

***The Sound of the Big Band;
Between evolution and continuity***

*Similarities and Differences of the voicing and its orchestration
through the work of 3 master big band arrangers.*

The Sound of the Big Band: Between evolution and continuity
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Preface

In our modern society where concepts like multitasking and versatility are of the utmost importance, ruling, and where to be in only a few fields may be a disadvantage, a young musician looks at the professional world with both interest and fear. Reinventing yourself on a daily basis is highly needed, which requires continuous research and the mastering of several tools at the same time. The music business world is changing every year, and it is much more difficult to foresee future developments in the industry than it used to be in the past. The number of skills required by an artist was probably never so high and diversified.

Personally, I have always pursued the dream to become a true musician, and not “only” a saxophone player. Musicians like Bob Mintzer (saxophone player, clarinet player, flute player, teacher, composer and arranger), Bob Brookmeyer and many others, were my guides and inspirations during my musical path. As I reach the conclusion of my second Master degree, I hope to be ready to dive into the professional world, with versatility that is so essential today.

My musical path was pretty unique; I have started the piano, I have then progressed with the clarinet and finally I had studied classical and contemporary saxophone. Before the end of my classical studies in Rome¹ I started the study of the jazz theory and harmony, in order to learn how to compose and arrange for Big Band. All this happened before I even had started to play jazz with my instrument.

In the Netherlands I have given more space to the saxophone. Familiarity with the musical theory has definitely helped me out a lot in these years, and has made my musical journey in this school 2 years shorter. I have always considered the analysis a crucial and essential moment in the education path, and I have sincerely hoped to have more time to dedicate myself to this activity during the past 2 years. Thanks to this thesis I could spend a considerable amount of time listening and analyzing of well known and less famous scores. I have definitely learned a lot, and understood clearly that it is possible to go even deeper in the coming years.

My personal goal was to deduce some elements of the style of some of the major jazz arrangers through the jazz history, so to master and personalize them in order to increase the colors in composing and my skills in arranging and orchestrating. I also have had the related goal to find enough material to underline the most important features of their production. Moreover, I had an additional goal, namely to use these elements in a small personal production, verifying “on the field” some of the most interesting elements, in order to render my arrangements more logical, colorful, coherent and sequential.

This Master thesis is a work that I hope to keep feeding in the years to come, as the learning process is notoriously endless.

The pieces I have selected in my analysis are tunes that encounter both my musical taste and a certain stylistic unity.

I have chosen Gil Evans, Bob Brookmeyer and Maria Schneider for some specific reasons that I will illustrate in the Introduction. At the beginning, I had the intention to examine arrangements of

¹ At Rome's Conservatory I have discussed a thesis about the “Neurological Implications during Improvisation”

“Duke” Ellington, but I had to modify this plan because of the magnitude of its production which has already been analyzed in great details by a number of authors. Furthermore, there are also not enough trustworthy scores available to dig in this work.

Ellington is a gigantic topic that I will definitely treat and study, but it would have deserved much more than one chapter in this thesis.

It's implied, but it's good to remark, that I don't consider the arrangers that I have chosen as the best ones; if I would treat them all this research would have been endless.

The ending chapter “My own production” is the outcome of my job. The arrangements and the compositions I have written and chosen to treat in my research are a natural result of the work I have been doing during these 2 years.

For these and for many other reasons, I need to thank a few personalities that guided me during this path. First of all the great musicians I have studied, because it is wonderful to dive in a beautiful world like this one, and yet feel so small in comparison with these giants, for the great inspiration they have on me and to countless other musicians, and for the beauty of their work, that I will never finish to admire and respect.

I thank my family, because everything I was before starting my musical journey it is all their job, and because no distance in the world can decrease the love I have received in my life from them.

I thank my teachers Angelica, Alfredo, Luigi Cavallo, Alfredo Santoloci and John Ruocco, for being the reason that has kept me motivated during these years, and my arranging teachers, Antonio Solimene and Henk Huizinga, for believing in me, listening to me, being honest and direct to me, yet never destructive in their message. Furthermore, I need to thank Mr. Bert Pfeiffer and Mr. Nils van Haften, for their precious help in finding new info about the New Art Orchestra and, last but not least, Patrick Schenkius and Jarmo Hoogendijk, for being the guides during my research with constant advices, help and total availability.

I own these people a lot.

Finally, conscious that I have learned a lot, I wish I will spread my knowledge and make this work not only a personal development, but a reason for a collective growth in the coming years.

Introduction

The world of the Big Bands, the universe of the Jazz Orchestra, underwent to an incredible evolution during the twentieth century.

It could be possible to talk and write for days and days about the dawning, the dance orchestras, the most famous concerts², the great musicians that started their career in the big bands, the many fabulous arrangers, the influence of classical music, the arrival of modernity and much much more.

Nevertheless, the topic of this research goes straight to one of the most important and crucial elements of the Big Band: the jazz “voicing” and its orchestration.

It is not a mystery that a clever use of the voices, an able harmonic and melodic construction of the voicing and of the orchestration, has consecrated in the history many great arrangers (for more info about the terminology used in these work, please go to “Chapter 1”).

The choice of the 3 arrangers analyzed in this work has some logical reasons; Gil Evans, Bob Brookmeyer e Maria Schneider are closely linked to each other.

First of all, there is a chronological reason: Evans' analysis is the one of the masterpiece with Miles Davis, “Porgy and Bessy” and “Sketches of Spain” (1959-1960).

For Brookmeyer's one, because of its very long production, the works chosen are from the '80 and, in the end, an incredible arrangement dated 2004.

Last but not least, for Maria Schneider, the music analyzed is dated 1994 and 2000.

Another reason is in the role of Maria Schneider; She studied with Brookmeyer and was assistant of Gil Evans; she received enormously the influence of both of them, so it's interesting to study these 3 artists together.

The third reason is a stylistic reason; Conceptually, some arrangers got more influenced by classical music (Duke Ellington, Stan Kenton, Claude Thornhill, Gil Evans, Bob Brookmeyer, Maria Schneider, Darcy James Argue), which is the opposite of a more “jazzy” trend (Jimmy Lunceford, Count Basie, Sammy Nestico, Benny Goodman, Buddy Rich, Thad Jones).

So, the attempt was to find similarities and differences between artists that, seem to have a similar background.

Similarly, it could be possible to make an analysis of the arrangers of the other “side”, to compare and study the outcome of this joint work.

Before going to the actual first part of this work, I would like to encourage you to read this thesis while listening to the music described above and, if possible, to consulting the score in order to gain the fullest possible understanding. The text is well-provided with music samples, but these samples are taken out of a context that can only be fully grasped by listening to the music that is described in addition to consulting a score.

² For instance, the Famous Concert at the Carnegie Hall by Benny Goodman's Orchestra in 1939, or the Concert at the Newport Jazz Festival by Duke Ellington in 1956

Chapter 1. General Terminology

It seems inevitable, treating a topic like this one, not to compare the jazz world with the classical one. However, the vocabulary used may be different in some cases.

Analysis and orchestration are terms of classical derivation and their use in jazz is growing with time, but it has not reached yet the same level of importance of the classical field.

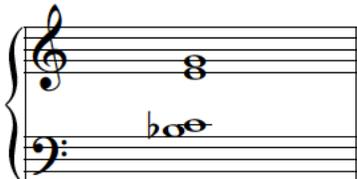
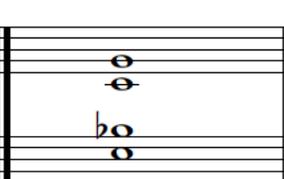
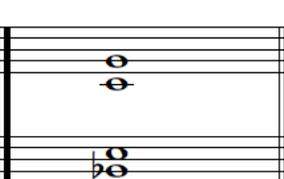
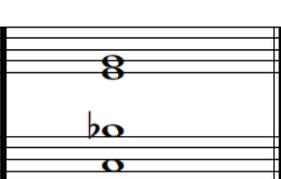
In the same way, the word “voicing”, which has a crucial role in the jazz language, is nearly unknown to classical musicians, and because of that it is important to underline some key aspects of it.

Jazz has a highly developed vocabulary that describes different kinds of voicings, and some of these terms will appear in this thesis. I will address the ones used in this work below.

The main differentiation between voicings is whether they are *close* or *spread*. In a close voicing, the chord structures are usually made by “hanging” chord tones below the top note in the voicing. The chord tones are included in as close intervals as possible (see ex. 1 below). A variant of the close voicing is called the drop 2. In drop 2-voicings, the chord tone that directly follows underneath the top note is moved to the very bottom of the voicing (see ex. 1 below). This is often used to avoid minor and major second intervals between the two top pitches, or to create a more open sound. The choice whether to use close or drop voicings is usually determined by the register of the melody. (low: close, high: drop)

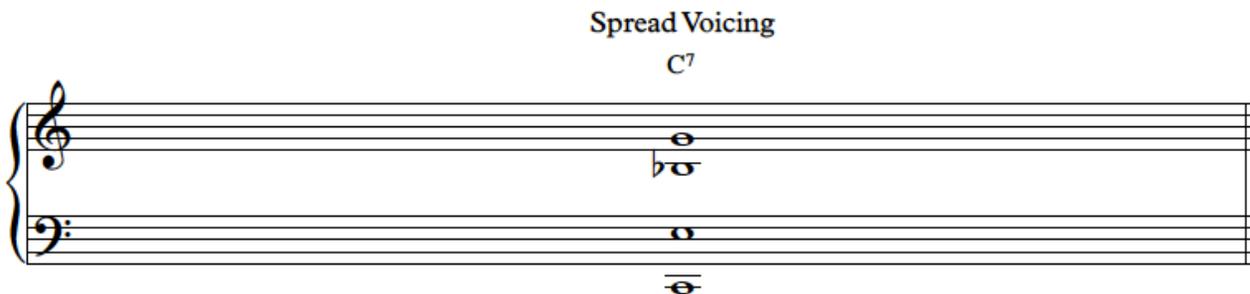
Following the same concept, there can be drop 2 and 4 and, in less cases, drop 3.

Fig. 1.1 Close and Drop Voicings

Close Position	Close - Drop 2 Position	Close - Drop 2, 4 Position	Close - Drop 3 Position (Less used)
C^7	C^7	C^7	C^7
			

On the other hand, the spread voicing tends to be built from the bottom note and upwards. These voicings are meant to be more open, warm and orchestral in sound.

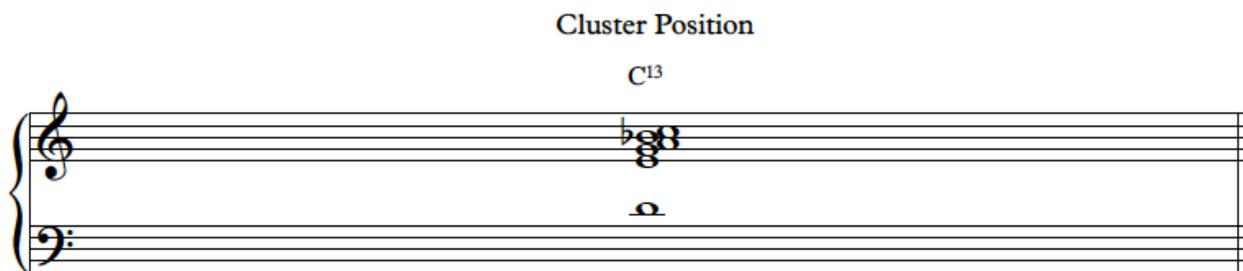
Fig. 1.2 Spread Voicing



Another term that will appear in this text is that of a *cluster*. According to “*Modern Jazz Voicings - Composing for small and medium jazz ensembles*” (Pease, Pulling and Gold 2001) “*Clusters are voicings in which the prevailing interval between adjacent notes is a second.*”

The character of clusters is usually dense and highly dissonant.

Fig. 1.3 Cluster Voicing



Lastly there are the voicings with upper-structure triads. An upper-structure triad is a complex sound consisting of both a separate triad in the top three instruments, and a representation of the basic chord, using 1, 3, 5 and 7 in the lower instruments. The two structures combined represent the given chord symbol since “*the three upper notes have a clear and identifiable triad sound*” (Pease and Pulling 2001:109) in addition to consisting of notes that belong to the given chord symbol. This type of voicing is “*used when the writer wants a powerful sound containing a high level of resonance*” (Pease and Pulling 2001:93)

Fig. 1.4 Upper Structure Voicing

Upper Structure (D triad over C7)

$\frac{D}{C7}$

The image shows a musical staff with two staves. The top staff is a treble clef and the bottom staff is a bass clef. The notes are: Treble staff: F#4, A4, C5; Bass staff: G3, B3, C4. The notes are arranged in a way that the D triad (F#, A, C) is positioned above the C7 chord (G, B, C). The notes are written as whole notes.

Chapter 2. Gil Evans

2.1 The Character

“Miles and I have a common interest in timbre, the pure sound of the music. And sound is the thing that's the most important to me of all the components of music. That's what got us together and that's what keeps us together, always. And Miles is a sound innovator, right? Nobody ever sounded like him before, so we were attracted to each other for that reason”



Gil Evans with Miles Davis

Gil Evans, 1987

Ian Ernest Gilmore "Gil" Evans (May 13th, 1912 – March 20th, 1988) was a Canadian jazz composer, arranger and piano player. He is one of the most prominent figures in the jazz history, although his life was never in the spotlight as it has happened for other artists. During his lifelong career Evans has played an important role in the development of cool jazz, modal jazz and jazz fusion which have made him one of the most influential composer and arranger of the XXth century.

Gil Evans has not merely contributed by introducing new forms in the music world, but he has created his own inimitable world. His was a world of sound.

He heard his first jazz records in the basement of his house - Duke Ellington, Louis Armstrong, Fletcher Henderson - and the father took him to hear Ellington at the Orpheum Theater in 1927. Gil fell in love with what he heard.

From that moment on, Gil Evans' life was devoted to music. Since the high school period, he has been performing, composing and arranging constantly. When he moved to New York (in 1946) he was 34 years old, but he was already a pretty well-known jazz arranger.

But, as for many musicians, New York was a life changing for Gil, and his career took quickly a new direction.

Nevertheless, as said, Evans' was already a well-established arranger, thanks to his work for the Claude Thornhill Orchestra. This band has a key role in Evans' musical development.

Thornhill (1909 – 1965) was a true innovator. a very good piano player, who performed with people like Benny Goodman, Glenn Miller, Tony Bennett and many others. In 1939 he founded the Claude Thornhill Orchestra, which lasted for 10 years.

During these years, Gil Evans collaborated as a composer and arranger, and later on, around 1947/48, he was leading all the rehearsals of the band. This assured a fix job to Gil Evans and the orchestra was a great ensemble to explore the possibilities of new voicings, unusual settings, new compositions and much more.

2.2 The game of the couples

In the jazz history there have been many “couples” that created wonderful music. Ellington and Strayhorn, Thad Jones and Mel Lewis, Charlie Parker and Dizzy Gillespie, Gerry Mulligan and Chet Baker, and so many others. The saying “Unity is strength” has never been so correct.

The same goes with Gil Evans; During his career he established two incredible relationships that changed his life and the jazz language.

First, the collaboration with Claude Thornhill: the unicity of this band (which had unusual instruments like French horns, a full clarinet section, eventually a choir and later on a tuba) undoubtedly influenced Gil's style during the years.

The band rehearsed constantly, allowing the arrangers to experiment, develop their style, and get a real and unique sound (like the “no vibrato” sound that allowed the mixture of the voicings to melt perfectly, giving a totally different sound than the one provided by the other bands of the time) and achieving a great level of performing. Thelonious Monk, already a living legend, had affirmed that Thornhill's band was “the only good band I've heard in years!”³

We could summarize Thornhill's influence in Gil Evans' style with three fundamental elements: His orchestrations had roots in classical and contemporary classical music, rather than in big band dance music; there was a constant refinement of specific combinations of sounds and instruments in order to express a mood; the idea that sound itself was the primary element in music.

Even more that with Thornhill, the real legacy that Evans established was with Miles Davis.

It may seem weird that those two personalities – one really silent, almost shy, totally humble and generous, the other one so overflowing and extreme, definitely out of the order – could melt so well.

The friendship between them lasted more than 40 years, until Evans' death. They constantly met, discussed, helped and stimulate each other. In his autobiography (written with Quincy Troupe) Miles simply considers Gil Evans his best friend. On the other hand Gil called one of his two sons Miles.

Their legacy, which started in Evans' New York basement in the 52nd street in the early '40 (a place that became quickly a meeting point for artists and musicians like Charlie Parker, Gerry Mulligan and many others) gave to the world masterpieces like his arrangement of “Moondreams” and “Boplicity” on the album “Birth of the Cool” (1949/1950, published in 1957), “Miles Ahead” (1957), “Porgy and Bess” (1958), “Sketches of Spain” (1959), “Quiet Nights” (1963), “Filles the Kilimanjaro” (1968), “Star People” (1983).

Every of these albums would deserve some words, but in order not to end out of the topic, the focus is especially on “Porgy and Bess” and “Sketches of Spain”.

2.3 Porgy and Bess

Porgy and Bess, Miles's and Gil's second large-scale collaboration, was recorded in

³ Kelley, Robin D. G., 2009. Thelonious Monk: The Life and Times of an American Original. New York: Free Press

August 1958. At the time, George Gershwin's folk opera was enjoying a comeback. The original 1935 Broadway production had closed after 124 performances (successful run for an opera, but a Broadway flop) and a brief tour. Written by a white composer/songwriter strongly influenced by black music and jazz, it received rough treatment at the hands of some critics. Gershwin crisscrossed several sacred boundaries, creating a netherworld between opera and show music, symphonic jazz, and Gullah spirituals. Porgy also provoked controversy among black critics, artists, and audiences.

Besides songs like "Summertime" and "It Ain't Necessarily So", that became jazz and pop standards, the opera did not inspire a great deal of interest until 1943, when its revival on Broadway was hugely successful. Again, a third positive revival happened in 1952 with an international tour.

Miles, who decided to work on Porgy and Bess with Gil, attended concerts and rehearsals of one of the productions, being his current girlfriend (Frances Taylor, who eventually married Miles from 1958 to 1968) a dancer in that show.

However, "this" Porgy and Bess is totally different from the original one. Gil reconstructed it both narratively and musically. He reordered Gershwin's songs almost completely, staying close to some, considerably recomposing others, and leaving out those that did not fit well in this rendering.

Eventually, he mixed some elements from songs that he would not use with others that were included, in order to stick somehow to certain melodic and harmonic ideas of Gershwin.

The real tough job was Miles' one. he had to imitate the sound of every important character with his trumpet. He had a deep and definitely meaningful tone. Nevertheless, according to Miles, this was one of the most difficult recordings he ever did in his career.

2.3.1 The story of Porgy and Bess, in few words

Gershwin's opera was both acclaimed and criticized for his crossover between jazz and classical music, and for some commonplaces regarding black people (the use of drugs, the fights, and the murderers).

The opera is in three acts, set in "Catfish Row".

Porgy is a poor and disabled beggar, while Bess is a beautiful woman, desired by most men. After using drugs, (dust of happiness) provided from a drug dealer named Sporting Life, she ends up with Crown, a big and rude man.

After five years with Crown, the couple has to separate temporarily. In the first act, under the effect of alcohol, Bess' man kills another character, Robbins, and needs to run away.

No one is inclined to host Bess who needs as well to run away before the arrival of the police. Porgy, only Porgy, opens his door and let the beautiful woman in. From this moment, her life changes. She stops using drugs and begins working and "living decently".

Unfortunately for Bess, during a picnic trip (to which Porgy cannot go due to his handicap) she meets Crown who forces her to be again with him. He promises to come back soon to affirm his

"ownership" on her. Once back, Bess is sick for a week, but then declares again her love for Porgy, who knows what she did during the trip.

At the end of the second act a terrible hurricane shock the life of the people of Catfish Row. Most of the men are fishermen, and they will not come back after this storm. Clara, the wife of Jake, one of them, goes out to find him giving their baby to Bess. She will not survive either.

Crown comes back, showing his brute force against Porgy, before trying to help Clara in finding Jake.

After the Hurricane, Bess is now in charge of the baby of Clara, singing the lullaby "Summertime". Porgy kills Crown, under the eyes of the drug dealer Sporting Life. (who several times proposed Bess to run away with him to New York)

The police comes and Porgy, who denies being the murder, needs to identify Crown's body; refusing to do so, he goes in jail for one week, where he becomes rich playing craps with his cellmates.

In the meantime, however, Sporting Life forcefully gives drugs to Bess, inviting her to move to New York again. She repeatedly refuses, but the drug dealer leaves some more drugs at her door.

Porgy cannot wait to see his beloved woman and is desperate in discovering that she eventually went to New York.

Confident in God, he decides to find her, and with no hesitation leaves Catfish Row, his people, and the scene.

2.4 The style of Porgy and Bess

Gil's Porgy and Bess is a marvel of post-bop modern jazz arranging. As symphonic as some of the writing is, a bluesy quality still permeates it thanks to Miles' playing. Furthermore, the harmonic language Gil used in a good portion of this work was prescient of the modal harmonies that Miles was starting to inject into his small band music. (who eventually led to the music of "Kind of Blue")

The score's drift toward modal writing - moving around a particular scale and tonal center - and Gil's tendency towards polytonality gave the music a moody ambiguity that was becoming one of the artistic signatures of the Canadian composer. Besides that, this album ended up to be in the so-called "third stream", a new genre of music located about halfway between jazz and classical music (Gunther Schuller, who coined the term in 1957).

The influence of Thornhill's experience is big, pretty obvious in the harmonic colorings, ostinato figures and pedal points increasing tension during the charts.

The craftsmanship in his use of glissandos, tremolos, swoops and call-and-response drives the chart to an extraordinary final product.

Following the influence of the Nonet of "Birth of the Cool", the orchestration is very particular. Saxophones doubling flutes and clarinets for the reeds, three French horns, a brass section with tuba added, and no harmonic instrument such as piano or guitar. The innovative color of the unison between flute with trombone, or tuba and double bass, the versatile sounds of Miles Davis and the unique voice of Cannonball Adderley on alto saxophone makes this work a perfect

orchestration example. Paul Chambers and Philly Joe Jones, members of Miles' quintet, can easily lift up the whole orchestra and switch from a symphonic style to a more "jazzy" sound.

The record was a great success (Miles' top selling CD until Bitches Brew, which came out in 1970).

2.5 "Bess, You Is My Woman Now"

The song "Bess, You Is My Woman Now", is one of the most expressive, intimate and romantic moment of the whole "Porgy and Bess".

Originally situated almost at the end of the second act, it is a duet between the two main character. Porgy, who was the only one who hosted Bess after the murder of Mr. Robbins from his man Crown, declares his love for the beautiful woman. Bess, who after being with Crown finally ends up using drugs and start working and living decently, confirms her feelings for him, saying "I's you forever, morning time, evening time, summer time and winter time".

After this scene, there won't be many other happy moments, and for this reason, this song is one of the most beautiful and happy moments in the opera.

Gil Evans, who changes the order of the songs according to his intentions, plays this ballad as the second track of the album.

The original song is already beautiful. Nevertheless, Gil Evans finds a way to rearrange the song in a unique way.

Harmonically, the original song is in Bb major, moving a major third up or down (Gb major or D major), both for melodic reason and voice extension reasons; Evans starts from the same key of the original version, (F major) but then goes to Bb major, D major, F# major, and adds a G minor tag in the end.

Evans uses many times a dominant pedal to increase tension during the chart It is interesting his use of a pedal played as well from the flutes, a tool that creates a more mellow and mysterious sound.

The harmony, which tends to follow the original progression, has many unexpected moments, with polychords, (upper structure voicing; for more information please check Chapter 1.) and unusual resolutions.

Fig. 2.1 Polychords and Unexpected Resolution

The image shows two musical staves in 4/4 time, illustrating polychords. Above the staves, the text reads "Polychords" and "Current key Bb".

- Bar 18:** The upper staff has a chord with notes Bb, Db, and Eb. The lower staff has a chord with notes E and G. Above the upper staff, the chord is labeled as $\frac{D\flat}{E}$.
- Bar 33:** The upper staff has a chord with notes Bb, Db, and Eb. The lower staff has a chord with notes E and G. Above the upper staff, the chord is labeled as $\frac{B\flat}{E}$.

Below the staves, the labels "bar 18" and "bar 33" are centered under their respective measures. There are also small circular symbols below the bar lines.

Unexpected Resolution

Current key f#

Musical notation for bars 66 and 67. The current key is F# (indicated by a sharp sign on the F line). The notation shows two staves (treble and bass clef) with chords and notes. Above the staves, the chords are labeled: D7alt, Emaj7(#11), Fmaj13, and F#maj9. Bar 66 contains D7alt and Emaj7(#11). Bar 67 contains Fmaj13 and F#maj9. The bass line in bar 67 features a dissonant bass note (B natural) creating a b9 interval with the F# root.

Gil harmonizes the "Blue Note" with a half diminished chord, and makes use of one of his trademark: the use of dissonant bass notes: in particular, he creates b9 intervals using basic voicings in uncommon inversions.

Fig. 2.2 Dissonant bass note

Musical notation for bars 61 and 70. The current key is F# (indicated by a sharp sign on the F line). The notation shows two staves (treble and bass clef) with chords and notes. Above the staves, the chords are labeled: Dmaj7/C# and F#maj7/E#. Bar 61 contains Dmaj7/C#. Bar 70 contains F#maj7/E#. The bass line in bar 70 features a dissonant bass note (B natural) creating a b9 interval with the F# root.

Sound-wise, Evans generally divides the sections: Mostly, trumpets and trombones work together, as well as horns and reeds (in this case one alto saxophones and three flutes). When the whole brass are playing, the reeds do not, because their sound is too thin to be heard. Often the trumpets use Harmon mute, while Miles plays flugelhorn through the whole ballad. Miles' role, as said, is crucial, playing a female and a male part at the same time.

The tag at the end seems to have nothing to share with the whole chart, but this may be explained by Evans' sense of the opera.

2.4 Sketches of Spain

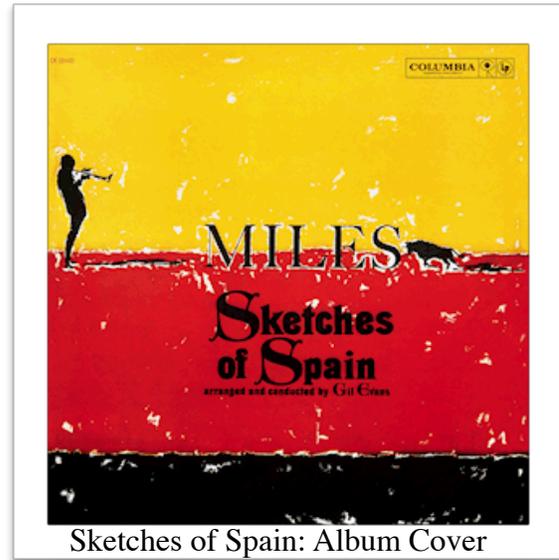
"I had the feeling that I needed some rest. I was always hanging around looking for new music to play, new challenge for my musical ideas, and most of the times I made it. Maybe it's because I was living alone, always going around to listen to any kind of music and always being the center of my life.

Now I was mostly at home with Frances, going to parties, making a couple life. But there still was one thing that I needed to do in the end of '59 and it was to start a new album with Gil

Evans, an album that we decided to call “Sketches of Spain””

From Miles Davis' Autobiography

Sketches of Spain really represent a turning point in the jazz history. It seems a coincidence, but this recording was born in 1959, the “year that changed Jazz” (Nat Hentoff, American historian and jazz critic).



During same year albums like “Kind of Blue” (Miles Davis), “Giant Steps” (John Coltrane), “Time Out” (Dave Brubeck), “The Shape of Jazz to Come” (Ornette Coleman), “Portrait in Jazz” (Bill Evans), “Mingus Ah Um (Charles Mingus) and more were recorded.

In this magic moment for jazz, the bigger ensembles didn't have that much of a great time. Money was becoming less (Gil Evans already had experienced this before, when he decided to create his Nonet with Miles Davis for “Birth of the Cool”) and smaller combos were the real thing. Dance rooms were quickly disappearing, and the core of the attention was for the great soloists.

Nevertheless, after the success of “Kind of Blue”, Miles still had the energies and the inspiration to create something new.

Another quote from his autobiography: *“in 1959 I was in Los Angeles and I met up with Joe Montdragon, a good friend of mine”. (...) When I arrived at his place he showed me this recording of the “Concierto de Aranjuez” by Joaquín Rodrigo, a Spanish composer. (...) I immediately understood that I had to record it because the lines and the harmonies got stuck into my head. When I was back in New York I called Gil and we discussed about that. (...) He also loved it, but he said we had to do some more tunes to cover the length of a whole album. We have a Peruvian folk cd and from there we took “The Pan Piper”. Then, we took the Spanish standard “Solea”, a song of complaint and nostalgia, and the Spanish march “Saeta” played on Good Friday. Our trumpet players played the march of “Saeta” really like they were Spanish!”*

From this idea Gil Evans put all his efforts, creating and recreating, modeling, changing, adding and removing details, in order to present the best work possible.

The result is absolutely perfect. The music is both difficult and intriguing, challenging (jazz and non jazz musicians played together, a very rare event) but still lyrical, and Miles is at the top of his shape. The arrangements are wonderful, and the feeling of “Spain” is constant through the whole work.

2.5 An overall analysis of the "Concierto de Aranjuez" - Adagio

"Miles Ahead", "Porgy and Bess" and "Sketches of Spain" introduced a new sensitiveness, ambiance, and sound into modern jazz arranging and composition; several boundaries were crossed, several styles and concepts were anticipated.

Several decades before the rising of the "world music", Evans and Davis explored a Spanish flavor in jazz repertoire like no one had ever done before.

The opening of "Sketches of Spain" is the ambitious arrangement of Rodrigo's Adagio from his Sketches of Spain. From the "Concierto", Evans only takes the II mov., the *Adagio*. Nevertheless, he took his greatest liberty by inserting "his chorus" during the arrangement and by coloring differently the general atmosphere. Originally for guitar and orchestra, Evans has Miles Davis as soloist and a unique setting to orchestrate.

The reeds offer a huge palette of colors: Flute, Alto Flute, Oboe, Clarinet, English Horn, Bass Clarinet, Bassoon.

Three French horns, four trumpets, one trombone, one bass trombone and one tuba completes the wind instruments.

The rhythm section is formed by harp, double bass, (played by Paul Chambers, former member of Miles Davis Quintet) drums (Philly Joe Jones) and two percussionists. (between them, a young Elvin Jones). Once more, no piano is involved.

At the beginning, Miles stays pretty close to the original guitar melody, but Evans' ambiance, between symphonic music and jazz music, tends to change the vibes of the chart.

Before going deeper in the section composed by Evans, (which is in the middle of the Movement) it is important to underline a few elements that stand out immediately and are some of the characteristic elements of Gil Evans' style.

Following the example of composers like Duke Ellington, Evans is clearly a horizontal thinker more than a vertical one. He makes a huge use of the so-called "Linear Approach".

Bill Dobbins, in his book *"Jazz Arranging & Composing - A Linear Approach"*, defines this technique a way to *"express a jazz language in a clear and economic way, with the purpose of giving to each instrument a melodic line"*.

In the jazz arranging world, it is almost unavoidable to create some not very musical inner lines in a sequence of voicings. The harmony moves horizontally and according to the melody, without "caring" so much about the other voices. It is a duty of the arranger to try to make every single part interesting. The linear approach is the most used technique regarding this topic and Gil Evans has a perfect craftsmanship in using it.

He mixes a simple spread voicing technique (see Chapter 1. for more information) with some independent and very singable lines which eventually have also a clear harmonic function in the context.

Fig 2.3 Linear Approach

The image shows two staves of musical notation. The top staff is labeled "Hobo cantabile" and features a melodic line with a slur over the first two measures. The bottom staff provides harmonic support with chords and bass lines. Above the first staff, the chords "Am" and "Gm" are indicated. Above the second staff, the chords "Fmaj7", "Bbmaj7", "A7(b9)", "A7", "Dm(maj7)", and "Dm" are indicated. The notation includes various rhythmic values, slurs, and triplets.

Another element which stands out from his contemporary colleagues is the big use of clusters in the voicings. (Chapter 1. for more information)

Fig 2.4 Clusters examples

The image shows two staves of musical notation. The top staff features dense clusters of notes, often with slurs. The bottom staff provides harmonic support with chords and bass lines. Below the first staff, the text "From Bar 57" is written. Below the second staff, the text "From Bar 78" is written. The notation includes various rhythmic values and slurs.

Minor 9th intervals between the two lower voices of the chord or major and minor 2nd between some of the top voices give a darker sound than Rodrigo's original atmospheres.

A third component defines Gil Evans' style; the freedom that double bass and tuba have was never so big. Since his arrangements included in "Birth of the Cool", tuba and double bass have a big role, shifting from a harmonic function to a melodic one.

Again, in "Bess, You Is My Woman Now" (Chapter 2.5) from *Porgy and Bess*, they quote for the first time Bess' words "*Morning time, Evening time, Summer Time, Winter Time*".

Here, in *Sketches of Spain*, the bassoon generally joins them by casting light on the dark sound produced by these two instruments. In the opening of the *Adagio*, they seem to be the busiest instruments with the trumpet, leaving the "light" woodwinds and the horns the harmonic support role. (in the following example an extract from a line played by bass, tuba and bassoon)

Fig 2.5 Bass Line

The image shows two systems of musical notation for a bass line. The first system starts with a treble clef staff containing rests, and a bass clef staff with a melodic line. It includes a triplet of eighth notes, another triplet of eighth notes, and a nonet (marked '9') of sixteenth notes. The second system continues the bass line with several triplet markings over eighth notes and concludes with a half note and a whole note.

The harp enriches the atmosphere of the Movement with color effects, lines, tremolos, now alone and now in unison with other instruments

The part that does not belong to the original "*Concierto*" holds a double function; first, it takes another direction from Rodrigo's development. Second, it gives some elements of the following original compositions. (like classical composers used to do in their "Overtures")

This section is rhythmically propelled by castanets and brushes and finally builds back to a restatement of Rodrigo's main theme, with far darker colorings and a deeper majesty than the original one. It ends differently, dissonantly, in a staggered fashion, with traces of Rodrigo's work drifting in and out.

The original section composed by Evans' "*Adagio*" is a 45 bar section based mainly on a b Phrygian pedal. (the Phrygian scale has this sequence of sounds: 1, b2, b3, 4, 5, b6, b7. Basically, B Phrygian, is a G major scale)

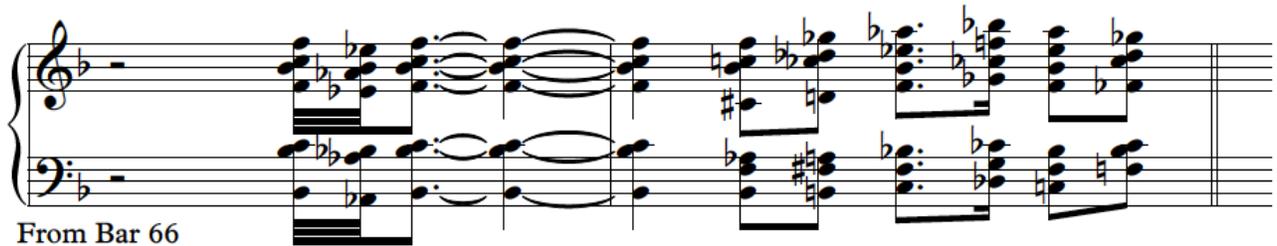
The atmosphere stays dark, and it is a big and long preparation for the return of the main theme, which comes back in a full and powerful sound.

As already said, Evans tends to use clusters (See Fig. 2.4) and unusual sound mixtures quite often. (in bar 142 Alto Flute, Trumpet and Harp are together)

Nevertheless, this section is characterized mainly by the "parallel harmony".

Generally, during modal sections, every note can be harmonized in the same way, without the need of chromatic passing tones or dominant chords. This means that the harmony moves in a parallel diatonic way to constantly confirm the mode of the section. (see example)

Fig 2.6 Parallel harmony



Miles' trumpet is the only one with solo parts, while all the other instruments are busy in moving up and down in the Phrygian scale.

The use of mutes on the horns and cup mutes on the trumpets gives a more mysterious sound to the overall section. The castanets have a clear rhythmic role. Still, this big segment may sound like a "rubato" one. This ability of Gil Evans' is quickly showed in the score of "Sketches of Spain", with a clever and constant displacement of the entrances of the instruments. Few times, in fact, the instruments enter on the first bit of the bar, underlining this sense of instability.

The end of this inner section sees a big crescendo that naturally brings the listener to the representation of the main theme. In this darker orchestration of the theme, the use of the "descant" (in jazz it would be called "call and response") accentuates even more the tension and the struggle of this moment. It is the climax, and it sounds so extreme especially thanks to the long "interlude" that Evans wrote.

Evans uses his instruments considering every possibility of their range: Trumpets and flutes are shouting, lower instruments are at the bottom of their extension, horns, and trombones in the middle giving body to the harmony that here is thick and dense. Evans never renounces to use some voices in a linear approach, conscious that every single line will add some ingredients to his work. In this representation of the theme, Alto Flute and Trumpet 2 play together in the high register. (and even higher than the melody!)

Before section "J", which is leading us to the end of this chart, the instruments extend their range even more. The tuba goes as down as it possibly can, the flutes do the same in the high register.

When this incredible tension ends Evans draws a wonderful ending for his "adagio"; starting from a dense dialogue between the instruments, where Miles rules with few and meaningful notes, and ending with the same unexpected harmony used by Rodrigo in the last four bars.

Also Evans' version ends with a D major triad, contrasting incredibly with what happened for the previous 15 minutes of music.

2.6 Considerations about Gil Evans' style

Given that the analyzed material is only a small part of the huge production of Gil Evans, it may be enough to highlight some of the most important elements of Evans' style.

The unicity of his way of arranging stands out clearly because of some factors:

- unusual voicings
- unusual sound mixtures and, in general, unusual choice of instruments
- clusters in top or low voices
- linear approach
- big use of modal atmospheres

"Porgy and Bess" and "Sketches of Spain" are two perfect examples of Evans style. He is already a mature and experienced arranger, and he hears things that nearly nobody was capable of hearing at that time.

Miles Davis has the crucial role of giving Evans the deserved exposure and perfectly fitting into the intricate world of sounds of the Canadian composer.

These masterpieces are trademarks in between the "cool jazz" period and the "modal jazz". They changed the way of intending the world of jazz arranging and created infinite links between classical, symphonic and jazz music.

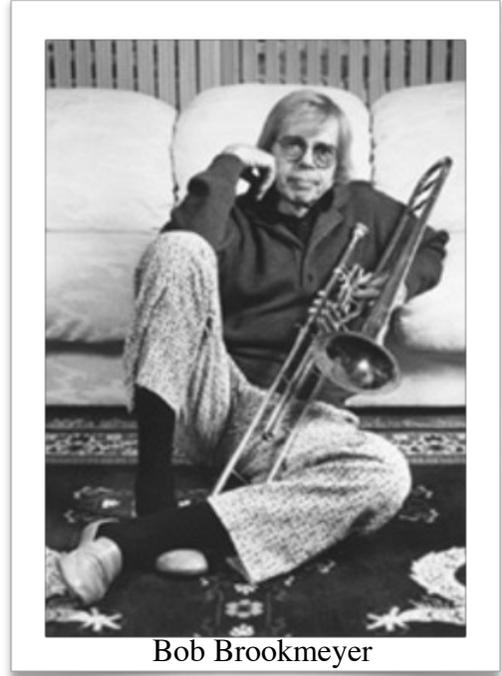
Chapter 3. Bob Brookmeyer

3.1 The Character

Robert Edward "Bob" Brookmeyer (December 19th, 1929 – December 15th, 2011) was an American jazz valve trombonist, pianist, arranger, and composer; Needless to say, his influence in the jazz music world was huge, both as a performer and as a composer/arranger.

Grown up in a pretty poor family from Kansas, he started performing and arranging already at 14, starting officially his career in 1944.

Definitely a child prodigy in the jazz world, Brookmeyer played clarinet before switching to trombone, but his arranging skills allowed him to perform quite steadily also as a piano player.



Bob Brookmeyer

Eventually, he performed with the Claude Thornhill Orchestra around 1950 and there he met also Gil Evans. During an interview with Marc Myers, he used to recall *“Playing with that band was alright, especially when we played college dates. You’d play that session, smoke a little dope, and it was dark, so everything was comfortable. I think Gil Evans wrote some things for the band that was pretty complex. Claude was very proud of the band. (...) When touring, if Claude wanted to leave early, I’d also play the piano.”*

Along the years he kept performing and being part of important combos; He recorded with Gerry Mulligan, Chet Baker, Zoot Sims, and even had a four hands piano recording with Bill Evans.

He's one of the few personalities in the music business that could keep arranging and performing, and his arranging palette got bigger and bigger, allowing him to arrange also for Ray Charles, He even managed to write for full string sections.

His career never stopped, despite some heavy alcoholism problem (he kept drinking from 1950 until 1976). Once sober for a continuous time, he had the chance to write steadily for the Thad Jones / Mel Lewis Big Band, in which he also performed quite a few times.

Arranging for this band was an important step, because *“you were tacitly invited to be more than you could be, to try new things. And I did.”*

Moving on with Bob's life, in the end of the '80, he decided to move to Europe to work closer with classical musicians. He moved to the Netherlands in 1991 and continuously taught, played and conducted orchestras in the Netherlands, Germany, Sweden, Norway. He founded the New Art Orchestra, a very special big band made of European young and talented musicians.

3.2 The “New Art Orchestra”

The New Art Orchestra was a project led by conductor Bob Brookmeyer. When he moved to the Netherlands in the early 90', he had a big plan of opening a “Master School of Jazz” in Rotterdam, with the idea of inviting top players like Joe Lovano, Kenny Werner, Kenny Wheeler, Lee Konitz. Unfortunately, due to financial problems, this plan never worked out and the school never started. At the same time, while teaching and giving workshops in several schools, he recruited a whole big band of young and talented musicians. Looking for a more classical sound, he founded the "New Art Orchestra", a big band, his last and most ambitious project as performer, arranger and conductor.

While researching about this band, I had the great pleasure to interview Mr. Bert Pfeiffer, who played trombone in one record of this band and studied privately with Brookmeyer. Moreover, I had a long phone call with Mr. Nils van Haften, tenor saxophonist of the New Art Orchestra.

The first impression I got was a great excitement and nostalgia about the New Art Orchestra: *"It was magical; always great music. Bob only cared about that. He was strict at rehearsals but human. He always had clear ideas about what he wanted from us. The musical level of that band was so high that I barely played in big bands after that period. Bob had a very direct approach. If you didn't know his music by the second day...you were out of the band. But if you were in, you were part of a wonderful family."* (Bert Pfeiffer, 2017)

"The most incredible things was that we were all so much into his music; we were willing to adapt our skills to Bob's musical ideas, ideas that we trusted completely and undoubtedly. That band had a special sound; we never sounded artificial or forced, which happens with many other good bands around. After a couple of weeks with that band on the road, you were going home and bringing with you this different sound, this new conception about sound. I am so thankful and happy to had the chance of be a stable member of the New Art Orchestra. We did wonderful things, and Bob was simply the best we could have!" (Nils van Haften, 2017)

The New Art Orchestra recorded five CDs, spread in almost 15 years of activity. The great availability of doublings on the reeds (flutes, clarinets, hobo, and English horn) gave a very broad palette of sounds to Brookmeyer, which could easily shift between jazz big band style to a more classical one. Another trademark of the band was the use of synthesizers. Brookmeyer doubled most of the parts on the piano and on the synth. He liked the sustain that the synth could offer, and he tended to over stress it to mellow the sound and balance it in a better way.

3.3 “*Hello and Goodbye*”

The composition and arrangement of “Hello and Goodbye” was recorded in 1980 by the Mel Lewis Jazz Orchestra. By that time, Bob Brookmeyer was already the conductor of the band, writing different kind of pieces and exploring sounds and possibilities.

Brookmeyer's language is pretty complex, but it is crucial to understand how the simple melodic materials strike a happy balance with the thick voicings, irregular forms, and rich harmonies written by the composer. This craftsmanship gives his chart a unique flavor, where the simpleness of the melodic shape is perfectly melt in a very advanced harmonic concept.

Hello And Goodbye is a motivic composition. As we will see also in Maria Schneider's “Green Piece”, (Chapter 4.3) the motivic development is one of the strongest element to form a melody. In some cases, some writers base small sections on a single motif, but it is possible to write a whole composition keeping in mind a simple and very basic element. Brookmeyer is definitely a master in that, and “Hello and Goodbye” is a perfect example of the use of this technique.

During the whole chart this element (represented below in example 3.1) is presented 36 times. It is a three notes cell that appears, mostly, melodically modified every time. It is hard to avoid mentioning and emphasizing how big is the importance of rhythm in the three basic elements of jazz: rhythm, harmony, melody.

Fig. 3.1 Basic Motif of the composition



The image shows a musical score for a piano accompaniment. The key signature is three flats (B-flat, E-flat, A-flat) and the time signature is 4/4. The melody is written in the treble clef and consists of a sequence of notes: G4, A4, B-flat4, C5, B-flat4, A4, G4. This sequence is repeated four times across eight measures. The bass line is written in the bass clef and consists of a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes, represented by slanted lines. Above the first measure, the chord is identified as A-flat9(sus4). Below the score, the text "From Bar 17" is written.

As said before, Brookmeyer has a unique style thanks to his liberty in moving the forms of his chart, and never sounding academic in his writing. This ability keeps him away from the common sequence of head, solo, special and head out. In this case, for instance, the form is very broad and it naturally arrives at 56 bars, plus a 24 bars tag in a contrasting tone, before a smaller recapitulation of 24 bars.

Nevertheless, because of the strength of the melodic material, none of Brookmeyer's choices sound forced or artificial.

Sound-wise, this arrangement is pretty interesting. The Thad Jones – Mel Lewis Big Band was famous for having a stable 5 reeds section made of Soprano Sax, Alto Sax, 2 Tenor Saxes and Baritone Sax. In this composition, however, Brookmeyer uses two soprano saxes, which gives a different color to the reed section. Furthermore, one French horn is added.

Harmonically, Brookmeyer is able to present a contrast between sections through the use of unison and very dense harmonies. Mainly, the theme is presented with unison from different instruments. Then, almost suddenly, the horns are split up creating dense harmonies. The harmony of the main idea is based on a pedal (Ab9sus) supporting an idea of suspension and, therefore, a growing need for resolution.

Clusters are used in a very "massive" way, but again it is good to underline that this appears once the melody is well impressed in the ear of the listener, making very easy to recognize it.

Fig. 3.2 Theme harmonized with clusters

From Bar 51

Furthermore, Brookmeyer breaks the "rule" of not creating b9 with his melodies.

Fig. 3.3 b9 between top voice and inner voice-leading

From Bar 229

The density mentioned before is meant to increase the intensity and getting to the climax

of the section. The following bars, 65 to 71, appear in the chart 3 times, always in the same way. Here the harmony is very thick, the melody is strong and the accents are accurately written out. This is a moment of resolution, recapitulation, and a perfect launch to the following sections.

Fig. 3.4 Dense harmony reaching the climax

sax

tpt

rbn

From Bar 65

It is also very important to define the structure of the bridge written from Brookmeyer; This section is in great contrast with everything that happens before or that follows. As it happens also in "American Express, (Chapter 3.4) this section completely breaks the atmosphere and has a very humoristic, ironic and eccentric character.

This is a great example of the liberty in Brookmeyer's writing.

The choice of the Tenor and Baritone sax as soloists seems very well thought, due to the character of the tune. Both these instruments have a pretty broad range and have a virtuosic attitude. Nevertheless, it is interesting to see that Brookmeyer uses multiple improvisers to his recapitulations. So, while some instruments are playing the theme, others improvise, increasing

the tension and preparing for the powerful resolution. (which is the repetition of bars 65 to 71)
The motivic development is also stressed during the backgrounds.

Fig. 3.5 Use of the motif (rhythmically varied) for the background



From Bar 121

Voicing-wise, it is very important to underline the broad palette in Brookmeyer's vocabulary. From unison to clusters, from standard harmonizations to thick voicings. (reaching 7 notes per chord!)

Another element, which gives an incredible strength and unity to Brookmeyer's line, is the ability to mix thick voicings with spread voicing technique. For instance, in bars 168 - 171, (during the special) the bass line is reinforced by the bass trombone which is actually part of the harmonization of the melody. The bass trombone plays, mostly, the root of each chord created by Brookmeyer, increasing the melodic shape of his line. It seems like Brookmeyer use the linear approach to underline certain lines in his voicings, and the effect is powerful and perfectly achieved.

Fig. 3.6 Thick Voicings and Spread Voicing with bass line doubled by Bass Trombone

The image shows two systems of piano accompaniment. The first system (bars 168-171) features thick voicings in the right hand and a bass line in the left hand. The second system (bars 172-175) features spread voicings in the right hand and a bass line in the left hand. The key signature has three flats (B-flat major/C minor).

From Bar 168

Chords: C, B7, Bb7, Am7, A13, C#m9, Dm9, Em9, Fmaj9, G+7(b9), Cmaj9, Em11

Chords: Ebm11, Ab7alt, Dbmaj13, Db/C, Db/Cb, Db/Bb

Finally, the piece is modulating from Ab Mixolydian do Db, after a short section in C Major. This final modulation has a relation of 4th with the main tonality, as well as the first interval of the main melody.

Concluding, it is clear that Brookmeyer has a very defined style in this period, but it is also clear that new influences are coming from his different experiences and his taste. For sure, this work is one of the many where Brookmeyer "accept" the invitation "being more than you could be, to try new things."

Nevertheless, in "America Express" Brookmeyer will make further experiments, clearly showing the different influences and transformations that are happening in his music.

3.4 *"The American Express"*

In the 80' the style of Brookmeyer developed further, leading him to a more classical way of intending music. (ending up with a band like the New Art Orchestra)

In 1984 his work "The American Express", (again written for the Mel Lewis Jazz Orchestra) was a clear example of the multitude of styles, influences, ideas that are changing Brookmeyer's musical concept.

This work is characterized by a broad series of different styles and situations. Like in "Hello and Goodbye", a humorous interlude is included, as well as a "quasi-symphonic" section. Furthermore, swing style, vaudeville rhythms, multiple improvisers, and even atonality complete this chart.

It may seem that too many ingredients are added into the same composition, but Brookmeyer is able to mix everything smoothly and in a meaningful way.

Considering the other arrangements analyzed, this one has a very jazzy sound, especially in the "tutti" sections; nevertheless, there is a constant variety in the feeling of the song.

After the first "tutti" in a traditional big band style, a sudden "bell effect" immediately changes the vibe of the chart. The entrances of the instruments do not draw any definite harmony, and actually seem to go in a more atonal direction.

Fig 3.7 Bell Effect with dissonant entrances

The image displays a musical score for a piano accompaniment, starting from bar 17. The score is written in a 4/4 time signature with a key signature of two flats (Bb and Eb). The notation is spread across two staves: the upper staff is in treble clef and the lower staff is in bass clef. The music features a complex, dissonant texture with overlapping lines and chords. There are several instances of dissonance, particularly in the lower register of the bass staff, where notes from different harmonic areas are combined. The overall feel is one of controlled chaos, characteristic of the 'Bell Effect' mentioned in the caption.

Presented at first in a major version, the theme comes in a minor atmosphere during the second time. Again, in a very unexpected way, Brookmeyer inserts 4 other lines, contrasting with the theme and making the exposition blurred.

As usual in Brookmeyer, the form is absolutely not defined, and the theme comes again in its major version. This time, 5 other lines "disturb" the main melody by increasing the tension and the feeling of anxiety.

When the interlude comes, the effect created by Brookmeyer is incredible; the resolution does not arrive and a brand new and contrasting element appears, apparently without any link with the previous section.

Once back with the swing style, Brookmeyer changes the mood again in a "quasi-symphonic" feeling, starting the preparation for the first soloist.

Multiple improvisers and punch chords draw the end of this first big part.

Many sections are linked with some bars played by the piano, and this gives strength to the different ideas.

After the soprano sax solo and the special, again in a more traditional jazz big band language, the tenor sax solo starts with a different vibe before going back to the swing feeling.

It is curious to comment Brookmeyer's annotation for the background: He asks his band to play in a "sloppy and drunk sounding" and then in a "sober" way.

The charts end quoting exactly the first 55 bars of the chart; also this ending does not actually sound like an ending, giving a perfect conclusion to this unusual arrangement.

Like in "Hello and Goodbye", two soprano sax are playing, and a bass clarinet alternates with the baritone sax. No other unusual instruments are added, confirming that the root of this arrangement is a traditional jazz big band setting.

Brookmeyer constantly uses the linear approach (especially when many lines interfere with the theme) and, only in few cases, the parallel harmony. The rarity of this technique makes every use of it extremely powerful. In fact, Brookmeyer uses it to reach the climax of the section that foreruns the interlude.

Fig 3.8 Parallel harmony



From Bar 100

Sound-wise, the jazz language is the main field on which the composition is based. To achieve different sounds, Brookmeyer gives clear indications, making every transition easier to realize

Another very interesting element which appears also in "Lovely" (see chapter 3.5) is a rhythmic pedal played by the trombones under the soprano sax solo. In this case, Brookmeyer asks the trombone players to "*attack ad lib - create busy, nervous feeling - up or down an octave occasionally*".

Fig 3.9 Trombones rhythmical ratters



However, in "Lovely", Brookmeyer writes down this rhythmic pedal; (adding one extra note, and displacing the pattern in several octaves) this device happens, this time, under a modal melody played by the English horn.

Fig 3.10 Rhythmical pattern from "Lovely"



It is interesting to see how some elements came back again after almost two decades, even though the overall style of Brookmeyer had evolved so much during this long period.

The American Express is a work that may be seen as a turning point of many influences, ideas, and intuitions.

This sound will be channeled in a very accurate way with the New Art Orchestra. So the next chapter is focused on one composition written and arranged for this new band.

3.5 *Lovely*

The last of Brookmeyer's arrangements included in this work is an incredible composition recorded in 2004 named "Lovely" and recorded in "Get Well Soon" with the New Art Orchestra. (For more information about the New Art Orchestra please go to the sub-chapter 3.2)

This chart, a through-composed ballad without any representation of the first idea, is a masterpiece that deserves a deeper look.

The easiness and the logic that structures this song is absolute. The melodic shape is simple, yet totally convincing. The voice-leading creates a continuous tension-release effect, giving moments of sudden anxiety or great relief.

The orchestration is clever; the reed section is formed by alto flute, two clarinets, bass clarinet and English horn. The trumpet section becomes a full flugelhorn section while the guitar is not included.

Brookmeyer alternates simple sound mixtures (English horn in unison with flugelhorn or five flugelhorns in unison) with thicker voicings that enormously increase the tension; still, the central role is played by the inner chromatic lines.



Fig 3.11 *Inner linear approach with dense harmony*



From Bar 28

Brookmeyer decides not to overload the harmony. In his arrangement of "First Love Song" from the '80, for instance, the whole band harmonizes the melody, generating 7-8 part voicings and, therefore, a very dark sound (see the comparison between bars 1-8 of First Love Song and 13-17 of Lovely). In his more recent work the color is brighter, even if several dissonances constantly "interfere" with the wonderful melody drawn by the composer.

Simplicity is definitely the key word for this song. An almost classical approach is followed during the harmonic sequences and the light and unusual sounds of the woodwinds complete this wonderful piece.

Fig 3.12 Extract from *Lovely*

Abm Gbm Abm7(b5) Gbm Em Dm

From Bar 13

Em7(b5) Dm C#m7(b5) F#(sus4b9) F#7

Fig 3.13 Extract from *First Love Song*

Woodwinds: Flute
3 Clarinets
Bass Clarinet

Brass: 4 Flugelhorns
3 Trombones
1 Bass Trombone

$\text{♩} = 60$

Woodwinds Gb F7 Emaj13 Ebmaj13 Gbmaj7(#11) Cm9 Am11 D-7 Gm9 Gb13(#11) Fm9 Bb+7 Gm11/C Bbm11(b5) A13(9)

Brass

Abmaj13 Gm11 Bm9 E+7(b9) Cm9 Bm7(b9) Bb7(9sus4) Db7alt. Gm9 C+7(#9) Fm9 Bb+7(b9) Eb6/ Eb13(9)/Eb

The original compositions “Closed Eyes” and “The Business Suite Mov. II” are highly inspired by this work (for more info see Chapter 5.)

3.6 Considerations about Bob Brookmeyer's Style

Bob Brookmeyer, as well as Gil Evans, had a huge career that allowed him to flow between several musical styles, to approach many artists, to work in different situation, always keeping a great level of music.

His full and deep respect for the Music reflects the personality of someone that has found in this art a way to express himself despite a difficult childhood. Music helped him to stop drinking and music gave him a versatile talent that few personalities in the jazz world ever had.

His style is difficult to define in a few lines. Some of the elements that seem to be more unique may be the following ones:

- melodic approach and melodic/motivic development
- liberty in treating the form
- big contrast between single lines with thicker sections
- particular sound mixtures (especially with the New Art Orchestra)

Despite being a true jazz player, the passion for the classical sounds and harmonies creates an intimate relationship with Brookmeyer's jazz vocabulary. The result is a perfect mixture of atmospheres and sonorities that few other arrangers have managed to reach.

My compositions "Closed Eyes" and "Business Suite II Mov" are highly inspired by the work of Bob Brookmeyer, especially his latest work with the "New Art Orchestra". (Please check the chapter "My Own Production")

Chapter 4. Maria Schneider

4.1 The Character

Maria Schneider (November 27th, 1960), whose music has been defined evocative, majestic, heart-stoppingly gorgeous, is a composer, arranger, and bandleader that has changed the world of the composition, with a style that goes way beyond any possibility of categorization.

Five times Grammy Award winner, she has been leading since 25 years her own big band (an almost unique thing nowadays) and has written pieces for all kinds of settings and events.

After her studies in Minnesota and Rochester, In 1985 she moved to New York and won the “National Endowment for the Arts”, which allowed her to study with Bob Brookmeyer. At the same time, while working as a copyist, she had the chance to meet and start working as Gil Evans’ assistant.

Brookmeyer and Evans were and still are, according to Maria Schneider, her favorite composers, and arrangers.

Quoting Maria Schneider: *“I loved the subtlety of Gil’s music. I loved how deeply expressive it was. It had all the soft shifts in orchestration of classical music with the spontaneous exchange of ideas and rhythmical aspects of jazz.”* (Schneider in Sturm 1998);

“Gil had its own big band, it’s jazz, you know, but it had all that transparency, the nuance, starting from the stuff with the Claude Thornhill Orchestra. Big bands were dancing bands at that time, but then they got this airy sound and mixing it with classical music, it’s just great!”

And about Brookmeyer: *“Bob’s ingenuity, his ideas about minimizing materials and developing a sense of form, and the wonderful spirit and drama of his music would open up a new world to me”* (2006) and *“Bob had the thing of long forms, forms that you find in classical music. So it wasn’t just this definable jazz thing.”* (Schneider, 2016)

Her music, which has a broad palette of colors and emotions, carries a sort of “inevitability” that flows during the whole composition, truly telling a story.

The Maria Schneider Orchestra is together since 1992, and it is definitely one of the most unique ensembles, with a wide range of doublings, great soloist, and a very definable overall sound. There is something highly “Ellingtonian” in Schneider’s attitude to her musicians: she gives certain roles to a specific musician more than to a specific instrument. As Duke Ellington would do, Schneider takes advantage of the strengths of her musicians, which allows her to personalize her works even more.

Her album “Concert in the Garden”, from 2004, was the first fund-raised album that managed to win a Grammy Award.

Nevertheless, in this research, I have analyzed her works from 1994 and 2000, being Maria



Maria Schneider

Schneider's style already compact and perfectly structured at that time.

4.2 *Wirgly*

Wirgly is a composition by Maria Schneider included as opening track of her first album called "Evanescence" (1994), released by the label "Enja". Both structurally and rhythmically *Wirgly* is in many ways closer to a traditional big band arrangement than other contemporary works of Schneider, and is an example of some of her earlier works.

The Maria Schneider Orchestra, which at that time featured musicians like Rick Margitza on the tenor saxophone and Dennis Mackrel, currently conductor of the Jazz Orchestra of the Concertgebouw, was born in 1992. When this first record came out, the album received two nominations for the Grammy Award.

It is a wonderful record, where the influence of both Evans and Brookmeyer is absolutely clear. Yet, the personality, the femininity and the elegance of Maria Schneider are perfectly melted in her music.

The "motivic" concept and development that Schneider uses is a clear influence of Bob Brookmeyer. A composition is created on the basis of one or two elements, with a perfect balance between form and melodic elements. "Green Piece", track n°5, is a great example of that. (a detailed analysis of "Green Piece" will follow in Chapter 4.3)

The colors, the lightness and the darkness that Schneider is able to add, seems to come from her work and deep analysis of Gil Evans.

In "*Wirgly*", the solo sections are based on harmonic progressions presented in the melodic presentation and the shuffle or "boogie-woogie" style is applied in larger sections of the piece. This latter trait is something that rarely occurs in Schneider's music. The piece mixes these traditional elements with more untraditional elements such as sections of open harmonic language and tone row, resulting in an interesting combination.

Quoting Maria Schneider; "*this is a programmatic piece depicting a monster called Wirgly. Wirgly is about a monster. At first, it wasn't easy to divulge my personal motivation behind the music. But in the case of Wirgly, for example, it's necessary in order to explain why the approach of that solo shouldn't be bluesy or anything traditional. It should be monsteristic and atmospheric*" (Schneider in Sturm 1998:x).

The arrangement, according to Maria Schneider's description, really has some strong and dramatic effects; the constant switch between half time and double time creates some sort of instability and anxiety, and after the beautiful tenor saxophone solo, the trombone solo



powerfully lifts up the whole chart, leading to the third solo, a distorted guitar solo, in an escalation of dramatic moments.

The chart almost does not end, with a fade-out that is not resolving the angst and the fear of the monster.

Nevertheless, one of the most important parts is at the beginning of the chart. The intro, which features an "almost soloistically" drum section, sees the whole horns busy with some punch chords. The melody uses 11 different tones in the first 14 chords. The voicings are even more fascinating. (see example) Maria Schneider creates a blurry effect, without defining any harmony, and using mainly four different voicings.

- Voicing 1: a Minor11 chord with a cluster between the 2nd and the 3rd note, creating a b9 with the doubled melody.

Fig. 4.1 Voicing 1

The image shows two measures of music for Voicing 1. The first measure is labeled 'Gm¹¹/D' and the second is labeled 'Bm¹¹/F#'. Both are in 4/4 time. The notation shows a piano accompaniment with a cluster of notes in the right hand and a single note in the left hand.

- Voicing 2: the less common voicing is a Major7 #11 chord, which eventually becomes a Dominant 7sus with the 3rd included as the top voice of the chord or a minor chord, depending on the movement of the inner voices. This voicing is very similar to n°3, having a quartal voicing as the base for the chord.

Fig. 4.2 Voicing 2

The image shows two measures of music for Voicing 2. The first measure is labeled 'Gmaj7(#11)/A' and the second is labeled 'Cm⁹(add13)'. Both are in 4/4 time. The notation shows a piano accompaniment with a quartal voicing in the right hand and a minor triad in the left hand.

- Voicing 3: A quartal voicing plus a minor triad (add2). It creates a simple minor chord. (or a Maj7 chord)

Fig. 4.3 Voicing 3

The image shows a piano score for two measures. The first measure is labeled 'Voicing 3' and contains the chord voicing for Bm9 or Dmaj9(add13). The second measure contains the chord voicing for Cm9 or Ebmaj9(add13). The notation is written on a grand staff with treble and bass clefs.

- Voicing 4: A closer voicing, with several clusters, which may create a Major 6/9 chord #11.

Fig. 4.4 Voicing 4

The image shows a piano score for two measures. The first measure is labeled 'Voicing 4' and contains the chord voicing for G6/9(#11). The second measure contains the chord voicing for Ab6/9(#11). The notation is written on a grand staff with treble and bass clefs.

In general, in every voicing there is at least one cluster or a fourth, giving a less tonal and more dissonant sound. Moreover, the straight mutes of the trumpets, cut some frequencies and create an even sharper sound.

Attached to this work, there is the transcription of the whole intro in a piano score. (bars 3 - 66)
This work highly inspired the arrangement of "Just in Time", which will be mentioned in Chapter 5, "My Own Production".

4.3 Green Piece

Maria Schneider's "Green Piece" is a beautiful composition included, as well as "Wirgly", in her first CD called "Evanescence".

Even more than "Wirgly", this arrangement clearly outlines Maria's style. A perfect craftsmanship in playing with the sounds, interesting voicings, backgrounds that truly give something more to the chart. Nevertheless, one element stands out. Maria over stresses the melodic development through the whole composition.

The whole chart is based on one motive in constant development; the first element is presented once, and everything that follows is inevitably linked with that first strong pattern. In this case, her first line that is presented already in bar 5 by the soprano saxophone and the flute.

Fig. 4.5 Basic Motivic Element



This element, rhythmically augmented or shortened, continuously melodically modified, very often harmonically re-harmonized, appears more than 40 times during the piece. (without counting the smaller quotes)

Basically, this work could be analyzed completely by taking care of this motivic development. But, in order to contextualize Maria Schneider's style, it is crucial to find the common points with Gil Evans and Brookmeyer. In this case, in fact, the influence of Gil Evans' "world of sounds" and the liberty of moving the form as Brookmeyer would do, make this arrangement a perfect example of continuity with the work of Maria's biggest influences.

The instrument setting is that of a traditional big band plus a French horn that makes some sounds more mellow. Flutes, clarinets and bass clarinet are used to smooth some atmospheres, and the rhythm section is working rhythmically more than melodically. (with a rhythmical pattern that starts the tune and keeps going for the whole first exposition)

Fig. 4.6 Rhythmic Pattern



Form-wise it is impossible to define a clear structure. The form is not strictly underlined, which is very similar Bob Brookmeyer's approach. This is even clearer when checking out the harmony, which is not necessarily presented in the same way. Often Schneider decides to change the harmony, being the motivic element strong enough to give a bigger sense of the form.

The harmonic complexity of "Green Piece" is another important element of this beautiful arrangement. Maria Schneider shows a great ability in alternating easy material with some very complex one. The repetition of the primary melodic element never sounds redundant, especially thanks to the extreme harmonic variety that every time accompanies the melodic shape. A deep and well-treated use of poly-chords and slash chords is made during the preparation for the first soloist and during some background sections.

Fig. 4.7 Poly-chords and Slash chords re-harmonization

Bar 58

To spicy-up some chords, Maria uses clusters in lower voices. This has a very effective result, being every melody always lyrical and as much melodic as it can be.

Fig. 4.8 Cluster in low voices

bar 123

In the last representation of the theme (harmonically completely reconstructed), Maria Schneider presents a sort of "parallel harmony". The bass plays an F pedal, and each note of the melody is harmonized by all the horns. Mostly, Schneider keeps a diatonic parallelism: she respects the intervals drawn by the melody, adjusting the inner voices in a diatonic context. Whenever the chord is "out" from the expected harmony the resulting effect is powerful and successful, giving a quick tension-release feeling.

The function of the bass, playing a constant pedal, is definitely a good choice. When the harmony fits the "F" world, the effect is light, melodic, sweet, mellow. Every time the harmony moves somewhere else, the cluster starts from the lower voices thanks to the static presence of the pedal,

increasing the dissonance and the need of "going home".

Fig. 4.9 Parallel harmony



4.4 The Days of Wine and Roses

It is clear that Maria Schneider follows the lessons of her mentors by the use of the linear approach, advanced re-harmonization techniques and a deep research in different sounds, but always projecting her own strong personality. The original material that she writes reflects her personality, sincere and sweet, determined and strong. This language is the main reason of her success.

Nevertheless, it is also very interesting to see how Schneider treats jazz standards.

Both Evans and Brookmeyer arranged jazz standards, and both of them had the great ability of revealing new faces of that specific work. If Brookmeyer is more famous for his original material, Gil Evans, has a special and unique talent in arranging whatever kind of music.

In 2000 Maria Schneider released a live performance at the “Jazz Standards”, a club in New York. This wonderful performance features new and old arrangements by Maria Schneider, which is at this time a very well known and respected artist.

The album will be called “Days of Wine and Roses – Live at the Jazz Standard” and one of the crucial songs of the repertoire is, of course, the one that gives the title to the album.

Maria Schneider, in the CD linear notes, says:

“Some of my loveliest musical experiences have been working with Toots Thielemans. (1992-2016) We did our first project in 1994 with the Norrbotten Big Band. Consulting him for tunes, he asked me to arrange Ivan Lein's “Comecar de Novo” and “Days of Wine and Roses”, among others. Note that the key change that happens in Days is the same as he and Bill Evans did on the Affinity album (1979, Warner Bros). I told Toots in our first meeting that I Loved Bill's modulation. He retorted, “That's mine!””

If Maria Schneider is a great composer and arranger of her own music, in this record she shows to be well at home also in working on jazz standards.

Unfortunately, there are no recordings of Maria's arrangement played by Toots Thielemans, but it is known that they had more than one collaboration during the years.

The whole chart flows naturally with a constant switch between the key of F major and the key of Ab major. The feeling of suspense that Maria creates from the first chord is even more interesting. Instead of Fmaj7, the first chord becomes F7sus, like a dominant chord. Moreover, the harmony does not resolve in the usual harmonic progression.

What really impresses about this is that the melody clearly goes to the 3rd of the Major chords. Maria Schneider does not change that, creating a spicy sound, giving the idea of which song is going to be played. Yet, the new harmony catches the attention of the listener, which is waiting for the resolution of the new chord progression.

The entire piece is conceived with an extended form. The melody takes 48 bars to be presented instead of 32. This happens because the first 8 bars of each section last two times longer, while the last 8 remains the same. Moreover, Maria adds a small tag in order to go back to the first key.

Fig. 4.10 Comparison between original melody and Maria Schneider's one

Original Melody bars 1-15

Chords: Fmaj7 Eb7 D7(b9) D7 D7 Gm7 Bbm Eb7 Am7 Dm7 Gm7 C7 Em7(b5) A7(b9) Dm7 G7 Gm7 C7

Maria Schneider's Version

Chords: F7(sus4) D/Bb Db/Eb C/A Db/Eb Dm9 B/D Bb/G D/G Bb+/F D/E Eb/A Dm13 Abmaj7(#11) Gm9 Am9 Bbm9 Cm9/Eb

Mostly, the song features the soprano saxophone, which plays the first melody, has the first solo and the last melody. Only the tenor saxophone solo momentarily takes the main role before the special.

During the soprano solo, the harmony seems to "respect" more the original one. After that, a tenor

solo, a special, and the last melody will follow.

A lot of interesting things happens, starting from the theme.

In bars 52, 53, 54 the voicings present 7 different note per chord. (mainly outlining a parallel harmony)

Fig. 4.11 Cluster Voicings

The image shows a musical score for piano, labeled "Cluster Voicings" and "Bars 52-54". It consists of two staves, treble and bass clef, in a 4/4 time signature with a key signature of two flats. The music features dense, vertical clusters of notes in both hands, with some notes marked with accents. The clusters are primarily composed of notes from the same scale degree, creating a parallel harmony effect.

During the backgrounds, clusters create the harmony, and minor seconds can be found both at the lowest voices and at the top ones.

Fig. 4.12 Cluster Voicings

The image shows a musical score for piano, labeled "From Bar 112". It consists of two staves, treble and bass clef, in a 4/4 time signature with a key signature of two flats. The music features dense, vertical clusters of notes in both hands, with some notes marked with accents. The clusters are primarily composed of notes from the same scale degree, creating a parallel harmony effect.

During the special, the real climax of the piece, all the instruments draw a dense harmony.

Fig. 4.13 Extract from the Special

The image displays two staves of musical notation for piano. The top staff is labeled 'From Bar 285'. Both staves feature dense, complex harmonic textures with many notes beamed together, creating a rich, layered sound. The notation includes various rhythmic values and accidentals, and the bottom staff contains several triplet markings over groups of notes.

Sound-wise this arrangement reflects more the core of the jazz music. The setting is the original big band one (only differences are 2 soprano saxes and no altos involved) and the style follows a more traditional path. The personality of Maria Schneider is in the ability of modifying the harmony, playing with the structures, moving all the voices in a very melodic and logical way.

This work may be similar to Bob Brookmeyer's big band works like "Hello and Goodbye" or "The American Express" (Chapters 3.3 and 3.4) but the use of some voicings seems to be a natural heritage of Gil Evans language. In any case, the balance between these languages is wonderfully melted in the style of Maria Schneider, which never sounds like a copy or an imitation of someone else. The true art is the unicity of the sounds and the appeal that Maria Schneider naturally incorporates in each of her works.

4.5 Considerations about Maria Schneider's Style

The style of Maria Schneider, considering the analyzed material, is really well crafted and modeled according to her musical taste. None of her choices seems to be pushed or forced, and she truly has a great ability in letting her music “flow” smoothly.

Several elements were underlined in the previous chapters. The following may be the most important:

- natural heritage from Gil Evans' coloring style and linear approach
- natural heritage from Bob Brookmeyer's freedom in playing with the form
- great harmonic density and complexity (up to seven voices per voicing)
- freedom in using clusters
- meaningful backgrounds
- motivic development

There is no need to check out Maria Schneider's biography to understand how powerful is the influence of the music of Evans and Brookmeyer on her style.

In the last years Maria's work is moving towards new directions (in 2016 she collaborated with David Bowie) and she is getting closer to a more classical setting. (like Evans and Brookmeyer did)

Her music will keep developing, but her roots will definitely keep in consideration the wonderful background that she had with Gil Evans and Bob Brookmeyer.

Chapter 5. My own production

5.1 Presentation

This chapter is the outcome of the analysis and the listening of many jazz arrangers. It is unavoidable to be influenced by the greatest artists, consciously as well as unconsciously.

During my Master degree, I have arranged 6 big band arrangements, 2 pieces for the NSJO (Nederland Studenten Jazz Orchestra), 2 pieces for my sextet (Soprano, Alto, Tenor and Baritone Saxophones plus double bass and drums) and 3 pieces for small big band (Alto, Tenor, Baritone Saxophones, 2 Trumpets, Trombone and Rhythm Section). One of these pieces, called "The Business Suite", was commissioned by the Dutch Ministry of Finance and premiered in February 2016.



My arrangement of "Maiden Voyage" for my sextet won the "2016 Louis van Dijk Jazz Award", while my big band arrangement of my composition "Closed Eyes" was selected in the finals of the International Arranging Competition "Scrivere in Jazz" in Sassari, Italy, in September 2016. On the same occasion also my big band arrangement of Enrico Rava's composition "Theme for Jessica" was selected.

Closed Eyes, finally, was selected to be performed by the Jazz Orchestra of the Concertgebouw directed by Dennis Mackrel in October 2016.

Personally, I feel more attached to Bob Brookmeyer's style. I got to know him no more than a couple of years ago, and I never really had the time to appreciate his work. Nevertheless, while analyzing and reading about him, I felt in love with the character, and his music has influenced me deeply.

The melodic development of his style keeps impressing me after every listening, and his harmonic cleverness and simplicity make everything sound easy and beautiful.

Maria Schneider is as well very important in my development. When I discovered her I had the impression that her music was "the" music; her melodies are always beautiful, and everything has an overall sense of structure and is always well thought. Thanks to this research I really feel that she had the chance to work and study with both Evans and Brookmeyer; she is the right person to keep on going with their tradition.

Last but not least, Gil Evans has really impressed me. A distracted listening to his music does not really mean anything in my opinion. Once deeper in his work, it is impossible not to appreciate it.

I am satisfied with what I have discovered about him and happy to finally have the time to dig into this world.

The arrangements I have realized have not been directly inspired by these three arrangers. Their ideas, their solutions, their techniques, have been growing in my subconscious as I have been developing my production.

In some cases, I have discovered to have used some elements from a certain arranger only after a while. In others occasions, I have managed to get close to a sound before analyzing it or finding it in one of the scores I had checked out.

Before summarizing up some elements that I have introduced in my arrangements, it is important to remind that all my arrangements are attached to this research. Where possible, also an audio link is added. One more time, I suggest the reader to take a look at the scores while checking the audio files.

5.2 The influence of Gil Evans

It is not difficult to find spots where Gil Evans' ideas have influenced my musical choices. On the other hand, it is very complicated to try to imitate his language. More than Brookmeyer and Schneider, Gil Evans is unique for the choice of the instruments and the mixtures, more than for the voicings or the harmonies he uses.

Of course, his attention covers every aspect of the arrangement, but what he says us really true: *“(...) sound is the thing that's the most important to me of all the components of music”*.

Even without having the same liberty in choosing the instruments, I have tried to focus on the colors, the atmospheres, and eventually the voicings that Gil Evans would use.

In my arrangement of Coltrane's “Your Lady” (performed by the CvA big band feat Rick Margitza) I use the linear approach and the low instrument as a key melodic instrument. (like in “Porgy and Bess”) In some occasions, the inner voices are together. Other times, they are not, creating a contrast that will quickly release its nature, but with a stronger melodic resolution.

Fig. 5.1 Linear Approach and predominant bass line

Linear Approach
Bass Line

From Bar 149

mf

mf

The musical score consists of three systems of piano and bass staves. The key signature has three flats (B-flat, E-flat, A-flat) and the time signature is 3/4. The first system starts with a piano dynamic marking *mf*. The bass line features a melodic line with a triplet of eighth notes. The second system continues the melodic and harmonic development. The third system includes several triplet markings in both the piano and bass staves.

Moreover, the clusters and the minor 9th interval is used in the same arrangement. In the next example, I have used it in a situation of “ascending release”. The effect is more spicy, having a dissonant chord in a melodic and releasing situation. Furthermore, the bass line (which seems similar to the effect Gil Evans used in Porgy and Bess) has a double function: Harmonic, playing certain notes of the required harmony, and truly melodic, touching some particular sounds.

Fig. 5.2 Cluster Voicing

Clusters and moving bass line

From Bar 59

pp dolce

p

The musical score shows two systems of piano and bass staves. The key signature has three flats and the time signature is 3/4. The first system features piano clusters in the right hand and a moving bass line in the left hand. The second system includes dynamic markings *pp dolce* for the piano part and *p* for the bass line.

In terms of sound choices, it is hard to get closer to Gil Evans' sound. Nevertheless, in my last update of "Closed Eyes", I use two bass clarinets to present the first melody, instead of two tenor saxophones. (See attachment "Closed Eyes")

In "Theme for Jessica", the brass section is formed by 4 trumpets, 2 French horns, trombone and bass trombone. I have used the horn as middle voices of my voicings, to smooth out the sounds; I have also used the horns in unison, giving a warmer sound than that of the other instruments. At the end of the arrangement, the horn is playing the theme in unison with a tenor saxophone, and in octave with a trumpet.

5.3 The influence of Bob Brookmeyer

As previously said, my work on "Closed Eyes" and the II Mov. of "The Business Suite" have been highly influenced by Brookmeyer's "Lovely" and, in general, by the sound of his "New Art Orchestra". It is very hard to say in which way the other arrangements became part of my knowledge, being more traditional works, but they are definitely part of my "world of sounds".

During these two years I had the pleasure to meet Mr. Dennis Mackrel. Besides being the drummer in some of the greatest big bands of all times (Count Basie Orchestra, Thad Jones Big Band, Maria Schneider Jazz Orchestra, McCoy Tyner Big Band) he is an arranger and, currently, Chief Conductor of the "Jazz Orchestra of the Concertgebouw".

He has conducted my arrangement of "Closed Eyes", and has said about it:

"Beautiful use of Cadences. Shifting between major, minor/ minor, major chords creates a really nice feeling of uncertainty and yet the melody feels very comforting because of the sonic colors you use.

The orchestrational use of the Flugelhorns, Soprano Saxophone and the use of range (low in the horns going to the upper range and the moving bass parts starting on the 3rd going to the roots in bars 30-32 is great!! – wow!)

The dissonance created by the moving line in the Alto, Tpt2 and Trbn 1 is really effective! Then to add the pedals E naturals at bars 33-35 give a feeling of hope!

The choice of Tenor as a soloist is perfect as it's one of the most human sounding voices in the band and this chart screams of humanity!

The backgrounds and cadenza and final recapitulation is perfect!
Great Chart!

The craft in this arrangement is very clear. It's very well thought out, logical and extremely well written. I really don't have anything to add except that after listening to it, I'm really inspired to become a better writer!!! Thank You."

Dennis Mackrel

Chief Conductor of the Jazz Orchestra of the Concertgebouw

It was a great honor for me to work with the awesome Jazz Orchestra of the Concertgebouw and Dennis Mackrel. I have written this arrangement after the terroristic attacks in Paris, in November 2015. Incredibly, Mr. Mackrel has perfectly pitched that "*this chart screams of humanity!*" because it was indeed the feeling that inspired me in writing and

arranging this composition.

For this arrangement I have used 4 Flugelhorns (often in unison), soprano sax and no guitar. Harmonic-speaking, I make use of the parallel harmony to form the intro and the coda.

Fig. 5.3 Parallel harmony

Parallel Harmony

B \flat maj13 G \flat maj13 E \flat m11 Fm11 B \flat maj13 G \flat maj13 Amaj7(#11)

From Bar 1

I clearly use again the linear approach, in a Brookmeyer way more than an Evans way. The difference is in the harmonic subtlety, warmer in the American composer. Here you may find the second presentation of the melody; I have included the bass line, the brass background (with alto saxophone as the top voice) and the melody played by two flugelhorn. (example)

Fig. 5.4 Linear Approach

Linear Approach

D \flat maj7 Bm7 E7(sus4)/B E13 Amaj7 F \sharp m7 Fmaj7(#5) Em7 A7(sus4) A7(b9)

From Bar 16

Dmaj7 /C \sharp Bm7 B \flat maj7 Amaj7

The constant “game” of delayed resolution and chromaticism, mixed again with the linear approach, tends to give a bigger dynamism to the chart.

Fig. 5.5 *Delayed Resolutions and chromaticism*

Delayed Resolutions
Tension - Release Effect

From Bar 30

5.4 The influence of Maria Schneider

Maria's Schneider's works are hard to analyze. The harmony is very thick and not everything works so well when played only with a piano. It is hard to write such dense harmonies, yet keeping every line melodic.

In my arrangement of “Just in Time” (played by the CvA big band feat Martijn van Iterson) I have quoted Maria's intro from “Wirgly”. Even before analyzing her work, I have tried to get closer to the sounds she uses in her intro. In the same way, I have ended up using only four kinds of voicings. In the next page there is an extract of a reduced score from the special of “Just in Time”.

As mentioned before, a fully transcribed and reduced version of Maria's intro on “Wirgly” is attached to this work.

Somehow, also in “Your Lady” I wanted to quote Maria. My whole arrangement is based on an 8th tone row which is played two times, the second one half step down.

Fig. 5.6 *8 tone row*

8 Tones Row

From Bar 1

Fig. 5.7 *Just in Time Special* extract example

The image displays three staves of musical notation for the piece "Just in Time Special". The first staff is labeled "PIANO" and features a treble clef, a key signature of two flats (B-flat and E-flat), and a 4/4 time signature. It begins with a dynamic marking of *mf* and includes a crescendo hairpin. The second staff is labeled "PNO." and also has a treble clef, two flats key signature, and 4/4 time signature. The third staff is also labeled "PNO." and includes a treble clef, two flats key signature, and 4/4 time signature, with three triplet markings over the first three measures. The bass clef staves in all three systems are mostly empty, indicating a focus on the right hand.

In many other works, however, there are small examples and unconscious quotes of Maria Schneider’s style. In the attachments to this research I suggest a deeper look to “Theme of Jessica”, “Stablemates” and “Your Lady”.

Conclusions

It is wonderful to see how unconsciously music lies inside us, and writing can be one of the best ways to discover that.

This exciting, long, and complex work has shown me clearly that analysis, as I had imagined, is truly one of the most practical ways to learn. It is not to copy, it is not necessarily to imitate, but it is to contextualize what really matters about something (in this case, big band arrangements).

I have improved as a writer and as a composer, and I have certainly broadened my style, my ideas, my solutions, my imagination. The great arrangers show you that there are no boundaries, no styles, no mistakes if the ultimate goal is to make good music.

My primary interest has been to focus mainly on the voicings of Evans, Brookmeyer, and Schneider. I have done it, deeply and carefully, but I have understood that this is not enough. What really makes the difference is how they use their endless vocabulary. What really makes the difference is the style and the coherence to keep an idea going on long enough to make you believe that that one was the best idea for that moment.

The incredible variety of sounds, techniques, colors, is what makes a good arranger a great arranger. I am sure that, by continuing my research on these artists, I will keep finding new solutions, new brilliant ideas and yet have the feeling that everything always flows beautifully and smoothly.

My Research Title is "The Sound of Big Bands: Between evolution and continuity". It is truly a good title in my opinion, especially because I had forecasted with what result I would have come out.

Gil Evans is the revolution; He is a crucial turning point in the jazz history; His style, his ideas, his courage changed deeply the role of the arranger, the importance of the writer.

Brookmeyer and Schneider, who are incredible musicians with a personal style, are the continuity. They heard Gil Evans' lesson, they accepted his music, internalized it and, maybe subconsciously, inherited Gil's spirit.

I do not want to say that Bob Brookmeyer and Maria Schneider would not be as good as they are without Gil Evans, but I can affirm that their style has many common elements.

There is definitely more continuity than evolution between these great arrangers, but they definitely constitute an evolution in the world of the jazz writing.

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