grow and diminish in volume.

At rehearsal marking “I,” the piece transitions to a new section with a key change and a frequent emphasis on the offbeat, challenging the performers’ perception of the location of the downbeat. The quintet is often divided into groups playing contrasting rhythmic ostinatos or melodic material, and these groups must align stylistically and in time. This rhythmic complexity continues throughout the composition, including the performance of hocket rhythms in measures 178-183 shown in Figure 13.

Figure 13. *Celebration Loops*, Hocket Rhythm Section, mm. 178-183.

The image displays a musical score for the Hocket Rhythm Section of *Celebration Loops*, spanning measures 177 to 183. The score is arranged in five staves, each representing a different instrument: Oboe (Ob.), Clarinet in B-flat (Cl. in B♭), Alto Saxophone (A. Sax.), Bassoon (Bsn.), and Bass Clarinet (B. Cl.).

Measures 177-181 are marked with a double bar line and a rehearsal mark. The dynamics for these measures are *p* (piano) for the Bassoon and Bass Clarinet, and *mp* (mezzo-piano) for the Clarinet in B-flat and Alto Saxophone. The Oboe part is mostly silent, with a few notes in measure 177.

Measure 182 is marked with a rehearsal mark "O" in a box. The dynamics change to *mf* (mezzo-forte) for the Oboe, Clarinet in B-flat, Alto Saxophone, and Bassoon, and *f* (forte) for the Bass Clarinet. The music features complex hocket rhythms with frequent offbeat accents.

Measures 183-184 are marked with a double bar line and a rehearsal mark. The dynamics are *f* (forte) for the Oboe, Clarinet in B-flat, Alto Saxophone, and Bassoon, and *mf* (mezzo-forte) for the Bass Clarinet. The music continues with complex hocket rhythms and offbeat accents.

Lastly, *Celebration Loops* provides each student with individually challenging parts. It is essential that each student comes prepared to rehearsals with a solid grasp of the technical aspects of their individual parts to align effectively with the other instruments. Chapter 1 of *REED REVOLUTION*, which focuses on individual responsibility, will be a valuable resource for each member of the ensemble.

CHAPTER 10

DIGITAL RESOURCES

The final aspect of *REED REVOLUTION* created to provide a multifaceted approach to reed quintet pedagogy is the collection of online resources provided with the method book. Hosted on my personal website, student ensembles will be able to find multiple recordings that are designed to enrich the learning process of the five pieces provided in Chapter 7.

One of the key assets of these resources is the inclusion of professional reference recordings. These recordings are performed by the Arcane Reed Quintet and produced by Jin Studios LLC. They offer students the opportunity to listen to the pieces played by a professional ensemble, providing a high-quality reference recording. By studying these professional renditions alongside the scores, students can gain a deeper understanding of the music and its nuances. Moreover, these recordings can serve as a catalyst for meaningful discussions within the ensemble, allowing students to analyze and appreciate different aspects of the performance. The guidance provided in Chapter 2 on group listening can help students maximize the benefits of these reference recordings.

Additionally, these resources will include additional recordings that either diminish or increase each of the instrument's audio levels. These recordings offer flexibility in how students can interact with the pieces. If the student would like to play along with their individual part and hear it amplified, regardless of what the other parts are doing musically, they can do so. Alternatively, students can choose to practice their parts while only hearing the other instrument parts played professionally. This immersive experience allows students to perform alongside the Arcane Reed Quintet at a

professional level. This flexibility in audio levels accommodates various practice preferences and enhances the overall ensemble experience.

The online resources provided with *REED REVOLUTION* offer a comprehensive and adaptable approach to reed quintet pedagogy. These resources are tailored to support students throughout their journey as they work through the pieces in Chapter 7. They encompass listening, practice, and ensemble development, contributing significantly to the students' musical growth and proficiency.

The online resources can be found at www.benxmacdonald.com/reed-revolution.

CHAPTER 11

CONCLUSION

REED REVOLUTION: A Fundamental Approach to Reed Quintet serves as a comprehensive guide, providing invaluable support for the growth of developing chamber musicians. This method book is crafted to equip students with essential guidance and tools that will aid them in establishing their own reed quintet. By emphasizing the development of interpersonal skills and a strong foundation in chamber music performance, the book seeks to create collaborative, high-level reed quintets.

The set of commissioned pieces within this text serves as a pivotal bridge, aiding students in acquiring the necessary skills to navigate the existing reed quintet repertoire. Through *REED REVOLUTION*, the reed quintet will become more accessible to students interested in participating in this genre of chamber music.

Lastly, I aspire for this work to act as a catalyst, inspiring the commissioned composers to continue in their contributions to the reed quintet repertoire, and encouraging other composers to join this creative endeavor. The impact that will occur because of *REED REVOLUTION* will play a vital role in the ongoing development and enrichment of the reed quintet.

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APPENDIX A
ONLINE RESOURCE LIST

ONLINE RESOURCES

The Power of “Yet”

Tyler Mazon

1. Reference Recording
2. Practice Tracks
 - a. Oboe – Amplified
 - b. Bb Clarinet – Amplified
 - c. Alto Sax – Amplified
 - d. Bass Clarinet – Amplified
 - e. Bassoon – Amplified
 - f. Oboe – Reduced
 - g. Bb Clarinet – Reduced
 - h. Alto Sax – Reduced
 - i. Bass Clarinet – Reduced
 - j. Bassoon – Reduced

The Pull

Jenni Watson

1. Reference Recording
2. Practice Tracks
 - a. Oboe – Amplified
 - b. Bb Clarinet – Amplified
 - c. Alto Sax – Amplified
 - d. Bass Clarinet – Amplified
 - e. Bassoon – Amplified
 - f. Oboe – Reduced
 - g. Bb Clarinet – Reduced
 - h. Alto Sax – Reduced
 - i. Bass Clarinet – Reduced
 - j. Bassoon – Reduced

Turbulent Cycles

Josh Trentadue

1. Reference Recording
2. Practice Tracks
 - a. Oboe – Amplified
 - b. Bb Clarinet – Amplified
 - c. Alto Sax – Amplified
 - d. Bass Clarinet – Amplified
 - e. Bassoon – Amplified
 - f. Oboe – Reduced
 - g. Bb Clarinet – Reduced
 - h. Alto Sax – Reduced
 - i. Bass Clarinet – Reduced
 - j. Bassoon – Reduced

Eternal Ascent

Chris Evan Hass

1. Reference Recording
2. Practice Tracks
 - a. Oboe – Amplified
 - b. Bb Clarinet – Amplified
 - c. Alto Sax – Amplified
 - d. Bass Clarinet – Amplified
 - e. Bassoon – Amplified
 - f. Oboe – Reduced
 - g. Bb Clarinet – Reduced
 - h. Alto Sax – Reduced
 - i. Bass Clarinet – Reduced
 - j. Bassoon – Reduced

Celebration Loops

Parker Fritz

1. Reference Recording
2. Practice Tracks
 - a. Oboe – Amplified
 - b. Bb Clarinet – Amplified
 - c. Alto Sax – Amplified
 - d. Bass Clarinet – Amplified
 - e. Bassoon – Amplified
 - f. Oboe – Reduced
 - g. Bb Clarinet – Reduced
 - h. Alto Sax – Reduced
 - i. Bass Clarinet – Reduced
 - j. Bassoon – Reduced

APPENDIX B

REED REVOLUTION: A FUNDAMENTAL APPROACH TO REED QUINTET

Consult Attached Files.