

AN HISTORICAL SURVEY OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE VIBRAPHONE
AS AN ALTERNATIVE ACCOMPANYING INSTRUMENT IN JAZZ.

BY

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ABSTRACT*AN HISTORICAL SURVEY OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE VIBRAPHONE AS AN ALTERNATIVE ACCOMPANYING INSTRUMENT IN JAZZ.*

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The vibraphone, a melodic percussion instrument in which metal bars are struck with mallets to produce the sound and with a chromatic range of usually three octaves, was developed in the United States of America in the early 1900s. Early performers on the instrument, who had developed their techniques on the xylophone, had to adapt their playing style to deal with the note-sustaining possibilities of the vibraphone. Although most played holding two mallets, one in each hand, a number of players experimented by holding two in each hand, giving them the ability to play four notes at a time as chords or groups of notes. As a consequence, vibraphone players were able to perform the role of harmonic accompaniment in any ensemble.

With the development of mallet technique, specifically the ability to play and outline chords using four mallets, an increasing number of vibraphonists chose to perform and record in groups using the vibraphone as the sole harmonic accompanying

instrument, replacing the piano and guitar, the instruments generally used to provide the chordal accompaniment.

Based on commercially available recordings of performances where the vibraphone alone performs the role of harmonic accompanist in the jazz ensemble, this study looks at the historical development of the use of the vibraphone as an alternative harmonic accompanying instrument.

Descriptive analyses of key recordings made by leading and influential vibraphonists are given with regard to the use of the vibraphone in the role of an harmonic accompanying instrument. To reach a deeper understanding of the musical and non-musical factors that have been of influence in the use of the vibraphone as the sole harmonic accompanying instrument in an ensemble, this study follows a multifaceted qualitative research approach based on information obtained from published literature, liner notes to recordings, interviews conducted with leading contemporary vibraphone players and the personal experience of the author.

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CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION AND FIELD OF REFERENCE

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1.1 Introduction

The vibraphone, a melodic percussion instrument with metal bars that are struck with mallets to produce the sound, has a chromatic range of usually three octaves, with the lowest tone being F below middle C. Along with instruments such as the piano and guitar, the vibraphone can be classified as an harmonic as well as a melodic instrument. That is, a “musical instrument on which two or more notes can be sounded simultaneously” (Crook 1995, 14). The instrument was developed in the United States of America in the early 1900s as a modern development of the xylophone.

As its sounding bars are made of metal, it is an instrument where the notes can ring for a significant time unless dampened by the damper pedal. The xylophone, on the other hand, with its wooden bars, produces very little sustain after the note has been struck. Early performers on the vibraphone, who had developed their techniques on the xylophone, had to adapt their playing style to deal with the note-sustaining possibilities of the vibraphone. Although playing mainly with two mallets, one in each hand, a number of players experimented holding four mallets, two in each hand, giving them the ability to play four notes at a time as chords or groups of notes. This

gave the instrument the potential of being able to fill the role of harmonic accompanist in the ensemble.

Early vibraphone players generally performed in ensembles where there were other harmonic instruments present. With the development of mallet technique, specifically the ability to play and outline chords using four mallets, an increasing number of vibraphonists chose to perform and record using the vibraphone as the sole harmonic accompanying instrument. Thereby they replaced the piano and guitar, the instruments generally used as accompanying chordal instruments in jazz.

Jazz is generally regarded as music with a significant individual or group improvisational bias that is based on an African-American musical tradition. Graham Collier's definition of jazz - "an improvised musical expression of a man's individuality" (Collier 1975) - is taken as a suitable definition for the purposes of this study. It echoes two of the main points in Joachim Berendt's definition in his *The Jazz Book*, namely "a spontaneity and vitality of musical production in which improvisation plays a role" and "a sonority and manner of phrasing which mirror the individuality of the performing musician" (Berendt 1976, 174). Berendt also suggests that the vibraphone is ideally suited to jazz performance.

Percussion instruments – instruments which are struck or hit – tend to be used primarily as rhythm instruments. If such instruments additionally offer all kinds of melodic possibilities, it can be assumed that they would make ideal jazz instruments. In this sense, the vibraphone is an ideal jazz instrument. (Berendt 1976, 243)

Early vibraphone players tended to play the vibraphone holding only two mallets, taking a single line melodic approach. However, Red Norvo (1908 - 1999), Lionel Hampton (1908 - 2002), Victor Feldman (1934 - 1987), Mike Mainieri (b. 1938),

Gary Burton (b. 1943), and subsequently many other vibraphonists, expanded the possibilities of the instrument by developing a flexible four-mallet technique that allowed them to play chords, a technique commonly only associated with the piano or guitar.

In the introduction to his vibraphone method book, *Four Mallet Studies*, influential vibraphonist Gary Burton, a leader in the use of four mallets and of the vibraphone as an harmonic accompanying instrument, discusses the future possibilities for the instrument.

[The] Vibraharp is a rather new instrument as instruments go, and its uses and possibilities are just lately being discovered. Until recently, four mallet playing was considered very impractical by most players, and useful only in special situations. The development of any instrument's techniques is motivated by an innate desire on the part of the musician to play as much with his instrument as he possibly can. Therefore, it was only a matter of time before mallet players began to expand their playing beyond the basic two-mallet approach. (Burton 1968)

This study looks at the historical development of the use of the vibraphone as an harmonic accompanying instrument in a jazz ensemble. Musical as well as non-musical factors that have been of influence in the use of the instrument in this way are noted and discussed. The study takes the following form:

- A review of the literature on the development of vibraphone techniques, specifically four-mallet technique, and the application of these in effective harmonic accompaniment.
- An historical survey of commercially available recordings, where obtainable, of performances where the vibraphone is the sole instrument performing the harmonic accompanying role in a jazz ensemble.

- A descriptive analysis of various vibraphonists' approaches to performing the role of the sole harmonic accompanying instrument.
- Noting of non-musical aspects of the recordings such as: repertoire, instrumentation, personnel, date and place of recordings.
- Documentation of interviews with three leading contemporary vibraphonists.
- Documentation after personal attendance of seminars given by influential vibraphone players.
- Documentation of private lessons with leading vibraphonist Ed Saindon.

1.2 Aims of the research

Through the documentation and descriptive analysis of recordings I hope to reach a deeper understanding of the potential of the vibraphone as an harmonic accompanying instrument in jazz and the factors, both musical and non-musical, that can be of influence in the use of the instrument in this way.

1.3 Significance of the study

My interest in the subject of the vibraphone's usage as an harmonic accompanying instrument in jazz originates from first hearing a record by the Gary Burton Quintet entitled *Ring* (Burton 1974). Having purchased a vibraphone with the intention of broadening my percussion studies (where I had focussed mainly on the drum kit, snare drum and timpani in the orchestral and band contexts) I was enthralled to hear how the vibraphone could be used in jazz and music that allowed for individual and group improvisation.

I grew up in a home where the music listening environment was a combination of traditional jazz (Louis Armstrong and Dutch Swing College Band) and avant garde twentieth century music (Stockhausen, Ligetti and Messiaen). Consequently, I found Gary Burton's music particularly appealing, in that it incorporated many of the elements of music that I was comfortable with from a twentieth century contemporary music point of view. I began collecting records of jazz vibraphone players like Lionel Hampton, Milt Jackson (1923 - 1999), Red Norvo, Bobby Hutcherson (b.1941), Gary Burton and Mike Mainieri. Inspired by Gary Burton's comments (as quoted earlier in this chapter) with regard to the possibilities of four-mallet playing and the potential use of the vibraphone as an harmonic accompanying instrument in jazz, I became absorbed by Burton's approach to the instrument, his four-mallet technique and the masterful way he performed the role of melodic soloist as well as accompanist.

After a period of self-study using Gary Burton's book and articles on four-mallet technique from the Percussive Arts Society's Percussive Notes magazine, I was fortunate, in 1982, to have a brief period of study with vibraphonist and educator, Ed Saindon (b. 1954). (Ed Saindon has taught jazz vibraphone at the Berklee College of Music in Boston, Massachusetts, USA since his graduation from the college in 1976.) From the outset Saindon encouraged me to look at the vibraphone as an instrument capable of solo performance (incorporating self-accompaniment), as well as performing the harmonic accompanist role of in a jazz ensemble. This approach to vibraphone performance has continued to be Ed Saindon's field of interest up to the present day. Subsequent communication and visits to Boston in 1986 (private study with Ed Saindon), 1994 (Berklee College of Music: Summer Semester and private study with Saindon) and 2003 (Berklee College of Music: Mallet Festival) - combined

with my own performance over the past 25 years as a vibraphone player in a variety of musical groups and settings - has led to a continued interest in the vibraphone's potential as an accompanying instrument, specifically in the area of jazz and improvised music. I have continued to collect recordings of performances where the vibraphone is used as a harmonic accompanying instrument.

A library database search has revealed that other than articles in percussion-related periodicals there is no study that documents the development of the use of the vibraphone as an accompanying instrument. Terry Gunderson's thesis, *A Pedagogical Approach to Solo Jazz Vibraphone Developed Through an Analysis of Common Performance Practice* (Gunderson 1992), deals exclusively with solo unaccompanied vibraphone playing techniques. Whilst the techniques discussed by Gunderson do apply to accompaniment situations I would suggest that there are many other aspects that need to be addressed if a study of the vibraphone as an accompanying instrument is to be complete.

I have noted a steady growth in the number of players using the instrument as a harmonic accompanying instrument and in a wider range of musical settings. Some of the more notable vibraphonists who use the instrument in this way include, Gary Burton, David Friedman (b. 1944), David Samuels (b. 1948), Ed Saindon, Mike Mainieri, Steve Nelson (b. 1954) and Tom Beckham (b. 1968).

1.4 General approach

In preparation for this study I read works by Mouton (2001) and Babbie and Mouton (2001) on the study of social research design and methodology. Through a broad

overview of techniques and methods suggested in their books I formulated a qualitative research design and methodology that reflects the points they suggest (Babbie and Mouton 2001, 278).

In June and July of 2003 I attended the Berklee College of Music's Mallet Festival in Boston Massachusetts, USA. During the course of the Festival I undertook the following tasks:

- Conducted interviews with leading vibraphonists Dave Samuels, Gary Burton and Ed Saindon (Appendices: C, D and E).
- Attended seminars and master classes given by Gary Burton, Ed Saindon, Dave Samuels, Joe Locke (b. 1959) and Victor Mendoza (Appendices: F, G, H, I, J).
- Took private lessons with Ed Saindon (Appendix: K).

Based on the flexible qualitative research design suggested by Mouton (2001), I used the time whilst attending the Festival to formulate my research topic and to obtain information related to vibraphone performance.

The factors that led me to formulate my research topic were:

- My own vibraphone playing experience.
- Lessons and communications with Ed Saindon.
- A continued interest in collecting recordings of influential vibraphonists.
- A deepening interest in the variety of technical approaches that have been taken.

- An interest in the study of articles and books on vibraphone technique and performance.
- My own performance of solo and ensemble works for the vibraphone.

1.5 Research topic

An historical survey of the development of the vibraphone as an alternative accompanying instrument in jazz.

1.6 Assumptions and limitations

I have limited my study to descriptive analyses of commercially available recorded performances where the vibraphone alone performs the role of harmonic accompanist in the ensemble. It would be unreasonable to assume that I have obtained all such recordings. I can only suggest that in this study I have included those recordings that signified turning points in the development of the vibraphone as an harmonic accompanying instrument.

I have not given any in-depth analysis of harmonic, rhythmic and melodic techniques, as this is worthy of another study.

1.7 Introduction to research methodology

The generic style of improvised music, broadly categorised as jazz, is by its very nature always evolving. Consequently research in this field can never be conclusive as performance practice and technical approaches are constantly evolving. The aim of my research was not to compare the functionality and effectiveness of the vibraphone as an alternative accompanying instrument to instruments such as the piano or guitar.

As suggested by Babbie and Mouton (2001), my research methodology has been one of combining qualitative research, through detailed engagement (interviews, seminars, lessons and personal observation), with an in-depth literature review, and finally an historical listing and descriptive analysis of recordings.

Babbie and Mouton outline three main points in the gathering of qualitative data (2001, 288):

- Thorough enculturation
- Current involvement
- Adequate time

In this study I have focused on those performers who have developed styles and techniques over a period of years (enculturation). Regarding the current involvement and adequate time factors mentioned by Babbie and Mouton, I attended the Berklee College of Music's Mallet Festival in 2003 and gained access to vibraphonists who are currently involved in performance. I conducted a number of interviews (Appendix C: Interview with Dave Samuels, Appendix D: Interview with Gary Burton, Appendix E: Interview with Ed Saindon), attended seminars and had private lessons. The interviews and private lessons were conducted with a qualitative approach in mind, so as to allow the possibility of new information emerging. An attempt was made to guide the interviewee towards the given topic. However, the interviewee was not limited to this. This approach was taken so as to obtain as much relevant information as possible.

I have allowed this qualitative research to be flexible and broad so as to allow all the varied aspects of music and its performance equal weight and influence on my conclusions. From the more quantitative historical listing of the relevant recordings to the qualitative interviews and personal observations, I have attempted to obtain as broad a perspective as possible on the topic of the vibraphone as an alternative accompanying instrument in jazz.

1.8 Overview of the research document

In this introductory chapter I have outlined my approach to research design and methodology. Based on qualitative research designs suggested in Babbie and Mouton I formulated a multifaceted approach that combines research through detailed engagement and an in-depth literature review with an historical listing and descriptive analysis of commercially available recordings.

In Chapters 2 and 3 I document background information obtained through a literature review with respect to the development of vibraphone technique and the progress in the use of the vibraphone as an harmonic accompanying instrument.

In Chapters 4 to 11 I review the historical development of the use of the vibraphone as an alternative harmonic accompanying instrument in jazz with a brief descriptive analysis of each recording. In Chapter 4 I lay out the terms of reference on which I base this analysis and clarify the terms used.

In the final chapter I give an overview of the historical development of the use of the vibraphone as an alternative harmonic accompanying instrument. I also discuss the

various factors that could be of influence in the use of the instrument is this way. This discussion is based on information gathered through:

- The study of the historical development
- Published literature
- Interviews with leading role players
- Clinics and seminars
- Private lessons
- Personal experience

Finally I discuss the future prospects for the instrument, making suggestions with regard to developments that need to be made in order for the vibraphone to retain, and possibly expand, its potential as an effective harmonic accompanying instrument in jazz and other music styles.

CHAPTER 2. THE VIBRAPHONE AND PLAYING TECHNIQUES

- 2.1 Introduction**
- 2.2 History of the vibraphone**
- 2.3 Development of technique**
- 2.4 Summary**

2.1 Introduction

In this chapter I give an overview of the history of the vibraphone and the development of playing techniques. Information on these subjects was obtained from James Blades's book *Percussion Instruments and their History* (Revised Edition 1992) and periodicals *Percussive Notes* and *Modern Percussionist*. For the purposes of this study I have limited my research to the technical developments in four-mallet vibraphone playing, specifically in the application for harmonic accompaniment.

2.2 History of the vibraphone

In the early 1900s, experimentation by instrument designers who wanted to create original instruments with new sound qualities and capabilities, particularly percussion instruments, led to the development of the vibraphone.

Vaudeville it seems was responsible for the introduction of the vibraphone. In this field of entertainment, the xylophone, marimba and numerous novel percussion instruments were popular features. There was, not unnaturally, constant experiment to provide the extraordinary. (Blades 1992, 408)

An article in *Percussive Notes* describes the early developments that led to the production of the instrument:

Herman Winterhoff, of the Leedy Manufacturing Company, began experiments around 1916 to create a *vox humana* or tremolo effect on the company's steel marimbaphone. Driven by an electric motor and two drive belts, the rotating fans opened and closed the resonating chamber creating the desired vibrato effect. This instrument was marketed under the trademark *Vibraphone*.

By 1928 the J. C. Deagan Company had developed a competing instrument, the *Vibraharp*, with a permanent pedal and bars made of aluminium. (no author given 1999, *Percussive Notes*, 80)

The words vibraphone, vibraharp and vibes can therefore be used interchangeably to describe the instrument, and will be so used in this study.

The bars of this new instrument are made from a metal alloy.

An aluminium alloy which produces a spectrum of sound from dark and mellow to bright and shimmering. The vibraphone has a strong third overtone (double octave) as does the marimba. (Cook 1997, 102)

In order for the player to be able to control the amount of ring or sustain of these metal bars, a pedal dampening system was introduced. This led to an instrument with unique dampening and muffling possibilities.

The early instrument had no dampening mechanism and had a metal retaining bar on top of the bars to keep them in place. The pedal dampening mechanism was invented in 1927 by William D. "Billy" Gladstone who was using the instrument at the Capitol Theatre for broadcasts over radio station WEA. (no author given 1999, *Percussive Notes*, 80)

A foot-operated pedal controls a felt damper strip that muffles all the bars when released. Depressing the pedal allows the bars to ring freely when they are struck. Pedal technique similar to that used on the piano is an important element of vibraphone playing. Individual bars may also be muffled by dampening with a mallet or finger while other bars are allowed to ring. (Cook 1997, 102)

2.3 Development of technique

The technical approach to playing the vibraphone is similar to that of the xylophone. The early vibraphonists, who had developed their technique on the xylophone, adapted their approach to deal with the new possibilities of the vibraphone. A few players expanded the commonly used two-mallet style to include holding four mallets (two in each hand). In the early days of the instrument there was no standard playing

technique other than those borrowed from the xylophone, consequently a number of different approaches were taken.

Red Norvo, one of the first jazz musicians to use the vibraphone, led the way in the development of using four mallets. He “integrated four-mallet technique into his vibraphone playing style, which he executed in a block-chord fashion.” (Rehbein 1999, 62) “He seldom used the motor on his vibraphone, resulting in a vibrato-less sound that resembled his xylophone playing.” (Rogers 1997, 71-72)

Lionel Hampton, another influential vibraphonist from the early days of the instrument, comments in his *Method for Vibraharp, Xylophone and Marimba* on the potential use of the four mallets.

Four hammers are most effective in the playing of slower types of music where full harmonies are desired. Certain artists, however, have achieved such facility with four hammers that their playing begins to approach the finger independence of a pianist. (Hampton 1939)

In spite of Hampton’s and Norvo’s four-mallet technique, they both generally dropped two when soloing. Vibraphonists Walt Dickerson (b. 1931), Terry Gibbs (b. 1924), Milt Jackson, Dave Pike (b.1938) and others preferred a two-mallet technique, and consequently played in a single line melodic style, much like that of a saxophone or trumpet.

Early vibraphonists used hard mallets to play the instrument. This led to a percussive sound reminiscent of the xylophone. Later players, however, opted for the use of softer mallets, leading to a gentler and more resonant sound.

In the late forties when Milt Jackson arrived on the scene . . . he wanted the vibraphone to sound more fluent and vocal-like, and prettier and smoother. So

he used heavier, softer mallets, and he slowed the vibrato down and used more pedalling for expression. (Mattingly 1999, 9)

Milt Jackson's influence on vibraphone technique and sound production is significant.

Up until his [Milt Jackson's] era in vibraphone playing, it was really a very percussive approach to playing the instrument. He went for a more languid, lush sort of style, and showed all of us that this could be a much more expressive instrument than it first had appeared to be. (Mallows 2003, Burton clinic)

From 1960 Gary Burton's influence on the development of four-mallet technique, is significant.

Gary Burton enjoys the unique historical distinction of being the first complete master of an original American musical instrument. Under Gary's meticulous eye, the vibraphone transcends its vaudeville evolution and assumes its rightful place among the fully recognized instruments of the Western world. Gary's expressive command of a personal four-mallet technique involving complex harmonic structures, counterpoint, dynamic independence, and dampening is without precedent on the vibraphone and serves as a profound inspiration not only to percussionists as every level but also to contemporary musicians as a whole. (Howland 1983, 59)

Burton describes the development of his four-mallet technique:

She [Evelyn Tucker] had also showed me how to hold four mallets. First I played with two, and then later on I started playing pieces that were written for four mallets. I didn't use the grip that I use today – I used what is called the traditional grip. (Mallows 2003, Burton clinic)

There are three generally accepted ways of holding the four mallets:

- Traditional grip – where the inside mallets are on top.
- Burton grip – with the outside mallets on top.
- Musser (or Stevens) grip – where the mallets do not touch and there are two fingers in between.

In his book, *Introduction to Jazz Vibes*, Burton notes that there is no accepted formative study method for the vibraphone.

The vibraharp is a rather new instrument in the field of professional music. Just recently, there has been occasional use of the instrument in contemporary compositions, and it has been prominent in popular and jazz music for approximately the last thirty years. There has not been sufficient time to

develop a traditional study of the instrument; no standard or accepted method of playing or teaching has evolved. So, teaching and playing methods have remained somewhat individualistic. (Burton 1965)

Due to the relatively short history of the instrument, Burton intuitively searched for effective techniques to employ on the vibraphone.

One of the things that was available to me when I emerged as a player was that this instrument was only twenty years old when I started. There were some major areas of technique that had not even been touched yet. For example, very few players were playing with four mallets. No one had used dampening, or treated the instrument as a keyboard, or as a solo instrument. There were major areas of discovery that were open to me. (Schroeter 1998, 38)

With no role models on whom to base his approach, coupled with a strong desire to make music, Burton approached the instrument in a novel and innovative way, aiming to elicit a full pianistic sound from the instrument. Steven Rehbein sums up Gary Burton's influence on the vibraphone's development:

Burton developed a new technical and conceptual approach to playing the instrument. The innovation consists of an independent four-mallet technique, which enables him to simulate a pianistic approach to improvisation. In addition, techniques such as mallet dampening and after-pedalling are refined and used in tandem with his four-mallet technique. (Rehbein 1999, 63)

In spite of Burton's influence there has been a wide range of approaches taken to vibraphone technique. Vibraphonist Arthur Lipner remarks, "There is not even a universally accepted technique of holding mallets" (Lipner 1997, 49). Mike Mainieri, for example, was introduced to the instrument through a teacher (Len Leach) who taught him a four-mallet technique where the inner mallets are held like most vib players but the outer mallets are placed between the little and ring fingers. Mainieri says of his grip that it "frees up my inner mallets . . ." and "it felt better to play jazz on the vibes with the inner mallet" (Schietroma 1983, 57). Joe Locke, in his 2003 clinic, described how he has adapted the Stevens grip to suit his own playing style. (Mallows 2003, Locke clinic)

Commenting on the development of vibraphone technique vibraphonist Ted Piltzecker writes:

The range of technical achievement of the vibraphone has increased dramatically since its inception. Many new advancements have opened up an entirely new spectrum of performance possibilities which considerably increase the range of expression on the instrument. The number of performers making their living by playing the instrument is still very small and, therefore, so is the number of qualified teachers. An established methodology for four-mallet jazz vibraphone playing does not really exist, so players seem to acquire the necessary skills in a piecemeal fashion. (Piltzecker 1987, 14)

Burton suggests a possible reason why vibraphone technique has developed in such a unique and varied way:

We [vibraphonists] never play in a section. So we don't normally see each other. With vibraphone, there were so few of us that our paths didn't cross all that often, so there wasn't as much hanging out together and sharing ideas about what to play and so on. (Mattingly 1999, 11)

A number of vibraphone players have continued with the two-mallet approach. These include Roy Ayers (b. 1940), Jay Hoggard (b. 1954) and Bobby Hutcherson. On the other hand others, notably Mike Mainieri and Steve Nelson, play with four mallets for chordal playing and elect to drop two when playing solos. Joe Locke, in contrast, holds four mallets but, by his own admission, is mainly a two-mallet player.

I'm a two mallet player - I just hold four mallets. There are times when I use all four mallets, but my approach to playing the vibes really comes out of my love for horn players. So I play with the inside two mallets. I play like how a two mallets player would, but if I want to punch out some chords in the middle of the solo, I've got it in my hands. (Mallows 2003, Locke clinic)

Steven Rehbein, in his article *Evolution of Improvisation on the Vibraphone* summarises the development of vibraphone techniques:

Approaches to . . . the vibraphone have changed appreciably through the years. Performers continually devise more accessible ways to execute technical passages in pianistic style and to conceptualise theoretical components, such

as the interactions of harmony and counterpoint. Examples of technical development in improvisation include the evolution from playing with two mallets to playing with four mallets, each of which function independently, the emergence of contemporary mallet-dampening techniques, and the expansion of the performer's capacity to encompass roles as soloist as well as accompanist. (Rehbein 1999, 62).

A number of contemporary vibraphonists have developed flexible four-mallet techniques allowing them the ability to play contrapuntal lines, complex chord shapes and to function effectively as the sole harmonic accompanist. These players include David Friedman, Jay Hoggard (b.1956), Khan Jamal, Arthur Lipner, Matthias Lupri, Bill Molenhof, Victor Mendoza, Ted Pilzecker, Mark Piper, Ed Saindon, Dave Samuels, Jerry Tachoir, Tom van der Geld and Tom Beckham (b.1968).

Vibraphonist Ed Saindon, whose early influence and mentor was Gary Burton, has through his many educational articles and his teaching at the Berklee College of Music in Boston, become a leader in the advancement of vibraphone techniques.

Through his Vibe Workshop column that began in 1977, Ed Saindon has authored and edited a multitude of vibraphone articles which run the gamut from technique to theory and jazz to 20th century music. As a result of his diverse educational activities (i.e. private instruction, clinics, publishing and articles) and professional performances and recordings, Ed Saindon has been and continues to be one of the most important contributors to the field of mallet percussion. A leading exponent in such mallet areas as solo vibraphone playing, advanced sticking concepts and innovative dampening techniques, he is equally versed and knowledgeable in such areas as jazz harmony and improvisational technique. (Blake 1985, 36)

The focus of Ed Saindon's approach has been the adaptation of pianistic techniques to the vibraphone.

Playing the vibes as a piano has been my focus since I took up the vibes. The goal is to try and adapt pianistic techniques on the vibes. It's just a matter of editing and adapting the techniques for the vibes. I've studied the pianists from the stride and swing era. Certainly, things cannot be duplicated note for note, but the basic concepts, lines and the techniques can be simulated. (Blake 1998, 43)

Ed Saindon produced a series of articles that have been influential in setting the trends for this pianistic approach to the instrument. In the introduction to the article, *Pianistic Playing Part 1*, Ed Saindon suggests that there is still untapped potential with regard to the use of pianistic techniques on the vibraphone.

One area of vibraphone playing that has the most potential for development lies in the concept of pianistic playing. This concept of playing, relatively speaking, is only in the infant stages. Definitely a four-mallet style, its necessary requisites are deft pedalling, creative dampening techniques, command of the whole range of the instrument, a harmonic and theoretical background. (Saindon 1984, 171)

Vibraphonist Arthur Lipner suggests that the mallets and dampening pedal are the tools that the vibraphonist can use to make the instrument more expressive.

There are two main tools of articulation available to the vibist: mallets, and the pedal. Mallets allow one to employ the techniques of dampening and dead strokes. (Lipner 1996, 6)

Ed Saindon in his article, *Solo Playing*, mentions the five dampening methods that he uses to give expression and clarity to his performance:

- Hand to hand dampening for scales
 - Hand to hand dampening for intervals
 - Mallet to mallet dampening
 - Hand dampening
 - Slide dampening
- (Saindon 1982, 82)

Another technique used by vibraphonists to alter the articulation is the dead-stroke – which is attained by “briefly leaving the mallet on the bar after the attack”. (Lipner 1997, 21)

In addition to technical possibilities of the instrument there are many musical considerations as well. In the introduction to the article *Chord Solos* Ed Saindon suggests that there are many possibilities with regard to reharmonisation and mallet

techniques that can be used to create additional colour and give tunes a fresher sound. (Saindon 1981, 59)

2.4 Summary

Due to the vibraphone being a relatively new instrument with no established method for technique there have been a variety of technical approaches taken. Some players have elected to play the instrument holding only two mallets, while others have developed skills holding four. With the ability to play four notes at a time the vibraphonist now has the facility to play chords and textural effects that previously were available only to pianists, guitarists and other harmonic instrumentalists.

A number of vibraphone players have developed such flexibility with the four mallets that each mallet can function as an independent entity, resulting in the possibility of playing a multi-layered texture of multiple moving lines, or counterpoint.

Apart from developing facility in holding four mallets, many players have developed a high level of skill in dealing with the sustain of the notes. The use of the pedal dampening system and dampening methods using the mallets and hands has resulted in great strides being made in developing the potential of the vibraphone as an expressive musical instrument.

CHAPTER 3. THE VIBRAPHONE AS AN ACCOMPANYING INSTRUMENT

- 3.1 Introduction**
- 3.2 The jazz ensemble**
- 3.3 The rhythm section and accompanying instruments**
- 3.4 The vibraphone as an accompanying instrument**
- 3.5 Summary**

3.1 Introduction

In this chapter I give some background as to the generally accepted roles played by the rhythm section instruments, specifically the harmonic instruments, in jazz. I also give an overview of the approaches a number of contemporary vibraphonists have used when employing the vibraphone in the harmonic accompanying role.

Information with regard to jazz music and the jazz ensemble, specifically the relationship between accompanying instruments and melody players (the rhythm section and soloists), was obtained from *The Jazz Book* by Joachim Berendt (1976), *Jazz* by Graham Collier (1975), *The Book of Jazz* by Leonard Feather (1957) and *Jazz – a History* by Frank Tirro (1977). For information with regard to the role played by harmonic accompanying instruments in jazz ensembles, I researched two books specific to the topic - Jim McNeely's *The Art of Comping* (1995) and Hal Crook's *How to Comp: a Study in Jazz Accompaniment* (1995). Information about the development of the vibraphone as an accompanying instrument was obtained from various articles in *Percussive Notes* and *Modern Percussionist*.

Published literature in periodicals and vibraphone technique books has tended to focus on aspects such as four-mallet technique or solo vibraphone performance, with only a limited amount of material specifically aimed at developing the vibraphone as

an harmonic accompanying instrument and part of the rhythm section. Transcribed interviews published in periodicals, however, reveal interesting related information with regard to the vibraphone player's approach to accompaniment.

3.2 The jazz ensemble

Collier broadly defines jazz as, "an improvised musical expression of a man's individuality" (Collier 1975), implying that the choice of instrumentation for a jazz ensemble has much to do with the individual nature of the music.

Unsatisfactory though the definition may be, and even though overlapping with other musics, it is the only definition wide enough to cover the variety of musics classifiable as jazz. (Collier 1975)

Joachim Berendt suggests the following more comprehensive definition of jazz:

Jazz is a form of art music which originated in the United States through the confrontation of the Negro with European music. The instrumentation, melody, and harmony of jazz are in the main derived from Western musical tradition. Rhythm, phrasing and production of sound, and the elements of blues harmony are derived from African music and from the musical conception of the American Negro. Jazz differs from European music in three basic elements:

- 1 A special relationship to time, defined as "swing".
- 2 A spontaneity and vitality of musical production in which improvisation plays a role.
- 3 A sonority and manner of phrasing which mirror the individuality of the performing musician.

These three basic characteristics create a novel climate of tension, in which the emphasis no longer is on great arcs of tension, as in European music, but on a wealth of tension-creating elements, which continuously rise and fall. The various styles and stages of development through which jazz has passed since its origin around the turn of the century are largely characterized by the fact that the three basic elements of jazz temporarily achieve varying degrees of importance, and that the relationship between them is constantly changing. (Berendt 1976, 174)

Working from these definitions, the scope of music styles covered in this document, and classified as jazz, will include music with a significant element of improvisation, irrespective of the style or rhythmic source of the music.

3.3 The rhythm section and accompanying instruments

Hal Crook in the Introduction to his book, *How to Comp: a Study in Jazz Accompaniment*, suggests that the “conventional comping instruments are piano (keyboards), guitar, vibraphone, bass and drums” (Crook 1995, 12), and comments on the origins of the word “comp”.

The word “comp” is derived from the word accompany (or accompaniment). It was popularised years ago by jazz musicians who expressed the uniqueness of their new musical idiom even through the language they used. (Crook 1995, 12)

Crook explains the concept of comping in an ensemble that performs music that has an element of improvisation.

To comp means to *improvise* a background for a solo using the elements of melody, harmony and/or rhythm. In other words, comping is a kind of *secondary soloing* which supports, complements and interacts with a primary solo. (Crook 1995 12)

Collier explains each instrument’s functional role in sectional group loosely called the rhythm section:

The rhythm section in jazz usually consists of piano or guitar, in some cases both, providing the chords, bass providing the basic pulse and suggesting the harmony, and drums providing and decorating the pulse. (Collier 1975, 153)

Harvey sums up the development in the rhythm section (specifically from the perspective of the piano) over the first half of the 1900s.

The various [early stride] piano styles . . . were developed by solo pianists and remained unchanged even when the pianists played in rhythm sections. This state of affairs continued until the rise in popularity of Count Basie’s orchestra in the mid-1930s, when Basie’s famous rhythm section . . . engendered a new conception of the swinging rhythm. . . allowing the rhythmic function to be taken over completely by the bass, drums and guitar. [Basie’s] solos thus became mostly single-line right-hand improvisations, with chordal punctuations in the left hand. This style influenced other pianists and led to a new and more subtle approach to rhythm generally, with the earlier ‘on the beat’ statement of the rhythm being replaced by a syncopated style that implied rather than stated the rhythm. This new approach laid the foundations for the further changes that occurred in the early 1940’s under the general name of ‘be-bop’. . . This new freedom gave the pianist greater scope, since

he was no longer obliged to conform to such rigid harmonic structure, nor to state the basic pulse. It also gave rise to a new breed of virtuoso bass players . . . who no longer confined themselves to the traditional bass role of playing mostly roots and fifths but instead played ‘walking’ lines of notes . . . Drummers were [also] emancipated from their purely time-keeping role and fostered a greater independence of rhythm between the two hands, since from now on one hand only marked out the time whilst the other filled in with decorations . . . [The be-bop era also lead to a] more chromatic approach to jazz harmony. (Harvey 1974, 60)

Summarising the functional role played by the rhythm section instruments (specifically the harmonic instruments) Rehbein suggests:

The function of an accompanist in jazz music is to provide harmonic and rhythmic support for the soloist. (Rehbein 1999, 63)

3.4 The vibraphone as an accompanying instrument

Collier’s definition of a comping instrument, as an instrument capable of playing the “basic harmonic structure in a rhythmic way to assist the soloist” (Collier 1975, 153), allows for the inclusion of the vibraphone as an instrument capable of playing the harmonic structure in a rhythmic way and therefore making it possible to “comp”.

In the introduction to his book, *Four Mallet Studies*, Gary Burton describes how the development of a more advanced four-mallet technique was as a result of vibraphonists wanting to play the instrument in a versatile way and to realise the potential of the instrument. In answering the question, “Just what are the musical uses for four mallet playing?” Burton points to the way ahead with regard to the potential of the vibraphone in the accompanying role.

The instrument is quite capable of playing rich, interesting and varied harmonic structures (either for accompaniment of other instruments or for unaccompanied solos) and the instrument can be multi-linear as is a piano, with several parts existing simultaneously. Just with these two broad areas of four-mallet usage, the instrument can carry a greater role in a group, and a much more varied role on music in general. With expanded four-mallet techniques, [the] vibraharp can serve the function of a guitar or piano in a jazz

instrumentation, or offer a great variety of orchestration possibilities either within an ensemble or as a solo instrument. With expanded four-mallet playing, the mallet instrument can join the ranks of the very few musical instruments, such as piano or guitar, which have sufficient possibilities for any musical situation from ensemble plying to unaccompanied solos. (Burton 1968)

As will be shown in subsequent chapters, the use of the vibraphone as an harmonic accompanying instrument is not limited by music style. Vibraphonists have continually expanded the possibilities of the instrument into a broad range of jazz styles. Ed Saindon suggests that the vibraphone can be effective as an accompanying instrument in many styles of music.

As the style of pianistic vibes playing gains more momentum and becomes more widespread, more and more styles of music will be opening its doors to the flexible and competent vibist. (Mendoza 1984, 65. Ed Saindon's editor's note)

Victor Mendoza comments on the expansion in the use of the vibraphone as an harmonic accompanying instrument in the rhythm section.

Since the vibraphone has already taken the place of the piano or guitar in so many instances, it is imperative that it be classified as an accompanying instrument in the Latin rhythm section as well. (Mendoza, 1984, 65)

In the introduction to his article, *New Age Solo Vibraphone Techniques*, Saindon suggests further styles where the vibraphone can be effective as an harmonic accompanying instrument.

With the common occurrence of new combinations of instruments and the blending of various musical styles in primarily acoustic settings, the vibraphone has gained an additional musical avenue. Under the name "New Age" or "New Acoustic Music" the musical style encompasses a variety of styles from folk, classical, rock and jazz. The vibraphone fits extremely well in this genre as the music is expressive, dynamic and melodic in nature. In this style the vibraphone has a strong role as a solo or accompanying instrument. In addition, the all important facet of the vibraphone, its wide dynamic range is not masked by other instruments. Combinations with such instruments as oboe, cello and French horn allow the vibraphone's colors and dynamics to shine through while still blending into a homogeneous sound within the various acoustical settings. (Saindon 1987, 30)

3.5 Summary

With the advance of their four-mallet techniques, Mike Mainieri and Gary Burton, through their recordings in the 1960's, pioneered the use of the vibraphone as an accompanying instrument. The vibraphone started to fulfil not only the melody and soloist role but also that of accompanist, a role traditionally performed by the piano or guitar, that of supplying an harmonic accompaniment to the soloists. The instrument has gradually become a more accepted member of the rhythm section thereby becoming more involved in the harmonic and rhythmic aspects of the ensemble's performance and not just the melodic.

Since the use of the vibraphone as an harmonic accompanying instrument has only been used more consistently since 1960, musical styles are generally more contemporary with accompaniment approach being based on developments of jazz styles prior to this date. In the following chapters I will describe the historical development of the use of the vibraphone as an harmonic accompanying instrument in jazz.

CHAPTER 4. HISTORICAL SURVEY OF RECORDINGS

- 4.1 Introduction**
- 4.2 Descriptive analysis**
- 4.3 Terminology**
- 4.4 Comping styles**
- 4.5 Music styles**

4.1 Introduction

A study of books on the history of jazz reveals that the vibraphone is commonly thought of as an instrument capable only of single line solo playing. For example, Joachim Berendt in his *The Jazz Book* (Berendt 1976) focuses mainly on the vibraphone as an instrument used for soloing and only briefly mentions chordal playing when he cites Gary Burton. With regard to Red Norvo, Vic Feldman and Mike Mainieri, players who were all able to play with four mallets and perform the comping role in the ensemble, he does not stress this aspect.

Interestingly enough, Leonard Feather in his book *The Book of Jazz* published in 1957 only mentions the chordal possibilities of the vibraphone by way of a 1956 invention.

Experiments with an attachment that enabled the vibes to be played with the fingers, from a three-octave piano keyboard attachment. Though far short of mechanical perfection, this invention, the “vibories”, seemed a logical outgrowth of the manual difficulties presented by the normal vibes technique, with which it is possible to play only two notes at a time (occasionally four or more extra mallets are held) (Feather 1957, 137)

This seems to indicate that four-mallet technique and the use of the vibraphone as a chordal instrument really only evolved to useful proportions after the late 1950s.

In the following chapters I will contrast these comments with an historical survey of commercial recordings made where the vibraphone plays the role of the sole harmonic

accompanying instrument in the ensemble. Although the focus of this study is on the vibraphone as an alternative harmonic accompanying instrument, used for example as part of a rhythm section backing a trumpet or saxophone soloist, I will also mention recordings of interest such as trio and solo recordings where these have significance for the study. Early recordings in which vibraphone players have performed as a trio with only vibraphone, bass and drums, as well as the early solo vibraphone recordings, show clearly the possibilities of the instrument and its potential for performing the harmonic accompanying role in the ensemble.

The main focus of the descriptive analysis comments made in these chapters will be on recorded examples where the vibraphone is used to accompany other (non-harmonic) instruments. However, until the 1960's recordings using the vibraphone were limited to having it as a solo melody instrument or in a trio with either a guitar (also a harmonic instrument capable of playing a chordal accompaniment) or with bass and drums and without a single-line melodic instrument. Since these recordings are of historical significance in contrasting and highlighting the technical and conceptual progress made on the instrument, they will also be discussed.

4.2 Descriptive analysis.

The purpose of the descriptive analysis is to identify the progressive development of the use of the vibraphone as an alternative accompanying instrument in jazz. My descriptive analysis of the recordings will include the following in each case:

- A brief biographical sketch of the vibraphonist.
- Era of the recording. (dates and place of recording can be found in Appendix B: Recording information)

- Description of the jazz style. (see below for more specific clarification of stylistic terminology)
- Repertoire, noting specifically if compositions are originals by the performing vibraphonist or not.
- Instrumentation, specifically the role played by the vibraphone, and other factors relevant to the topic. (Instrumentation and performers are listed in full in Appendix B: Recording information)
- Comping style used by the vibraphonist and a short descriptive analysis of techniques employed. (A clarification of terms used is listed below)
- A brief descriptive analysis of the vibraphonist's approach to soloing (improvising).
- Comment on the timbre of the recorded sound of the vibraphone and the use of additional electronic sound-enhancing effects or MIDI triggering devices.

4.3 Terminology

- Comping – From the word accompany: to play in support of a melodic instrument or singer.
- Solo – To improvise on the tune, either within the harmonic structure or in a free manner.
- Block chords – Groups of notes played together that outline the chordal quality of the moment.
- Voicing – The process of arranging the notes of a chord.
- Closed-position voicing – Chordal shapes where the notes are placed close together.
- Open-position voicings – Chordal shapes where the range of the notes played is expanded by raising at least one of the notes an octave.
- Voice leading – The process of smoothly connecting notes from chord to chord with a blended textural sound.

- Stacked chords – A higher voiced chord sounded against a sustained lower chord.
- Re-harmonization – Rewriting of a chord progression for the purpose of creating richer and more interesting vertical relationships between a melody and its associated harmony.
- Articulation – The legato or staccato execution of a series of notes or chords.

Articulation techniques available to the vibraphonists are:

Peddalling – The use of the vibraphone's sustain pedal to either let the note ring or alternatively end the note's sustain.

Mallet dampening – The use of a mallet to stop the bar from ringing.

Dead strokes – Not removing the mallet from the bar once the note has been struck, creating a dead sound with no sustain.

4.4 Comping styles

- Traditional concerted style – Block chords played as a regular rhythmic accompaniment and generally placed on the beat.
- Expanded concerted style – Block chords plus a root note played rhythmically on syncopated beats.
- Modern concerted style – Chordal shapes played rhythmically in the style of contemporary jazz.
- Arpeggiated style - The rhythmic, staggered sounding of chordal tones. Comparable to the pianistic technique of “rolling the chord”.
- Layered texture – The sounding of chordal scalar tones or tonal clusters over a wide range of the instrument allowing the sounds to sustain and blend together.
- Solo style – Complementing melody and bass tones sounded together followed by chordal notes played in a rhythmic fashion.
- Rhythmic style – Where the chord or scalar tones are sounded rhythmically through the use of alternating mallet or hand-to-hand strokes, reminiscent of classical marimba techniques.
- Vamp – A short section of music, usually chord related, that is repeated several times.
- Riff – A repeated melodic figure, often played behind a solo.

- Contrapuntal style – The use of scalar movement to provide contrasting counter melodies that imply harmony and create complex rhythmic texture.
- Scale comping – A comping process in which colours are drawn freely from the appropriate improvising scale.
- Context defines comping style – Within each musical style there are predefined approaches as to the way comping is handled based on the harmonic, rhythmic nuances typical to that style.

4.5 Musical styles

- Ballad – A slow tune.
- Blues – A category of harmonic progression and its associated derivative musical style.
- Stride – A piano style characterised by using the left hand in a downbeat-upbeat pattern in which beats one and three are heavily accented single bass notes (or octaves or tenths) and beats two and four are unaccented triads.
- Swing – The style of jazz music popular in the 1930s and early 1940s, characterised by arrangements for large ensembles. The rhythm section is led by the bass playing regularly on the beat. Melodic patterns are based on scales and arpeggios.
- Latin – Characterised by the musical styles and rhythmic patterns found in the Caribbean and South America.
- Bossa nova – A medium paced Latin dance style that features a straight eight-note pulse (without swinging in the traditional sense) and repeated two bar syncopated rhythmic pattern.
- Be-bop – The classical jazz style, epitomized by the music of the mid-1940s through the mid-1950s as created by such musicians as Charlie Parker, Dizzy Gillespie, Max Roach, Bud Powell, and Thelonius Monk. Characterised by asymmetrical phrases, ornate melodic lines and complex rhythmic patterns. Harmonies are more dissonant than those used in the swing style.
- Free jazz – Performances that negate stylistic rules which were formally valid, by attempting to destroy the feelings of structure, direction and tonality with the introduction of random improvisation and the use of instruments in a non-standard way.

- Country – The musical culture that evolved in the USA based on absorbing folk-music styles from Europe and elsewhere in the early days of the countries national growth.
- Rock – Popular music that evolved in the 1960s and 1970s as a result of white musicians absorbing black rhythm and blues styles.
- European jazz – Jazz styles that reflect the art music of Europe (Western classical music).
- World music – An inclusive term implying music that reflects influences from many world cultures, sometimes beings used together in a hybrid form.
- Western classical music - Formal art music that evolved in Europe over the past 300 years.

CHAPTER 5. THE TWENTIES, THIRTIES AND FORTIES

5.1 Red Norvo

5.2 Lionel Hampton

5.1 Red Norvo

The history of the vibraphone began toward the end for the twenties with Red Norvo, who found his way to this instrument via the xylophone. Norvo developed in an intriguing way from Chicago style through Swing and bebop to cool jazz. (Berendt 1976, 244)

Leonard Feather describes how Red Norvo significantly influenced the way that the vibraphone was used in jazz styles.

Mallet instruments were a novel accoutrement of percussionists in the 1920s, used mainly for novelty side effects in dance band music, stage acts and brass bands. Not until the advent of Red Norvo was any of them considered as a possible outlet for jazz expression. (Feather 1957, 133)

Michael Rosen gives some background with regard to Red Norvo's introduction to the vibraphone.

Norvo was the very first person to play and record jazz on the xylophone. He was also the first musician to play the vibraphone in jazz. In the early '30s he was doing a session with the Dorsey Brothers before they had formed their big bands. The tune was *Mooncountry* by Hoge Carmichael. For some reason Red's xylophone didn't get delivered to the session and it was time to start. Red noticed a vibraphone in the corner and played it on the session. The vibraphone didn't have a damper pedal at the time; it hadn't been invented yet! Red had to dampen with his fingers and forearm. (Rosen 1999)

Feather comments how Norvo took the techniques he had learned on the xylophone and transferred them to the new instrument – the vibraphone.

Norvo . . . remained unique, using the instrument [the vibraphone] without motor, thus avoiding the artificial vibrato of the electric current, retaining all the Norvo traits while gaining the ability to sustain notes. (Feather 1957, 134)

In the liner notes to *The Savoy Sessions* recordings of the Red Norvo Trio, Burt Korall gives some background information with regard to Norvo's performances in the 1930s and 1940s.

In the 1930s, he led a piano-less octet, subtle big bands that made their point without screaming. He recorded with uncommon sets of instruments. Older fans will certainly remember his own *Dance of the Octopus* and the Norvo version of Bix Beiderbecke's *In a Mist* featuring Norvo playing marimba; Benny Goodman, bass clarinet; Dick McDonough, guitar; and Artie Bernstein, bass. The music was off-centre for the time – impressionistic, charming chamber music with only a suggestion of swing. Visionary stuff for 1933.

In the 1940's, Red headed a small group with such promising young players as trumpeter Shorty Rogers and trombonist Eddie Bert. Bowing to the new technology and the demands of a changing music, Red turned to the vibraharp, leaving the marimba and xylophone behind. (His first job on vibes, Eddie Bert recalls, was at the Chantclair, a club in Baltimore, in 1942.) (Norvo 1976)

In 1949, motivated by wanting to spend more time with his family and the fact that the only gigs he could get in California were for smaller groups with three or four members, Norvo formed a trio consisting of vibraphone, guitar and bass. The first major bookings for the trio were in Hawaii at the end of 1949. Burt Korall quotes Norvo as commenting that this trio instrumentation was innovative.

“Was something new, the instrumentation never had been tried before.” (Norvo 1976)

Guitarist in the trio, Tal Farlow, comments on the various roles that were played by the members of the group.

“It was not the kind of group where you could sit back and hope things would happen. You had to keep thinking ahead, responding to the other guys and their ideas. We'd double on the melody on the opening and closing sections. He'd chord while I was soloing and I'd do my best to give him a good cushion while he played.” (Norvo 1976)

5.2 Lionel Hampton

Leonard Feather gives some background to Lionel Hampton's start on the vibes and his later inclusion in the Benny Goodman Quartet.

Lionel Hampton, then a 17-year old drummer with the Les Hite band that was backing Louis Armstrong, took up the vibraphone more or less by chance. There was a vibraphone in the studio the day he recorded *Confessin'* with Louis in July 1930. He used it for a brief ad lib introduction. Hampton remained in obscurity until Benny Goodman found him leading a band in a

Los Angeles ballroom in 1936, used him on some records, then persuaded him to give up his band and make the Goodman Quartet a permanent entity (Feather 1957, 134)

“In 1936, Goodman added black vibraphonist, Lionel Hampton to his trio” (Tirro 1977, 242) joining pianist Teddy Wilson and drummer Gene Krupa. Early recordings of the Benny Goodman Quartet show Hampton playing fluid two-mallet style solos and alternating solo space with Goodman and pianist Wilson. Hampton demonstrates his ability to play with four mallets with the occasional chordal introduction or chordal accompaniment to the solos. This he does mainly on the slow to medium paced numbers. For example, on the track *Sweet Sue Just You*, Hampton plays a rhythmic block chordal introduction setting up a chordal vamp that continues behind Goodman’s clarinet melody. During the clarinet solo Hampton steps up his accompaniment to include chordal inversions alternating with longer sustained chords, to be more supportive and occasionally interactive, at least as much as the musical style of the day would allow of the accompanist. For the statement of the theme on *My Melancholy Baby*, Hampton matches his chordal comping to Wilson’s stride piano playing. On *Stomping at the Savoy*, Hampton states the main melody in a block chord style. On other tracks Hampton can be occasionally heard playing arpeggiated chords as accompaniment to Goodman’s solos. On *Vibraphon Blues*, Hampton plays, behind Goodman’s clarinet solo, a block chordal backing, four-mallet style, on the vibraphone. Later on the same track Hampton returns to a two-mallet style and plays background melodic riffs that generates musical energy behind Goodman’s solo.

Subsequent recordings of Hampton, made between 1937 and 1940, find the multi-instrumentalist generally accompanied by a larger ensemble, comprising saxes, brass

and rhythm. Peter Dempsey in his liner notes to a collection of recordings of Lionel Hampton made between 1937 and 1940, describes Hampton as:

One of the most celebrated figures of the Swing Era and among jazz's most exuberant, extroverted showmen ... (Hampton 2002)

These recordings show Hampton in his many guises, from vocalist on *On the Sunny Side of the Street* (recorded April 1937), to boogie-woogie pianist on *China Stomp* (recorded April 1937), *Piano Stomp* (recorded August 1937), and *Twelfth Street Rag* (recorded June 1939), and vibraphonist on the rest of the tracks.

Accompanists in this style period did not interact significantly with the soloist, and consequently Hampton's chordal accompaniments are usually conservative, consisting of four-mallet closed position block chords played in a traditional concerted style generally on the beat. On the track *On the Sunny Side of the Street* Hampton plays a block chordal accompaniment behind Johnny Hodges' alto saxophone, and following his two-mallet style solo, finishes the tune playing arpeggiated chords that outline the harmony. On *Ain't Cha Comin' Home* (recorded June 1939) Hampton plays a chordal introduction using block chords with some higher colourful notes sounded after the chord. On *Memories of You* (recorded June 1939) he plays a block chord introduction and continues with a chordal accompaniment to the melody and horn solos generally played on the beat in a traditional concerted style. On *I Can't Get Started* (recorded October 1939) Hampton combines block chords with arpeggiated chords and short melodic fragments.

For his vibraphone solos Hampton plays in a two-mallet arpeggiated style requiring the pianist in the ensemble to provide the harmonic accompaniment.

On these early recordings Hampton uses very hard mallets and a fast vibrato effect. In the context of larger ensembles of winds, brass and the rather plodding rhythm section, harder mallets were needed in order for the vibraphone to be heard. This led to a more brittle sound reminiscent of the xylophone.

In spite of his ability to play chordally with four mallets Hampton normally performed in groups that included pianists and guitarists. Recordings of Hampton made in the 1940s have the multi-instrumentalist usually fronting a big band, and playing the soloist's role as singer, pianist, or vibraphonist. These recordings show Hampton playing in a two-mallet style with infrequent use of four-mallets.

Lionel Hampton, the vibraphonist, seems to derive so much inspiration for so many fine solos from the rhythmic riff orgies of his big bands that one would rather not do without them. (Berendt 1976, 244)

On *Stardust* (recorded in August 1947), however, Hampton provides a full chordal accompaniment to the soloists using closed position block chords played in a traditional style, but expanding his approach to include arpeggiated chords, countermelodies, higher colourful notes played after the chord has been sounded, and line clichés. Hampton creates contrast in accompanying the bass solo by playing chords voiced in the higher register.

CHAPTER 6. THE FIFTIES

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|------------|-----------------------|
| 6.1 | Red Norvo |
| 6.2 | Victor Feldman |

6.1 Red Norvo

In 1950 bassist Charles Mingus joined the Red Norvo Trio, together with guitarist Tal Farlow and vibraphonist Red Norvo. This close-knit group played in an intimate swing-influenced style of chamber jazz that incorporated well-organised arrangements of popular songs and jazz compositions by Duke Ellington and other masters. Recordings made between 1950 and 1951, reissued in 1976 as the *The Savoy Sessions* (Norvo 1976), show Norvo playing a strong harmonic role, through his chordal arrangements of the tunes and chordal comping behind the solos of Farlow and Mingus.

Through his use of hard mallets and conservative use of the sustain pedal, Norvo plays with a clean and direct style. The recording quality of the vibraphone on this album is clear at all times. On most of the tracks the vibrato effect is not used, but on the slower tunes, *Prelude to a Kiss* and *It Had To Be You*, Norvo does use the vibrato with the speed set fairly fast.

On all of the tracks Norvo moves between a four-mallet block chord style, that he uses for the chordal arrangements of tunes and for harmonic comping behind the guitar and bass solos, and a two-mallet solo style reminiscent of his early xylophone days, regularly using rolled notes and octaves and ornaments such as trills and turns. On a few tracks (*I Can't Believe That You're In Love With Me* and *I'll Remember*

April) Norvo can be heard picking up and putting down his mallets on the lower notes of the instrument as he changes between holding two to holding four mallets.

Norvo plays block chords mainly on the beat in a concerted style while comping behind the solos of Farlow and Mingus. Using regular changes in chord voicings and passing chords, Norvo creates a feeling of forward motion in his comping. The track *I'm Yours* is a good example of his use of changes in chord voicings as he plays fast chordal inversions behind the guitar solo. His chordal playing is mostly in the middle range of the instrument with the occasional splash of sound in the upper range, as can be heard on *Prelude to a Kiss*. On *Godchild*, Norvo adds interest to his comping for the bass solo by playing angular textures broken up percussively and exchanged between the hands.

In the introduction to the melody on *September Song* Norvo varies his normal dry articulation by playing octaves with the top note stopped and the lower allowed to ring.

6.2 Victor Feldman

British born Victor Feldman played drums and piano from an early age and only started playing the vibraphone at fourteen. His first album as leader that was recorded in America was the 1958 trio release, *The Arrival of Victor Feldman* (Feldman 1958). On this album bassist Scott LaFaro (then only 21 and making his first professional recording) and drummer, Stan Levey, join Feldman. The repertoire comprises jazz standards, *Waltz* by the classical composer Frederic Chopin and arranged by Feldman, and three Feldman originals - *Chasing Shadows*, *Too Blue* and *Minor Lament*.

On the album Feldman plays both the vibraphone and piano. On *Waltz* and *Satin Doll*, his move from the piano to the vibraphone is covered by a short bass interlude. On *S'posin'* he states the melody on the vibraphone and then moves to the piano to accompany the bass solo, later returning to the vibraphone for a solo spot. After introducing the theme on *Waltz* in a solo piano style, he moves to the vibraphone for the solo section, remaining on this instrument to accompany the bass solo. He returns to the piano for the final solo piano statement of the theme, which is accompanied by bowed bass. The tunes *Serpent's Tooth*, *Flamingo*, *Bebop* and *Too Blue* are played using only the vibraphone, while *Chasing Shadows* and *Minor Lament* are played on the piano.

On *Serpent's Tooth*, *Flamingo*, *S'posin'* and *Too Blue* Feldman states the melody on the vibraphone, accompanying himself with block chords played rhythmically in a concerted style. While Feldman's piano playing is in the horn-like bebop style accompanied by punctuated chords in the left hand, his vibraphone solos are mainly in a single-line fashion with little chordal playing. On *Bebop* Feldman exhibits a flawless mastery of the bebop style with an up-tempo vibes solo. Only on the track *Flamingo* does he explore the possibilities of supplying chordal accompaniment to his own vibraphone solos. While playing melodically with the right hand in the upper register of the instrument, he lays down a traditional concerted style chordal pulse with the left, in the lower register.

Feldman's vibraphone comping behind the bass solos on *Serpent's Tooth*, and *(There is no) Greater Love* for example, is limited to block chords, gently ringing with a slow

speed set on the vibrato. This is contrasted with his piano comping behind the bass solos on *Chasing Shadows* and *S'posing*', where he exhibits a freer approach to playing the chords through the use of a wide range of chordal shapes and arpeggios.

Feldman plays the final chords of *Bebop* with great flourish in an arpeggiated style, demonstrating his technical mastery of the vibraphone and the breadth of the sound palate available should the full range of the instrument be used. On *Too Blue*, he uses a number of other techniques to create interest with great effect. Stopped dry sounds are contrasted with longer ringing sounds, enhanced through the use of the vibrato effect set at a slow speed. On *Flamingo* Feldman plays the melody in a block chord style with luscious harmonies, adding voice leading clearly executed through the use of mallet dampening.

CHAPTER 7. THE SIXTIES

- 7.1 Gary Burton**
- 7.2 Mike Mainieri**
- 7.3 Victor Feldman**
- 7.4 Gary McFarland**
- 7.5 Gunter Hampel and Karl Berger**

7.1 Gary Burton

In 1961, Gary Burton recorded the album *New Vibe Man in Town* (Burton 1962), his first as leader. On this trio album Burton, then only eighteen years old, demonstrates a well developed bebop-style up-tempo soloing technique and four-mallet command of the vibraphone. Comping requirements of the vibraphone are limited as the only other instrumental soloist is bassist Gene Cherico, who is given only limited solo space.

The repertoire on this album, to quote Burton, based on “things we knew we could play easily” (Burton 1962), is a mixture of standard songs such as *Over the Rainbow*, *Like Someone in Love* and *You Stepped Out of a Dream*, mixed with jazz compositions such as Clifford Brown’s *Joy Spring*, Marion McPartland’s *So Many Things* and Red Mitchell’s *Sir John*.

Indicating his desire to develop the playing and technical opportunities of the vibraphone, Burton is quoted in the liner notes to the album as saying:

“Vibes have never been exploited very much because no one has developed enough technique. I’d like to try and do it.” (Burton 1962)

Burton plays the full range of the instrument, not limiting himself to block chord playing in the middle range of the instrument, as did Norvo and Feldman on their

recordings of the 1950s. On the ballads, *So Many Things* and *Over the Rainbow*, Burton employs a wide range of sound colours and textures. These include block chords played in an expanded concerted style, chordal stacking, stacked chords, layering of harmonic texture, passing chords, arpeggiated chords and scalar runs. In the last few bars of *Over the Rainbow* he plays contrasting moving lines, demonstrating the contrapuntal potential of the vibraphone.

Burton clearly shows his blues and country roots on the track *Sir John* where he uses his four mallets to execute melodic fragments reminiscent of blues pianists and guitarists. His solos on the up-tempo tunes, *Joy Spring* and *Like Someone in Love*, are mainly in a single-line, melodic bebop style, use of his four-mallet technique being limited to the occasional chordal punctuation. In the introduction and the statement of the melody on *Our Waltz* he employs a pianistic solo style approach that consists of a left-hand rhythmic accompaniment and melodic statements in the right.

It is where Burton comps behind the bass solo that the potential of the vibraphone as an accompanying instrument is best demonstrated. Accompanying the bass solos on *Like Someone in Love* and *Minor Blues*, he keeps the harmony interesting and buoyant, utilising shifting block-chord voicings and passing chords. To heighten the rhythmic interest in his accompaniment he varies his articulations and dynamics. Short dry sounds are contrasted against longer ringing sounds (enhanced through the use of a slow vibrato effect), with chordal attacks being played at different intensity levels creating an harmonic and rhythmic base that is interesting and yet responsive to the soloist's musical ideas. By not accompanying the bassist's introduction to *Sir*

John, Burton creates contrast and heightens the effect of the statement of the melody on the vibraphone.

In September 1962 Burton, then only nineteen years old, recorded his second album as leader, *Who is Gary Burton?* (Burton 1963). The album features the vibraphonist in the context of a larger seven-piece group that includes pianist Tommy Flanagan. Here Burton bridges the gap between chordal player and melody player. Comping duties are left mainly to pianist Flanagan while on some tracks the vibraphone combines with the piano to play sustained block chords as on *Fly Time Fly*, guide tone lines on the middle section of *My Funny Valentine*, and the unison riff style phrases in the 5/4 sections of *Get Away Blues*. On *One Note* Burton creates layered sustained sound textures, enhanced through the use of a slow vibrato effect, behind the interludes and trumpet solo. On most tunes Burton plays the melodic themes in unison with the horns, whilst providing chordal accompaniment in a solo style. The subtle nuances of the vibraphone so clearly heard on his first album are not as clear, tending to be masked by the larger instrumental line-up.

It is interesting to note that Flanagan is given the opportunity to play an extended solo piano introduction to *My Funny Valentine* when it would have been appropriate for Burton to provide this introduction (solo vibes style) along the lines that he played in *Over the Rainbow* on his first album.

The repertoire of the album is a combination of jazz compositions by George Shearing (*Conception*) and Jaki Byard (*One Note*), standards *I've Just Seen Her* and *My Funny Valentine* and, interestingly, the inclusion of repertoire written specifically

for this album by Burton's fellow Berklee College of Music classmates Chris Swanson and Mike Gibbs.

Burton's third recording as leader, recorded in August 1963, was issued under the title *3 in Jazz* (Burton, Rollins and Terry 1963). This album features the vibraphonist in a quartet setting - the vibraphone being given the harmonic accompanist's role supplying the harmonic and rhythmic accompaniment to the trumpet solos of Jack Sheldon. The repertoire of this album combines jazz standards, *Hello, Young Lovers* and *Stella by Starlight*, with original jazz compositions by Mike Gibbs (*Blue Comedy*) and Gary Burton (*Gentle Wind and Falling Tear*), indicating Burton's interest in playing new repertoire that allowed for a fresh approach to vibraphone performance.

On this album Burton presents a well-developed approach to using the vibraphone as an harmonic accompanying instrument and a member of the rhythm section. In his comping behind the trumpet solos he uses many of the techniques heard on his first album. These include rhythmically played block chords, moving harmonic shapes, passing chords, arpeggiated chords, chordal stacking, use of the full range on the instrument, bass notes offsetting the chords, contrapuntal lines, scalar lines, contrasting dynamics, and sounds with short dry attack contrasted against sustained chords or notes. His use of a slow vibrato effect can be heard clearly on the slower tunes, *Gentle Wind and Falling Tear* and *Stella by Starlight*, creating a dreamlike texture to the overall sound. Burton's ability to provide accompaniment to his own solos shows a significant development since his first album. His vibraphone solo on *Stella by Starlight* clearly shows a well-developed sense of style and concept with

regard to the solo style of playing, an aspect of his playing that would later become increasingly significant.

In August 1963 Burton also recorded the Sondheim/Bernstein tune *Something's Coming*. Issued in 1980 on the album *The Vibe Man* (Burton 1980), this recording features Burton, again in a quartet setting, but this time with guitarist Jim Hall (who tends to play in a melodic linear fashion on this track). Burton clearly demonstrates a mature approach to comping behind Jim Hall's guitar solo, using a chordal treatment that covers the whole instrument and creates a warm spectrum of harmonic colours as a backdrop to the solo.

In 1963 Burton joined the George Shearing Quintet and, due to the popularity of this group, gained widespread recognition for his abilities as a vibraphonist. In the liner notes to a live recording made of a concert in Santa Monica in 1963, Leonard Feather comments on Burton's potential to become a leading figure in the future of jazz vibraphone playing.

The vibraphonist is Gary Burton, barely out of his teens when he joined Shearing, who categorizes him as "definitely one of the three best in the country, along with Milt Jackson and Cal Tjader". He's a fine pianist and all-round percussionist too – an extraordinary musician, with a great sense of harmony (Shearing 1963)

Gary Burton gives some background with regard to his early experiences in the George Shearing Quintet.

The first band I was in, and toured, was with a piano player named George Shearing, it was a great bit opportunity and experience. George played a lot of ballads, and the vibes part was typically slow and spacious single notes. So night after night we would play these slow moving simple sorts of things in unison. (Mallows 2003, Burton clinic)

The vibraphone was used in the George Shearing Quintet mainly as a melodic instrument playing single lines as part of a through-composed melodic structure.

The music is scored with the vibraphone and guitar doubling the piano melody in a homophonic texture to which the piano left hand occasionally adds counterpoint lines (Tirro 1977, 328)

Although Burton's four-mallet technique was not used to the optimal, the time that he spent in the group had a significant impact on his playing and musical approach especially with regard to harmony and solo playing.

George was a master of harmony and had a sense of drama in his playing. There are many books that he published, fifty years ago, of just standards that were re-voiced with beautiful re-harmonisations. I bought those books and played them when I was in high school, very painstakingly figuring out the chords on the piano because I was so interested in these harmonies. When I played with him for a year, it was a real education. He also played solo pieces. When I heard him do this, I said; "I'd like to do that!" So I started playing solo pieces as soon as I left his band – I stole that from him, so to speak. When I joined Stan Getz's band, the first thing he said was when Stan would take breaks occasionally during the set he would say; "Play something, and I'll be back in a bit." So I would play these solo pieces. To this day I have kept on doing that. I got the inspiration from seeing George doing it (Mallows 2003, Burton clinic).

On the 1963 recording of the Shearing Quintet, Burton's ability on the vibraphone is really only evident when he is given space to solo. On *Walkin'* he cleanly executes pianistic style blues licks, and on *Love is Just Around the Corner* Burton utilises his four-mallet technique to play solo style. Comping duties are given to Shearing on the piano, with the guitar and the vibraphone playing longer sounds subtly in the background. On *Love is Just Around the Corner*, however, Burton briefly picks up on a background riff phrase that Shearing sets up behind the guitar solo.

In 1964 Burton joined the Stan Getz Quartet, a significant move considering the popularity of the tenor saxophonist and the innovative instrumental line-up, that of tenor saxophone, vibraphone, bass and drums. The vibraphone was therefore required

to providing the harmonic accompaniment for Getz's saxophone solos. Burton describes the events that led to his inclusion in this group and his role as sole harmonic accompanist.

So it was when I joined Stan Getz that this came all to the fore. He was looking for a piano player or a guitar player to join his band to replace a guitar player who was leaving. And he was having trouble finding someone. So somebody recommended me to him, in fact it was Lou Levy, a piano player who used to play for Peggy Lee, who was an old friend of Stan's, said, "Well there's this kid who plays vibes with four mallets. Maybe that would work." It turned out that the bass player in Stan's band was a friend and knew me well. He called me up and said, "Stan is interested in trying this out. Why don't you come on down and sit in for a set to see if it would work." So I did. It didn't work very well - I didn't know the songs they were playing and I wasn't used to Stan's playing. I hadn't really heard him play that much actually up to that point. Didn't go very well and I didn't get the job. He said, "Thanks anyway, it didn't seem to work out!" But about two weeks later he called again to say they still hadn't found anyone and they had three weeks of gigs in Canada starting the next Monday and "We're desperate" and would I do the three weeks just to help them out. And I said, "Oh well, why not! I could use the work." So I decided to do it. (Mallows 2003, Burton interview)

Through his involvement in this group, Burton rose to prominence internationally.

Gary Burton, who initially came to the fore as a member of the Stan Getz Quartet of the sixties, plays with a fascinating combination of tender, floating lyricism and great virtuosity. He is the vibraphonist who has developed further than anyone else the ability to play with three or four mallets simultaneously, creating chordal effects similar to those of pianist Bill Evans, who influenced him. (Berendt 1976, 246)

Burton describes the initial difficulties that he encountered comping for Stan Getz.

The first thing I discovered on the first night was that I did not know how to comp for him. He was very particular about comping. He was used to very good accompanists who played for him, and I had no clue as to how you'd go about it. So for the first week it was really a tug of war. I would try to comp for him. But after about one or two choruses he would tell me to stop playing and he would play with just the bass and drums. He wasn't one of those kinds of people who could explain what he wanted. There are many musicians who are like that. They can tell you, "It's not working, try something else." But they can't say, "Instead of playing so much on the down beats." Or, "Instead of playing voicings where you use all four notes with the root in them, try doing this . . ." He did not know what to tell me to make it better. All he knew was that he didn't like what he was hearing. So I kept struggling, trying to do different things, playing less, playing lower, playing whatever I thought might

be better. For the first half of this three week run it wasn't working well at all. I wasn't figuring anything out and I felt very frustrated, as he must have had too.

Then things started to click! By the end of the three weeks we had sort of found a style and I had sort of gotten the hang of it. Then he asked me to stay on for the next few weeks and I ended up staying on for three years. During that time I learned really how to do it. He was a good person to learn with because he was demanding and also he played "straight on" - he was easy to follow. (Mallows 2003, Burton interview)

The "New" Stan Getz Quartet was recorded live on 19 August 1964 at the Café Au Go Go, Greenwich Village, NYC (Getz 1964) barely a few weeks after Burton had joined the group. Although billed as a quartet the recording includes Astrud Gilberto on vocals and Kenny Burrell on guitar on some of the tracks. On the rest of the tracks Gary Burton, (still only 21 years old at the time) fills the role of harmonic accompanist.

The one [recording] that was at the beginning was called *Getz Au Go Go*. That was three weeks to a month after I'd joined the band. We had just come back from Canada we did this club gig in New York and they recorded it. (Mallows 2003, Burton interview)

These recordings show that he had already developed his comping style to such a level as to be able to offer the soloist (whether it be Getz on saxophone or Astrud Gilberto's vocals) a solid harmonic and rhythmic platform. Burton keeps the music alive and buoyant through providing accompaniments consisting of a constantly moving palette of harmonic colours and chord shapes.

The repertoire played on this recording by the Stan Getz Quartet is a combination of bossa nova style tunes by Antonio Carlos Jobim (*Corcovado*, *Eu e Voce* and *One Note Samba*), jazz standards (*It Might as Well be Spring*, *Summertime*, *Only Trust Your Heart* and *Here's that Rainy Day*) and, notably, two original compositions by vibraphonist Gary Burton, *The Singing Song*, a tune with an Afro-Cuban 6/8 feel, and

6-Nix-Pix-Flix, a short theme used as a background for Getz's introduction of the members of the band to the audience.

On the tunes played in the bossa nova or light samba styles (*It Might as Well be Spring* and *One Note Samba*) Burton comps chordally in a rhythmic concerted fashion with the occasional moving lines, reminiscent of guitar comping in this style. With some use of chordal stacking he creates a fuller, thicker harmonic texture. On his own composition, *The Singing Song*, Burton keeps the Afro-Cuban feel by rhythmically arpeggiating the chords in a 6/8 pulse.

On *Summertime* and *Here's that Rainy Day* Burton expands his comping style in the solo sections interactively punctuating the soloist's phrases. He responds to Getz's more aggressive flourishes with more forceful playing and the use of a dryer sound, using interesting chord shapes, passing chords and tonal clusters over the whole range of the instrument. Burton uses a wide range of comping techniques. These include, rhythmic breaking up of the chords between the hands, shorter dryer sounds contrasted against longer ringing tones, passing chords, chordal stacking, rhythmic chordal comping in an expanded concerted style and guide tone lines.

Although Getz is the featured soloist on the album, Burton's solos on *Summertime*, *The Singing Song* and *Here's that Rainy Day* show a clearly developed concept of self-accompaniment through the use of a variety of musical techniques. These include arpeggiated chordal runs, chordal attacks at phrase points, left hand chordal fills against a right hand melody, interesting rhythmic turns, creative reharmonization of the chordal structure and discordant angular shapes that add tension to the sound.

Live recordings made of the quartet at the Paris Jazz Festival in November 1966 were issued on the album, *The Stan Getz Quartet in Paris* (Getz 1967). The rhythm section trio backing Getz comprised Gary Burton on vibraphone, Steve Swallow on bass and Roy Haynes on drums (what was later to become the core of the Gary Burton Quartet). The repertoire is again a mix of bossa nova/samba tunes (*Manha de Carnaval*, *O Grande Amor*), standard tunes (*When the World Was Young*, *On Green Dolphin Street*, *The Knight Rides Again*) and Burton's original, *Singing Song*.

In contrast to the 1964 recordings, Burton is given more solo space, playing solos on most of the tracks. He also plays an unaccompanied vibraphone solo version of the tune *Edelweiss*, demonstrating a mature approach to solo vibraphone playing and clearly showing the potential of the instrument as one capable of playing the wide range of musical techniques. Here he uses complex moving lines, left hand accompaniment figures against a right hand melody, melodic thirds and sixths against a left hand accompaniment, contrasting dynamics, smoothly executed lines up to melody notes or down to moving guide tones and ostinato bass figures.

Although the vibraphone is very low in the recording mix, Burton can be heard comping confidently and with power, utilizing a wide range of technical approaches, including a guitar-like rhythmic approach on the bossa nova and samba style tunes and a fuller sounding arpeggiated chordal texture as on the ballad *When the World Was Young*. Burton clearly responds to the changes that Getz makes in the musical moods in his solo. Clearly audible on this recording is Burton's use of various mallet-dampening techniques to give his lines and inner moving harmonic parts greater

clarity. On *Singing Song* he plays a more complex and more intense 6/8 accompaniment against the Afro-Cuban rhythm of the drums. On the Latin-flavoured *On Green Dolphin Street* Burton does not play so as to allow the intense Elvin Jones style drumming of Roy Haynes to come to the fore. On *The Knight Rides Again* he expands his playing to include playing a percussive rhythm on a temple block whilst retaining an outline of the chords with his left hand.

By 1966 Burton was keen to lead his own group. In the liner notes to the album *Country Roads & Other Places*, Jean-Paul Guiter describes the factors that helped to influence Burton into forming his own group.

In late 1966 a Belfast jazz audience, gathered in eager anticipation of hearing the Stan Getz Quartet, found itself faced with a mere trio (Gary Burton on vibraphone, Steve Swallow on bass and Roy Haynes on drums), Getz himself having inexplicably taken off for London.

One of the main consequences of this incident was Gary Burton's decision to abandon the role of sideman and to set up a group of his own. He made his debut by borrowing the rhythm section of a musician who was one of his principal sources of inspiration, pianist Bill Evans. With Evans on vacation, Burton was temporarily able to call upon the services of bassist Eddie Gomez and drummer Joe Hunt. (Burton 1982)

Burton gives some background as to how he went about creating his own sound.

I just happened to go to a session somewhere in New York with friends and there was this guitar player who was playing this very strange mixture of jazz and rock. I thought; "Perfect, this is just perfect for me." So I introduced myself to him, it was Larry Coryell, and said; "Do you want to work a week in Boston?" We did, and that started it. I was looking for something, and I didn't know it was going to be that particular combination of things until I heard him playing. Then I could see it working. That led me to it. (Mallows 2003, Burton clinic)

One of the early recordings of the Gary Burton Quartet was made in April 1967 and reissued in 1980 on *The Vibe Man* (Burton 1980). Playing Carla Bley's composition *Sing Me Softly of the Blues*, Burton is joined by Larry Coryell on guitar, and fellow

former members of Stan Getz's quartet Steve Swallow on bass and Roy Haynes on drums. The performances of both Burton and Coryell show the influences of rock, country and blues music styles. In spite of the presence of another chordal instrument, the vibraphone fills the role of harmonic accompanist.

Between 1967 and 1968 this quartet recorded three albums: *Duster* (Burton 1967a), *Lofty Fake Anagram* (Burton 1967b) and *The Gary Burton Quartet in Concert* (Burton 1968). The albums have repertoire comprising new compositions by Michael Gibbs, Steve Swallow, Clara Bley, Gary Burton and Larry Coryell, one jazz composition by Ellington and a tune by popular artist Bob Dylan, clearly showing Burton's keen desire to create a new sound for himself by breaking away from the conventions of traditional jazz styles. In the liner notes to *Duster* Burton is quoted as saying:

"I would prefer not to have our music claimed as jazz, or rock, or anything. It has a variety of elements in it, the most important being improvisation."
(Burton 1967a)

Although it is not possible, and not advantageous, to classify these recordings, what is clear is that Burton uses the full potential of the vibraphone to create music that crosses the boundaries of many styles of music including the avante garde.

Burton joins all these elements (country, hillbilly and rock) into an independent, new world so securely that he has been accepted equally by the jazz and rock worlds. (Berendt 1976, 245)

The vibraphone functions as an harmonic instrument providing layers of sounds, rhythmic comping figures, unison melody statements, chordal punctuation and short sounds contrasting longer ringing sounds. The music, by its very nature, is more

angular, but the virtuosic way that Burton plays the vibraphone and executes the many musical techniques is very clear.

Ed Saindon mentions the *Gary Burton Quartet in Concert* (Burton 1968) album specifically as an influential one with regard to Burton's comping style.

Gary's *Carnegie Hall Concert* with Larry Coryell - That for me was one of the best albums that he did. When you listen to Gary play, even though Coryell is in the band, Gary is doing a lot of left hand stuff accompanying his own solo. So that is talking about vibes in conjunction with another comping instrument. So for example with Coryell playing guitar, when he was soloing then Gary was comping behind him. (Mallows 2003, Ed Saindon interview)

The instrument's vibrato effect is not used on these albums leading to much dryer more contemporary sound. The recording levels on these albums have the vibraphone high in the mix giving the sound a very direct feel.

The duet, *Lines*, between Larry Coryell and Burton on the *Gary Burton Quartet in Concert* album (Burton 1968) is particularly interesting in that it points to Burton's future duo collaborations. Burton plays his own composition *Dreams* as a solo performance, demonstrating the wide range of musical possibilities that the instrument has to offer. His use of single-hand roles for ostinato figures, manual manipulation of the vibrato effect, and use of stark cluster chord sounds, are of specific interest on this recording.

A significant album with regard to the use of the vibraphone in the role of accompanist was *Gary Burton and Stephane Grappelli/Paris Encounter* (Burton and Grappelli 1972). Featuring French violinist Stephane Grappelli, veteran of the group Hot Club of France that included the famed Belgian-born gypsy guitarist Django

Reinhardt, the recording was made in 1969 in one day of recording in Paris (Mallows 2003, Burton interview), whilst the Gary Burton Quartet was on a European tour with his quartet, with an instrumental line up on this album of violin, vibraphone, bass and drums.

The repertoire combines standard tunes (*Here's That Rainy Day* and *The Night has a Thousand Eyes*) and new jazz compositions (Miles Davis' *Blue in Green*, Steve Swallow compositions *Falling Grace* and *Eiderdown*, and Mike Gibbs' *Sweet Rain*) with two tunes from Grappelli's repertoire (Django Reinhardt's *Daphne* and a Grappelli original, *Arpege*).

Grappelli's playing style does not leave much breathing space for Burton to punctuate the solo with his accompaniment. Consequently Burton's accompaniment is more conservative, outlining the harmonic movement of the tunes using block and arpeggiated chords and inner passing lines. On the statement of the theme on *Here's That Rainy Day* and in the violin/vibraphone duo introduction to *Arpege* Burton plays more expansively, arpeggiating the chords over the whole range of the vibraphone with flourishes of colour in the upper register contrasted against chord shapes in the lower range. During the violin solos Burton comps in a more concerted fashion creating layers of harmonic sound over which Grappelli solos with effortless runs and arpeggios.

During this period Burton had experimented with the technique of pitch bending (created by applying mallet pressure to the vibraphone bar once the note has been struck, leading to a hauntingly eerie falling-off effect much like a wind player can

accomplish using the manipulation of the reed) which he uses to great effect on his solo on Mike Gibbs' *Sweet Rain*.

7.2 Mike Mainieri

Mike Mainieri's first album as leader, *Blues on the Other Side* (Mainieri 1962), features the vibraphonist in a quartet context accompanied by Bruce Martin on piano, Julie Ruggiero on bass (who played with Mainieri on the Paul Whiteman Show when the vibraphonist was 15), and Joseph Porcaro, Jr. on drums. Scott Yanow suggests that Mainieri had already acquired a depth of experience by the time this album was recorded.

He first played vibes professionally when he was 14, touring with Paul Whiteman in a jazz trio called Two Kings & a Queen. He played with Buddy Rich's bands for a long period (1956-1963) and then became a busy studio musician, appearing on many pop records. (Scott Yanow. Mike Mainieri, <http://www.allmusic.com>)

Although the instrumentation on the album includes pianist Bruce Martin, Mainieri, (who at the time was in his early twenties) demonstrates a well-developed four-mallet technique. The vibraphonist uses his four-mallet technique to play block chord reworking of the tunes *If I Were a Bell*, *Tenderly*, and *When I Fall in Love*. For the rest of the tracks Mainieri plays the vibes in a swinging two-mallet style reminiscent of Red Norvo and Milt Jackson, with creative melodic playing rather than a deliberate show of technique. On *B R Blues*, for example, Mainieri shows a style clearly rooted in the blues and swing styles. His use of the vibrato effect set at a slow speed gives the vibraphone a very typical smooth sound of the period.

Accompanying responsibilities are for the most part given over to the pianist. On some tracks, however, Mainieri plays block chords very quietly behind the pianist's

solos. For bass solos, on *B R Blues* for example, the vibraphone and piano play unison riff melodies.

The repertoire on the album combines standard jazz tunes such as *Tenderly*, *If I Were a Bell*, and *When I Fall in Love*, with Mainieri original compositions *Blues on the Other Side*, *B R Blues*, and *Waltzin in and Out*, demonstrates Mainieri's compositional skills.

The ballads *Tenderly* and *When I Fall in Love* are introduced with four-mallet block chord arrangements accompanied by bowed bass. Demonstrating a strong four-mallet technique Mainieri regularly plays block chords over pedal bass notes creating rich harmonic reworking of the tunes. He seamlessly links the concerted chordal passages with effortlessly executed scalar runs.

For the solos, however, Mainieri reverts to a two-mallet style, relying on the harmonic accompaniment to be supplied by the piano. At the end of the vibraphone solo on *If I Were a Bell* he demonstrates his ability to move between the two- and four-mallet techniques when he plays swinging four-mallet block chord chorus. The chordal solo on *Tenderly* demonstrates Mainieri's mastery of different articulations in order to get the vibraphone to be an expressive instrument. Starting the chorus playing with a dry sound and no use of the sustain pedal and with the occasional use of rolled chords in a typical marimba style, he returns to the use of the sustain pedal as the music broadens.

In 1967 Mainieri recorded a second album as leader. *Insight* (Mainieri 1967) features the vibraphonist accompanied by Joe Beck on guitar, Lyn Christie on bass, and Don

McDonald on drums. In both solo playing and when accompanying others in the group, Mainieri uses his four-mallet technique to create textures rich in harmonic and rhythmic complexity. Beck's guitar playing is mainly limited to melodic playing, which allows Mainieri to explore the accompanying possibilities of the vibraphone.

The style of music on the album is a combination of influences, from jazz standards (*Autumn Leaves* and *Skating in Central Park*), through original compositions by Mainieri (*Rain Child* and *Instant Garlic*), to an unaccompanied solo vibraphone reworking of the Debussy piano piece, *La Plus Que Lente*. All the tracks on this album demonstrate the group's tendency towards exploring the possibilities of freer musical expression.

[The album] displays the free expressiveness which the group believes is an integral part of their make up. (Mainieri 1967, liner notes by Manny Alban)

Mainieri, who plays more aggressively and with freedom on this album, explores the expressive possibilities of the vibraphone through the use of a variety of articulations and playing techniques. These include: colourful ringing textures contrasted by short dead-stroke stopped sounds, legato dampened phrases and voice leading. He regularly uses chromatic side-slipping chordal movements to create a feeling of heightened harmonic tension. Using his mallets in an alternating mallet-stroke fashion to break up the chords he creates a rhythmical arpeggiated texture that moves away from the concerted block-chord style of his previous album.

On the track *Instant Garlic* Mainieri further expands the sonic possibilities of the vibraphone by using the shafts of the mallets to strike the bars, leading to a raw metallic percussive effect.

In solo vibraphone introduction to *Skating in Central Park* Mainieri uses counter lines, passing chords, side-slipping, bass notes and a rich variety of chordal voicings to create a harmonically rich texture. On *Rain Child* he demonstrates four-mallet technique by playing melodic sixths in the right hand whilst providing chordal outlines in his left. His pianistic approach to the vibraphone performance clearly shows a range of musical influences from rock and country to classical piano.

Mainieri uses a variety of accompaniment techniques when he plays behind the guitar solos of Joe Beck. After the solo vibraphone introduction on the tune *Skating in Central Park*, Mainieri sets up a chordal vamp over bass notes. This he continues to use as the accompaniment to the guitar solo. Later in the same piece he plays a typical swinging accompaniment approach, varying his attacks through a variety of articulations. On the blues-rock based tune, *Minnesota Thins*, Mainieri uses the vibraphone in a rhythmical way, creating a strong chordal accompaniment to the guitar solo. His use of stopped dead-stroked chordal sounds is in keeping with the style of the tune.

On the final track on the album Mainieri explores the full keyboard potential of the vibraphone when he plays an unaccompanied solo vibraphone rendition of Debussy's piano composition, *La Plus Que Lente*. Using clear articulation, contrapuntal lines and arpeggiated mallet work over the whole range of the instrument, he builds an arrangement that is full of musical texture and interest. His control over the use of the sustain pedal combined with mallet dampening allows for clearly ringing melody notes being heard over moving chordal shapes. In the clear execution of right hand melodies played over left hand chordal outlines, and the occasional melodic run to

link phrases, he demonstrates his command of pianistic devices and the potential of the vibraphone as an harmonic keyboard instrument capable of creating a full-layered pianistic sound.

7.3 Victor Feldman

In 1965 Victor Feldman performed at Ronnie Scott's jazz club in London with a trio accompanied by Rick Laird on bass and Ronnie Stevenson on drums. This live performance was recorded and issued under the title *His Own Sweet Way* (Feldman 1965). Feldman plays mainly piano on this performance but plays two tunes on vibes accompanied by the bass and drums. Although Feldman tended to approach chordal playing on the vibraphone in a block chord style, his voicings are rich and his inner moving lines are cleanly executed through the use of mallet dampening techniques. On this recording Feldman, on vibraphone, comps behind the bass solos using a variety of techniques heard on his previous album.

7.4 Gary McFarland

Arranger, composer and vibraphonist Gary McFarland (1933 - 1971), well known for his film-scoring abilities and his charting skills with midsize bands, is regarded by some as one of the more significant contributors to orchestral jazz during the early 1960s.

On *Pamela*, an original McFarland composition in 3/4 time, written for a trio of vibraphone, bass and drums, and recorded on the *Jazz in the Classroom* album (McFarland and others, no date given) during McFarland's short stint at the Berklee College of Music, McFarland, playing vibraphone, can be heard accompanying the guitar solo of Gabor Szabo using block chords played in a traditional concerted style.

His statement of the melody is mainly in the two-mallet style of the 1940s and 1950s. The rest of the album features McFarland's original compositions orchestrated for a larger ensemble.

Does the Sun Really Shine on the Moon? (McFarland 1968), an album of mainly light popular tunes of the 1960s, shows McFarland to be an accomplished vibraphonist. Using the instrument mainly as a single-line melodic instrument, there are a number of occasions where he plays the role of harmonic accompanist. On the Latin style tracks, *Flamingo* and *O Moro*, he accompanies the soprano saxophone melody and following solo by laying down background block chords, counter melodies and interesting guide tone lines that contrast with the rhythmic Latin-flavoured comping of guitarist Sam Brown. The vibraphone sound is light and airy with a gentle speed on the vibrato effect. McFarland briefly shows off his four-mallet skills by playing a block-chord arrangement on the vibraphone of the popular tune *Up, Up and Away*.

7.5 Gunter Hampel and Karl Berger.

The expansion of jazz styles in the 1960s afforded the opportunity for vibraphonists to explore new possibilities for the instrument. Two German musicians, Gunter Hampel and Karl Berger, both of whom played numerous instruments, pioneered the use of the vibraphone in groups dedicated to experimental and free improvisator music. Generally the vibraphone was the only harmonic instrument in the ensemble. However, due to emphasis on collective improvisation, the roles of accompanist or soloist were not as clearly defined. Joachim Berendt describes the development of the use of the vibraphone in the early 1960s.

The most radical among the newer [1960s] vibraphonists . . . are two German musicians: Hampel (who has also distinguished himself as flautist, clarinetist,

bass clarinetist, and pianist) is the more sensitive of the two, Berger the more dynamic. Both have a refined, developed instinct for the springy elasticity of their instrument, which they often strike so lightly that it seems as if the wind were playing it. It is precisely the “wafting”, “wind like” sounds that Berger, Hampel, and a few other new vibraphonists elicit from their instrument which liberate the free tonality of the new jazz from any strained intentionality, and make it seem as “natural as the “self-evident,” tuneful melodies and phrases in the “natural functional harmonics”. (Berendt 1976, 245)

Berger, who came to New York with trumpeter Don Cherry, was a member of the Don Cherry Quintet in the years 1964 to 1966 (Berendt 1976, 245). In this ensemble Karl Berger played the only harmonic instrument. Steve Huey describes the instrumentation for Don Cherry’s 1966 Blue Note release, *Symphony for Improvisers* (Cherry 1966).

For his second album, *Symphony for Improvisers*, Don Cherry expanded his *Complete Communion* quartet — tenor saxophonist Gato Barbieri, bassist Henry Grimes, and drummer Ed Blackwell — to a septet, adding vibraphonist Karl Berger, bassist Jean François Jenny-Clark, and tenor saxophonist Pharoah Sanders (who frequently plays piccolo here). (Steve Huey. Don Cherry, <http://www.allmusic.com>)

In 1966 Gunter Hampel recorded the album, *Music from Europe* (Hampel 1966). In addition to his flute and bass clarinet playing, Hampel plays the vibraphone, notably the only harmonic instrument in the quartet. Scott Yanow labels the style of the music on this album as early creative and avant garde with a strong element of free jazz improvisation.

Gunter Hampel's second release as a leader and his only one for ESP has been reissued on CD. Hampel (heard on vibes, bass clarinet and flute) teams up with the many reeds of Willem Breuker (soprano, bass clarinet, tenor, alto, baritone and clarinet), plus bassist Piet Veening and drummer Pierre Courbois during three complex and sometimes eccentric originals. (Scott Yanow. Gunter Hampel, <http://www.allmusic.com>)

Gunter Hampel’s 1969 recording, *8th of July 1969* (Hampel 1969), finds the multi-instrumentalist (Hampel plays the vibraphone, clarinet, flute, piano and bass clarinet) in a sextet comprising Anthony Braxton (alto sax, soprano sax, E flat clarinet),

Willem Breuker (bass clarinet, alto sax, soprano sax, tenor sax), Steve McCall (drums), Arjen Gorter (bass) and Jeanne Lee (synthesizer).

On this album Hampel plays the vibraphone and the piano as an alternative sound colour to his experimental sonic explorations on the bass clarinet. The music is creatively free, with the emphasis on collective improvisation and sonic exploration, and is reminiscent of the experimental new music of the classical genre. The performance of all the players is full of intense energy with many frenetic outbursts of sound.

The vibraphone is used more as a source for alternate tone colour rather than as a harmonic accompanying instrument in the traditional sense. Hampel uses the full range of the instrument to play tonal clusters and flourishes of sound (played with a very light touch) to create a multi-layered sound of great rhythmic and harmonic complexity. In the introduction to the title tune, *8th of July 1969*, Hampel plays angular melodic shapes, sometimes dry with no use of the sustain pedal, and at other times letting the notes ring together creating shimmering tonal clusters of sound. In the introduction to *Morning Song*, a duet between saxophone and vibraphone, Hampel uses the full range of the instrument, playing angular tonal clusters and musically responding to the over-blowing effects of the saxophonist with splashes of colour in the upper register of the instrument and carefully placed lower tones.

CHAPTER 8. THE SEVENTIES

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8.1 Gary Burton

A significant recording of the 1970s is Gary Burton's solo vibraphone performance at the 1971 Montreux Jazz Festival, issued on the album *Alone at Last* (Burton 1971).

Burton is . . . among the musicians who initiated the contemporary tendency to play unaccompanied by any rhythm section, and brought this tendency to its most fulfilling heights. (Berendt 1976, 245)

Although there are earlier recordings of solo-unaccompanied vibraphone performances, this album is of great significance with regard to Burton's level of technical skill and speed of execution. This recording has had a significant influence on the way subsequent players have approached the instrument.

So I was always looking at the instrument as a solo instrument, mainly because of Gary [Burton] I think. That *Alone at Last* album - I think was a milestone in vibes playing. (Mallows 2003, Saindon interview)

In addition to his own composition, *The Sunset Bell*, Burton plays two medleys - *Moonchild/In Your Quiet Place* by pianist Keith Jarrett and *Green Mountains/Arise, Her Eyes* by bassist Steve Swallow. On this album is Burton's solo vibraphone version of Brazilian composer Antonio Carlos Jobim's *Chega de Saudade*. This latter track was recorded in the Atlantic Recording Studio in New York. On all these tracks Burton utilises a wide variety of solo performance techniques that he had mastered. Using a range of technical possibilities he demonstrates the keyboard potential of the vibraphone, not only as an instrument for solo performance, but also as one capable of

harmonic accompaniment. These include contrapuntal playing, solo style melody and accompaniment, note bending, one handed rolls, scalar runs, chordal stacking, arpeggiated layering, mallet dampening and legato pedalling.

During the middle years of the 1970s Burton was to continue with a quartet that included a guitarist.

. . . my early bands all had guitar players in them or piano. I had had that guitar and vibe instrumentation for '67 to '72 or something. For five years I had had that guitar and vibe thing . . . Well I didn't really have a piano in the band except for about four or five months that Chick played in my band in '69. (Mallows 2003, Burton interview)

In the late 1970s he returned to the quartet format of his early recordings using a horn player as lead melody instrument and the vibraphone as the only harmonic accompanying instrument.

I just felt it was more time for a change. I had had that guitar and vibe instrumentation . . . and I was beginning to feel that I was exhausting the tonal variety of it all and was feeling that I should do something different, time for some kind of a change. (Mallows 2003, Burton interview)

In January 1978 Burton recorded the album *Times Square* with trumpeter Tiger Okoshi and a rhythm section of Steve Swallow (by this time playing electric bass) and Roy Haynes, both of whom along with Burton had been members of the Stan Getz Quartet in the middle 1960s. In an interview made soon after the release of the *Times Square* album, Burton describes his development on the vibraphone with regard to using the vibraphone as an harmonic accompanying instrument.

Steve [Swallow] and I had steadily expanded our playing. Steve went from being an acoustic bass player playing single lines, to being an electric player who fills in a lot harmonically; and I seemed to be doing more and more with four mallets as far as harmonizing is concerned. We found that when we played – just the two of us – it sounded very complete. That was also a motivation for the change – I felt I wanted to be the only chordal instrument in the group. Ten years ago when we started the group I was wary of that,

because I'd already played for three years with Stan Getz, and felt I could never do quite enough to fill it up the way it should be. So when I started up my own band I wanted another chording instrument to share the role with me. But ten years of comping has expanded what I could do. The pleasant thing we discovered when we added the horn was that it didn't seem empty or that anything was missing. It gave both of us the feeling that we had more to do; new areas to explore. Without another person comping we create more interplay. (Stern 1978)

On this album he uses the whole range of the instrument to create interweaving melodic lines, accompaniment figures, stacked chords and arpeggios rich in colour. The recorded acoustic sound of the vibraphone is full and rich in sustain, giving to the overall sound of the group a very complete and pleasing texture. Burton gives to the accompaniment a strong feeling of forward movement, never letting the music become static, and provides a solid harmonic and rhythmic background to both the trumpet and bass solos. His use of chordal stacking is more evident on this recording. Using this technique he creates a rich harmonic texture and an interesting overlaying of rhythmic ideas that is enhanced by the use of different articulation and dynamics between the layered chords.

The repertoire on the album features compositions by Jim Hall, Steve Swallow and Keith Jarrett, reflecting Burton's continued commitment to playing new compositions that are innovative both harmonically and rhythmically. Burton's artful approach to the statement of the melodic themes ranges from being gently harmonically supportive, as on *Coral* and the 3/4 tune *Peau Douce* (incorrectly listed on the album cover), playing the melody in unison with the trumpet, as on *Careful* and *True or False*, to a regular Montuno Latin vamp on *Como en Vietnam*. His playing on this album demonstrates his pianistic approach to the vibraphone and his command of a wide range of instrumental techniques that he uses to the maximum, thereby

establishing the vibraphone firmly as a valid and functional harmonic accompanying instrument.

8.2 Karl Berger

Vibraphonist and pianist Karl Berger recorded three albums in the 1970s that are of interest to this study. These were *We Are You* (Berger 1971), recorded with a quartet, and two duet albums, *All Kinds of Time* (Berger 1976) with bassist Dave Holland, and *Just Play* (Berger 1979) with percussionist Ed Blackwell. Berger's musical approach tends toward free collective and interactive improvisation. On these recordings he uses the vibraphone as an alternative instrument to the piano and other mallet percussion instruments, which includes the marimba and ballafone. Berger's approach to the vibraphone is as a single-line melodic instrument, with the occasional use of a two-note chord, generally choosing to move to the piano for chordal playing, as is evident on the tracks *D'accord* and *Perfect Love* from *All Kinds of Time*.

8.3 David Friedman and David Samuels

David Friedman, classically trained in percussion at the Julliard School of Music, plays on influential jazz pianist Horace Silver's album *In Pursuit of the 27th Man* (Silver 1972). On this album Silver breaks away from his usual use of the saxophone and trumpet as the lead melody instruments, to allow Friedman, playing vibraphone, to take on the role of melodic soloist. On many of the tracks Friedman states the themes, often in unison with the piano and with very little addition of chords. His vibraphone solos are generally melodic in nature, with chordal use limited to blues-based pianistic licks and angular tonal clusters, for example at the high point of the solo on *Strange Vibes*.

It is on the title track of the album, *In Pursuit of the 27th Man*, that Friedman begins to explore the chordal and harmonic accompaniment possibilities of the vibraphone. After stating the angular melody and an inventive, mainly melodic, vibraphone solo, Friedman plays a strong rhythmic accompaniment behind Silver's piano solo. As Silver's melodic explorations progress Friedman expands his accompaniment to include angular tonal clusters, rhythmic effects played between the hands, two-handed rolls, repeated ostinato figures, short-stopped angular sounds and shapes, and even various vibrato effects. The mallet techniques and musical effects that Friedman uses on this track are reminiscent of the classical solo marimba pieces composed by the innovative marimba virtuoso, Clair Omar Musser in the 1930s and points the way forward to the intricate performances that Friedman and Dave Samuels were to produce with their Double Image duo.

In March and April 1975 Friedman recorded, as leader, the album *Winter Love, April Joy* (Friedman 1978). On this recording fellow mallet percussionist David Samuels joins Friedman to play both vibraphone and marimba on a number of tracks. The teaming up of these two virtuoso mallet players was to lead later to the formation of The Mallet Duo in 1975, renamed Double Image in 1977. The duo of Friedman and Samuels, who alternatively play both vibraphone and marimba, accompanied by bassist Harvie Swartz and drummer Michael Di Pasqua, recorded the albums *Double Image* and *Dawn* in 1977 and 1978 respectively. These recordings focus on a style of chamber jazz that allows for a large degree of interactive collective improvisation.

The tune *Nyack*, first recorded on the *Winter Love, April Joy* album, was the first piece Friedman wrote for vibraphone and marimba duo. On this tune Friedman, playing marimba, and Samuels, playing vibraphone, explore the sonic and rhythmic possibilities of their instruments. Ostinato figures, rhythmic effects between the hands, tonal clusters, chromatically moving chord shapes, unison rhythmic phrases, clear legato lines using mallet dampening, a wide range of dynamic contrasts from sudden stabs to quiet legato ringing tones, the use of the full range of the instrument, bell-like sounds obtained by playing notes in the upper register with the shafts of the mallets, complex rhythmic effects created by various sticking patterns, dead strokes and stopped sounds, are some of the techniques that are used to keep the music on this album light and interesting. On *Truce*, an original by the bassist Harvie Swartz, Friedman plays a glissando effect using the rattan ends of the vibraphone mallets. On *Winter Love, April Joy* the album goes beyond the documentation of live performance through the use of creative recording techniques by reversing the playback tape on *I've Touched Your Soul*, a pop-rock flavoured tune by Friedman.

On both of David Friedman's albums as well as the Double Image recordings, the focus of the repertoire is on original compositions by Friedman, Samuels and bassist Harvie Swartz, demonstrating their desire to find new ways of expressing their musical ideas on the mallet instruments. Harmonically the performances on these albums by Friedman and Samuels use a more open sound, breaking away from the normal harmonic vocabulary commonly found in jazz standards and jazz compositions and thereby embracing the changes that were being experienced in the jazz world in the 1970's through the influence of other musical styles such as rock and country music and even classical twentieth century compositional techniques.

The emphasis is on collective interactive improvisation with a strong rhythmic flavour commonly based on simple chord structures and minimalistic harmonic movement. On some tracks the duo explores the possibilities of free improvisation breaking away from regular rhythmic structures and style. On *I've Touched Your Soul*, from the album *Winter Love, April Joy*, Friedman plays the vibraphone in a style reminiscent of a pop-rock pianist playing open triadic chords shapes and cliché grace notes up to the melody note. On this album the absence of a drummer affords Friedman and Samuels the space to explore the percussive and rhythmic possibilities of the vibraphone and marimba.

On his second album *Futures Past* (Friedman 1977), Friedman demonstrates the potential of the vibraphone as a harmonic accompanying instrument when he accompanies vocalist Rimona Francis on the track, *A Smile on the Face of Mourning*. Starting with the interplay of Francis's vocalising sounds and single vibraphone notes and stick glissando effects Friedman then moves to the marimba for a series of gently rolled choral-style chords accompanied by Swartz's bowed bass notes. Returning to the vibraphone to play the melody, Friedman uses mallet dampening techniques and very subtle arpeggiated chordal outlines and a significant dynamic difference to bring out the melody above the accompaniment. A haunting effect is created when Rimona Francis vocalises the melody in unison with the vibraphone. This track gives clear examples of the accompanying methods that need to be employed when accompanying singers or vocalists. Uncluttered by any percussive effects (with the absence of a drummer) the subtle effects and sound colours that Friedman uses on the vibraphone are clearly exposed.

On the rest of the album the piano playing of Pat Rebillot seems to dominate. Friedman's vibraphone comping is limited to light rhythmic chords at the end of the piano solo on Harvey Swatz's *Rachel's Samba*, quietly layered sound colours behind the piano solo on Friedman's original *Rodney's Dream of Fantasy and Self-fulfilment*, and gently rolling arpeggiated chords and repeated bass note grooves behind the bass melody on the country-rock flavoured *Sunlit Winds*. One year after this recording Friedman again recorded *Rodney's Dream of Fantasy and Self-fulfilment* this time with the group *Double Image* (Double Image 1977). Here he is accompanied by David Samuels on marimba, Harvie Swartz on bass and Michael DiPasqua - who plays the drums with brushes and with great sensitivity. Not limited by the presence of any piano Friedman clearly plays with more abandon on this version of the tune, adding upper register flourishes to his chordal playing. On many of the tracks on the album *Futures Past* Friedman alternates between the vibes and marimba, using the change to create a variation in the timbral texture, usually with the marimba playing more aggressive rhythmic chordal vamps.

On both of his albums Friedman demonstrates the vibraphone's potential as a keyboard instrument. On *Winter Love, April Joy*, Friedman plays a solo unaccompanied vibraphone transcription of J S Bach's *Saraband*, from the baroque composer's *B minor Sonata for Solo Violin*. After the initial statement of the theme, Friedman improvises on the piece's implied chord progression. On the *Futures Past* album Friedman plays a solo vibraphone version of jazz composer Thelonious Monk's *Trinkle-Tinkle*. The latter performance is an excellent example of solo style playing, where the melody in the right hand is played over a left hand accompaniment of bass notes and guide tones.

Noticeable on these recordings by Friedman and Samuels is the move away from the use of the vibrato effect on the vibraphone, leading to a more contemporary sound, much as reed players moved away from the exaggerated vibrato sound of the 1930s and 1940s.

In 1977 Dave Samuels, a veteran of recordings with Pat Metheny, John Scofield and Gerry Mulligan in the early 1970s, recorded an album with the group Timepiece that featured the music of saxophonist and flautist Gerry Niewood (Niewood 1977). On this album Samuels, playing vibraphone, assumes the role of harmonic accompanist in the rhythm section. His use of rhythmic ostinato chordal figures, strong responsive comping and arpeggiated runs provides a solid accompaniment to the wind playing of Niewood. Samuels's rhythmic chordal comping on the *Manhattan Bittersweet/Snow* medley helps to lead the band in and out of the up-tempo samba sections of the tune that contrast the unison chord figures of the rest of the track.

The use of the electric vibes (on four tracks) and electric bass (on two tracks) on this recording indicates a move to a more electric sound of music that evolved in the 1970s and embraced the music styles of rock and Latin music into the crossover styles jazz-rock and fusion. These styles lead the players to play with more intense energy and consequently at a higher volume level. By this time recording techniques had advanced to make possible for a better recording separation between the instruments, allowing the sustain on the vibraphone to be heard and thereby leading to a fuller ensemble sound. On the tracks *Ralph's Piano Waltz* and *Masada* Samuels's use of chordal side-slipping on the electric vibes, combined with a subtly phased sound manipulation, gives the vibraphone sound a very contemporary flavour. The electric

vibes sound is taken one step further on *Thorn of a White Rose*, when Samuels plays a solo on the electric vibes using a strident overdrive guitar effect. In order to retain timbral interest on the album, Samuels uses the marimba as an alternative accompanying instrument to the vibraphone, playing strong rhythmic textures and rolls (on the track *Soft Focus*, for example).

8.4 Tom Van Der Geld

European vibraphonist Tom van der Geld's albums *Children and Play: Patience* (Van der Geld 1978), and *Children and Play: Out Patients* (Van der Geld 1980), together with the album he recorded with trumpeter Kenny Wheeler *Around 6* (Wheeler 1980), reflect a the style of free interactive melodic improvisation that was common among European musicians in the late 1970s and early 1980s. The repertoire on these albums is mainly comprised of original compositions by Van der Geld and Kenny Wheeler.

Van der Geld's approach to the vibraphone is gentle and spacious. In both his soloing and in his role as harmonic accompanist Van der Geld prefers to allow the soloist lots of space, occasionally supplying colourful chords in response to the soloist's melodic mood. The effective use of mallet dampening gives his melodic lines a smooth legato touch. Often playing over ringing chords and tonal clusters, Van der Geld prefers to float his melodies on top of the implied rhythmic and timbral wanderings of the drums and bass. Van der Geld's gentle approach is contrasted on these albums by the often angular and brittle multi-woodwind playing of Roger Jannotta, on *Patience*, and Evan Parker's saxophone over-blowing sounds on *Around 6*. His chromatic approach to chordal playing leads to gently moving shifts in harmonic colour. His use of the

vibraphone to create interesting chord shapes, subtly rolled chords, softer dynamics, and space, gives the music a very fluid and gently appealing texture.

8.5 Mike Mainieri

In 1977 vibraphonist Mike Mainieri recorded the studio album *Love Play* (Mainieri 1977). The album has a commercially popular flavour through the use of the funk and Latin styles that developed during the 1970s. The use of the Fender Rhodes keyboard, Moog synthesiser, electric bass and rhythmic funk guitar comping, combined with the drumming of Steve Gadd, gives the music a definite 1970s funk/fusion sound. The recording is multi-layered through the use of overdubbing recording techniques. On this album Mainieri uses a five-octave percussive instrument with electronic triggers - the *Synthivibe*. Using this instrument's pitch bending potential combined with the vibraphone played through chorus and reverb effects, Mainieri create an album with a very contemporary sound.

Mainieri's comping on the vibraphone provides washes of colour, and his counter lines and melodic phrases give the recording a thick, multi-layered flavour. The vibraphone and synthivibe dominate the overall sound. Mainieri comps in a very rhythmic and supportive way behind an energy-filled tenor saxophone solo by Michael Brecker on the track *Love Play*, playing chords with an open contemporary sound, and his interlinking pentatonic phrases seem to propel Brecker on. This album points to the future collaborations Mainieri had with saxophonist Michael Brecker, keyboardist Don Grolnick, bassist Eddie Gomez and drummer Steve Gadd, when they formed the band Steps (later renamed Steps Ahead) in 1979.

8.6 Wolfgang Lackerschmid

In January 1979 German vibraphone player Wolfgang Lackerschmid (then only 22 years old) recorded three duets with legendary trumpeter Chet Baker (Baker and Lackerschmid 1998). These tracks were only released, along with other recordings of Lackerschmid, in 1998, documenting a ten-year musical friendship between the two musicians. The repertoire on this album consists mainly of original compositions by the vibraphonist Lackerschmid.

Lackerschmid's vibraphone playing on the trio recordings is introspective, gently outlining the chords over clearly ringing bass tones, implying a slowly moving quarter-note pulse and often letting chords ring into each other. As an indication of how successfully Lackerschmid manages to full out the sound using the vibraphone, Baker is quoted as saying; "We don't need a rhythm section" (Baker and Lackerschmid 1998)

Even in straight-ahead concerts with other horn players included, he [Chet Baker] would call for a duet, then it was time for *Five years ago*. This was his choice. (Baker and Lackerschmid 1998, liner notes by Hans-Jurgen Schaal)

On the track, *Five Years Ago*, Lackerschmid expands the timbral options of the vibraphone by using a cello bow to get some very glassy effects whilst playing spacious ringing tones with the mallets in the other hand. His occasional use of dead-stroked, stopped notes heightens the spectrum of colours that he obtains from the instrument, and complements Baker's legato breathy trumpet playing excellently. On the freely improvised track, *Dessert* (based conceptually on the taste of the vanilla ice cream they had eaten during a break in the recording session), Lackerschmid adds the use of tuned gongs to his spectrum of tonal colours.

The quintet recordings on this album were recorded some ten months later, in November 1979. For these tracks Baker and Lackerschmid are joined by a rhythm section of Larry Coryell on guitar, Buster Williams on bass, and Tony Williams on drums. The musical style of these tracks is more in the cool and bossa nova styles for which Baker was well known. In spite of the presence of guitarist Coryell, Lackerschmid continues to comp in a chordal fashion, notably more rhythmically than on the earlier duo tracks. On *Balzwaltz*, for example the vibraphonist plays down a very consistent 3/4 accompaniment that uses block chords over lower bass notes.

CHAPTER 9. THE EIGHTIES

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| 9.1 | Dave Samuels |
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9.1 David Samuels

In the 1980s David Samuels recorded a number of albums significant to this study. *All the Mornings Bring* (McCandless 1979) and *Skylight* (McCandless, Lande and Samuels 1982) were recorded with oboist Paul McCandless and pianist Art Lande, and *Gallery* (Samuels and others 1981) with McCandless and a larger group that included cellist David Darling. The use of instruments more commonly used in Western classical orchestral music (oboe, English horn, bass clarinet and cello) on these albums implies the influence of Western classical music, but the integrity of improvised music in the jazz sense is retained. On these albums Samuels plays vibraphone, marimba and percussion.

Paul McCandless, a member of the groundbreaking 1970's groups The Paul Winter Consort and Oregon, describes the music on the albums as "improvised chamber music" (McCandless 1979). Influences from a diverse spectrum of musical styles, including Western classical music, jazz and Indian classical music, are evident on these albums. The compositions, provided by McCandless, Lande and Samuels, contrast composed sections of melodic themes and unison chordal passages with open sections that allow for a more intensive approach to interactive group improvisation.

In the liner notes to the album *All the Mornings Bring* Paul McCandless comments on the approach that the trio took when working on the material for the album.

At the inception of this album I had personal and musical friendships with Art Lande and David Samuels. The notion of a trio of piano, mallets and winds was an unconventional setting, which felt both fresh and fertile. As a player the most rewarding music is made when what you do makes a difference in what someone else does and vice versa. This ensemble approach to improvising was our point of departure. The solos here are part of the total sound, with the accompaniment offering material, pushing, jabbing, and rounding of phrases. It's a live situation where everyone contributes. (McCandless 1979)

David Samuels echoes this comment in a 2003 interview.

It was more of an issue of playing in an ensemble with a particular instrumentation and dealing with it. . . there wasn't any major plan ahead. (Mallows 2003, Samuels interview)

Samuels's approach to accompaniment varies greatly on these albums. For example, on the delicate English horn and vibraphone duet, *Slumber Song*, from the album *All the Mornings Bring*, he plays rhythmic chordal and ostinato figures reminiscent of classical piano techniques. On *Bowspirit*, from the same album, Samuels plays an African style marimba vamp behind McCandless' *Selje* flute. In spite of the presence of the piano on the albums recorded with Art Lande, the vibraphone alternates between the melodic role, playing themes and counter lines, and the role of accompanist, playing harmonic and rhythmic figures behind the melodic statements by the piano, oboe and cello.

On the title track of the album *All the Mornings Bring* McCandless uses a larger woodwind ensemble to perform his music. Interestingly the vibraphone is the only harmonic accompanying instrument in the ensemble. Samuels plays ringing block chords that enhance the ensemble figures. For the oboe and bass solos, in the absence

of a drummer, he plays moving chordal figures that imply an eighth note pulse. On the track, *Soaring*, from the *Gallery* album, Samuels creates washes of sound with a gently pulsating chordal pattern, using lots of sustain, that continues for much of the track. On the track *Prelude*, on the same album, Samuels uses the solo pianistic technique of rolled melody and accompaniment to provide a harmonic backdrop for the cello.

Throughout these albums Samuels alternates between a concerted chordal style, sometimes rhythmically broken up between the hands, and a melodic counter line approach, reminiscent of his work with David Friedman on the *Double Image* recordings. Samuels departs from his more rhythmic approach in the freely improvised *Painting* track, on the *Gallery* album. For timbral variation to the mallet instruments, the vibraphone and marimba, Samuels adds the use of percussion instruments, suspended cymbal, side drum and shaker.

9.2 Gary Burton

In June 1980 Gary Burton recorded the first of two albums with a quartet that included alto saxophonist, Jim Odgren. The albums *Easy as Pie* (Burton 1981) and *Picture This* (Burton 1982) continue the concept heard on the *Times Square* album (Burton 1978) of using the vibraphone as the sole harmonic accompanying instrument in the group.

The repertoire on these albums again comprises mainly new compositions, by Carla Bley, Chick Corea, Mick Goorick, Michael Gibbs, and others, using contemporary harmonies and rhythms drawn from a wide variety of musical styles. These newer

compositions are in contrast to those by earlier jazz composers, including Duke Ellington and Billy Strayhorn's *Isfahan* and Charles Mingus' *Duke Ellington's Sound of Love*. On *Easy as Pie* the album includes a standard tune, *Blame it on My Youth*, which Burton plays unaccompanied on the vibraphone.

Burton's use of the whole of the vibraphone's harmonic and dynamic range, with constantly moving chordal voicings played in a modern concerted style, textural colours and fluidly executed scale runs, fills out the sound and gives energy to the ensemble whilst backing saxophonist Odgren, both in the statement of the melodic themes and in the solo sections. His unaccompanied solo on *Blame It on My Youth* demonstrates the depth of his musical and technical abilities and prowess.

His comping on these albums behind the saxophone and bass solos are, like his own solos, filled with creative inventiveness, strong forward melodic and harmonic motion and rhythmic skill. The recorded acoustic sound of the vibraphone is very clean and direct at all times, bringing clarity to Burton's accompaniment that so easily could have been smothered by the drums or bass.

9.3 David Friedman

In the early 1980s David Friedman recorded two quartet albums that featured the use of the mallet instruments, the vibraphone and marimba, as harmonic accompanying instruments. In July 1981 Friedman recorded the album *Of the Wind's Eye* (Friedman 1981) with soprano saxophonist Jane Ira Bloom, and seven months later in February 1982, he recorded the album *Peace* (Baker and Friedman 1982), with trumpeter Chet Baker.

The repertoire on both these albums consists mainly of original compositions by Friedman in a contemporary acoustic jazz style that allows space for improvisation. Although harmonically based in jazz harmonic traditions, the compositions also show influences of Western classical styles. These originals are effectively combined with jazz compositions: *Four in One*, a chromatically-based melody by jazz pianist Thelonious Monk on the album *Of the Wind's Eye*, and the title track on the album with Chet Baker *Peace*, a short harmonically rich composition by the pianist Horace Silver. The free improvisational character of *Syzygies* is contrasted against conventional jazz tracks, as on Friedman's tribute to Thelonious Monk, *Lament for Thelonious*.

Friedman uses the vibraphone and marimba interchangeably on these albums, depending on the musical mood required of the tune, or section of the tune. On *Mr Close*, Friedman plays only the marimba, on *For Now* the vibraphone, whilst on *Fonque* he changes instruments during the track. Friedman's musical artistry combined with his technical command of the vibraphone and marimba through the use of dynamic contrast, variations in articulation, and use of pedalling and dampening techniques, gives the music depth. Interestingly, the medium-paced 3/4 Friedman original, *For Now*, is recorded on both albums. Comparison of the two recordings reveal Friedman taking a different approach on each version. With Jane Ira Bloom, he plays an unaccompanied solo vibraphone introduction and a supportive accompaniment to the saxophone melody using a thoughtful approach rich in harmonic texture and influenced by classical piano style accompanying techniques. Accompanying Chet Baker, Friedman takes a more rhythmic chordal approach.

Friedman comps behind Baker's lyrical solos in a responsive way, never cluttering the openness of the ensemble. On the ballad, *Peace*, he instinctively fills in the punctuation to Baker's musical thoughts, often laying out and giving space, but never losing continuity of the musical flow. He does not play for the first section of the chord progression for the trumpet solo in Jerome Kern's *The Song is You*, on the *Peace* album, subtly coming back later to create a heightened sense of harmonic tension. On *Shadows* Friedman and Baker play a very thoughtful duet with the vibraphone providing a full-textured sound, with washes of arpeggiated chords rich in harmonic flavour that are contrasted with the occasional change of articulation through the use of shorter, drier chords.

9.4 Ed Saindon

Virtuoso vibraphonist Ed Saindon has been the principal vibraphone instructor at the Berklee College of Music since his graduation from the school in 1976. He has also been of great influence to many vibraphonists through his numerous educational articles in percussion magazines. In 1983 he recorded a studio album, *Inverness* (Radiance 1983), with the group Radiance. Showing influences of folk music, through the use of the classical and 12-stringed guitar, and Western classical music, using the oboe and cello, the compositions combine through composed sections with sections that allow for improvisation in a chamber jazz style.

On this album, Saindon's vibraphone provides a gentle, ringing harmonic pad, filling out the sound behind the cello and oboe melodies, and contrasts the finger-picking of the classical and 12-string guitar. Saindon outlines the harmonies through breaking

up the chords using complex sticking patterns. His technical fluency on the instrument is evident in his execution of arpeggiated chordal runs on the improvised interlude, *Spinning*. His vibraphone solos, although generally brief, are complex and go beyond the single melodic line norm. On *Fanfare*, for example, he uses broken chords with various sticking patterns reminiscent of classical marimba techniques, and combines these with the pianistic techniques of melody and accompaniment. Breaking up the chords in this way leads to single-note bell sounds in the upper register, giving to the music a mystical quality and allowing the chords to be implied rather than clearly stated, as in the traditional concerted style.

On *Whisper in the Wind*, Saindon explores the dynamic range of the vibraphone. In this uncluttered tune, the subtle sounds and textures of the vibraphone complement the guitar, cello and English horn. Through the use of complex sticking patterns, arpeggiated chordal textures, and short grace-note figures, Saindon utilises his four-mallet technique over the whole range of the instrument. His smooth use of dampening techniques gives clarity to the sound, avoiding the possibility of notes discordantly ringing together.

The recorded sound of the acoustic vibraphone is rich, full and enhanced through the use of studio recording techniques and electronic sound enhancing. On this album, Saindon uses the marimba as an alternative instrument on some tracks, giving an overall earthier colour to the sound.

9.5 Harry Sheppard

Vibraphonist Harry Sheppard, veteran of performances with such luminaries as Billie Holiday, Benny Goodman, Coleman Hawkins and Clark Terry, since 1956, recorded the album *Symbiotic* (Sheppard 1982). Accompanied by bass, drums and percussion, Sheppard plays an instrument called the Electravibe - an electronically amplified vibraphone that produces a very clunky sound. The repertoire on the album is a combination of Sheppard originals and jazz standards played with a very freely improvised approach, except for those tracks, such as the samba *The Road to Sao Paulo*, where the drums keep a regular and obvious beat.

Sheppard's vibraphone soloing and comping is varied, ranging from rhythmic concerted block chords, as on *The Road to Sao Paulo*, through swinging lines and block chordal passages on *You Stepped Out of a Dream*, to angular melodic fragments and interesting chordal shapes on the free tracks. Playing behind the bass solos he generally plays conservatively, allowing plenty of space for the soloist. He punctuates with short melodic fragments, block chords, angular harmonic shapes (sometimes allowing them to ring, sometimes playing with dead strokes, sometimes rolled), and the occasional arpeggio in the higher register of the instrument. Sheppard's approach tends toward a free improvisational one with a thoughtful and creative finding of interesting sounds, rather than musical expression through technique.

9.6 Gunter Hampel

Gunter Hampel recorded a number of albums in 1980s, all in the avant-garde, free jazz style. These include: *All The Things You Could Be If Charles Mingus Was Your*

Daddy (Hampel 1980), *Place To Be With Us* (Hampel 1981), *Celestial Glory* (Hampel 1981) and *Jubilation* (Hampel 1983). His use of the vibraphone is as an alternative instrument to his arsenal of wind instruments (clarinet flute, bass clarinet, baritone sax) and the piano. The ensembles on the albums combine wind instrumentalists, bass, drums, and the occasional vocal line by the singer Jeanne Lee, thereby making the vibraphone the only instrument in the group capable of playing a harmonic accompanying role. Due to the interactive collaborative improvisational nature of Hampel's music no instrument is regarded as having a lesser accompanying role to play, consequently the vibraphone is used as an equal partner in the creative process

9.7 Karl Berger

Vibraphonist and pianist Karl Berger recorded two trio albums with bassist Dave Holland and drummer Ed Blackwell - *Transit* (Berger 1988) and *Crystal Fire* (Berger 1991). In the liner notes to *Transit* Berger make it clear that the choice of musicians with whom to play this style of music is built on friendships and trust, and is dependent on the desire to communicate.

Off and on the three of us have played together for almost 20 years, with long interruptions along the way. I feel a 'transit' in my life that leads to new musical expressions. These kinds of changes become obvious when there is a continuity of communication over many years. (Berger 1988)

Although regarded more as a pianist, Berger plays vibraphone on most tracks. On *Transit* Berger plays vibraphone on seven of the nine tracks. His melodic style is based on a rhythmic-swing eighth note pulse with only the occasional use of other rhythmic concepts. He plays the vibraphone with a very light touch, his melodic single lines tending to be in the upper register of the instrument's range. Occasionally he plays a two-note chord or octave interval.

The repertoire consists entirely of Berger original compositions, in a style that lends itself to collective melodic improvisation. The free interweaving of melodic lines unhampered by chordal structures leads to spontaneous harmonic ideas that still bear the musical integrity of the composition. The short melodic themes, some of which are highly reminiscent of melodies composed by Berger's mentor, Ornette Coleman, his "harmelodic" approach to improvising melodies (as on the track *Ornette*), are generally played by the vibraphone and bass in unison. Free collective playing, which still retains the rhythmic integrity of the theme, follows. An excellent example of this can be found on the track *We Change*, where a cyclical 5 beats is retained throughout the track.

Since the very essence of the harmelodic approach does not place any one instrument in a position of accompanying, but rather allows for a collective flow of melodic invention. For example on *Transit*, Berger lays out to allow space for Holland to explore melodically on bass, while on *Ornette*, Berger uses a quieter dynamic and plays more regular melodic fragments on the vibraphone allowing the bass line to come to the fore. On *We Change*, Berger changes his articulation and plays a dead-stroke melodic pattern that helps to lead the bass more into the focus of attention; on *Crystal Vision* these dead-stroke patterns and short-stopped rolls take on a sonority similar to that of tuned temple blocks. On *Budda Eyes*, Berger plays rhythmic chords of short duration in the high range of the vibraphone, which contrasts the fluid regular bass line flow.

9.8 Wolfgang Lackerschmid

In 1987 vibraphonist Wolfgang Lackerschmid recorded two trio tracks with trumpeter Chet Baker, that are included with the earlier 1979 recordings (see Chapter 8) and released on the 1998 album *The Legacy, Volume 3; Why Shouldn't You Cry* (Baker and Lackerschmid 1998). The title track, *Why Shouldn't You Cry*, although written for their first recording session in January 1979, was only recorded in this trio format, with bassist Gunter Lenz, in August 1987. The track reveals Chet Baker at his introspective best, with Lackerschmid's accompaniment supporting him sensitively, using long, ringing chordal tones that outline the harmony and provide a strong harmonic base for Baker's breathy melodic wanderings. Lackerschmid's technical progress and command of his instrument are evident on these tracks in his easy and thoughtful use of the whole of the vibraphone's range.

CHAPTER 10. THE NINETIES

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| 10.1 | Ed Saindon |
| 10.2 | Matthias Lupri |
| 10.3 | Mike Mainieri |
| 10.4 | Steve Nelson |
| 10.5 | Gunter Hampel |
| 10.6 | Tom Beckham |

10.1 Ed Saindon

In the middle to late 1990s Ed Saindon recorded a number of albums featuring the vibraphone as the sole harmonic accompanying instrument in the ensemble. With East Coast wind player Harry Skoler, he recorded *Conversations in the Language of Jazz* (Skoler 1995) and *Reflections on the Art of Swing: A Tribute to Benny Goodman* (Skoler 1996). As leader Saindon released *Swing on the Sunnyside* (Saindon 1996) and *The Great American Songbook* (Saindon 1998). Then in 1999 Saindon recorded a trio album with flautist Matt Marvuglio, entitled *Why Cry* (Marvuglio 1999).

The repertoire on all these albums centres around classic songs from the swing and *Tin Pan Alley* era, combined with the occasional gentle bossa nova and original compositions by Saindon (*Conversations in the Language of Jazz* and *Reflections on the Art of Swing* on Harry Skoler's albums, and *18th Child* on Matt Marvuglio's album). Saindon contributes the arrangements on his own as well as on Skoler's albums.

Saindon's vibraphone style is clearly based on the piano styles of the stride and swing traditions. This pianistic approach ensures that he never lapses into the single line style so common among vibraphone players, but retains the integrity of a keyboard

sound at all times. In the liner notes of *Swing on the Sunnyside* Saindon names his influences and links them to tunes played on the album:

Earl 'Fatha' Hines (right-hand octaves as on *You Brought A New Kind Of Love To Me*); Fats Waller and Ralph Sutton (stride type of groove as on *Sweet Lorraine*); Art Tatum (hallmarks such as rubato introductions, cascading runs and well-placed arpeggios as on *Ain't Misbehavin'*; George Shearing and Dick Hyman (contrapuntal patterns as on *When You Wish Upon A Star*); Teddy Wilson (walking tenths as on *I Found A New Baby*); Oscar Peterson (jabbing left under a flowing right as on *Sweet Georgia Brown*); Errol Garner and Dave McKenna (left-hand groove as on *I Can't Give You Anything But Love*). (Saindon 1996)

Not only has Saindon mastered the four-mallet vibraphone technique, but also through his imaginative use of reharmonisation, passing chords and colourful tension notes he keeps the music fresh and interesting. Saindon's virtuoso performances are so complex that the listener could easily assume that recording overdubbing of tracks has been used - a possibility that Saindon clearly negates in the liner notes to *The Great American Songbook* and *Swing on the Sunnyside* where he notes that "no doubling tracking was used in the recording of the vibes tracks" (Saindon 1996 and 1998). Saindon's mastery of the solo style gives him the fluent ability to play melodic phrases with intervals of an octave, sixth or third in one hand while retaining a supportive harmonic accompaniment in the other hand. This technique can be heard in the introduction to *Love is Here to Stay* on the *Swing on the Sunnyside* album, and contributes to a full vibraphone sound, encompassing the whole range of the instrument.

Saindon's vibraphone solo version of *Benny*, his solo introductions to tracks, *Somewhere*, *Soon*, and *I wish I'd Met You*, as well as other interludes and introductions, are all masterpieces in solo, unaccompanied vibraphone performance demonstrating his technical control and passion for this style of performance.

Arpeggiated chords and bass notes accompany the melody, with interweaving inner lines and counter figures that are clearly articulated through the deft use of dampening and pedalling. His high degree of technical skill with the four mallets allows each of them to operate as individual voices, much like a quartet of vibraphone players.

On the vibraphone and clarinet duets, *Memories of You* and *Moonglow* from Skoler's albums, Saindon provides a rich and varied accompaniment that utilises the whole range of the instrument and incorporates bass lines, chordal accompaniment, counter lines and inner moving parts.

A chamber jazz atmosphere is evident on all these recordings. Dynamics are generally quieter and help to bring the focus on Saindon's rich harmonic and melodic playing. His accompaniment is supportive at all times, feeding the soloist harmonically, rhythmically and melodically by intuitively punctuating the soloist's phrases through accenting a chord here, or an upper chordal splash there. His imaginative use of dynamics and contrasts in articulation, combined with a keen rhythmic sense, gives the music space while still generating energy in the ensemble. Saindon's flawless technical execution of up-tempo comping and soloing on tunes *After You've Gone*, Fats Waller's *Handful of Keys* and the Gershwin classic *Oh, Lady Be Good*, takes vibraphone playing to new technical levels. Even at these faster tempos Saindon still executes harmonic support both to the soloist and his own solos with seemingly effortless ease.

The recorded acoustic sound of the vibraphone is rich, full and clear at all times. All the subtleties of Saindon's performance can always be clearly heard and are generally

uncluttered by the bass and drum sounds. This is even more so on the Marvuglio album, where there are no drums, the walking line of the bass keeping the pulse of the music moving along.

10.2 Matthias Lupri

German-born Matthias Lupri (his family moved to North America a year after his birth) started out as a drummer playing in blues, rock and country bands. After hearing Gary Burton's *Times Square* album (Burton 1978) he became interested in jazz vibraphone, eventually making this his main instrument.

"A teacher told me to check out Gary Burton. So I bought his Times Square album with Tiger Okoshi, Steve Swallow and Roy Haynes, and it totally changed my whole approach to music. For the next five years, while I was still on the road with rock bands, I would practice my vibes every night in my hotel room". (Lupri 1999, quoted in the liner notes by Bob Blumenthal)

While enrolled at the Berklee College of Music in the early 1990s, Lupri came under the influence of vibraphonists Gary Burton, Ed Saindon, and Victor Mendoza. During this time Lupri took note of how the vibraphone could effectively be used in jazz as an harmonic accompanying instrument.

He also took note of how Burton, in his Times Square period, was working without piano or guitar, and a Lupri ensemble concept also began to take shape. "I love playing with sax and no other comping instrument," he explains. "It gives you more freedom, and without the richer piano sound the timbre of sax and vibes together tends to float more." (Lupri 1999, liner notes by Bob Blumenthal)

Lupri's debut release as a leader, *Window Up Window Down* (Lupri 1995), features the vibraphonist in a quartet setting of saxophone, vibraphone, bass and drums, the vibraphone taking on the harmonic accompanying role in the ensemble.

On this album the pure acoustic sound of the vibraphone, with the vibrato effect set on a medium slow speed, has been recorded. Lupri tends to play block chords in a modern concerted style behind the saxophone solos of Timo Verbole, preferring tighter chord voicings with rich tensions. On the track *Pictures*, Lupri plays in a rhythmically concerted style, with block chords in the lower range of the instrument, creating a strong rhythmic drive behind the saxophone solo. On *Just Say Anything* he uses angular interval shapes, rhythmically played between the hands, to heighten the feeling of excitement and abandonment in his comping. On the track, *Children*, he uses the technique of chordal stacking behind the saxophone's statement of the melodic theme, thereby widening the harmonic base and also adding rhythmic interest. On *Interspectives* he adds to the sound colour by playing, above the range of the melody, occasional arpeggiated splashes of sound in the upper register.

Lupri's use of space is particularly interesting. He regularly lays out from comping at the beginning of the saxophone solos. This leads to a feeling of heightened tension. This use of space also allows the soloist to set up the direction in which he intends the solo to be taken. Once the flow of the solo has begun and the musical shape has been revealed, Lupri joins the bass and drums, creating a dramatic change in the musical colour of the ensemble while still supplying the soloist with musical and textural ideas.

The repertoire on the album consists entirely of compositions by vibraphonist Lupri in a contemporary acoustic jazz style, with a free broken-swing or straight eighth-note style.

One major change for Lupri was a new found urge to compose music as well as play it. "I always felt that I was missing something by just playing," he recalls. "I wanted to add more melodically." (Lupri 1999, liner notes by Bob Blumenthal)

Although the compositions have strong melodic and rhythmic ideas, the general ensemble dynamic is clearly one of spontaneous interaction between the members of the group. Through the sensitive and responsive use of dynamics, changes in rhythmic intensity, and space, the musicians create a platform upon which the soloists, mainly Lupri and saxophonist Timo Verbole, can freely build improvised excursions, sometimes to the point of abandonment.

As on *Freefall* and *The Fruit Lady*, the melodic themes are often stated by the saxophone and vibraphone in unison, with the occasional addition of a chordal or arpeggiated harmonic shape, to outline the harmony of the moment.

In the solo vibraphone introductions to *Abstraction* and *Names*, Lupri plays in a pianistic style, breaking up the chords between the hands. Through the use of contrasting dynamic he plays softer, arpeggiated chords whilst bringing out the melody notes played in the upper register.

By contrast to his chordal comping Lupri tends to play in a more aggressive two-mallet style for his own solos, with only the occasional use of four mallets to execute angular clusters, rhythmically played between the hands, leading to a heightened feeling of harmonic and rhythmic freedom. His solos tend to consist of melodic fragments and shapes. With the absence of any obvious harmonic accompaniment to

his solos, Lupri is free to explore melodic shapes that give a feeling of harmonic movement.

Lupri's second album, *Shadow of the Vibe* (Lupri 1999), again features the vibraphonist in the quartet setting with the vibraphone as the only harmonic accompanying instrument. This album continues along a similar musical path to the first, featuring Lupri's modern acoustic jazz style compositions and relying again on the spontaneous way that the members of the group interact. This interactive way of performance gives the music a feeling of spontaneous freedom, without losing the integrity of the musical composition of the specific track.

The band is completed by George Garzone on soprano and tenor saxophones and John Lockwood on bass. With drummer Bob Gullotti, Garzone and Lockwood have been working free-form magic together in The Fringe for 15 years, and each has also established his mastery in more straight-ahead situations. They bring their usual intensity to the table, as well as a preference for spontaneity that greatly impressed the leader. (Lupri 1999, liner notes by Bob Blumenthal)

Lupri's comping on this album is rhythmically and texturally more aggressive and is enhanced through the use of a pick up system on the vibraphone leading to a more modern and immediate sound. This contrasts the purer acoustic vibraphone sound recorded on his first album. Although block chordal comping still dominates his comping Lupri is melodically more interactive while accompanying saxophone soloist George Garzone. This melodic interaction is clearly evident on the tracks *Mirror*, *Shadow of the Vibe*, and *Moonlamps*.

Preferring to let the sustained notes ring together he creates a texturally thick wash of harmonic colour. On the unaccompanied solo vibraphone track *Intrusion*, he lets the notes ring together, creating discordant resonance in the harmonic texture. For his

chordal attacks Lupri uses less sustain so as to heighten the effect of the rhythmic aspect of the comping.

10.3 Mike Mainieri

On the groundbreaking album, *An American Diary* (Mainieri 1995), Joe Lovano, playing tenor sax and an assortment of other woodwinds, bassist Eddie Gomez, and drummer Peter Erskine join Mike Mainieri, who plays vibraphone, marimba and percussion. The conceptual basis for the tunes on this album are drawn from works by influential twentieth century American composers, Samuel Barber, John Cage, Aaron Copland, Roger Sessions, Leonard Bernstein, Charles Ives and Frank Zappa, and combined with original compositions by members of the ensemble.

In the liner notes Howard Mandel notes that these composers were all:

Uncompromising individualists, innovators and/or outright renegades bound neither to any irrelevant elitist classicism nor “foreign” influence or ancestry that was anything but cosmopolitan. Their music, like that of Mainieri, multi-reedist Joe Lovano, bassist Eddie Gomez and drummer Peter Erskine, issued from no ivory tower, and depended on no patronage from imposing church or court. (Mainieri 1995)

Mainieri explains how the concept for the album arose.

Browsing through my collection, I discovered a record of a piano sonata by Copland written in 1927. I was especially taken by the vivace movement; I thought at a slower tempo it sounded like what Monk would write 25 years later. So I decided to research works by other American composers not usually covered in the jazz scene. (Mainieri 1995)

Mainieri’s acoustic vibraphone sound is rich and full, enhanced through the use of electronic effects. On the improvisation section on Roger Sessions’ *Piano Sonata No.1*, he uses a pitch-bending effect, controlled by a foot pedal that he invented, with very creative results.

The musical emphasis of this recording is on the interaction between the soloist and the rest of the group. This allows Mainieri to explore colourful, open chromatic sounds and textures that can be produced on the vibraphone. He displays a fluid four-mallet technique with an ease of execution of arpeggios, chordal shapes, tonal clusters and melodic runs over the whole range of the instrument. His comping behind the solos of Lovano and Gomez is filled with contemporary-sounding angular chromaticism and generates an energy that permeates to the rest of the quartet. His use of richly ringing harmonic textures, as on the lushly re-harmonised version of *Somewhere*, is contrasted by the short, angular melodic stabs and chromatic counterpoint he plays behind the tenor saxophone melody on *Hudson River Valley*. On the latter track Mainieri accompanies Lovano with short angular phrases and melodic stabs that the saxophonist picks up on, seeming to react instantaneously to them. Rhythmic comping, using a variety of articulations and pedalling effects including stopped chords and chords with no sustain, are contrasted with layered chords and the almost over-use of the sustain pedal. On Zappa's *King Kong*, this layering leads to a wash thick in harmonic texture. On the *Overture to the School for Scandal* Mainieri plays gently rolled vibraphone chords behind the bass melody, followed by a rhythmic chordal groove that supports the soprano saxophone solo. On *Vivace* from Aaron Copland's *Piano Sonata* the vibraphone plays the angular melody in unison with the tenor saxophone, while on *Sometimes I Feel Like a Motherless Child* Mainieri plays the melodic theme on the vibes in a very simple, almost bluesy, manner.

Mainieri uses, as alternative instruments to the vibraphone, the marimba, piano and various percussion instruments (including tuned gongs and chimes), with great effect. On the track *Song for My People*, a groove tune based on a New Orleans second-line drumming style, he plays a repetitive ostinato figure on the marimba, occasionally filling in with a chromatic melodic interjection. On *In the Gloaming* he plays a strong rich chordal accompaniment on the piano.

Mainieri's conceptual approach to Charles Ives' *Universe* is worth mentioning:

"I imagined Ives' basic idea in an improvisational setting, and reconstructed it for a small ensemble. I layered six xylophones in different time signatures – sounding like stars glimmering at night – all in an improvisational context against a progression of chords I constructed with string-like effect on the MIDI vibe. I played rolls on bass marimba for tonal guidance, overdubbing gongs (mine struck every nine and a half seconds), and had the quartet playing several cues as if the band were walking through the piece. I also introduced a clarinet quoting the trumpet part of Ives' masterpiece 'The Unanswered Question.'" (Mainieri 1995)

The second album in the *American Diary* series, *The Dreamings* (Mainieri 1997), shows Mainieri's continued expansion in the use of the vibraphone, with an ever-widening range of musical influences. The repertoire on this album consists mainly of Mainieri originals or his arrangements of traditional songs from a variety of cultures - Native American Indians, Australian Aborigines, the Jewish people, and the Philippines. The use of instruments not common in jazz performance such as the didgeridoo, gongs, harp and cello, all help to give the album a fresh and compositional effect, thereby taking the vibraphone into an even a wider variety of music styles. The album also includes tracks that show Mainieri's interest in experimental forms of composition. On the track "*R*" is for *Riddle* Mainieri:

Assigns each instrument its own 12-tone riddle, and in the 12th bar, the group riddle is revealed in the bass line as he plays the word "abracadabra" and all the "r's" are rests. (Mainieri 1997, liner notes by Mike Mainieri and Dawn Buckholz-Andrews)

Mainieri's chordal approach to the vibraphone is clearly evident on this album through his use of the full range of the instrument, with a variety of pianistic techniques that range from block chordal shapes to arpeggiated broken chords. Mainieri, who has continued in his quest to extend the possibilities of the vibraphone as a keyboard instrument through his development of MIDI trigger systems, pitch bending pedals and split dampening pedals, plays on this album a custom-made Yamaha vibraphone with an extended lower range, giving his instrument a range of 3 ½ octaves. On the track *Dear, My Friend (The Gift)*, Mainieri uses the lower range of the instrument to play gong-like pedal tones behind the vocals of percussionist Arto Tunçboyan.

The vibraphone plays a dominant harmonic role on this album, providing not only a solid harmonic and rhythmic base to the soloists, but also regularly doubling the melody with the saxophone whilst continuing to provide harmonic accompaniment. The use of reverb and electronic processing effects on the vibraphone allows Mainieri to create a full sound and provides lots of space for the vibraphone sound to ring through. On *Schecharchoret* he plays behind Yemenite vocalist Noa, using the full extended keyboard range of his vibraphone in a pianistic way, taking it beyond the nuances usually available to the vibraphonist. Open voicings for chords, played in a more concerted style, are contrasted by arpeggiated textures and scalar runs. Using a wide variety of articulations Mainieri keeps the vibraphone sound fresh and expressive. His use of chromaticism in his accompaniments gives the music a leaning toward a free improvisational nature, so that his return to the tonal creates a feeling of relief and clarity. Through the use of his MIDI pickup system Mainieri is able to alter the texture of the music from the subtle use of synthesizer sounds to a clear, natural

acoustic vibraphone sound and the use of the vibrato effect set at a slow pulsating speed. This can be clearly heard on the track *Bashi-Bazouk* where he uses pad sounds behind the bowed bass solo of Marc Johnson, before returning to the natural acoustic sound of the vibraphone.

The straight-ahead up-tempo swing and samba solo sections of the tune *Straphangin'*, allows Mainieri the freedom to comp interactively behind Garzone's saxophone playing. Here he responds to the saxophonist's melodic phrasing by using a variety of harmonic techniques and chordal shapes. On *One Night in Paradise* Mainieri's accompaniment to Garzone's clarinet solo allows lots of space for the sonority of the vibraphone to ring through whilst still remaining responsive to the soloist's musical phrasing, at other times supplying new material for Garzone to pick up on.

Whilst most of the pieces on this album seem to be more through-composed, there is still ample space for improvisational freedom. At the end of *The Dreamings* Mainieri extends the boundaries and plays free sounds on the vibraphone that link with the wanderings of the saxophone and the drone of the didgeridoo.

It is on the ballad, *An American Tale*, that Mainieri best explores the pianistic possibilities of the vibraphone. This trio track, with just vibraphone (a clear natural acoustic sound with a gentle vibrato effect), bass and drums, allows Mainieri to utilise the full range of the instrument with a wide variety of articulations to create a full rich ringing sound with lots of space in the music. The fluid use of an arpeggiated approach fills out the sound. Mainieri's statement of the melody in the upper register can be clearly heard over chordal accompaniments in the lower range.

Mainieri's two *American Diary* albums are truly groundbreaking in their use of the vibraphone in improvised music that goes beyond the borders of traditional jazz, into the realms of contemporary classical compositional techniques in conjunction with musical influences borrowed from other cultures of the world. Taking the vibraphone beyond its traditional jazz usage he allows the instrument to become part of a world music not limited by tradition and style. He successfully uses the instrument to provide the harmonic and rhythmical platform for a wide variety of musical influences whilst retaining the element of freedom for improvised musical expression.

10.4 Steve Nelson

Recordings by Steve Nelson, *Full Nelson* (Nelson 1990) and *Communications* (Nelson 1990), reveal him playing a two-mallet vibraphone style in the lineage of Milt Jackson and Bobby Hutcherson. A native of Pittsburgh, Pa., Nelson studied with Larry Ridley, Ted Dunbar and Kenny Barron, and later performed and recorded extensively as a member of David "Fathead" Newman's group. Receiving his Masters degree in 1989 from Rutgers University, he later went on to teach there. (Nelson 1999, liner notes by Ira Gilter) In the liner notes to the album *Full Nelson*, Sid Gribetz comments that Nelson is:

A vital part of the precocious current generation of jazz artists who are firmly schooled and rooted in the tradition without any reactionary conservatism, those who are also forward looking and energetically stretching that tradition. (Nelson 1990)

On bassist Dave Holland's 1996 release, *Dream of the Elders* (Holland 1996), Steve Nelson changes roles and plays as a member of the rhythm section to provide harmonic and rhythmic accompaniment for the soloists. On both vibraphone and marimba Nelson exhibits a four-mallet technique not evident on the earlier recordings

mentioned above. With no obvious use of the vibraphone's vibrato effect, Nelson's natural acoustic vibraphone sound is warm and clear, in spite of his use of slightly harder mallets.

The style of the music is contemporary acoustic jazz rooted in traditional jazz styles while still allowing space for the soloists to explore harmonically and melodically. The repertoire on *Dream of the Elders* consists entirely of compositions by leader Dave Holland.

On many tracks (*The Winding Way* and *Claressence* for example) Nelson plays the melody in unison with the saxophone while still joining with the bassist to provide rhythmic chordal interjections played in a modern concerted style. On *Lazy Snake* the stark statement of the melodic theme is played in unison between the vibraphone and saxophone, and stated with no harmonic support by the vibraphonist.

At the beginning of many of the saxophone solos on this album Nelson does not comp thereby allowing saxophonist Eric Person to expand and explore with freedom. Nelson starts comping by entering with gently played chords at the appropriate musical time in the solo. His chordal comping consists mainly of short rhythmic interjections and chordal textures that create texture and space rather than dictating harmony or asserting a specific rhythmic pattern. Playing gently with a light touch and generally in the lower and middle range of the instrument, occasionally with an arpeggiated chord or splash of colour in the upper register of the instrument, Nelson is thoughtfully sensitive to the soloist's musical thread. His comping is never aggressive but is supportive in a sensitive and responsive way. Playing contrasting

melodic and rhythmic patterns, he keeps the music interesting and moving. Only rarely does he allow a regular rhythmic or melodic pattern to develop while still leaving space for the music to have life and freedom. Accompanying the bass solo on *Claressence* he plays chordal backing in a modern concerted style using a variety of articulations, contrasting ringing sounds with shorter drier rhythmic patterns. At the end of *Lazy Snake* Nelson moves to the marimba to provide light chordal textures behind the improvisational wanderings of saxophonist Eric Person. Behind the vocals of Cassandra Wilson on the tune, *Equality*, Nelson keeps the music flowing expanding his accompanying approach to include lower bass tones, moving chordal inversions and subtle washes of harmonic texture. On the album's title track *Dream of the Elders* Nelson moves freely between the marimba and the vibraphone, playing rhythmic chordal interjections on the former, and arpeggiated chords on the latter.

Nelson's vibraphone solos tend to be in a two-mallet, linear melodic style with scalar runs, outlining melodic patterns and harmonic shapes and are usually played with no harmonic support other than the accompaniment of the bass and drums. Only on the instrumental version of *Equality* does Nelson expand his soloing to include chordal accompaniment. Here he plays with an open-sounding textural approach using all four mallets in a pianistic way.

Dave Holland recorded a further two albums *Points of View* (Holland 1998) and *Prime Directive* (Holland 1999) with vibraphonist Steve Nelson in the role of harmonic accompanist in a rhythm section that included Billy Kilson on drums and himself playing double bass. This rhythm section would stay the core of Holland's recordings for the next six years.

The repertoire on these albums, in addition to the originals by leader Dave Holland, includes compositions by other members of the group. On *Points of View*, Nelson supplies the track *Serenade* (in which he plays rolled chords and melodic intervals on the marimba in a Caribbean style), and on *Prime Directive*, his *Candlelight Vigil* is played.

On these second and third albums of the Dave Holland Quintet, Steve Nelson's comping is melodically and rhythmically more assertive. While still allowing the soloists space (as he did so effectively on the first album) Nelson now sets up subtle, rhythmic, chordal comping patterns that are contrasted with washes of arpeggiated harmonic texture. On the track *Ario*, for example, Nelson sets up a rhythmic background pattern that the soloists play against. His use of contrasting articulations in his comping helps to keep the music interesting and alive. On the tune *Bedouin Trail* on the *Points of View* album, Nelson includes into his comping style lyrical counter-lines that contrast with the soloist's melodies. On his own tune, the contrapuntal *Candlelight Vigil* on the *Prime Directive* album, Nelson increases his comping style further with the inclusion of broken chords and lower bass tones that are played below chords with contemporary voicings. On these later albums Nelson continues to favour a two-mallet solo style, letting the harmony be implied rather than stated.

10.5 Gunter Hampel

Gunter Hampel continued to record albums throughout the 1990s using the vibraphone as an alternative instrument to his bass clarinet. The music style is generally based on collective, interactive improvisation.

Hampel's album *8th Sept. 1999* (Hampel 1999) consists of studio and live recordings made at the Knitting Factory in New York City. The album features the vibraphonist in an ensemble that combines musicians from Europe and the USA. As Hampel describes in the liner notes to the album:

. . . underwent rehearsals and tried, like a coach on a basketball team, to get people together from two different cultures, to play music, move and rise together. When that works, that is something you cannot buy for any money in the world. It's a togetherness which exists through giving. (Hampel 1999)

The music on the album, all conceived by Hampel, reflects a combination of blues, shuffle grooves and free, aggressive, spontaneous improvisation, often collectively by a few members of the ensemble. Tracks are numbered and given titles but serve as vehicles for free musical expression. On (*No.925*) *How Late is it in Your Life?* a short unison melodic phrase is used to move between sections where various members of the ensemble can freely improvise, using whatever techniques they wish.

On this album Hampel plays the vibraphone exclusively. For the most part playing in a two-mallet, linear style, he plays melodic interjections, mainly in the upper register of the instrument, behind the unison statement of the melodic themes by the horns.

The natural acoustic sound of the vibraphone has been recorded here. On all of the tracks Hampel uses the vibrato effect. Hampel's playing is often fast and angular, but lightly played, giving a tinkling effect. Occasionally, as on the track (*No.869*) *Preface*, he uses the mallet shafts to strike the ends of the bars to create a harder metallic sound.

In using the vibraphone as an accompanying instrument, Hampel creates angular counter-melodic textures played against other members of the ensemble, as evidenced in the duet tracks *(No.869) Preface* and *(No.871) Preface to the Truth*. It is only on the live track, *(No.871) Truth*, that Hampel exhibits his use of four mallets to provide a chordal backing, setting up a harmonic groove using open-voiced chords stated in a concerted style.

CHAPTER 11. THE NEW CENTURY

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11.1 Steve Nelson

Bassist Dave Holland's *Not for Nothin'* (Holland 2001) continues along the similar path of his previous albums recorded in the 1990s (*Dream of the Elders* (Holland 1996), *Points of View* (Holland 1998) and *Prime Directive* (Holland 1999) are discussed in Chapter 10) with the use of the vibraphone (played by Steve Nelson) as a member of the rhythm section providing harmonic and rhythmic accompaniment for the soloists. On this album Nelson uses many of the musical and technical approaches heard on the previous album.

On his next album, *What Goes Around* (Holland 2002), Dave Holland expands the ensemble to a big band styled group with four wind and six brass players. Interestingly Steve Nelson (on vibraphone) is again used as a member of the rhythm section to provide the harmonic support to the soloists. In his liner notes to the album Holland describes his thoughts with regard to the relationship between composing and performance as it applies to this album.

For me the essence of a big band is in the celebration of the collective spirit by a group of highly individual personalities. The musicians on this recording each have their own distinctive styles and concepts, but each one also experiences the joy of sharing the musical journey with each other. Putting notes to paper is only the first step in the process. What brings the music to life is the collective intention of the musicians and their individual experiences, in both life and music. (Holland 2002)

The album consists entirely of original compositions and arrangements by Dave Holland. Whilst most tracks have sections where the wind and brass players play scored backings to the soloists, there is still ample space for the vibraphone to be used as an harmonic accompanying instrument. The recording separation of instruments on the album allows Nelson's chordal stabs to be clearly discernable over the rest of the ensemble. His rhythmic approach contrasts and complements the melodic approach of the wind and brass arrangements. As on Holland's previous albums Nelson's playing is never intrusive, allowing the music to have space and often laying out to let the bass and drums carry the responsibility of supporting the soloist. His use of ambiguous chordal clusters, chromatic figures and rhythmic fragments adds to the texture of the ensemble making the overall sound rich and creative.

On the track *What Goes Around* Nelson plays a dry, angular ostinato figure that contrasts the thick chordal sounds of the winds and brass. Later in the same track he plays chordally in unison with the rest ensemble adding texture to the wind and brass arrangements.

Nelson is also given solo space on a number of tracks. On the track *Blues for C.M.* his introduction and vibraphone is played in an aggressive two-mallet blues style. Later in the same track he reverts to the use of four mallets to accompany other soloists.

11.2 Matthias Lupri

Vibraphonist Matthias Lupri's third album as leader, *Same Time Twice* (Lupri 2002), sees the inclusion of guitarist Kurt Rosewinkel into the ensemble. On this album Lupri builds on the ideas of his previous albums (see Chapter 10: The Nineties) by

using the vibraphone as the main harmonic accompanying instrument in the ensemble, the guitar only adding to the overall sonic texture. The vibraphone is again recorded using a direct pick up system and electronic sound-enhancing effects give the vibraphone a contemporary keyboard sound.

As is evident on the track *Song of Change*, Lupri has increased the activity in his comping approach by using more arpeggiated chords and rhythmically breaking up chords between the hands over the whole range of the instrument. This has led to a thicker, more energetic approach to the music.

11.3 Tom Beckham

A product of the Berklee College of Music, Tom Beckham's debut release as leader, *Suspicious* (Beckham 2000), features the vibraphonist in a quartet setting. All the compositions on the album are by Beckham and are in a modern acoustic jazz style that allow space for free improvisation.

Beckham demonstrates his command of a flexible, four-mallet technique as he takes on the role of harmonic accompanist in the rhythm section. His approach to the vibraphone is as a keyboard instrument, one capable of harmonic and rhythmic accompaniment as well as melodic playing. Using a variety of pianistic devices he creates a clear, full-textured, keyboard sound from the instrument. Through the effective use of mallet dampening techniques, Beckham's sound is very clear and direct and reflects a sound musical logic. Playing the counter-line on *No Agenda*, Beckham uses mallet dampening to create a legato melodic line that contrasts with the saxophone's melody.

At the end of the *Village Children* and in the introduction to *Sweet Tooth*, Beckham plays a solo, unaccompanied vibraphone interludes that clearly demonstrate his command of the pianistic approach to the instrument. He uses a variety of techniques that include chords with contemporary voicings, bass notes, contrapuntal lines, linking chords by short melodic fragments, stacked chords, scalar runs and clear dynamic contrasts between melody and accompaniment, effectively utilising the whole range of the vibraphone. On *Ascent*, a slower tune with rich harmony, Beckham keeps the music constantly active and buoyant through the use of arpeggiated chordal textures played over the whole range of the instrument. On *Suspicious*, a moody tune in 3/4 time, he again demonstrates his pianistic approach to the instrument. Creating a full-keyboard, textured sound, Beckham provides harmonic and rhythmic support to his own melodies as well as his interjections played in response to saxophonist Chris Cheek's melodic improvisations.

Melodic themes are often played in unison with the saxophone, whilst still providing chordal accompaniment, much like a pianist's left hand comping against horn-like melodic statements. Beckham plays the melodic statement on an up-tempo swing tune, *Little Booboo*, in unison with the saxophone while continuing to provide harmonic chordal punctuation, effectively leading to a full complete sound.

The natural acoustic sound of the vibraphone, with no vibrato effect, can be heard clearly on this album.

Drummer George Schuller's 2003 release *Round'bout Now* (Schuller 2003) features Beckham playing the role of harmonic accompanist on the vibraphone. Using a range

of pianistic devices Beckham provides full harmonic backdrop for the horn soloists. In spite of the presence on some of the tracks of guitarist Pete McCann, the vibraphone and guitar sound complement each other.

The repertoire on the album is mainly original compositions by leader George Schuller, combined with three tunes by Miles Davis (*Side Car*, *Circle in the Road*, and *Filles de Kilimanjaro*) and an original by Beckham, *Blackamoor*. On this latter track Beckham plays a solo unaccompanied vibraphone introduction that demonstrates his pianistic approach to the instrument. Among the devices he uses are contrapuntal lines, chordal stacking, contemporary chord voicings, rolled chords and splashes of sound in the upper register. His rhythmic chordal comping later in the same track adds to the intensity created by the rest of the members of the rhythm section.

Beckham effectively provides space by laying out at the beginning of the saxophone solo on the track *Vat 19*. By not playing, he allows the soloist to interact freely with the bass and drums alone. After the full-textured sound of the previous track, the lack of chordal accompaniment creates a strong feeling of openness and heightened tension, which is relieved when the vibraphone's chordal comping continues with some rhythmical angular chordal shapes.

11.4 Christos Rafalides

Greek born Christos Rafalides' album, *Manhattan Vibes* (Rafalides 2002), features the vibraphone being used as the harmonic comping instrument in a contemporary jazz setting. The repertoire on the album is a combination of original compositions by

Rafalides and jazz standards. The rhythm section trio of Rafalides, playing vibraphone and marimba, bassist John Benitez and drummer Steve Haas (the core of the group *Manhattan Vibes*) provide groove-based support to the soloists (trumpeter Rand Brecker, guitarist Vinny Valentino and vocalist Mary Wormworth) that is clearly influenced by Latin, funk, rock and jazz styles.

A past student of both Ed Saindon and Joe Locke, Rafalides has effectively incorporated the pianistic approach to vibraphone performance into his playing. This is clearly evident on the track *La Esecia Del Guanguanco* where, after playing the melody statement combined with a rhythmic left hand Latin-styled chordal accompaniment, he plays a Montuno vamp on the vibraphone to support the guitar solo of Vinny Valentino. On *C.R.@.S.H.* Rafalides uses rock influenced chordal comping to set up a rhythmic accompaniment to Randy Brecker's trumpet solo.

It is on the tracks *Estate* and the jazz standard, *All The Things You Are*, that Rafalides best demonstrates his command of the pianistic style approach to vibraphone performance. In the solo vibraphone introductions to the tunes, he uses the full range of the instrument to provide melody, bass lines and chordal support in a fully integrated pianistic fashion. He continues this style throughout the pieces. During the bass solo on *Estate* he reacts to the musical mood by providing more rhythmically played chordal movement. Joe Locke's influence on Rafalides' playing can be heard in the latter's chromatic chordal comping. Both tracks finish with Rafalides setting up strong Montuno style vamps over which the drums stretch out rhythmically.

The final track of the album is a solo vibraphone version of Rafalides' composition *Sweet*. Using a pianistic style approach he breaks up the chords in a rolled style, with the melody stated clearly over the bass notes and inner chordal movements. On this track the vibraphone's vibrato effect is heard, giving a lush sound to the notes that are allowed to ring.

11.5 Joe Locke

Joe Locke's album, *4 Walls of Freedom* (Locke 2003), features the vibraphonist in a quartet setting, accompanied by Bob Berg on tenor saxophone, James Genus on bass, and Gary Novak on drums (the quartet is joined by Gerard Presencer on flugelhorn for the last three tracks). In the liner notes Locke comments on the vibraphone being the only harmonic instrument in the ensemble, and therefore it needs to take on the responsibilities of providing harmonic accompaniment to the solos.

The title itself suggested that *4 Walls of Freedom* be a quartet project, each player contributing equally to the construction of this sonic "room". Furthermore, it was an essential aspect of the quartet's make-up that the vibes function as the sole chordal instrument. As a vibraphonist normally accustomed to playing with pianists, the responsibility for all the harmony initially seemed daunting, but ultimately yielded great creative freedom. It's a matter of perception. I'm limited only by my imagination. (Locke 2003)

The repertoire on the album consists entirely of original compositions by Locke grouped into two suites (*4 Walls of Freedom Suite* and *Suite Di Morfeo*) and linked by *Crescent Street*, an up-tempo contemporary swing tune. The suites are in a contemporary jazz style where strong rhythmic and melodic thematic statements introduce solo sections that allow the soloists, mainly tenor saxophonist Bob Berg, and Joe Locke on vibraphone, space for improvisational wanderings.

On this recording Locke uses a MIDI pickup system on the vibraphone that allows him to trigger, from the acoustic instrument, MIDI synthesiser sounds. The

combination of these electronic sounds with the quartet of acoustic instruments give the overall sound of the music an appealing modern approach. The introduction to the first movement of the *4 Walls of Freedom Suite*, entitled *Surfacing*, has Locke playing an aggressive single-line solo with the sound dominated by a very harsh overdriven guitar-like effect from the synthesiser. For the rest of this suite he returns to using a combination of the bar sound from the pickup system with the acoustic sound of the vibraphone, which gives a subtle vibrato effect. On *Movement #2 – Prayer*, *Movement #3 – Searching* and *Movement #6 – Look to this Day*, Locke uses the MIDI system to trigger a softer breathy VOX and atmospheric bells textures from the synthesiser. Although the attack of the acoustic vibraphone is heard, the layered texture of sounds generated from the synthesiser gives a full contemporary sound to the ensemble. His use of the vibrato effect on the acoustic vibraphone can be heard when the notes are sustained.

On this album Locke's accompaniment to Berg's dominant, free-blowing improvisations consists mainly of chordal playing in a modern concerted style. His voicings are generally based on providing rich texture and tension to the harmony in a contemporary style. Chordal stacking is used to create a fuller harmonic texture as well as adding the rhythmic interest. Locke uses a variety of chordal attacks to create a strong feeling of forward movement. These range from short (damped) stopped sounds to longer ringing tones. Chords are often repeated with a variety of articulations, thereby adding to the expressive tension of the moment. By contrast, on *Movement #2 – Prayer*, Locke accompanies the saxophone's statement of the theme and the subsequent solo using arpeggiated broken chords over the whole range of the instrument, which creates a harmonically layered texture.

Locke's chordal approach is adventurous, constantly searching for new sounds from the scales, never limiting himself to set chord shapes, and thereby creating a constantly moving harmonic and rhythmic backdrop for Bob Berg's saxophone solos. Locke creates an additional expressive contrast when he sets up a rhythmic vamp at the end of *Movement #6 – Look to this Day*, by using the shafts of the mallets to strike the ends of the bars, creating an appealing tinkling metallic effect.

On many of the tracks (for example the contemporary swing tune *Crescent Street*) Locke plays the melodic themes, enhanced by the addition of contemporary voicings, in unison with the saxophone.

By contrast to his comping, Locke's accompanied solos are generally in more aggressive, faster, single-note style, outlining melodic patterns and moving shapes. However, on the first movement of the *Suite Di Morfeo, Now I Lay Me Down*, Locke plays a masterful unaccompanied vibraphone solo incorporating ringing, arpeggiated chords, rich in harmonic texture, and pianistic solo-style playing.

11.6 Franz Bauer

On the album *Tree of Sounds* by the German-based group Batoru, the vibraphone (played by Franz Bauer) is heard being used as an harmonic accompanying instrument in the context of European jazz styles. The music style on this is influenced by Bulgarian folk music through the playing of percussionist Stoyan Yankoulov and accordionist Peter Ralchev.

On the track *Slow Dark* Franz Bauer uses washes of harmonic colour and block chords to provide an atmospheric texture behind the melody line of vocal and accordion. This leads to a section of free improvisation with the vibraphone providing textural effects and cluster sounds. Through the effective use of mallet dampening Bauer plays flowing counter lines behind the melody line on *Refugees*. The track *Right Shoes* is more in the contemporary swing-shuffle style. Here the vibraphone provides interactive support to the accordion and vocal solos through the use of angular chordal textures and punctuating stabs of colour. On *Katinka's Ballad* Bauer expands his chordal approach to more open style voicings that create a thick texture. This effect is enhanced through subtle use of the vibraphone's vibrato.

CHAPTER 12 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

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12.1 Summary of historical development

Terry Gunderson in his article, *Discography of Unaccompanied Jazz Vibraphone*, suggests that the history of vibraphone performance in the context of jazz can be traced back to two influential performers, namely Lionel Hampton and Red Norvo.

The history of . . . jazz vibes can be traced as far back as October 16, 1930 with Lionel Hampton playing a three-mallet eight-measure introduction for a Louis Armstrong recording . . . [of] *Memories of You*. (Gunderson 1999, 48)

Both Hampton and Norvo previously played the xylophone and merely adapted their technique to suit the new demands of the vibraphone. Apart from their facility in playing the instrument with two mallets, both these players developed the ability to play holding four mallets. This technique gave them the facility to play chords which they played mainly in closed position and rhythmically in a traditional concerted style. In spite of their chording ability Hampton and Norvo performed mainly in groups that included other chordal instruments, usually the piano or guitar.

The basis of this study is recordings of performances where the vibraphone is used as the only instrument performing the harmonic accompanying role. Recordings of Norvo and Hampton from the 1930s and 1940s reveal them playing the chordal accompaniment role only to a limited extent. Recordings of Hampton made between 1936 and 1940 while he was a member of clarinettist Benny Goodman's group reveal him playing background accompaniments (mainly on slow to medium paced tunes) using closed-position block chords and executed mainly in a concerted style. For his solos on these tunes, as well as on faster numbers, Hampton plays exclusively in a two-mallet style, with arpeggiated runs and background figures typical of the jazz style of the period. Red Norvo, on the other hand, produced some excellent four-mallet playing, mainly in smaller ensembles. He and his wife, vocalist Mildred Bailey, were significantly given the nickname of "Mr and Mrs Swing" (Rogers 1997, 70). The Red Norvo Trio, featuring Norvo on vibraphone with a guitarist, Tal Farlow, played tightly-knit arrangements of standard tunes and jazz compositions. Norvo usually played block-chord accompaniments to the guitar solos. Playing mainly in a rhythmically concerted style of the period, his chords were rich in harmonic texture. Norvo tended not to use the vibrato effect on the vibraphone giving the sound a very clear, smooth-flowing texture (in contrast to Hampton's use of a fast vibrato effect). Both Hampton and Norvo used hard mallets to play the vibraphone, which led to a harder, brittle sound, reminiscent of the xylophone.

The history of vibraphone playing in the 1940s and 1950s is dominated by the success of Milt Jackson mainly through his involvement in the highly acclaimed Modern Jazz Quartet (arguably one of the longest-lived and most successful small jazz groups of all time). Jackson's use of softer mallets, creating a softer, smoother, more vocal

sound on the instrument, had a significant influence on the historical development of the vibraphone. Jackson, who played exclusively in a two-mallet style with no use of the chordal possibilities of the instrument, was influential in the vibraphone being perceived purely as a lead melody instrument to be played with two mallets. Dave Pike, Bobby Hutcherson and others have continued playing the vibraphone in this way.

In the late 1950s and early 1960s, vibraphone players such as Victor Feldman, Mike Mainieri and Gary Burton developed flexible four-mallet techniques that gave them the ability to play the role of harmonic accompanist in an ensemble. All three of these vibraphonists demonstrated through their recordings a desire to increase the potential of the vibraphone as a keyboard instrument and a potential member of the rhythm section. The development of their four-mallet techniques helped to move vibraphone performance beyond the block chordal style of Hampton and Norvo. Howard Mandel, in the liner notes to Mainieri's 1995 release, *An American Diary*, comments on Mainieri's quest to develop the potential of the vibraphone.

“[Mainieri]...loved Lionel Hampton, Milt Jackson and Red Norvo, but has laboured to extend the reach of his instrument [the vibraphone] and imagination for more that 30 years.” (Mainieri 1995)

Although a concerted style of chordal playing dominates in their early recordings, Mainieri and Burton advanced their technique with four mallets significantly through the 1960s. This gave them the ability to play solos and accompaniments that incorporated a range of techniques including layered chordal textures, arpeggiated runs, contrapuntal playing and rhythmically breaking up the chords between the hands.

Burton's first full-time job was with pianist George Shearing. But, in spite of his ability to play chords, he was required to take on the role of melody player.

The first job I had on a full time basis was with George Shearing with both piano and guitar! So no four-mallet playing there at all! It was all just single line music. Yes, I held the four. It was nice to hit the occasional accent chord but it wasn't comping for anyone. In fact the truth is, I had never really learned to comp that much. When I had played four mallets on the vibes I was the lead instrument. So I was melodising and filling in myself. But what I wasn't doing was comping in the background for someone else to solo. (Mallows 2003, Burton interview)

It was only when he joined Stan Getz that Burton developed his skills as an accompanist. In the tenor saxophonist's quartet he played the role of harmonic accompanist on the vibraphone, thereby raising the awareness of the instrument's potential as an accompanying instrument and a member of the rhythm section.

Using techniques gleaned from pianists and guitarists (notably Bill Evans and Jim Hall) Burton approached the task of using the vibraphone in the harmonic accompaniment role in an innovative way. Recordings of the middle to late 1960s show Burton using a variety of techniques influenced by the interactive comping style developed by the bebop pianists. During this period Burton also developed his abilities to play the vibraphone in solo unaccompanied performance. These solo performances (specifically the solo performances released on the album *Alone at Last* (Burton 1971)) are of great significance in the development of the potential of the vibraphone as a chordal instrument and one capable of providing a full and complex harmonic and rhythmic performance.

From the 1950s onwards, jazz styles developed and broadened significantly, resulting in a number of vibraphonists developing their own distinctive styles and approaches,

thereby expanding possibilities of the instrument. German multi-instrumentalists Karl Berger and Gunter Hampel pioneered the use of the vibraphone in the free and avant-garde jazz styles. Their performances were generally in ensembles with no other chordal instrument, but due to the emphasis on collective improvisation, the roles of accompanist or soloist were not clearly defined. These two vibraphonists have continued to record in this style right up to the present day. Burton began to explore the possibilities of combining jazz styles with rock and country music styles when he joined forces with guitarist Larry Coryell after leaving Stan Getz's group. In spite of the vibraphone's relatively rare presence in these styles, Burton set the trend in newer crossover styles thereby widening the potential of the vibraphone as an harmonic accompanying instrument. Mike Mainieri, throughout his recordings of the late 1960s, specifically his unaccompanied solo performances, developed the potential of the vibraphone's rich sonority. Relying mainly on his own compositions as vehicles for improvisation, Mainieri demonstrated the full keyboard potential of the instrument as an harmonic keyboard instrument capable of creating a full-layered pianistic sound. His use of alternating strokes with the four mallets to break up the chords created an interesting rhythmic arpeggiated texture. Through the use of clear articulation, contrapuntal lines and arpeggiated mallet work over the whole range of the instrument, Mainieri created arrangements innovative in their musical texture and interest.

The 1970s saw the rise to prominence of a number of virtuoso vibraphone players. All of these players were in some way influenced by Gary Burton's groundbreaking work of the 1960s and his continued association with the Berklee College of Music. Many of these players too, aimed to expand the potential of the instrument in an ever-

widening range of jazz styles. Mallet percussionists David Friedman and Dave Samuels, who later joined forces in the group Double Image, explored the possibilities of using the vibraphone (and marimba) in the acoustic chamber jazz styles prevalent in the 1970s. Utilising techniques borrowed from classical marimba playing, the duo broadened both the harmonic and the rhythmic accompanying potential of the vibraphone. The recordings of Tom van der Geld, in the late 1970s and early 1980s reveal a vibraphonist aiming to develop the rich sonority potential of the instrument through allowing the natural sonorities of the instrument to come to the fore. Bill Molenhof, who taught at the Berklee College of Music for a period, has written many solos and duets for vibraphone and marimba that employ the accompaniment techniques used by this new generation of vibraphone players.

Recordings in the late 1970s and early 1980s - *Paris Encounter* (Burton 1972), *Times Square* (Burton 1978), *Easy as Pie* and *Picture This* (Burton 1981 and 1982) - reveal Burton again using the vibraphone as the sole harmonic accompanying instrument. On these recordings he supplies a multi-layered harmonic accompaniment to the soloists through the use of rich chordal voicings, chordal stacking and complex contrapuntal lines. To provide accompaniment for his own solos he used many of the complex techniques demonstrated on the album *Alone at Last* (Burton 1971).

In the 1980s and 1990s educationalist and virtuoso vibraphonist Ed Saindon rose to prominence through his teaching at the Berklee College of Music and the many educational articles that he wrote for the *Percussive Notes* and *Percussioner International* magazines. Focusing his approach to vibraphone performance on adapting pianistic techniques Saindon, whose early mentor was Gary Burton, has

from the outset approached the instrument as one having the potential of filling the harmonic accompanist role in jazz ensembles. Recordings made in the 1990s show Saindon employing a range of pianistic techniques, using his sophisticated four-mallet technique to play intricate counterpoint and chordal textures with carefully crafted attention to articulation and control of dynamics.

[Ed Saindon is] a leading proponent of the four-mallet school of vibraphone playing and pianistic approach. In developing and adapting the pianistic approach within the context of small band swing, Saindon has taken his cue from pianists whose styles and hallmarks are rooted in the stride and swing tradition. (Skoler 1996, liner notes by Scott Yanow)

Using the full range of the instrument and a variety of pianistic techniques, Saindon has managed to use the vibraphone to create a full sound when providing the harmonic accompaniment both to other soloists as well as to his own solos.

I treat playing the vibes like I would play the piano . . . You got to know the whole piano history from the stride through swing all the way the bebop and contemporary. If you can really know all that stuff and those players, then when you get to the vibes it is pretty easy to put it down and adapt. (Mallows 2003, Saindon lesson)

Mike Mainieri through his groundbreaking work with his band Steps Ahead has taken the acoustic vibraphone into the world of electronic effects and sound manipulation through the use of MIDI pickups attached to the bars of the vibraphone, which allows him to trigger synthesizers. Bringing popular acclaim to the vibraphone in a music style that allows for higher volume levels and the use of electronic instruments Mainieri has significantly expanded the musical possibilities of the instrument. He describes how this approach developed:

. . . society pushing boundaries and needing new modes of expression. My own perception of jazz as “traditional only” was forced to expand to new heights and places that I never dreamed of going. (Mainieri 1997, liner notes by Mike Mainieri and Dawn Buckholz-Andrews)

In the middle to late 1990s Mainieri recorded a series of innovative albums entitled *An American Diary* (Mainieri 1995 and 1997). On these albums he explores the possibilities of using classical and folk music compositions as the basis for improvised performance. Using the vibraphone, with the acoustic sound enhanced through the use of electronic sound enhancing effects and MIDI triggered synthesiser sounds, he provides the harmonic, rhythmical and textural platform for a wide variety of musical influences whilst retaining the element of freedom for improvised musical expression.

Building on Mainieri's developments with respect to the use of MIDI triggering systems, Joe Locke, on his album *4 Walls of Freedom* (Locke 2003), has combined the acoustic vibraphone sound, notably the only harmonic instrument on the recording, with MIDI triggered synthesiser textures. In an essentially acoustic jazz quartet setting, this use of electronically-generated sounds gives to the ensemble a contemporary flavour. With this stronger sound Locke provides a solid harmonic and rhythmic accompaniment typical of contemporary jazz styles.

It is interesting to note that the vibraphone players I interviewed during the Berklee College of Music Mallet Festival in June and July 2003 had, in spite of having an extensive recording history, little interest in the historical aspect of vibraphone performance, especially with regard to its use as an harmonic accompanying instrument. With the exception of Gary Burton, they had all been drawn to the instrument initially through witnessing performances of earlier vibraphonists, but then had looked to other instruments, such as the piano and guitar, for their influences. Dave Samuels's desire was to find new ways to express himself through his music.

He felt his focus on improvised music meant that his musical style was constantly evolving and that there were no vibraphonists he could regard as role models.

The music that I was playing was different from the music that other people had played. Whether its been done before or if other people are calling you because you comp, I think is irrelevant. I mean that can be more of an historical issue looking at how many players ended up doing that. (Mallows 2003, Samuels interview)

These players were interested more in their own development and musical direction than what had gone before.

I don't listen a lot to vibes players. There is really no one to listen to. I think that the potential in the instrument is more with listening to piano players. (Mallows 2003, Saindon interview)

I listen to piano players. I get a lot from the pianists that I play with. (Mallows 2003, Locke clinic)

In the liner notes to Mike Mainieri's first album a leader Joe Goldberg mentions:

Mainieri, who professes not to listen to other vibraphonists very much, names the same two musicians whenever asked the inevitable question (who does he regard as his influences?): Clifford Brown and Charlie Parker, in that order. (Mainieri 1962)

This sentiment is indicative of the history of the vibraphone as an harmonic accompanying instrument. Contemporary vibraphonists Joe Locke, Christos Rafalides, Tom Beckham, Steve Nelson, and others, have continued to explore different musical styles and opportunities to use the instrument as an harmonic accompanying instrument in jazz. Karl Berger, Gunter Hampel, Jay Hoggard, Bill Ware, Rob Waring, and others, have explored the potential of the instrument to provide melodic counterpoint behind soloists in musical situations with a bias towards self-expression and free improvisation.

With the recorded legacy demonstrating the vibraphone's effectiveness in the role of the sole harmonic accompanying instrument, a number of factors, both musical and

non-musical, are relevant when choosing it as the accompanist in an ensemble. In the next section I will briefly discuss these factors.

12.2 Influencing factors

The role played by the accompanist in the context of improvised music (jazz) is complex, going beyond the harmonic, melodic or rhythmic aspects of music to include aspects of self-expression and communication (with the audience as well as amongst the performing musicians themselves).

In the study of the historical development of the vibraphone as an harmonic accompanying instrument in jazz, I have noted that the factors influencing the employment of the vibraphone in this way are rich and varied. These factors include:

- Communication
- Advancements in technique
- Imagination
- Desire for clarity of performance
- Amplification
- Overcoming misconceptions
- Economics
- Instrument of choice
- Alternate sound colours
- Compositional expression
- Personal friendships
- Visual aspect of performance

Information and comments with regard to these factors was been drawn from the following sources:

- Literature survey
- Interviews with three influential vibraphonists (full transcripts supplied in the appendices)
- Attendance at seminars (Berklee College of Music Mallet Festival June/July 2003)

12.2.1 Communication

Gary Burton and Dave Samuels in their clinics (see Appendixes F and H) described the performance of music (jazz in particular) to be analogous to the spoken word and conversation between individuals and in groups. Consequently an accompanist in an ensemble needs to be effective in both communicating as well as listening. Hal Crook in his book, *How to Comp: A Study in Jazz Accompaniment*, also uses this analogy to describe comping.

Effective comping becomes a matter of listening closely to the soloist for signals indicating how to play, i.e. whether to play loud or soft, intense or subdued, dense or sparse, rich or bland, tonal or non-tonal, active or inactive, percussive or smooth, syncopated or unsyncopated, in time or out of time, and even whether to play or rest.

Interaction happens when the musical action of one player (typically the soloist) inspires an appropriate musical reaction or response from another player (an accompanist). (Crook 1995, 131)

As with soloing, accompanying is to a large degree, a reflection of the personality of the player. Together with the influences of style and setting, the accompanist's response to the soloist and the group is based on their personal experience gained through their years of playing.

In the performance of improvised music an intense level of communication is required, specifically in the role played by the accompanist. To paraphrase Dave Holland's inspirational liner notes to his *What Goes Around* album (Holland 2002):

The essence of a group jazz performance is in the celebration of the collective spirit by a group of highly individual personalities. Each musician has their own distinctive style and concept, but each one also experiences the joy of sharing the musical journey with each other. The musical composition to be performed is only the first step in the process. What brings the music to life is the collective intention of the musicians and their individual experiences, in both life and music.

Ed Saindon relates his playing experiences with trumpeter Herb Pomeroy:

Playing in a group as the only comping instruments you have to learn how to respond. I play with a trumpet player Herb Pomeroy, and Herb thinks you have to be a good player, but you also have to have, what he calls, your "playing chops" with the band – how you complement and how you respond. That's an art just playing your instrument. (Mallows 2003, Saindon interview)

Dave Samuels suggests that it is how effectively the musician (in this case the vibraphonist) communicates that has the greatest bearing on the employment of the vibraphone as an accompanying instrument, implying that the instrumentation does not play a significant role in the equation.

I think that you convince other instrumentalists how this instrument sounds by the way that you play it. You book a player that you really like, and the way that person plays. Nobody makes an issue about the piano or the guitar or the drums or anything. It's rather; how does that individual affects me. (Mallows 2003, Samuels interview)

12.2.2 Advancement of technique

Prior to 1960 the vibraphone was generally not thought of as an instrument capable of effectively filling the harmonic accompanist role in the ensemble. Through the

inspirational work of Red Norvo, Lionel Hampton, Victor Feldman, Mike Mainieri and Gary Burton in the 1930s to 1960s and the educational work of David Samuels, David Friedman, Bill Molenhof, Tom van der Geld and most notably Ed Saindon in the 1970s and 1980s, there has been significant advancement in vibraphone technique, (in particular the ability to play chords with four mallets) and, as a result, the instrument has latterly gained more acceptance in this role.

Gary Burton comments on his early approach to the vibraphone and his initial desire to play a harmonic role.

It didn't occur to me at first to play the vibraphone as if it was a piano or guitar. Because I grew up in a small town, somewhat isolated, I didn't have lots of musicians to play with. So I got into first of all playing with four mallets because I needed harmony. I wanted to hear it sounding more complete. So I discovered after a few years that in fact it wasn't as daunting technically as it looked at first. At first people had told me; "You can't play realistically with four mallets - it can't be done. And even if you could, you can't swing if you play with four mallets." But I just kept messing around with it and got more and more comfortable with it. It became obvious to me that it was working. (Mallows 2003, Burton interview)

12.2.3 Imagination

Saindon suggests that the use of the vibraphone as an accompanying instrument is limited only by the technical ability and imagination of the player:

There are many, many more techniques and combinations available to the vibist. The wide scope of possible techniques, instrument combinations, and compositional devices are wide open and only limited to the skill and imagination of the mallet player. (Saindon 1987, 35)

Joe Locke, in the liner notes to his *4 Walls of freedom* album (Locke 2003), echoes this sentiment, suggesting that the vibraphonist needs to have imagination to create opportunities for the instrument.

As a vibraphonist normally accustomed to playing with pianists, the responsibility for all the harmony initially seemed daunting, but ultimately

yielded great creative freedom. It's a matter of perception. I'm limited only by my imagination. (Locke 2003)

12.2.4 Harmonic knowledge and facility

Playing the role of harmonic accompanist in an ensemble requires that the player be not only technically proficient on the instrument but also have a good working knowledge of harmony and style. The accompanist is required to be responsive to the soloist and therefore needs to be fluent and adaptable harmonically.

Vibraphonist Mike Mainieri relates that when he was just starting out as a player he was placed in situations where he was the only chordal instrument. This encouraged him to develop his harmonic skills with the four mallets:

When [I] was fourteen [I had] my own jazz trio and being the only chordal instrument [it] allowed me to start harmonically with four mallets. (Schietroma 1983, 57)

Commenting on his early days, Gary Burton, suggested that he was generally hired as a pianist and managed to play only a few songs on vibes, and out of necessity had to be able to fill out the harmony.

So a lot of the first jobs that I did get were situations where I would be hired to play piano . . . but whenever I would play the vibes I would have to leave the piano, so there wouldn't be a chord instrument. So I learned how to fill in the voicings enough for it to sound complete if I was playing with just the bass and drums. (Mallows 2003, Burton interview)

With regard to having a good working knowledge of harmony and chordal voicings,

Burton suggests:

You have to have memorized a lot of different voicings for each type of harmony. Some open, some closed, some rich sounding, some plain sounding. Then as I come to the moment to comp with that chord some instinct says, "This should be a rich one. This should be a big one. This should be a small one. This one should be whatever the colour of the voicing should be." Then

I've got one in the memory banks that fits that. You need to have a vocabulary of voicings that you've learned. (Mallows 2003, Burton interview)

Further discussion of the technical requirements and depth of harmonic understanding are outside the scope of this study. Full transcripts of clinics on comping given in 2003 by Ed Saindon and Joe Locke can be found in Appendices: G and I. In his clinic, Saindon expands on the various technical approaches an accompanist needs in order to function effectively. Joe Locke describes his own understanding of how to be an effective accompanist, and also suggests that the player must be able to adapt their approach to the musical approaches of different soloists.

12.2.5 Personal goals and choices

The use of the vibraphone in an harmonic accompanying role has often been as a result of personal choices and a desire on the part of the vibraphonist to express themselves musically using this specific instrumentation. In reply to the question "And how did you get to the point of using the vibes as a comping instrument?" Dave Samuels answers:

Well it happens because you make it happen. I wasn't following any game plan. I just wanted to go in that direction, and see what it was like. (Mallows 2003, Samuels interview)

Gary Burton comments that the return to the use of the vibraphone as the sole harmonic accompanying instrument was a personal decision based on his need for change and his desire to utilise the harmonic potential of the vibraphone.

For five years I had had that guitar and vibe thing, and I was beginning to feel that I was exhausting the tonal variety of it all and was feeling that I should do something different, time for some kind of a change. (Mallows 2003, Burton interview)

Ed Saindon has made it his personal goal to execute pianistic techniques on the vibraphone aiming to provide an accompaniment support that projects a full-layered sound:

[Keith] Jarrett plays more of the counterpoint style and even [Brad] Mehldau. I don't limit it to jazz. You want to be able to take something classical like Mozart and figure out what is happening, all the counterpoint, the thirds and counter point. I think that even most jazz pianists are kind of limited when it comes to this type stuff. They'll be playing changes and soloing. But Jarrett and Mehldau are coming from the classical. So if you are playing a tune like *Stella by Starlight* you can play with all these techniques where you have three voices going on at the same time. To me that is where the scope of the potential of the instrument is. You can get all these lines happening. When you start doing that [playing all the counterpoint lines] the instrument sounds much bigger – especially the vibes with its limited range. (Mallows 2003, Saindon lesson)

Ed Saindon, in the 2003 clinic, suggests that the idea of using the vibraphone as the sole harmonic accompanying instrument is still relatively untapped.

Playing in a band with no piano, and no guitar. I think that is sort of untapped - that whole pianistic approach to playing the vibes. Playing in a group with no piano or guitar. (Mallows 2003, Saindon clinic)

12.2.6 Clarity in performance

The challenge for many vibraphonists is to try to overcome the instrument's expressive limitations. In order to achieve greater expressive clarity, a number of contemporary vibraphonists have chosen to perform in groups that allow the vibraphonist space to explore dynamics, phrasing and the other elements of musical expression. Ed Saindon comments that he prefers to play in a smaller group without another harmonic instrument (and often without a drummer) in order that the full range of subtle techniques may be clearly heard.

The minute you add piano or drums the whole dynamic level comes up. The drummer can play soft with brushes. But there will always be time when he "digs in" and we can't compete – just the nature of the instrument. (Mallows 2003, Saindon interview)

Burton comments on why he has avoided playing with other harmonic instruments (specifically the piano):

I always shied away from playing with piano players . . . I had never felt safe having a pianist in the band on a regular basis . . . We were in each other's way it felt all the time. (Mallows 2003, Burton interview)

Ed Saindon comments on the instrumentation of his CD release *Swing on the Sunnyside* (Saindon 1996) and the need to allow for space within which he could showcase his pianistic approach to the vibraphone:

I purposely left out guitar and piano in order to give me more room to fill things out. (Blake 1998, 43)

Saindon suggests that in order to achieve clarity in performance the ensemble should be as uncluttered as possible.

An excellent setting that works very well with the application of these concepts [dampening and pedalling] is a trio in which the bass and drums give support but leave enough room for the vibist to fill things out with a variety of techniques. (Saindon 1982, 82)

Joe Locke's comments with regard to performance situations echo this point.

The chamber setting for the vibraphone is a beautiful setting. The chamber concept with different combinations of instruments is great and it exposes the natural beauty of the instrument. (Mallows 2003, Locke clinic)

Referring to the space that is created when the vibes are the sole harmonic accompanying instrument, vibraphonist Matthias Lupri, in the liner notes of his *Shadow of the Vibe* album is quoted as saying:

"I love playing with sax and no other comping instrument. It gives you more freedom, and without the richer piano sound the timbre of sax and vibes together tends to float more." (Lupri 1999)

12.2.7 Amplification

Not all performance situations allow for the vibraphone to be heard with clarity, as amplification of the instrument is notoriously difficult. Saindon comments that with an increase in the volume of the performance the subtle nuances of the instrument are often lost.

In trying to keep up with the volume of everyone else in the band, the vibist sacrifices his valuable dynamic range in order to be heard. (Saindon 1986, 66)

Commenting on the *Gallery* (Samuels and others 1981) recording, of Dave Samuels suggested that amplification of this mainly acoustic group was problematic in live performance, noting that the studio situation was easier to deal with.

There was always a volume issue, you see we had cello player - I guess he was using a microphone at that point. When Paul was playing soprano then it was Ok. Oboe or English horn, and we had to come way down for that.

In the recording studio, it's not the amount of sound it's the quality that's important. Like I said, the issue for me is whether or not it sounds good! (Mallows 2003, Samuels interview)

In order to project, the vibraphonist has the option of either playing more aggressively with harder mallets thereby compromising the instrument's potential warmth of sound. Alternatively the vibraphonist could ask the members of the ensemble to play at a lower volume – a request not often well taken by saxophonists or drummers. With the advancement of recording techniques and microphone quality, the vibraphone has been given a voice that can be heard, both in live performance as well as on recordings. This has allowed the vibraphonist to play in environments where they can match the volume of the rest of the ensemble without having to compromise on tone quality by using harder mallets.

As the trend toward the use of electronic instruments progressed, experimentation with pickup systems (the Electric vibes, the K&K vibraphone pickup system, KAT MIDI mallet controller, and others), have helped increase the volume potential of the vibraphone. The use of electronic processing of the acoustic sound (reverb and chorus effects) has allowed the acoustic sound of the vibraphone to have a place in musical styles that tend towards the use of non-acoustic electronic instruments (Fender Rhodes, synthesisers, the electric guitar and the electric bass). Steven Rehbein in his research paper, *The Contemporary Jazz Vibraphonist: The Electronic Expansion of the Acoustic Sound Spectrum*, optimistically suggests that technology has progressed significantly, and lists a number of innovative instruments that have been developed.

Musical expression on mallet keyboards is no longer limited to the acoustic parameters of the instruments. Electronic technological advancements with MIDI coupled with sophisticated amplification/MIDI units (K&K Sound System) have transformed acoustic instrument into veritable MIDI drivers, while enabling the sonic integrity of the mallet instrument (vibes, marimba) to be retained. Moreover, percussion-keyboard synthesizers and MIDI-mallet controllers (KAT, Simmons Silicon Mallet) are evidence that electronic-keyboard technology has intersected with the mallet-percussion field. (Rehbein 1994, 120)

Joe Locke and others have commented that so far none of these pickup systems has been totally successful in allowing for the subtle nuances of the instrument to be heard.

The problem is how to amplify the vibes. We have to use pickups because we want everything we play to be heard and yet you lose some of the beauty and organic intrinsic quality of the vibraphone when you amplify with pickups. (Mallows 2003, Locke clinic)

Saindon proposes that there still needs to be further development towards an amplification system that will project the purer acoustic sound of the vibraphone.

I love the acoustic sound. I don't like the K&K [vibraphone pick-ups] system. Dave Samuels and Joe Locke are using it because they have to. But I think that there must be a better way. The K&K was designed with Mainieri to trigger a synth. I don't think the goal was to get a pure acoustic sound of the vibes - it was rather to get the triggering thing. So Fishman, they make transducers for bass, they might be interested in building a system that would work. Possibly to get a better acoustic sound rather than just a bar sound. I don't use the fan [vibrato effect] but Dave Samuels does and he would like that effect caught and amplified. There must be a better way to amplify the instrument and that would open up some doors with regard to the music that we can play. Christos is playing loud Latin stuff in tight corners in New York City so he needs pick-ups. But the sound to me is not great. I like the acoustic sound of the instrument – that's why I play the instrument. It's got a big dynamic range acoustically. (Mallows 2003, Saindon interview)

Dave Samuels discusses the various attempts at trying to effectively amplify the sound of the vibraphone, using pick up systems, microphones, or mallet MIDI controllers. The article shows his continued frustration in trying to get an effective amplification of the instrument.

Essentially, the story of electronics for mallet instruments is one of lack of interest on the part of manufacturers, and also a lack of competition. Without interest, you don't have a lot of money being spent on research and development. (Mattingly 1997, 66)

12.2.8 Overcoming misconceptions

There are many misconceptions surrounding the vibraphone's potential as an alternative harmonic accompanying instrument. It is generally not common for bandleaders to use the vibraphone in the role of harmonic accompanist in the rhythm section.

Bandleaders rarely think of mallet instruments when considering either a rhythm section or lead role. We simply have to prepare ourselves as best we can for whatever opportunity we may find. (Gunderson 1999, 48)

Vibraphonist Jerry Tachoir in his article, *A Working Mallet Player*, echoes Gunderson's comments suggesting that the uncertainty with regard to work opportunities for mallet players is "partially due to employers not understanding the

capabilities of mallet instruments” and that “certain stereotypes exist with . . . [the mallet instruments]”. (Tachoir 1993, 70)

Consequently, vibraphone players have to create their own environment, forming their own performing groups, with the vibraphone as the sole harmonic accompanying instrument, if they so wish.

If your intention is to do things in a certain way and you find that the only way that you can do it is to create the environment then, that’s what you do! If that means that you go out and get your own gigs, then that’s what you do if you want to do it. (Mallows 2003, Samuels interview)

Tachoir echoes this sentiment when he suggests that in order to find work opportunities the vibraphonist often has to lead his own group.

Most mallet payers involved in ensembles tend to be leaders. Perhaps this reflects a certain ego associated with mallet instrumentalists, but more likely it reflects a scarcity of work opportunities. (Tachoir 1993, 70)

Victor Mendoza agrees, and comments that this situation is often due to a lack of imagination of the part of band leaders.

The strange thing is that vibes players are usually the leaders and it is not often that you get called because of the instrument. Generally it never dawns on people that the vibes can work in Latin music as the comping instrument. When people think of vibes, they think of elevator music. It has just got to do with a lack of imagination. So a lot of time you end up being a bandleader so that you can play what you want to play. (Mallows 2003, Mendoza clinic)

12.2.9 Economics

It is often out of financial necessity that the vibraphonist is forced to perform the role as the sole harmonic accompanying instrument. In the liner notes to the 1950 Red Norvo Trio recordings, *The Savoy Sessions* (Norvo 1950) Burt Korall mentions that Red Norvo’s decision to work with this smaller instrumental line-up came about because “the only gigs he could get in California were for smaller groups with three or four members.” (Norvo 1976).

Christos Rafalides, a vibraphone player who has broken new ground in using the vibraphone in different musical styles, replied to the question “How did you end up playing in just a trio?”

When I moved to NYC after graduation from Berklee, the gigs that I was able to get only had money for a trio and not the usual quartet or quintet. So this forced me to improvise . . . Ultimately it helped me continue to develop the four mallet technique, which allowed me to combine chords and lines.” (Rafalides 2004, Manhattan Vibes <http://www.manhattanvibes.com>)

12.2.10 Instrument of choice

Whatever the reason for deciding to play the vibraphone, the instrument becomes the vehicle on which the musician communicates their musical thoughts. In the case of Gary Burton, the vibraphone was the instrument on which he started his musical studies and performing career.

I’ve been playing it all my life. My approach to learning it was a little different than most people. In my generation, it was hard to find teachers for mallet instruments. I was fortunate at the very beginning. There happened to be a woman [Evelyn Tucker] in the neighbourhood who played the marimba and the vibraphone. So that’s why I started on this instrument - that’s what was available. (Mallows 2003, Burton clinic)

Burton gives some background as to how other vibraphonists started on the instrument.

Red Norvo started on xylophone and switched to vibraphone, but he was the only mallet player of the early generation that was really a mallet player to begin with. Hampton was a drummer. Milt Jackson was a guitar player. Victor Feldman was a piano player, and so on. I think that it was in my generation, I think, that Bobby Hutcherson and I both started on vibes. And people after us have. (Mallows 2003, Burton clinic)

Many vibraphonists started out on drums and were inspired or encouraged to take up playing the vibraphone due to a number of factors that included hearing a performance by Burton, or the personal need to move from the non-harmonic

requirements of the drum set to more harmonic involvement in the music. Joe Locke describes his start on the vibraphone:

I grew up in Rochester. I played drums when I was a little kid. My mother said that if I was to play the drum set then I must take piano lessons. How she had this wisdom I don't know. Then I realised that I wanted to play a harmonic and melodic instrument and I didn't want to play piano. The vibraphone was the perfect instrument for me. I started playing drums and piano when I was eight and started on the vibes when I was thirteen. (Mallows 2003, Locke clinic)

Christos Rafalides comments:

I realised that the vibraphone enables me to use both rhythm and harmony. I just fell in love with the instrument; the way it sounds, the way it looks, the way it is played. (Rafalides 2004, Manhattan Vibes <http://www.manhattanvibes.com>)

12.2.11 Alternate sound colour

Pianists Victor Feldman and Karl Berger have used the vibraphone as an alternative sound colour to other instruments with the intention of creating variety and interest in their performance. Gary Burton and Ed Saindon have recorded albums where they play the piano in addition to the vibraphone. Mallet percussionists, David Friedman and David Samuels, along with many other mallet specialists, tend to use the vibraphone and marimba interchangeably, depending on the musical requirements of the specific musical mood. Burton has recorded using both the marimba and the xylophone as alternative instruments to the vibraphone. Gunter Hampel uses the vibraphone as an alternative instrument to his multi-reed playing (clarinet, flute, piano, bass clarinet and baritone sax), giving impressive variety to his performance.

With the development of electronic triggers from the acoustic instrument, vibraphonists now have the ability to be linked to synthesisers, the MIDI triggering

sounds directly from the vibraphone. Mike Mainieri has pioneered the use of the vibraphone that triggers synthesiser sounds in his work in the *Steps Ahead* group.

12.2.12 Friendships

In improvised music, performers have to maintain a bond of friendship and trust in order to be able to communicate and perform as an effective group. Consequently the choice of accompanist can be influenced by personal friendships between musicians. Trumpeter Chet Baker and vibraphonist Wolfgang Lackerschmid, for example, had a friendship that eventually led to the two recording together. Gary Burton's initial inclusion in the Stan Getz Quartet was mainly through a personal friendship with the bass player of the group. Dave Samuels and Paul McCandless note in the liner notes to the album, *All the Mornings Bring* (McCandless 1979), that the choice of personnel for a recording or for the formation of a group is often dependent on personal relationships between the performers.

12.2.13 Compositional expression

Another influencing factor in the choice of the vibraphone as the sole harmonic accompanying instrument in the ensemble is the vibraphonists's desire to perform their own musical compositions. On occasion the focus of the composition is to display the technical and musical potential of the vibraphone.

Gary Burton, early on in his recording career, started to focus on developing a new sound, initially using his own compositions and later the compositions of Mike Gibbs, Carla Bley, Pat Metheny and others. Mike Mainieri, a prolific composer, regularly

performs and records his own compositions. Ed Saindon uses his compositions to highlight technical developments that he has achieved in his own playing.

12.2.14 Visual aspect

The vibraphone is a very visual instrument that tends to absorb the audience's attention in performance.

People are often dazzled by your technique and incredible dexterity, yet do not know what instrument you are playing. (Tachoir 1993, 70)

This visual aspect of vibraphone performance adds to the overall audience appeal of the group creating a visually interesting and engaging, as well as aurally satisfying performance. With the more widespread sale of videos and DVDs this aspect of performance is gaining momentum. Lionel Hampton, for example, was a master of showmanship who deliberately created a show for the audience. Red Norvo actively engaged the audience and fellow performers in eye contact after almost every phrase he played, mutually acknowledging performances of colourful or interesting lines.

In the performances I attended at the 2003 Berklee Mallet Festival I was interested to see a wide variety of performance styles by the vibraphonists. All created a strong visual presence on stage, certainly adding weight to the fact that the inclusion of the vibraphone in the ensemble adds significantly to the overall visual presentation of the performance.

Joe Locke, with his carefully groomed hair, fashionable clothing and obvious stage act, had an engagingly strong visual presence. Throughout his performance he had a broad smile and was seemingly in ecstasy over the sounds he was producing, recoiling after striking the bars with strong body movements as if the notes or phrases were too

hot to handle. He exuded almost childish joy as if thinking, “What would happen if I played this note or chord now?” standing back in amazement, as if to say, “Wasn’t that great!”

Ed Saindon’s more intense approach, while still engaging to the audience, creates a feeling that his music needs to be listened to. With small rhythmic head movements he engages the listener to feel the inner rhythm of the music – the layers beyond what is actually being played. Saindon limits his eye contact with the other players to reacting to “interesting” things or at the end of sections.

Gary Burton’s more flowing approach, gives the audience the feeling that he is actively engaging with the other members of the group. His body movement is strongly related to the quality of the sound - a ringing sound resulting in recoil of the arms, and a strong rhythmic effect, a more controlled body motion.

Latin music specialist and vibraphonist Victor Mendoza, stands upright at the vibraphone, keeping hands and arms moving with the head steady, as if keeping track of what is going on around him. With clear arm signals he indicates to the group changes in section or who is the next soloist.

Dave Samuels’ performance shows a looser flowing approach, indicating to the audience that he is in contact with the music. He moves freely around the stage, almost casually moving between the vibraphone and marimba.

12.2 The way forward

To complete this historical survey I look at the way ahead for the vibraphone as an harmonic accompanying instrument in jazz. Jazz music, with its fundamental requirement being that of self-expression and improvisation, is by its very nature constantly evolving and developing. New approaches and influences see musicians (both young and old) continuing to search for fresh ways to express themselves musically.

This historical survey of the development of the vibraphone as an alternative harmonic instrument reveals the gradual acceptance and increased usage of the instrument in this way. Vibraphonists who have affected or influenced this progress are those who have contributed in some significant way, musically or technically. Factors that could be considered as pointers to the future development of the instrument could be:

- Further development of technique (sticking, dampening and touch)
- Expansion of the keyboard (pianistic) potential of the vibraphone
- Expansion into more styles of music
- Developments in instrument design
- Developments in the amplification of the acoustic sound
- Further use of MIDI triggering

In undertaking this historical study, I have realised that there is a need for a formal approach in order to assist future vibraphonists to gain the skill of accompanying (comping) in jazz styles. I would suggest that there is a need for a method book on this subject, aimed specifically at vibraphonists. The vibraphone method books that

are available are limited in that they generally deal only with the basics of technique and application of harmonic concepts on the vibraphone, and are generally related to solo vibraphone performance styles.

Up to the present, vibraphonists interested in developing their skills in effective accompaniment have used techniques based on pianistic and guitar approaches. While these are still valid, we now have a recorded history of performances spanning more than fifty years, where the vibraphone has been used in the role of the harmonic accompanying instrument in jazz. As the vibraphone is a unique instrument, physically different from other harmonic instruments (such as the piano and guitar) and with its own potential in tone production and performance techniques, a method book specific to the instrument incorporating the various aspects of performance that have been developed over the past fifty years would be of great value.

Concepts specific to the vibraphone need to be addressed in order for the text to be comprehensive with regard to the usage of the instrument as an effective harmonic accompanying instrument. Some of these aspects are:

- Use of articulation to create interest and variety.
 - Pedalling
 - Dampening
 - Dead-strokes
 - Use of mallet shafts
 - Pitch bending
 - Bowed notes
 - Harmonics
 - Mallet choice
 - Vibrato effect (use of, and speed thereof)
- Harmonic possibilities available with a four-mallet technique.
 - Chordal shapes
 - Open and closed voicings

Chordal stacking
 Textural layering
 Rhythmically breaking up chords
 Arpeggios

- Statement of the melodic theme.

Melody with accompaniment
 Chordal support
 Chordal arrangements
 Counterpoint
 Laying out

- Vibraphone solo approaches.

Solo unaccompanied style
 Linear melodic two-mallet style
 Self-accompaniment

- Range of the vibraphone

Comping for different instrumental soloists
 Accompanying vocals

- MIDI triggering and use of synthesisers
- Use of other mallet percussion instruments and their harmonic potential.

Marimba
 Xylophone
 KAT

Apart from the technical aspects that are specific to the vibraphone and the harmonic knowledge required of an accompanist, an effective accompanist needs to be a “complete” musician with keenly honed aural skills that allow interaction with the soloist. A method book on vibraphone comping needs to include discussion of the following aspects of jazz performance:

- Technique (specifically four-mallet technique, pedalling and dampening)
- Ear training
- Transcribing and listening (historical survey)
- Knowledge of voicings

- Reharmonization techniques
- Improvisation techniques
- Time feel
- Articulation to create contrast and interest
- Dynamics
- Solo playing
- Orchestration techniques
- Style
- Performance considerations

These topics should be covered in a way that will inspire the vibraphonist towards a deeper study through absorbing information from many sources. Ultimately the effective accompanist will be a musician who has absorbed all the aspects of music making - a “total musician” with a keen imagination:

It is really about being a total musician with taste, good time, ears, sensitivity, knowledge of theory and harmony, etc. The list goes on and on. (Saindon 2004, Private email correspondence)

The first thing to keep in mind is not to put any limitations on the instrument. Limitations come from the player and not the instrument. The important thing to focus on and develop in this concept of pianistic playing is the concept itself, which is incorporating pianistic styles techniques and most of all, a pianistic mentality in your vibe playing. (Saindon 1984, 171)

Finally, a succinct quote from Ed Saindon that emphasises how the ultimate goal in undertaking an historical survey, discussing technical or harmonic concepts or writing a method book should be to keep uppermost in mind appreciation of the music.

They [the audience] are listening to music rather than technique. So, strive for strength in the music and then concern yourself with the technical concepts thereafter. (Saindon 1986, 104)

GLOSSARY

Arpeggiated style - The rhythmic staggered sounding of chordal tones. Comparable to the pianistic technique of “rolling the chord”.

Articulation – The legato or staccato execution of a series of notes or chords.

Block chords – Groups of notes played together that outline the chordal quality of the moment.

Ballad – A slow, moody tune.

Bebop – The classical jazz style, epitomized by the music of the mid-1940s through the mid-1950s as created by such musicians as Charlie Parker, Dizzy Gillespie, Max Roach, Bud Powell, and Thelonius Monk. Characterised by asymmetrical phrases, ornate melodic lines and complex rhythmic patterns. Harmonies are more dissonant than those used in the swing style.

Blues – A category of harmonic progression and its associated derivative musical style.

Bossa nova – A medium paced Latin dance style that features a straight eight-note pulse (without swinging in the traditional sense) and repeated two-bar syncopated rhythmic pattern.

Closed-position voicing – Chordal shapes where the notes are placed close together.

Comping – From the word accompany: to play in support of a melodic instrument or singer.

Contrapuntal style – The use of scalar movement to provide contrasting counter melodies that imply harmony and create complex rhythmic texture.

Chord tones - Those notes from the chord scales which establish the intended chord's basic sound (roots, 3rds, 5ths, and 7ths)

Country music –The musical culture that evolved in the USA based on absorbing folk-music styles from Europe and elsewhere in the early days of the countries national growth.

Dead strokes – Not removing the mallet from the bar once the note has been struck, creating a dead sound with no sustain.

European jazz – Jazz styles that reflect the art music of Europe (Western classical music).

Expanded concerted style – Block chords plus a root note played rhythmically on syncopated beats.

- Free jazz** – Performances that negate stylistic rules which were formally valid, by attempting to destroy the feelings of structure, direction and tonality with the introduction of random improvisation and the use of instruments in a non-standard way.
- Harmonic accompanying instrument** - An instrument capable of playing the “basic harmonic structure in a rhythmic way to assist the soloist” (Collier 1975, 153),
- Harmonic instrument** - Any musical instrument on which two or more notes can be sounded simultaneously, specifically – piano, keyboards, guitar and vibraphone.
- Harmelodic improvisation** – A collective improvisation technique developed by Ornette Coleman in the 1950’s where all the members of the ensemble are encouraged to play melodically regardless of tonality or structure.
- Horns** – Inclusive terminology for the wind and brass instruments in a jazz ensemble, used in contrast to the rhythm section instruments.
- Jazz** - An improvised musical expression of a man’s individuality. (Collier 1975)
- Latin** – Characterised by the musical styles and rhythmic patterns found in the Caribbean and South America.
- Layered texture** – The sounding of chordal scalar tones or tonal clusters over a wide range of the instrument allowing the sounds to sustain and blend together.
- Lay out** – For member(s) of the ensemble to stop playing for a period in the tune.
- Mallet dampening** – The use of a mallet to stop the bar from ringing.
- Marimba** – A mallet percussion instrument with the bars made of wood and a range lower than that of the xylophone.
- MIDI** – Musical Instrument Digital Interface. An electronic language where by messages are sent between digital musical instruments such as synthesisers.
- Open-position voicings** – Chordal shapes where range of the notes played are expanded by raising at least one of the notes an octave.
- Pedalling** – The use of the vibraphone’s sustain pedal to either let the note ring or alternatively end the sustain.
- Reharmonization** – Rewriting of a chord progression with the purposes of creating richer and more interesting vertical relationships between melody and its associated harmony.
- Rhythm section** - The rhythm section in jazz usually consists of piano or guitar, in some cases both, providing the chords, bass providing the basic pulse

and suggesting the harmony, and drums providing and decorating the pulse. (Collier 1975, 153)

Rhythmic style – Where the chord or scalar tones are sounded rhythmically through the use of alternating mallet or hand-to-hand strokes, reminiscent of classical marimba techniques.

Riff – A repeated melodic figure, often played behind a solo.

Rock – Popular music that evolved in the 1960s and 1970s as a result of white musicians absorbing black rhythm 'n' blues styles.

Rhythm Section - The instruments that accompany or back a soloist, namely: harmonic instrument(s) (such as piano, guitar or vibraphone), the bass, and the drums.

Scale comping – Comping processes in which colours are drawn freely from the appropriate improvising scale.

Second line drumming – A snare drum style, with a prevalence of rolls, based on the traditional marching drum line playing of New Orleans.

Solo – To improvise on the tune, either within the harmonic structure or in a free manner.

Solo style – Complementing melody and bass tones sounded together followed by chordal notes played in a rhythmic fashion.

Stacked chords – A higher voiced chord sounded against a sustained lower chord.

Standard – A tune popular with jazz musicians.

Stride – A piano style characterised by using the left hand in a downbeat-upbeat pattern in which beats one and three are heavily accented single bass notes (or octaves or tenths) and beats two and four are unaccented triads.

Swing – The style of jazz music popular in the 1930s and early 1940s, characterised by arrangements for large ensembles, the rhythm section being led by the bass playing a regularly on the beat. Melodic patterns are based on scales and arpeggios.

Tensions - Those notes from the chord scales that create more or less colourful sounding extensions of the basic chord (9ths, 11ths, and 13ths)

Traditional concerted style – Block chords played as a regular rhythmic accompaniment and generally placed on the beat.

Vamp – A short section of music, usually chord related, that is repeated several times.

Vibraphone/Vibraharp/Vibes - Words that are interchangeable and all relate to a melodic percussion instrument with metal bars struck with mallets to produce the sound and with a chromatic range of usually three octaves with the lowest tone being F below middle C.

Vibrato - An electric motor driving a drive belts rotates fans that open and close the resonating chamber creating a vibrato effect.

Voice leading – The process of smoothly connecting notes from chord to chord with a blended textural sound.

Voicing – The process of arranging the notes of a chord.

Western classical music – Formal art music that evolved in Europe over the past 300 years.

World music – An inclusive term implying music that reflects influences from many world cultures, sometimes beings used together in a hybrid form.

Xylophone - A mallet percussion instrument with the bars made of wood and a range higher than that of the marimba.

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- _____. 1978. *Times Square*. ECM 1111 ST.
- Burton, Gary and Chick Corea. 1979. *Duet*. ECM Records ECM 1140.
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- _____. 2003. *Interview with Ed Saindon*. Transcript in Appendix E.
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- _____. 2003. *Ed Saindon Clinic at Berklee College of Music Mallet Festival*. Transcript in Appendix G.
- _____. 2003. *Dave Samuels Clinic at Berklee College of Music Mallet Festival*. Transcript in Appendix H.
- _____. 2003. *Joe Locke Clinic at Berklee College of Music Mallet Festival*. Transcript in Appendix I.
- _____. 2003. *Victor Mendoza Clinic at Berklee College of Music Mallet Festival*. Transcript in Appendix J.

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University of Cape Town

APPENDIX A: CHRONOLOGICAL LISTING OF RECORDINGS

Album details

- Date of issue
- Name of vibraphonist
- Album title
- Recording group or artist

Key to the table:

- **Recordings where the vibraphone is used as the only harmonic accompanying instrument.**
- Recordings where the vibraphone is used as the only harmonic accompanying instrument in a duo or solo situation
- *Recordings of historical significance (the vibraphone used as a comping instrument with other harmonic instruments)*

Year	Vibraphone player	Album Name	Group or Artist
1950	<i>Red Norvo</i>	<i>The Savoy Sessions</i>	<i>The Red Norvo Trio with Tal Farlow and Charles Mingus</i>
1962	Gary Burton	<i>New Vibe Man in Town</i>	Gary Burton Trio
1963	Gary Burton	<i>3 in Jazz</i>	Gary Burton Quartet
1964	Gary Burton	<i>Getz Au Go Go</i>	Stan Getz Quintet
1966	Gunter Hampel	<i>Music from Europe</i>	Gunter Hampel Group
1966	Karl Berger	<i>Symphony for Improvisers</i>	Don Cherry Quintet
1966	Gunter Hampel	<i>Music from Europe</i>	Gunter Hampel Group
1967	Gary Burton	<i>The Stan Getz Quartet in Paris</i>	Stan Getz Quartet
1969	Gunter Hampel	<i>8th of July 1969</i>	Gunter Hampel Group
1971	Karl Berger	<i>We Are You</i>	Karl Berger Quartet
1971	Gary Burton	<i>Alone at Last</i>	Gary Burton
1972	Gary Burton	<i>Paris Encounter</i>	Gary Burton and Stephane Grappelli
1975	Gary Burton	<i>Hello Hotel</i>	Gary Burton and Steve Swallow
1976	Karl Berger	<i>All Kinds of Time</i>	Karl Berger and Dave Holland
1977	David Friedman	<i>Futures Past</i>	David Friedman
1977	David Samuels	<i>Timepiece</i>	Gerry Niewood
1978	Gary Burton	<i>Times Square</i>	Gary Burton Quartet
1978	Tom van der Geld	<i>Children at Play: Patience</i>	Tom van der Geld
1978	David Friedman and David Samuels	<i>Winter Love, April Joy</i>	David Friedman
1978	Jay Hoggard	<i>Solo Vibraphone</i>	Jay Hoggard
1979	Karl Berger	<i>Just Play</i>	Karl Berger and Edward

			Blackwell
1980	Tom van der Geld	<i>Children at Play: Out Patients</i>	Tom van der Geld
1980	Tom van der Geld	<i>Around 6</i>	Kenny Wheeler
1980	Gunter Hampel	<i>All the Things You Could Be If Charlie Mingus Was Your Daddy</i>	Gunter Hampel & His Galaxie Dream Band
1981	Gunter Hampel	<i>Place To Be With Us</i>	Gunter Hampel & His Galaxie Dream Band
1981	Gary Burton	<i>Easy as Pie</i>	Gary Burton Quartet
1981	David Friedman	<i>Of the Wind's Eye</i>	David Friedman
1981	Gunter Hampel	<i>Celestial Glory</i>	Gunter Hampel & His Galaxie Dream Band
1981	Bill Molenhof	<i>Beach Street Years</i>	Bill Molenhof
1981	David Samuels	<i>Gallery</i>	Gallery
1982	David Friedman	<i>Peace</i>	Chet Baker and David Friedman
1982	Gary Burton	<i>Picture This</i>	Gary Burton Quartet
1982	Harry Sheppard	<i>Symbiotic</i>	Harry Sheppard Group
1983	Gunter Hampel	<i>Jubilation</i>	Gunter Hampel All Stars
1986	Francois Volpe	<i>Blue Moon's Fall</i>	D. M Visotzky and Francois Volpe
1988	Karl Berger	<i>Transit</i>	Karl Berger, Dave Holland and Edward Blackwell
1990	Jay Hoggard	<i>The Little Tiger</i>	Jay Hoggard
1991	Karl Berger	<i>Crystal Fire</i>	Karl Berger, Dave Holland and Edward Blackwell
1991	Karl Berger	<i>Duets with Paul Shigihara</i>	Karl Berger
1992	Gunter Hampel	<i>Dialog</i>	Gunter Hampel and Mattias Schbert
1992	Jay Hoggard	<i>In The Spirit</i>	Jay Hoggard
1994	Karl Berger	<i>Conversations</i>	Karl Berger
1995	David Friedman	<i>Air Sculpture</i>	David Friedman
1995	Jay Hoggard	<i>Pleasant Memories</i>	Jay Hoggard
1995	Joe Locke	<i>Very Early</i>	Joe Locke Trio
1995	Matthias Lupri	<i>Window Up Window Down</i>	Matthias Lupri Group
1995	Mike Mainieri	<i>Man Behind Bars</i>	Mike Mainieri
1995	Mike Mainieri	<i>An American Diary</i>	Mike Mainieri
1995	Ed Saindon	<i>Conversations in the Language of Jazz</i>	Harry Skoler
1996	Karl Berger	<i>No Man is an Island</i>	Karl Berger Orchestra
1996	Steve Nelson	<i>Dream of the Elders</i>	Dave Holland Quartet
1996	Ed Saindon	<i>Swing on the Sunnyside</i>	Ed Saindon
1996	Ed Saindon	<i>Reflections on the Art of</i>	Harry Skoler

		<i>Swing: a Tribute to Benny Goodman</i>	
1998	Steve Nelson	<i>Points of View</i>	Dave Holland Quintet
1998	Wolfgang Lackerschmid	<i>Why Shouldn't You Cry</i>	Chet Baker and Wolfgang Lackerschmid
1998	Ed Saindon	<i>The Great American Songbook</i>	Ed Saindon
1998	Bill Ware	<i>Vibes</i>	Bill Ware Trio
1999	Gunter Hampel	<i>8th Sept. 1999</i>	Gunter Hampel Sextet
1999	Matthias Lupri	<i>Shadow of the Vibe</i>	Matthias Lupri Group
1999	Ed Saindon	<i>Why Cry</i>	Matt Marvuglio
2000	Tom Beckham	<i>Suspicious</i>	Tom Beckham
2000	Franz Bauer	<i>Tree of Sounds</i>	Batoru
2000	John Mark Piper	<i>Just a Step Away</i>	John Mark Piper
2001	Ted Piltzecker	<i>Standing Alone</i>	Ted Piltzecker
2001	Rob Waring	<i>Synchronize Your Watches</i>	Rob Waring Trio
2002	Gunter Hampel	<i>Challenge of the Now</i>	Gunter Hampel Trio
2002	Christos Rafalides	<i>Manhattan Vibes</i>	Christos Rafalides
2003	Joe Locke	<i>4 Walls of Freedom</i>	Joe Locke
2003	Tom Beckham	<i>Round'bout Now</i>	George Schuller

APPENDIX B: RECORDING INFORMATION

Recording information relevant to the topic obtained from liner notes and cover documentation

with regard to:

- Date of issue
- Name of principal artist
- Album Title
- Record label and number (Re-issue number if applicable).
- Instrumentation
- Date of recording
- Place of recording
- Writer of the liner notes

Goodman, Benny. 1990. *Benny Goodman: 1935-1936*. Laserlight 15726.

Benny Goodman	- clarinet
Lionel Hampton	- vibraphone
Teddy Wilson	- piano
Gene Krupa	- drums

Recorded: 1935 to 1936, details not given.

Liner notes: None.

Norvo, Red. 1976. *The Savoy Sessions*. Savoy SJL 2212.

The Red Norvo Trio:

Red Norvo	- vibraphone
Tal Farlow	- guitar
Charles Mingus	- bass

Recorded: May 1950, Los Angeles.

October 1950, Chicago.

April 1951, Los Angeles.

Liner notes: Burt Korall

Feldman, Victor. 1958, reissued 1998. *The Arrival of Victor Feldman*. Contemporary Records OJCCD-268-2 (S7549).

Victor Feldman	- vibraharp and piano
Scott LaFaro	- bass
Stan Levey	- drums

Recorded: January 1958, Los Angeles, CA.

Remastered: 1998.

Liner notes: Nat Hentoff

Burton, Gary. 1962. *New Vibe Man in Town.* . RCA reissued as 52420-2.

Gary Burton	- vibes
Joe Morello	- drums
Gene Cherico	- bass

Recorded: July 1961, New York.
Liner notes: George Avakain

Mainieri, Mike. 1962. *Blues on the Other Side.* ARGO LP 706.

The Mike Mainieri Quartet:

Mike Mainieri, Jr.	- vibraphone
Bruce Martin	- piano
Julie Ruggiero	- bass
Joseph Porcaro, Jr.	- drums

Recorded: May 1962, Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey.
Liner Notes: Joe Goldberg

Burton, Gary, Sonny Rollins, and Clark Terry. 1963. *3 in Jazz.* RCA Victor LPM 2725.

Gary Burton Quartet:

Gary Burton	- vibraphone
Jack Sheldon	- trumpet
Monty Budwig	- bass
Vernell Founier	- drums

Recorded: February 1963, Los Angeles, CA.
Liner notes: George Avakain

Burton, Gary. 1963. *Who is Gary Burton?* RCA LPM 2665.

Gary Burton	- vibraphone
Clark Terry	- trumpet
Phil Woods	- alto saxophone
Tommy Flanagan	- piano
John Neves	- bass
Joe Morello	- drums
Chris Swanson	- drums

Recorded: September 1962, New York City.
Liner notes: Marty Gold

Shearing, George. 1963. *Recorded in Concert, Santa Monica, Calif. The George Shearing Quintet.* Capitol Records T 1992.

George Shearing Quintet:

George Shearing	- piano
Gary Burton	- vibraharp
John Gray	- guitar
Bill Yancey	- bass
Vernel Fournier	- drums

Recorded: date not given, Santa Monica, CA.
Liner notes: Leonard Feather

Getz, Stan. 1964. *Getz Au Go Go.* Verve 821 725-2.

Stan Getz	- tenor saxophone
Astrud Gilberto	- vocalist
Gary Burton	- vibes
Gene Cherico or Chuck Israel	- bass
Joe Hunt or Helico Milito	- drums
Kenny Burrell	- guitar (on five tracks)

Recorded: August 19, 1964, live at Café Au Go Go, Greenwich Village, NYC.
Liner notes: Gene Lees

Don Cherry. 1966. *Symphony for Improvisers.* Blue Note.

Gato Barbieri	- tenor sax
Karl Berger	- piano, vibraphone
Don Cherry	- trumpet, cornet
Henry Grimes	- bass
Ed Blackwell	- drums
Jenny Clarke	- bass
Henry Grims	- bass
Pharoah Sanders	- piccolo, Tenor Sax

Information obtained from <http://www.allmusic.com>, accessed April 2004.

Hampel, Gunter. 1966. *Music from Europe.* Birth.

Gunter Hampel	- flute, bass clarinet, vibraphone
Willem Breuker	- clarinet, bass clarinet, alto sax, baritone sax, soprano sax, tenor sax
Pierre Courbois	- percussion
Piet Veening	- bass

Information obtained from <http://www.allmusic.com>, accessed April 2004.

Getz, Stan. 1967. *The Stan Getz Quartet in Paris*. Verve 2304 044.

Stan Getz	- tenor saxophone
Gary Burton	- vibraphone
Steve Swallow	- acoustic bass
Roy Haynes	- drums

Recorded: November 1966, live at the Paris Jazz Festival
 Liner notes: Andre Francis (in French)

Mainieri, Mike. 1968. *Insight*. Solid State SS 18029.

The Mike Mainieri Quartet:

Mike Mainieri	- vibraphone
Joe Beck	- guitar
Lyn Christie	- bass
Don McDonald	- drums

Recorded: Date and place not given.
 Liner Notes: Manny Alban

McFarland, Gary. 1968. *Does the Sun Really Shine On The Moon?* Skye SK-2 reissued on DCC Jazz DJZ 634.

Gary McFarland	- vibraphone
Jerome Richardson	- soprano saxophone
Marvin Stamm	- flugelhorn
Sam Brown	- guitar
Chuck Rainey	- bass
Grady Tate	- drums
Warren Bernhardt	- organ

Recorded: January 1968, New York.
 Liner notes: None

Burton, Gary. 1980. *The Vibe Man*. RCA CL 43237.

Gary Burton	- vibraphone (marimba and piano on one track each)
Joe Morello	- drums (three tracks)
Gene Cherico	- bass (three tracks)
Jim Hall	- guitar (one track)
Chuck Israels	- bass (one track)
Larry Bunker	- drums (two tracks)
Steve Swallow	- bass (three tracks)
Larry Coryell	- guitar (two tracks)
Roy Haynes	- drums (one track)
Bobby Moses	- drums (one track)

Recorded: Compilation of recordings 1961 to 1969, New York City.
 Liner notes: None

Hampel, Gunter. 1969. 8th of July 1969. Birth.

Anthony Braxton	- alto sax, soprano sax, E flat clarinet
Gunter Hampel	- clarinet, flute, piano, bass clarinet, vibraphone
Willem Breuker	- bass clarinet, alto sax, soprano sax, tenor sax
Steve McCall	- drums
Arjen Gorter	- bass
Jeanne Lee	- synthesizer

Recorded: July 1969, Holland.
Liner notes: None.

Berger, Karl. 1971. We Are You. Re-released in 1990 on EJNA CD 6060.

Karl Berger	- vibes, piano, marimba
Peter Kowald	- bass
Allen Blairman	- drums, percussion
Ingrid Sertso	- vocals, percussion

Recorded: November 1971, Ludwigsburg, Germany.

Burton, Gary. 1971. Alone At Last. Atlantic reissue 7567-80762-2.

Gary Burton	- vibraphone, piano, organ
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Recorded: June 1971, live at the Montreux Jazz Festival and studio recordings in New York later in the same year.
Liner notes: Pascal Bussy

Burton, Gary and Stephane Grappelli. 1972. Paris Encounter. Atlantic Recording Corporation SD 1597.

Gary Burton	- vibraphone
Stephane Grappelli	- violin
Steve Swallow	- electric bass
Bill Goodwin	- drums

Recorded: date not given, Paris, France.
Liner notes: Jean-Louis Ginibre

Burton, Gary and Steve Swallow. 1975. Hello Hotel. ECM 1055.

Gary Burton	- vibes, organ, marimba
Steve Swallow	- bass, piano

Recorded: May 1974, Fayville, MA.
Liner notes: None

Berger, Karl. 1976. *All Kinds of Time*. Sackville SKCD 2 - 3010.

Karl Berger	- balafon, vibes and piano
Dave Holland	- bass

Information obtained from <http://www.allmusic.com>, accessed April 2004.

Friedman, David. 1977. *Futures Past*. Inner City IC 3004.

David Friedman	- vibes, marimba
Harvie Swartz	- bass
Rimona Fracis	- vocals

Recorded: January 1976, New York City.
Liner notes: None

Niewood, Gerry. 1977. *Timepiece*. Horizon 719.

Gerry Niewood	- soprano sax, flute and alto flute
Dave Samuels	- vibes
Ron Davis	- drums
Michael Donato	- acoustic bass
Rick Laird	- electric bass

Recorded: Date not given, Toronto, Canada.
Liner notes: None

Burton, Gary. 1978. *Times Square*. ECM 1111 ST.

Gary Burton	- vibes
Steve Swallow	- bass guitar
Roy Haynes	- drums
Tiger Okoshi	- trumpet

Recorded: January 1978, New York.
Liner notes: None

Friedman, David. 1978. *Winter Love, April Joy*. Inner City IC 6005.

David Friedman	- vibes, marimba
David Samuels	- vibes, marimba, bass marimba
Hubert Laws	- flute, piccolo
Harvie Swartz	- bass

Recorded: March/April 1975, New York City.
Liner notes: None

Hoggard, Jay. 1978. *Solo Vibraphone. India Navigation IN 1040.*

Jay Hoggard - vibraphone

Recorded: November 1978

Information obtained from <http://www.jhoggard.web.wesleyan.edu>, accessed August 2004.

Van der Geld, Tom. 1978. *Children at Play: Patience. ECM 1113.*

Tom van der Geld - vibraharp, percussion
 Roger Jannotta - soprano saxophone, baritone saxophone,
 flutes, oboe, bass clarinet
 Kent Carter - bass
 Bill Elgart - drums percussion

Recorded: May 1977, Ludwigsberg, Germany.

Liner notes: None

Berger, Karl. 1979. *Just play. Quark (re-released in 2000 on Emanem 4037).*

Karl Berger - drums, xylophone, balafon, darbouka,
 vibraphone
 Edward Balckwell - drum kit, osi

Information obtained from <http://www.allmusic.com>, accessed April 2004.

Hampel, Gunter. 1980. *All the things you could be if Charles Mingus was your daddy. Birth.*

Gunter Hampel - clarinet, flute, piano, bass clarinet, baritone
 sax, vibraphone
 Perry Robinson - clarinet
 Thomas Keyserling - flute, alto sax
 Jeanne Lee - vocals
 Mark Whitecage - flute, alto sax
 Matin Bues - drums

Information obtained from <http://www.allmusic.com>, accessed April 2004.

Van der Geld, Tom. 1980. *Children at Play: Out patients. JAPO 60035.*

Tom van der Geld - vibraharp
 Roger Jannotta - tenor saxophone, alto saxophone, flutes,
 oboe, bass clarinet
 Wayne Darling - bass
 Bill Elgart - drums percussion

Recorded: July 1980, Ludwigsberg, Germany.

Liner notes: None

Wheeler, Kenny. 1980. *Around 6*. ECM 1156.

Kenny Wheeler	- trumpet, flugelhorn
Evan Parker	- soprano and tenor saxophones
Eje Thelin	- trombone
Tom van der Geld	- vibraharp
J F Jenny-Clark	- double bass
Edward Vesala	- drums

Recorded: August 1979, Ludwigsburg, Germany.
Liner notes: None

Hampel, Gunter. 1981. *Place To Be With Us*. Birth.

Gunter Hampel	- bass clarinet, baritone sax, vibraphone
Thomas Keyserling	- flute, alto sax
Jeanne Lee	- vocals
Martin Bues	- drums

Information obtained from <http://www.allmusic.com>, accessed April 2004.

Hampel, Gunter. 1981. *Celestial Glory*. Birth.

Gunter Hampel	- clarinet, flute, piano, vibraphone, basel trommel
Perry Robinson	- clarinet
Thomas Keyserling	- flute, alto sax
Jeanne Lee	- vocals
Mark Whitecage	- alto sax, soprano sax

Information obtained from <http://www.allmusic.com>, accessed April 2004.

Burton, Gary. 1981. *Easy as Pie*. The Gary Burton Quartet. ECM 1184.

Gary Burton Quartet:

Gary Burton	- vibraharp
Jim Odegren	- alto saxophone
Steve Swallow	- bass guitar
Mike Hyman	- drums

Recorded: June 1980, Ludwigsburg, Germany.
Liner notes: None

Friedman, David. 1981. *Of the Wind's Eye*. ENJA 3089.

David Friedman	- marimba, vibraphone, percussion
Jane Ira Bloom	- soprano saxophone
Harvie Swartz	- bass
Daniel Humair	- drums

Recorded: July 1981, Ludwigsberg, Germany.
Liner notes: None

Molenhof, Bill. 1981. *Beach Street Years*. Mark Records MJS 57596.

Bill Molenhof - vibes, marimba, piano, vocals
 Dewey Dellay - bass
 Tom Goldbach and Peter Grant - drums

Liner notes: None

Samuels, David, and others. 1981. *Gallery*. ECM 1206.

David Samuels - vibraharp, percussion
 Michael DiPasqua - drums, percussion
 Paul McCandless - soprano saxophone, oboe, English horn
 David Darling - cello
 Ratzon Harris - bass

Recorded: May 1981, New York .

Liner notes: None

Baker, Chet and David Friedman. 1982. *Peace*. ENJA 4016.

Chet Baker - trumpet
 David Friedman - marimba and vibraphone
 Buster Williams - bass
 Joe Chambers - drums

Recorded: February 1982, New York.

Liner notes: None

Burton, Gary. 1982. *Picture This*. The Gary Burton Quartet. ECM-1-226.

Gary Burton Quartet:

Gary Burton - vibraharp
 Jim Odgren - alto saxophone
 Steve Swallow - bass guitar
 Mike Hyman - drums

Recorded: January 1982, New York.

Liner notes: None

Sheppard, Harry. 1982. *The Harry Sheppard Group; Symbiotic*. Evidence 44-1.

Harry Sheppard - electravibe
 Bill Miller - bass
 Abdullah - percussion
 Richie DeRosa - drums

Recorded: November 1982, Farmingdale, New York.

Liner notes: Clement Meadmore

Hampel, Gunter. 1983. *Jubilation. Birth.*

Marion Brown	- alto sax
Gunter Hampel	- clarinet, flute, piano, bass clarinet, baritone sax, vibraphone
Albert Mangelsdorff	- trombone
Perry Robinson	- clarinet
Barre Phillips	- bass
Manfred Schoof	- trumpet
Steve McCall	- drums
Thomas Keyserling	- flute, alto sax

Information obtained from <http://www.allmusic.com>, accessed April 2004.

Visotzky, D. M. and Francois Volpe. 1986. *Blue Moon's Fall. Black Moon records BM 8601.*

Visotzky, D. M.	- alto saxophone
Francois Volpe	- vibraharp, marimba, percussions

Recorded: March 1986, Geneva, Switzerland.
Liner notes: None

Berger, Karl. 1988. *Transit. Black Saint 120092.*

Karl Berger	- vibraphone, piano
Dave Holland	- bass
Edward Blackwell	- drums

Hoggard, Jay. 1990. *The Little Tiger. Muse MCD 5410.*

Jay Hoggard	- vibraphone
Marcus McLaurine	- bass
Yoron Isreal	- drums

Recorded: June 1990
Information obtained from <http://www.jhoggard.web.wesleyan.edu>, accessed August 2004.

Nelson, Steve. 1990. *Communications. Criss Cross Jazz 1034.*

Steve Nelson Quartet:

Steve Nelson	- vibraphone
Mulgrew Miller	- piano
Ray Drummond	- bass
Tony Reedus	- drums

Recorded: December 1987 and October 1989, place not given.
Liner notes: Peter Leitch.

Nelson, Steve. 1990. *Full Nelson*. Sunnyside SSC 1044D.

Steve Nelson	- vibraphone
Kirk Lightsey	- piano
Ray Drummond	- bass

Recorded: August 1989, New York City.
Liner notes: Sid Gribetz

Berger, Karl. 1991. *Crystal Fire*. ENJA 7029.

Karl Berger	- vibraphone, piano
Dave Holland	- bass
Edward Blackwell	- drums

Recorded: April 1991, New Jersey.

Berger, Karl. 1991. *Duets with Paul Shigihara*. NYC.

Karl Berger	- vibraphone, piano
Paul Shigihara	- guitar

Information obtained from <http://www.allmusic.com>, accessed April 2004.

Hampel, Gunter and Mattias Schbert. 1992. *Dialog*. Birth.

Gunter Hampel	- bass clarinet, vibraphone
Mattias Schbert	- tenor sax

Information obtained from <http://www.allmusic.com>, accessed April 2004.

Hoggard, Jay. 1992. *In The Spirit*. Muse MCD 5476.

Jay Hoggard	- vibraphone
Mark Helias	- bass
James Newton	- flute
Dwight Andrews	- bass clarinet, flute, soprano saxophone
Edward Blackwell	- drums

Recorded: May 1992
Information obtained from <http://www.jhoggard.web.wesleyan.edu>, accessed August 2004.

Berger, Karl. 1994. *Conversations*. Re-released in 2003 on IOR 770272.

Karl Berger	- vibes, piano
Duets with:	
Carlos Ward	- alto sax, flute
Dave Holland	- bass
James "Blood" Ulmer	- guitar
Ingrid Sertso	- vocals
Ray Anderson	- trombone
Mark Feldman	- violin

Information obtained from <http://www.allmusic.com>, accessed April 2004.

Friedman, David. 1994. *Air Sculpture*. Traumton 2406.

David Friedman	- vibraphone, marimba
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Recorded:	June 1994, Germany.
Liner Notes:	None

Hoggard, Jay. 1995. *Pleasant Memories*. Muse MCD 5596.

Jay Hoggard	- vibraphone
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Recorded:	June 1995
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Information obtained from <http://www.jhoggard.web.wesleyan.edu>, accessed August 2004.

Locke, Joe. 1995. *Very Early*. SteepleChase SCCD 31364.

Joe Locke Trio:

Joe Locke	- vibraphone
Ron McClure	- bass
Adam Nussbaum	- drums

Recorded:	October 1994.
Liner notes:	Mark Gardner

Lupri, Matthias. 1995. *Window Up Window Down*. New England Music Services.

Matthias Lupri Quartet:

Timo Verbole	- tenor saxophone
Matthias Lupri	- vibraphone
Florian Feuser	- acoustic bass
Sebastiaan de Krom	- drums

Recorded:	April 1995, Boston, MA.
Liner notes:	None

Mainieri, Mike. 1995. *Man Behind Bars*. NYC 6019.

Mike Mainieri - vibraphone, marimba, xylophone, chimes,
piano, percussion and drums

Recorded: No date given, New York City.

Liner notes: None

Mainieri, Mike. 1995. *An American Diary*. NYC 6015.

Mike Mainieri - vibraphone, marimba, percussion
Joe Lovano - tenor sax and other woodwinds
Eddie Gomez - bass
Peter Erskine - drums

Recorded: October 1994, New York City.

Liner notes: Howard Mandel

Skoler, Harry. 1995. *Conversations in the Language of Jazz*. Brownstone BRCD952.

Harry Skoler - clarinet, alto saxophone, flute, piano
Ed Saindon - vibraphone, piano (on one track)
Roger Kimball - bass
Tim Gilmore - drums

Recorded: November, December 1994, January 1995, Westwood, MA.

Liner notes: Ken Franckling

Berger, Karl. 1996. *No Man is an Island*. Knitting Factory KCR 3004.

Karl Berger Orchestra

Karl Berger - vibes and piano

With cello, vocals, bass, strings, saxophone, drums and trumpet.

Information obtained from <http://www.allmusic.com>, accessed April 2004.

Holland, Dave. 1996. *Dream of the Elders*. ECM 1572.

Dave Holland Quartet:

Dave Holland - double bass
Steve Nelson - vibraphone, marimba
Eric Person - alto and soprano saxophones
Gene Jackson - drums
Cassandra Wilson - vocals (one track)

Recorded: March 1995, New York.

Liner notes: None

Saindon, Ed. 1996. *Swing on the Sunnyside*. A Records 1996.

Ed Saindon - vibes
 Dick Johnson - clarinet
 Herb Pomeroy - trumpet and flugelhorn
 Barry Smith - acoustic bass
 Matt Gordy - drums

Recorded: April, May 1995, Westwood, MA.
 Liner notes: Fred Bouchard

**Skoler, Harry. 1996. *Reflections on the Art of Swing: a Tribute to Benny Goodman*.
 Brownstone BRCD 9610.**

Harry Skoler - clarinet, tenor saxophone (one track)
 Ed Saindon - vibraphone
 Roger Kimball - bass
 Tim Gilmore - drums

Recorded: November 1995, Westwood, MA.
 Liner notes: Scott Yanow

Mainieri, Mike. 1997. *An American Diary: The Dreamings*. NYC 6026.

Mike Mainieri - vibraphone, marimba, xylophone and
 percussion
 George Garzone - saxophones and clarinet
 Marc Johnson - bass
 Peter Erskine - drums
 Noa - vocals (one track)
 Gil Dor - acoustic guitar (one track)
 Arto Tunçboyan - percussion, vocals (four tracks)
 Simon Steven - didjeradu (one track)
 Loretta Dee Carstensen - harp (one track)

Recorded: Date not given, New York City.
 Liner notes: Mike Mainieri and Dawn Buckholz-Andrews

**Baker, Chet, and Wolfgang Lackerschmid. 1998. *Why Shouldn't You Cry*. ENJA ENJ-
 9337 2.**

Chet Baker - trumpet
 Wolfgang Lackerschmid - vibes
 Gunter Lenz - bass

Recorded: January 1979, Germany (duo tracks), August 1987, Germany (trio
 tracks)
 November 1979, Germany (other tracks)
 Liner notes: Hans-Jurgen Schaal

Holland, Dave. 1998. *Points of View*. ECM 1663.

Dave Holland Quintet:

Robin Eubanks	- trombone
Steve Wilson	- soprano and alto saxophones
Steve Nelson	- vibraphone, marimba
Billy Kilson	- drums
Dave Holland	- double bass

Recorded: September 1999, New York City.

Liner notes: None

Saindon, Ed. 1998. *The Great American Songbook*. Big City Jazz BCJCD1-0001-2.

Ed Saindon	- vibes
Ken Peplowski	- clarinet
Warren Vache	- trumpet and cornet
Dan Barrett	- trombone
Marshal Wood	- acoustic bass
Jim Gwin	- drums

Recorded: November, December 1997, Westwood, MA.

Liner notes: Peter Appleyard

Ware, Bill. 1998. *Vibes*. Knitting Factory KFR 210.

Bill Ware	- vibraphone
EJ Rodriguez	- drums
Brad Jones	- acoustic bass

Recorded: October 1997, New York City.

Liner notes: None

Hampel, Gunter. 1999. *8th Sept. 1999*. Birth.

Gunter Hampel	- vibraphone
Nils Wogram	- trombone
Christian Weidner	- alto sax
Clemens Orth	- piano
Larry Roland	- bass
Sadiq	- drums

Recorded: September 1999, Studio and live recordings at The Knitting Factory, New York City.

Liner notes: Gunter Hampel

Holland, Dave. 1999. *Prime Directive*. ECM 1698.

Dave Holland Quintet:

Chris Potter	- soprano, alto and tenor saxophones
Robin Eubanks	- trombone and cowbell
Steve Nelson	- vibraphone and marimba
Billy Kilson	- drums
Dave Holland	- double bass

Recorded: December 1998, New York.

Liner notes: None

Lupri, Matthias. 1999. *Shadow of the Vibe*. Chartmaker jazz CMG-5060.

Matthias Lupri Quartet:

Matthias Lupri	- vibraphone
George Garzone	- saxophones
John Lockwood	- acoustic bass
Sebastian de Krom	- drums

Recorded: May 1998, Westwood, MA.

Liner notes: Bob Blumenthal

Marvuglio, Matt. 1999. *Why Cry*. Independent CD release.

Matt Marvuglio	- flute
Ed Saindon	- vibraphone
Barry Smith	- bass

Recorded: Date not given, East Bridgewater, MA.

Liner notes: Trevor Wye

Nelson, Steve. 1999. *New Beginnings*. The Montreux Jazz Label TCOB 99302.

Steve Nelson Quartet

Steve Nelson	- vibraphone
Mulgrew Miller	- piano
Peter Washington	- bass
Kenny Washington	- drums

Recorded: December 1997, Englewood Cliffs, NJ.

Liner notes: Ira Gilter.

Beckham, Tom. 1999. *Suspicious*. Fresh Sound FSNT 075.

Tom Beckham - vibraphone
 Chris Cheek - saxophones
 Reid Anderson - bass
 George Schuller - drums

Recorded: June 1999, New York City.
 Liner notes: Tom Beckham

Batoru. 2000. *Tree of Sounds*. Nabel 4685.

Batoru: Michael Schiefel - vocals
 Peter Ralchev - accordion
 Franz Bauer - marimba and vibraphone
 Dirk Strakhof - bass
 Stoyan Yankoulov - percussion

Recorded: June 1999, Germany.
 Liner notes: Dirk Strakhof

Piper, John Mark. 2000. *Just a Step Away*. AVL 98035.

John Mark Piper - vibraphone

Recorded: No date given, Omaha, Nebraska.
 Liner notes: None

Holland, Dave. 2001. *Not for Nothin'*. ECM 1758.

Dave Holland Quintet:

Chris Potter - soprano, alto and tenor saxophones
 Robin Eubanks - trombone and cowbell
 Steve Nelson - vibraphone and marimba
 Billy Kilson - drums
 Dave Holland - double bass

Recorded: September 2000, New York.
 Liner notes: Dave Holland

Piltzecker, Ted. 2001. *Standing Alone*. Equilibrium EQ 43.

Ted Piltzecker - vibraphone

Recorded: No date given, Demarest, NJ and Purchase, NY.
 Liner notes: None

Waring, Rob. 2001. *Synchronize Your Watches*. Resonant Music RM 9.

Rob Waring Trio:

Rob Waring - vibraphone
 Carl Morten Iversen - bass
 Frank Jakobsen - drums
 With
 Solveig Slettahjell - vocals

Recorded: Oslo, Norway, February and June 2001.
 Liner notes: None

Hampel, Gunter. 2002. *Challenge of the Now*. Birth.

Gunter Hampel - flute, bass clarinet, vibraphone
 Perry Robinson - clarinet
 Lou Grassi - drums

Information obtained from <http://www.allmusic.com>, accessed April 2004.

Holland, Dave. 2002. *What Goes Around*. ECM 1777.

Dave Holland Big Band:

Antonio Hart - alto saxophone, flute
 Mark Gross - alto saxophone
 Chris Potter - tenor saxophones
 Gary Smulyan - baritone saxophone
 Robin Eubanks - trombone
 Andre Hayward - trombone
 Josh Rosemand - trombone
 Earl Gardner - trumpet, flugelhorn
 Alex Sipiagion - trumpet, flugelhorn
 Duane Eubanks - trumpet, flugelhorn
 Steve Nelson - vibraphone
 Billy Kilson - drums
 Dave Holland - double bass

Recorded: January 2001, New York.
 Liner notes: Dave Holland

Lupri, Matthias. 2002. *Same Time Twice*. Summit Records DCD 337.

Matthias Lupri Group:

Matthias Lupri - vibraphone
 Mark Turner - saxophones
 Kurt Rosewinkel - acoustic and electric guitars
 Reuben Rogers - acoustic bass
 Gregory Hutchinson - drums

Recorded: September, 2000, New York City.
 Liner notes: Zan Stewart

Rafalides, Christos. 2002. *Manhattan Vibes*. Khaeon KWM 200201.

Christos Rafalides - vibes, marimba, synth pads
 John Benitez - bass, vocals, percussion
 Steve Hass - Drums, percussion, vocals
 With guests
 Randy Brecker - trumpet
 Vinny Valentino - guitars
 Mary Wormworth - vocals
 Luisito Quintero - percussion

Recorded: July 2001, Connecticut.
 Liner notes: None

Locke, Joe. 2003. *4 Walls of Freedom*. Sirocco Music SJL 1021.

Joe Locke - vibes, MIDI vibes and marimba
 Bob Berg - tenor saxophone
 James Genus - bass
 Gary Novak - drums
 Gerard Presencer - flugelhorn

Recorded: September 2002, New York
 Liner notes: Joe Locke

Schuller, George. 2003. *Round'bout Now*. Playscape recordings PSR#J021302.

George Schuller - drums
 Donny McCaslin - tenor and soprano sax, alto flute
 Ingrid Jensen - trumpet, flugelhorn
 Tom Beckham - vibes
 Dave Ambrosio - bass
 With guests
 Pete McCann - guitar
 Matt Darriau - kaval, bass clarinet
 Sonny Barbato - accordion

Recorded: February and March 2002, New York City.
 Liner notes: None

APPENDIX C: INTERVIEW WITH DAVE SAMUELS (18 JUNE 2003)

Context: Berklee College of Music Mallet Festival
 Venue: Percussion Department
 Berklee College of Music
 921 Boylston Street
 Boston, Massachusetts, USA
 Date: Wednesday 18 June 2003

Interviewee: Dave Samuels
 Interviewer: Frank Mallows

Frank Mallows (FM): The topic that I am researching is to do with the role of the vibraphone as an alternative harmonic accompanying instrument replacing the normally used piano or guitar. You have recorded and performed in groups where the vibes has been the only harmonic accompanying instrument with no guitar or piano. The areas that I would like you to talk about are: How does the vibraphone function as a comping instrument? What factors led to you playing with this instrumentation? Who were your influences? And how did you get to the point of using the vibes as a comping instrument?

Dave Samuels (DS): Well it happens because you make it happen. I wasn't following any game plan. I just wanted to go in that direction and see what it was like. I think everybody makes up their own choices in terms of what kind of context they would like to play in. I think it is much more a question of what someone's desires are than necessarily what their capabilities are.

I think as far as a comping instrument goes [the vibraphone] it is kind of a mixed blessing because of its range. I think horn players respond to it differently because it is in such an odd treble oriented range as opposed to the normal comping instruments have a bigger range and certainly go lower. The marimba is even a little more functional than vibes as far as comping just because of the range I think.

I am not quite sure how to describe how it evolved. Like I said it was more of an issue of playing in an ensemble with a particular instrumentation and dealing with it. Again, there wasn't any major plan ahead. I didn't sit down and say I'm gonna do this, and this, and this. That's just the way that I ended up doing it. Other people might go about it completely differently.

FM: If you're a pianist you'll be called up to be a sideman. Whereas a vibes player aiming to be an accompanist - you've almost got to be the leader of the group.

DS: That's correct.

FM: How often do you get called to be the comping player in the group?

DS: It's just not commonly thought of that way. But that's really a separate issue. If your intention is to do things in a certain way and you find that the only way

that you can do it is to create the environment then, that's what you do! Whether its been done before or if other people are calling you because you comp, I think is irrelevant. I mean that can be more of an historical issue looking at how many players ended up doing that. But from the playing standpoint is sort of like - so what?

FM: You must have had some element of something to build on as far as previous people having done it [used the vibes as the only harmonic comping instrument].

DS: No. I mean, the music that I was playing was different from the music that other people had played. Yeh, sure there where other people who had played [in this way] in the past. But I could of just as easily looked at all these vibes players, of which there are so few, at how many ended up comping in a group - less than one per cent. So what does that mean? Does that mean? That because its less than one percent - I don't do it? Or because its less than one per cent, it just happens to be an historical fact - which is irrelevant to me. It's an interesting fact - yes, there are not too many people that have done that - you are right - next?

I mean for me it doesn't create an issue one way or the other. If it sounded good and it works, then it was fine. Then you had to find other people to work with who would agree with you. Sometimes it worked and sometimes it didn't.

FM: Looking ahead, how do you see the vibraphone in that role [as the only harmonic comping instrument]?

DS: I think it depends on the player. It totally depends on the player. When people started to play as a saxophone trio [saxophone, bass and drums], before people like Coltrane and Sonny Rollins, nobody was doing that! That didn't stop anybody from trying it. And because it worked and some people have landed up still doing it, it just means that it's something new that's happened. A young tenor player might say; "Gee, I'd like to play in that context because I like how open it is" - great! Not like "**** look at all the tenor players and how many are actually doing that - so few. I guess I shouldn't do that!" For me its an interesting historical footnote but is has no relevance in the big picture.

FM: If it works for you again in the future you'll do it?

DS: Sure, if it's appropriate. The fact that there are other musicians that don't hear the vibraphone that way is just a reality - that there are not that many out there who do. It doesn't mean that it stops me from having to do anything, or not do it because other musicians aren't calling me to do it. The only thing that I can control is my own actions. I can't control the actions of other people. If that means that you go out and get your own gigs, then that's what you do if you want to do it.

FM: From a technical point of view - playing the vibes as a comping instrument within a jazz group, is there a problem with volume?

DS: Yes, there can be a problem with volume - sure! In the two days that you've had at the Mallet Festival you've heard one guy who plays with a pick up system [Mattius Lupri] and he could be heard. He wasn't comping all that much. Then you heard Ed [Saindon] last night - at least where I was sitting, you couldn't hear him. He had microphones. You'll hear more as the week progresses.

FM: With the group Gallery did you perform live or was it purely a recording group.

DS: We did some gigs, not a whole lot, but we did some, yeah.

FM: Was the group amplified?

DS: Yeah sure. There was always a volume issue, you see we had cello player - I guess he was using a microphone at that point. When Paul was playing soprano then it was Ok. Oboe or English horn, and we had to come way down for that.

FM: Obviously in the recording studio it was different.

DS: Totally! Not an issue. In the recording studio, it's not the amount of sound it's the quality that's important. Like I said, the issue for me is whether or not it sounds good!

FM: What techniques does one have to employ in order for the vibraphone to be an effective comping instrument?

DS: The vibraphone is not a piano and is not a guitar! It's not anything other than the vibraphone. One may have experience playing other instruments, which may help. But I can't make it to be anything other than the vibraphone. The only thing that I can do is realizing the imagination that I have playing this instrument. I'm not out there to try and convince anyone to anything! Why would I? I don't go to a French restaurant to compare it to Indian food. That's what I want, that's what I'll eat.

I think that you convince other instrumentalists how this instrument sounds by the way that you play it. People generally don't listen to a really great piano player and say "It must be anybody who plays piano is going to play like that!" or "**** I didn't realize that you could do all that on piano! I want one of those in my group". That's not the way that it happens. You book a player that you really like, and the way that person plays. Nobody makes a issue about the piano or the guitar or the drums or anything. It's rather; how does that individual affect me. I think that is the issue.

The other issue of, well how do you get people to hire you - you let the music speak for itself. That's the goal! Not trying to be on a crusade for other

players. I think that becomes academic and takes away from the real issue, which is playing. That's my take on it.

I think you can get too sidetracked from the real issue. Which is - if you want to play this instrument you've got to play it well. Then that's what your calling card is.

FM: You just happen to be projecting your musical personality on the vibraphone.

DS: That's correct! There are lots of possibilities - it is rare that one does just one thing anymore. Even the players that are out there are writing, producing records, some teaching. It's much more of a quilt work of different things that somebody does than just one thing.

FM: And when you're writing you are doing the some thing?

DS: It really depends on what it is. You want to explore all your possibilities. So you don't land up with just one thing. I guess there's just too much music and too many influences out there for one to play the ostrich and put your head in the sand and hope that it all goes away. It's not going to!

FM: Thank you very much for your time.

APPENDIX D: INTERVIEW WITH GARY BURTON (24 JUNE 2003)

Context: Berklee College of Music Mallet Festival
 Venue: Office of the Executive Vice President
 Berklee College of Music
 1140 Boylston Street
 Boston, Massachusetts, USA
 Date: Tuesday 24 June 2003

Interviewee: Gary Burton
 Interviewer: Frank Mallows

Frank Mallows (FM): I wrote a whole lot of questions down before I came to the US, but over the Mallet Festival week, which included listening to your clinic, and watching a video of a previous clinic that you gave, I've realized that a lot of my questions have already been answered.

What I am interested in researching is "the analysis and development of the vibraphone as an alternative accompanying instrument". Functioning as the only harmonic instrument in the jazz ensemble, with no piano or guitar.

There was a period, with Jim Odgren, that you recorded with that type of instrumental line-up.

Gary Burton (GB): For four years approximately I had that band where I was the only chording instrument. I also had done projects at other times. I did one of my very first records with just a trio with bass and drums. It was called *New Vibe Man in Town*. That was in 1960.

Let me talk generally a bit about it and then you can ask specific questions how I came to be doing this.

It didn't occur to me at first to play the vibraphone as if it was a piano or guitar. Because I grew up in a small town, somewhat isolated, I didn't have lots of musicians to play with. So I got into first of all playing with four mallets because I needed harmony. I wanted to hear it sounding more complete. So I discovered after a few years that in fact it wasn't as daunting technically as it looked at first. At first people had told me - "You can't play realistically with four mallets - it can't be done. And even if you could, you can't swing if you play with four mallets." But I just kept messing around with it and got more and more comfortable with it. It became obvious to me that it was working.

So a lot of the first jobs that I did get were situations where I would be hired to play piano, which I played rather clumsily and in a home style. People weren't looking for vibes players in Southern Indiana bands. They were looking for pianists or regular instruments. I would get hired to play both, but whenever I would play the vibes I would have to leave the piano, so there wouldn't be a chord instrument. So I learned how to fill in the voicings enough for it to

sound complete if I was playing with just the bass and drums. So that got me started doing this.

The next big opportunity came . . . I went to school and played mostly with groups that had piano or guitar in them, but I still kept on playing with four mallets. So my technique was still evolving. The first job I had on a full time basis was with George Shearing with both piano and guitar! So no four mallet playing there at all! It was all just single line music.

FM: You still held the four mallets?

GB: Yes, I held the four. It was nice to hit the occasional accent chord but it wasn't comping for anyone. In fact the truth is, I had never really learned to comp that much. When I had played four mallets on the vibes I was the lead instrument. So I was melodising and filling in myself. But what I wasn't doing was comping in the background for someone else to solo. I had done that some on piano. But mostly the jobs I'd played I was the lead instrument. It is the case of many piano trio people, they have not actually done much comping. And believe me, if you have to play with someone like that you discover immediately that they do not know how to play with you - how to follow you.

FM: They have only comped behind the bass player

GB: Which, is not the same thing. They're in your way constantly 'cause they don't listen to you and react to you. They keep still trying to lead. Which gets in the way if you are soloing.

So it was when I joined Stan Getz that this came all the fore. He was looking for a piano player or a guitar player to join his band to replace a guitar player who was leaving. And he was having trouble finding someone. So somebody recommended to him, in fact it was Lou Levy, a piano player who used to play for Peggy Lee, who was an old friend of Stan's, said "Well there's this kid who plays vibes with four mallets. Maybe that would work." It turned out that the bass player in Stan's band was a friend and knew me well. He called me up and said "Stan is interested in trying this out. Why don't you come on down and sit in for a set to see if it would work." So I did. It didn't work very well - I didn't know the songs they were playing and I wasn't used to Stan's playing. I hadn't really heard him play that much actually up to that point. Didn't go very well and I didn't get the job. He said "Thanks anyway, it didn't seem to work out!" But about two weeks later he called again to say they still hadn't found anyone and they had three weeks of gigs in Canada starting the next Monday and "We're desperate" and would I do the three weeks just to help them out. And I said "Oh well, why not! I could use the work." So I decided to do it

The first thing I discovered on the first night was that I did not know how to comp for him. He was very particular about comping. He was used to very good accompanists who played for him, and I had no clue as to how you'd go about it. So for the first week it was really a tug of war. I would try to comp

for him. But after about one or two choruses he would tell me to stop playing and he would play with just the bass and drums. He wasn't one of those kinds of people who could explain what he wanted. There are many musicians who are like that. They can tell you "It's not working, try something else." But they can't say "Instead of playing so much on the down beats." Or. "Instead of playing voicings where you use all four notes with the root in them. Try doing this . . ." He did not know what to tell me to make it better. All he knew was that he didn't like what he was hearing. So I kept struggling, trying to do different things, playing less, playing lower, playing whatever I thought might be better. For the first half of this three week run it wasn't working well at all. I wasn't figuring anything out and I felt very frustrated, as he must have had too.

Then things started to click! By the end of the three weeks we had sort of found a style and I had sort of gotten the hang of it. Then he asked me to stay on for the next few weeks and I ended up staying on for three years. During that time I learned really how to do it. He was a good person to learn with because he was demanding and also he played "straight on" - he was easy to follow.

FM: The recording you did with him in Paris - where was that in relation to your three year period with him?

GB: The *Live in Paris*? No, that was at the end. The one that was at the beginning was called *Getz Au Go Go*. That was three weeks to a month after I'd joined the band. We had just come back from Canada. We did this club gig in New York and they recorded it.

So that three years of accompanying Stan and then having to, of course, play and be my own accompanist as well, was when I really developed the ability to both accompany and solo comfortably. I came back to that, as you mentioned, when I had the group with Jim Odgren. I'd had bands with guitarists.

FM: You did the recording with Stephane Grappelli.

GB: Yes, I did that. That was '69, which was just one day of recording. But other than that my early bands all had guitar players in them or piano. But at some point I decided to try horns again. In fact I had a trumpet player for a couple of years and then Odgren.

FM: Tiger Okoshi?

GB: Tiger yeh!

FM: Did you only make the one record with Tiger?

GB: The one record with Tiger and then two with Jim I think.

FM: So it was more of a whim.

GB: Yeh, I just felt it was more time for a change. I had had that guitar and vibe instrumentation for '67 to '72 or something. For five years I had had that guitar and vibe thing, and I was beginning to feel that I was exhausting the tonal variety of it all and was feeling that I should do something different, time for some kind of a change. I couldn't really afford to get a bigger band and go to a five, six pieces or something. So I thought - "Well maybe a horn would be the thing to try." So called Tiger and then Jim. So altogether about six years went by in that thing. Then I started to miss the guitar again.

FM: And the piano?

GB: Well I didn't really have a piano in the band except for about four or five months that Chick played in my band in '69. Then the next time I hired a pianist was Makoto. And that was not until '83.

FM: So that period in the middle was the quartet where you had only the vibes as the chordal instrument.

GB: Yeh. In fact, actually it wasn't in '72. It was after Pat Metheny, and it was after John Scofield come to think of it. So that would of been '75, '76, '77, or so. So it was from the late 70's into the early 80's - that was the group

FM: Did you work exclusively during that time with the vibes as the comping instrument?

GB: Yeh. I feel comfortable comping on the vibes. I patterned my comping mostly after, in terms of voicings, the way guitar player's comp. That is, most guitar players comp on the top four strings. They don't comp all six of them 'cause that goes too low and covers too wide a voicing. In fact Jim Hall was the ideal example. He had nice voice note groupings and used almost exclusively the top three or four strings. So I would make similar kinds of voicings using my mallets and it seemed to work just great. Then another inspiration for comping for me was two players, Tommy Flanagan and Jimmy Rowles - piano players. Not so much their voicings, but rather how they followed the solos.

There are two parts to comping. One is having a good assortment of voicing choices at your disposal, and the other is how to support the soloist. There's a mental trick involved - normally when we play our attention is, lets say, 80 to 90% on our own playing and 20% we are monitoring what the other players are doing. We always figure that our first job is to make sure we don't **** up. So we are focused on our own playing making sure its right and where we are in the song and all that sort of thing

But when you accompany someone, you have to get 80% of your mind on to their solo, and only use 20% to watch your own playing. If you do in fact listen to their solo very intently as if you have nothing else to do at that moment except listen to their solo, you will hear what they're doing. Its like when you listen to a conversation with someone, you listen to what they say

and you can often anticipate what they're going to say next, or where its likely to go next, based on what they're currently saying. But if I'm only listening to you peripherally because I'm reading something and you are talking in the background, I may only pick up an occasional phrase and there will be whole gaps where I wouldn't know what you said because I would only be checking in with you occasionally. So there's the difference!

When I used to teach, if I had an ensemble, I could tell if a student, a compere, wasn't listening to the soloist. He might have been playing the right changes but it's not coordinating with what the soloist is doing. I would stop and I would say "Ok. Describe the Trumpet solo. What was he doing? Tell me something about the solo. What things did you notice while you were accompanying him?" – "I don't know!" I might say "Well, did you notice that he did a sort of a chromatic thing at the beginning of the bridge? Did you notice that he played the wrong changes for about two bars on the last eight? Did you notice that he did something using fourth intervals at the beginning of his second chorus?" - things you would have noticed had you been listening. You would remember some of those highlights if you had heard it. In fact, if you had just listened to the solo on the recording you could probably say "Oh yeh! I remember this . . . He did that . . . I remember he did that on other chorus . . ." If you don't notice those things when you're playing for someone then you weren't listening to them

So what happens is, even if you consciously say to yourself "Ok, I got to listen. I got to get my mind over here on to the trumpet solo." You start playing. But pretty soon you would of snapped back to your own playing again. That's habit - you've lifetime focused on your own playing. You have to keep throwing your attention back to the soloist till it gets used to staying there. In fact the minute something changes, a key change happens, or when we go into the bridge, you're attention snaps back to your own playing and forgets to go back to the soloist.

So it takes a little conditioning and training to get yourself used to being finally able to take your attention off your playing and onto what the soloist is playing. All these people that we admire as great accompanists and get a reputation, Tommy Flanagan was legendary for instance, they have this ability to, whether they came by it instinctively or figured it out intellectually or taught themselves to do it, the end result is, they have the ability to put their attention over on it.

I pretend that I am playing the trumpet. That it is me soloing. I live every line. I try to live every melodic develop and line that the trumpet is playing. As if I've got another set of arms that's playing the trumpet. And just as when I'm playing piano, my right hand is soloing and my left hand is punching in comping to support it. I'm not apt to comp in the wrong places when my right hand is soloing 'cause I can see what my right hand is going to play. But I don't plan what my right hand is going to play until the moment it happens. So I'm just listening to my right hand and then reacting to it. It is just the same thing - if I'm really listening to the trumpet player, I can react to that just as well, particularly if the trumpet player is easy to understand. You know,

some players don't play very thematically, or logically, so then there is not much to listen to.

So that, I think, is the key issue about comping. I've given that sort of explanation lecture about comping many many times to players to help, or at least point them in the right direction, or what they need to do mentally, when comping. 'Cause it straightens out a tremendous amount of getting in the way or over playing or conflicting with what the soloist is doing. Particularly if you've got a good clear soloist who is making logical melodic themes and really playing the changes well, they are really easy to follow. If you just listen to them then comping just falls right into place.

The other challenge that I said is; you need a collection of voicings. You have to have memorized a lot of different voicings for each type of harmony. So if it is C7 I might have 6 or 8 different note combinations that work on a C7 chord. Some open, some closed, some rich sounding, some plain sounding. Then as I come to the moment to comp with that chord some instinct says; "This should be a rich one. This should be a big one. This should be a small one. This one should be whatever the colour of the voicing should be." Then I've got one in the memory banks that fits that. There isn't time to consciously decide - "See I need a seventh, and a third, and a whatever."

FM: That's your musical instinct!

GB: Yeh! You need to have a vocabulary of voicings that you've learned. I learned those from working out, very slowly, harmonizing melodies to ballads. Just take the melody chorus to a standard ballad and reharmonise it with nice lush chords and voicings. It would take me hours to do one whole chorus. By the time I had done this on ten or fifteen songs I could do one in fifteen minutes. Then I could do one in five minutes and then I could do one sight-reading it. Because you begin to collect nice sounding chord voicings that you can get instant recall with. I know that is the same way that pianists do it and guitarists do it and well.

FM: Getting back to the group with Jim Odgren. What were the factors that influenced you to move away from that instrumental line up?

GB: I'd had horn players for six years approximately, two with Tiger and four with Jim, and I was beginning to get restless again to do some kind of change. But I didn't know what. It could have been another horn player, but I liked Jim's playing. I wasn't feeling as inspired by the group at this point. And as often happens I make a change 'cause I hear someone new that sort of catches my attention. I got acquainted with Makoto Ozone, who was just graduating from Berklee. I'd always shied away from playing with piano players, except for with Chick who I did duet concerts with all those years. But I had never felt safe having a pianist in the band on a regular basis, for two reasons: I tried with Chick, and it didn't seem to work. And I figured that if it didn't work with Chick to play in the band, then who is it gonna work with? Then it ended up that we'd play duets just great together. But those early attempts to have a

band together didn't work for us. We were in each other's way it felt all the time.

But I heard Makoto, started playing with him just the two of us, and it seemed so good and so promising that I got excited about it.

The other reason that I'd shied away from piano was because then you would have to deal with having to get good pianos where you go to play and the tuning to match the vibes and all. It was always a lot easier with guitar. We were self-contained. We didn't have to depend on getting an instrument. I was so excited about trying it with Makoto that I decided that it was ok - I will take the chance. I'll let Jim go and I'll add Makoto to the band, and I'll take my chances on getting pianos. It worked out great 'cause we've been playing together for twenty years now.

But the reason for the change was that I need a change every now and then. To be truthful, I was beginning to feel a little the limitation of being the only chord instrument. Not so much comping for the other players, but comping for my own solos. You're restricted to a certain extent, because you've got to keep dropping in voicings to fill in the harmonies. And that I felt sort of limited my soloing possibilities.

I still don't mind it occasionally now. But I like having another instrument to spar with, and to have another comper behind me now. Of course I might change my mind again one of these days - that is just what I've been doing up to now.

FM: Thank you very much for the interview and for your musical inspiration.

APPENDIX E: INTERVIEW WITH ED SAINDON (18 JUNE 2003)

Context: Private appointment for interview
 Venue: Ed Saindon's residence
 Methuen, Massachusetts, USA
 Date: Friday 27 June 2003

Interviewee: Ed Saindon
 Interviewer: Frank Mallows

Frank Mallows (FM): If you wouldn't mind talking about how you've got this point in your vibraphone playing and how you perceive the vibraphone as a comping instrument? What got you to that point? What are you still working on? And where do you see yourself heading? Maybe you could also talk a bit about the history of the vibraphone as it has been used as a comping instrument.

Ed Saindon (ES): Yeh, sure! That's not a big area compared to piano. I mean, how many vibe players are out there that do this approach?

FM: The vibraphone as a comping instrument, where there is no other harmonic instrument such as piano or guitar. How did you start thinking about playing in that type of instrumentation?

ES: Without piano or guitar . . . Ok. Well when I studied with Gary [Burton] we did a lot of solo playing and solo playing involves playing melody with accompaniment. So whether you are playing solo, or with a trio with bass and drums, it's the same thing. That's the way that I look at it. It's basically accompanying yourself without guitar or piano. I've done that way from the beginning when studying with Gary in '73. I think I switched to vibes in my sophomore year at Berklee. So that's like thirty years ago!

FM: Where are you from originally?

ES: Lawrence Mass, which is about ten minutes from here.

FM: When were you born?

ES: 1954. So straight out of high school I went to Berklee in '72. I was probably 20 or 21. I was there as a drummer, right! I was into Buddy Rich. I was playing in rock bands. Then I saw Gary Burton at a concert, with the Mike Gibbs Big Band. Gary played with Steve Swallow, Ted Seebes, who was the drummer at the time who Gary was playing with at the time, and the Mike Gibbs Big Band. Gary did the tune *Grow Your Own* by Keith Jarrett. It was an excellent concert! Gary did the "C" section by himself, and the crowd went nuts! It was a big audience. He did it solo. Then the bass came in, I think it was Swallow. Swallow came in with the drums and then they played a few more choruses with the big band. It was one of those things when you looking at it - it's like life changing! I think my eyes were wide open at that point

because I hadn't seen anything like that. I probably wasn't aware of the vibes, maybe Lionel Hampton, but not the way that Gary played it. This was '73 and Gary had long hair hanging down, and the fringed jacket. It was great!

So then I had Gary for beginning mallet lab. He showed us how to hold the mallets and we played simple tunes. He told us what scales to play. That was probably my sophomore year. Then I got more into it. I studied with Dave [Samuels] for a semester or two. Tom van der Geld. Lou Magnamo was my first teacher. I worked out of the Goldenberg [*Method for Xylophone, Marimba and Vibraphone*] book. Then I studied with Gary [Burton] for two years. I studied with Bill Molenhof as well - he was teaching at Berklee at the time. I think it was Bill, then Dave, then Gary.

In the lessons we would do two tunes. We would do a tune on vibes, and a tune on piano. And a lot of solo stuff. We did *Chega [du Saudade - A C Jobim]* all the stuff from the *Alone at Last* album that Gary did. I mean; I was a beginner! I was listening to Bill Evans, to Keith Jarrett. I was working on ear training, because coming from drums, I wasn't good with melody and changes. So I would do stuff in the car while I was driving with a tuning fork. I did a lot of ear training. I did a lot of thinking about the instrument - conceptualising. 'Cause Gary was big into counterpoint and arranging on the instrument. So I would be in an elevator and listening to the muzak, and figuring, "How can I play that music muzak on the vibes in terms of melody, counterpoint and all the different lines?" So I did a lot of conceptualising about that stuff. And listening to more contemporary type players at the time, maybe Chick Corea, Paul Bley, Herbie Hancock, Keith Jarrett and that sort of thing.

But I wasn't playing too many [jazz] standards. It was more at the time - *Falling Grace* [Steve Swallow] and those types of tunes. The *Real Book* had just come out in '73 or so. So all those Chick [Corea] tunes, Jarrett tunes, *Memories of Tomorrow* [a Keith Jarrett tune] that type of stuff. Although we would do a [standard] tune like *My Romance* in the lesson.

We worked on dampening, sight reading, the Goldenberg book with Louis Manyano. Very basic stuff like sticking and scales. I had to learn my scales, 'cause when I went to Berklee I barely knew where "middle C" was and that was about it. I was studying from scratch, you know!

Then when I graduated, I got my Music Ed. degree, I was playing drums and doing gigs on drums, and playing piano. I would see Pam [Ed's wife] on Sundays for dinner, and that was it. Rest of the time was spent practicing, studying and sessioning at night. A lot of sessioning, and gigs. Playing weddings on drums. That was how I paid my way through school. School back then cost nine hundred dollars a semester. I think that I had a grant that paid half. Incredible! I got my money's worth 'cause I studied with Alan Dawson on drums, and then Gary [Burton].

At that point I was thinking; "Should I keep the drums, the vibes, and the piano? Should I do all three? Or should I just focus on vibes?". Eventually I

decided just to focus on vibes. It's tough to be real strong on them all. Even though I like the drums. So I was playing more vibes. I was doing classical. I remember that my proficiency [examination] was in front of Gary Chaffee, you know the drummer, and Gary Burton, doing the Bach *Inventions* playing both lines. Talk about pressure!

Then Bill [Molenhof] left when I was graduating and Gary [Burton] got me the gig - I took over Bill's place. That was in the summer of '76.

FM: So that was quite a development in three years!

ES: Three years, sure, exactly! From not playing the instrument, not playing a melodic instrument. To studying the instrument in three years and then teaching at Berklee. So it was a great opportunity because I didn't know what I was going to do. At the time Gary [Burton] got me the audition for [George] Shearing. But he disbanded the group at the time and went with the duo. So, that didn't happen!

I started doing gigs, played weddings on vibes. Doing any gigs that came along.

FM: So right from the beginning you were playing the vibes as the comping instrument.

ES: Right! In fact the band for weddings a lot of the time was; drums, bass, vibes and girl vocalist. No piano, no guitar.

So I was always looking at the instrument as a solo instrument, mainly because of Gary [Burton] I think. That *Alone at Last* album - I think was a milestone in vibes playing. That was at the Montreux Jazz Festival, he was supposed to go there with a band and showed up by himself. The promoter didn't want him to do it, but he went on stage anyway. You know, that's pretty impressive in front of the Montreux to go up there by yourself and play vibes. At the time, that was the early 70's, he was practicing all those things at Berklee. So you'd go in and hear him practicing all that stuff, *Chega [du Saudade]* and all that stuff.

FM: You always felt totally confident about playing as the chordal [harmonic] instrument. Was there never a feeling of, I'm meant to be playing only melody on this instrument?

ES: No. I think mainly because of Gary and his pianistic approach. I played four mallets right from the beginning. Accompanying ourselves right from the beginning, guide tones and counterpoint. The way we play with dampening, versus Milt Jackson and Bobby Hutcherson, they don't play with too much dampening. So as far as multiple lines, they don't do that. With the dampening, the pedalling and the four mallets it's really a totally different instrument. The way we play it.

I studied Bill Evan's transcribed solos. I still do that. Herbie Hancock. Art Tatum. I watch a lot of videos. I've got Horowitz *In Moscow*. Claudio Arrau. I watch a lot of classical piano in terms of their technique and their whole approach to the instrument. A lot of jazz piano videos. I'll show you my collection downstairs, it about fifteen hundred, but it's mainly piano players. Just totally studying. Reading about players and improv and stuff like that. Transcribing solos.

When we play the instrument like a piano, it really encompasses jazz theory. Knowing tunes. It's a much broader instrument that just playing two mallet lines like Milt Jackson.

I don't listen a lot to vibes players, there is really no one to listen to. I think that the potential in the instrument is more with listening to piano players. Like Christos [Rafalides an ex pupil of Ed Saindon's presently working and recording in New York City] he is listening to Latin piano players and adapting those techniques to the vibes. Tom Beckham, a past pupil of mine at Berklee, he plays comping and soloing at the same time. He has recorded with a trio on a label Fresh Sounds. He plays with a trio and sax.

But there's not a lot!

I'm not sure what Tom van der Geld is up to. But he had a nice approach. I studied with him at Berklee and also in his apartment when I took the summers off.

I took the summers off from Berklee just to absorb all the information during the school year. I would get up, practice vibes. Take a break – piano – drums. Have lunch. Then same routine vibes, piano, drums every day of the summer. I might of worked on weekends playing drums at G.B. [General Business] gigs. But it was: get up, practice all day long! And that's what it took, those three years. So I studied with Tom and used to go to his apartment.

I think he is now in Austria. He was from Germany. He had a nice four mallet touch. Not a loud player. Good dynamics. He was into Keith Jarrett at the time. Nice player.

But all the other players like Terry Gibbs, Dave Pike, Charlie Shoemaker - even Mainieri, play with more of a two-mallet style. I don't hear much of the four mallets. You don't get a sense of the different parts and the counterpoint and the multiple lines with those guys versus Gary. I mean, if you hear Gary [Burton] play *Chega* or some of the other solo stuff you really get a sense that it's complete. There are multiple lines, runs, using the whole instrument, dampening and that sort of thing. Versus a more concerted style of playing which is more like Red Norvo's approach.

FM: That's why you listen to the Art Tatum recording, because he is all over the instrument.

ES: All over the place! Runs. Left hand bass lines. Counterpoint. Yeh, that's exactly how I think about it. When I was doing *Swing on the Sunnyside* I was listening a lot to Tatum and Teddy Wilson. When I was doing *Ain't Misbehaving* it was sort of like Tatum. And also Dave McKenna. I'm a big Dave McKenna fan in terms of his time and his approach.

I am not sure that there are any other vibes players that I can suggest to you. There is some solo stuff by [David] Friedman. He would be worth checking out, although some of the stuff that he is doing is "kind of out there". But no one is playing standards that I know of, with the solo piano approach. Unfortunately there is not a big demand for it. Otherwise I would of done that. What about John Piper? John has a solo CD out. And so does Ted Piltzecker.

But playing in a group as the only comping instruments you have to learn how to respond. I play with a trumpet player Herb Pomeroy, and Herb thinks you have to be a good player, but you also have to have, what he calls, your "playing chops" with the band – how you complement and how you respond. That's an art just playing your instrument. So sometimes if he hasn't played for a while, his chops as far as relating to the band goes are down.

There are a lot of guys who play solo piano gigs, then they play with a group and they don't know how to respond - they can't interact. I think John Piper is more of a solo vibes player.

FM: Could we look at the functionality of the vibes in a group?

ES: I'll give you an example; Lets say that if I am playing with a bass player, I play with Marshal Wood a local bass player and one of the best in town, and I am listening to the drums for the feel, but I'm also listening to the bass and what notes he's playing and are we on the "same page" as far as the changes go. He might play a different root and suggest a different chord, or I might do that, I might play his note and we might do a counterpoint together. It depends on different bass players. When I play with Marshal versus Barry Smith for example, who is more melodic, in a sense that he won't play always the roots but might play more counterpoint. I have to play a little bit differently with the two different bass players. Marshal will lay down the root and the time a little bit more - then maybe I can stretch out. Barry will probably float with the time and play less roots, so that I have to make sure that the changes are there. More like a Scott le Faro type thing. Versus Marshal who might be more of a Ray Brown style. So you have to be able to adapt and listen and not go in with you preconceived voicings. It depends also on who is playing drums. I play with two rhythm sections, one that plays fairly straight and the other that tends to play a little more with the time. And I'll pick different tunes depending on who is playing and the context of the gig. I might pick tunes with a more two or four feel with the "straight" guys, and play more out voicings with the "out" guys. And I like being able to do both.

I'm very picky with drummers. There are many in town but only possibly two that I feel comfortable with. To me drummers can make it or break it. A drummer should give us enough support but mustn't get in the way. They mustn't lead us to certain areas that we don't want to be led to. The biggest thing is dynamics. Drummers tend to play too loud for the vibes to be heard. I would like them to play time and let it settle.

I'm thinking the overall sound of the whole group in terms of the feel, listening to the bass player for the right changes and making what I play fit the context of the music, whether it is a swing tune or a bebop tune or a Keith Jarrett tune.

And a lot of the stuff I have got from listening to piano players; rock players, rhythm and blues, country and western, boogie, Dr John – if fact all styles. I've listened to Billy Joel, Elton John – 'cause it's all twelve notes.

FM: I'm getting to feel that this subject is getting bigger and bigger!

ES: Yeh, right!

Comping is complex. You've got to react to the soloist - you're improvising with the soloist, in support of the soloist. Gary [Burton] uses the analogy with conversation – it's the way he thinks about comping.

There was an article that Gary wrote for Down Beat magazine called *The Art of Comping* [Burton 1983].

In the Joe Locke clinic [Berklee College Mallet Festival 2003] his pianist [Henry Hey] was saying that some guys want very minimum notes and little interaction, and some guys want lots of notes with lots of interaction. But again that is from a pianistic standpoint. Again, I think that the source that you should be checking out is piano players.

Backing up singers is a whole different topic. We haven't really talked about that. Guys like Tommy Flanagan with Ella [Fitzgerald], Hank Jones – were the real masters of comping behind singers. That would be a specific approach – backing up singers. 'Cause what I do with a sax player is totally different to what I would do with a singer. Singers, depending on the experience of the singer, are often unsure of what they are singing, unsure of the time, unsure of the note and intonation. So I have to be more supportive and play with restraint, when playing with a singer than if I were playing with an instrumentalist, in terms of the time, setting up their note, giving them the right change, maybe play with less tension in my chords.

FM: What recordings are there with vibes backing a vocalist?

ES: Well there was the group Jackie and Roy, but that was with a pianist as well. That was with Bill [Molenhof] playing vibes.

I've done wedding gigs with this set up. But I am not sure of any recordings.

Check out Christos [Rafalides], he might have something on line [<http://www.manhattanvibes.com>]. He does a lot of gigs with singers.

Intros and endings are a big part of comping. If you are the only chordal instrument you need to come up with the progression for the intro. How you set up the harmony. And then the ending – same thing.

Also keep in mind there is still the stylistic side to playing; jazz standard versus Brazilian versus afro-Cuban versus rock, a ballad versus a $\frac{3}{4}$ or $\frac{4}{4}$ tunes. The stylistic aspect of comping is a big issue in itself when compared to just a standard jazz tune.

Then you have the concepts like stacking voicings, inner lines with chromatic approach like Bill Evans, pentatonic voicings, intervallic voicings, clusters, ostinato figures, all the different concepts.

Do you have the recording with Dave Samuels and Gerry Niewood? I think that was middle 70's and Dave was the only chordal instrument on that; drums, bass, sax and vibes. That was a good one. When that came out it was very hip. A lot of the voicings that Dave was using was upper structure triads. For example for A minor he would play a G over A. Or for Eb 6 he would play Bb over C. That type of stuff. Voiced in perfect fourths with a third at the top. Leaving out the third.

I used to listen a lot to Pat Metheny and Lyle Mays in term of how they arranged tunes. Especially when I was putting my *Different Stokes* album together, that was in the 80's.

When I'm playing in a trio I'm thinking more about arranging; ostinato figures, or ostinato with the bass, setting up different grooves with the comping. I'm not just thinking, comping. I'm thinking more about the big picture. Trying to see it like a piano, that's an orchestra.

I was just listening to the new Chick Corea trio album. He's using the whole range of the piano. He's not just comping, soloing. He's using the bass, the high end, and everything in-between.

FM: What's next for the vibraphone?

ES: Where can it be "taken"? I think it can be "taken" more places, more styles. I think the instrument has more potential with dampening, four mallet playing, and lines. I think that there is still more room. If you think that there are still piano players coming out, like Mehldau, when you would think that there wouldn't be anyone else who would come out with a new sound, right? And here is Mehldau playing unbelievable stuff and you know it's him, and the piano has been around a lot longer than the vibraphone. Granted, probably the piano has more potential as far as sounds and colours than the vibes.

But the vibes still has a lot more potential - four mallet playing, multiple lines, dampening, pedalling, touches, articulation, and musical type issues. I'm trying to work on lines where I'm varying the articulation. Not just using the pedal but doing some dead stroking and dampening. One note may be a ghost note with a staccato, and the next one legato. Playing a line in the left hand legato while playing dead stroking staccato in the right hand. Playing multiple lines that way. I'm working on classical pieces for that type of thing. Stacking – there is a lot of potential in that. Textures, clusters and shapes.

FM: And what about the problems associated with projection in a group situation?

ES: I love the acoustic sound. I don't like the K&K [vibraphone pick ups] system. Dave Samuels and Joe Locke are using it because they have to. But I think that there must be a better way. The K&K was designed with Mainieri to trigger a synth. I don't think the goal was to get a pure acoustic sound of the vibes, it was rather to get the triggering thing. So Fishman, they make transducers for bass, they might be interested in building a system that would work. Possibly to get a better acoustic sound rather than just a bar sound. I don't use the fan [vibrato effect] but Dave Samuels does and he would like that effect caught and amplified. There must be a better way to amplify the instrument and that would open up some doors with regard to the music that we can play. Christos is playing loud Latin stuff in tight corners in New York City so he needs pick-ups. But the sound to me is not great. I like the acoustic sound of the instrument – that's why I play the instrument. It's got a big dynamic range acoustically.

Most of the gigs I do in town don't have drums. Drummers are the last one I'll hire if I have to. I'll hire upright bass, clarinet and maybe trumpet, maybe guitar. No drums. Same with piano. The minute you add piano or drums the whole dynamic level comes up. The drummer can play soft with brushes. But there will always be time when he "digs in" and we can't compete – just the nature of the instrument. So most of my gigs I don't need mics because I don't use drums. If I use drums then I'll use overhead mics. I've got Shure Beta 87 mics on boom stands. A Polytone amp and speaker that I put in front of me with a little monitor on a mic stand. I can put that really close to my ear. I can "crank it up" because the amp is in front of me. That gives me a pretty good sound. For the gigs that I do that's okay.

But that is a problem with the instrument. Even Gary sometimes can't be heard. When I used to see him with Metheny - Metheny would be cranked and you couldn't hear Gary, and he would have to bash.

I hate to play loud. I like to have a big dynamic range. For me solo playing is optimal or maybe in duo with a bass player. So we are limited in that aspect.

Getting back to your topic. I think you should really address style, and jazz is a big word. You have standards, contemporary jazz, swing era, and the whole stylistic thing. I think you could expand on your topic and not use the word jazz as that excludes Brazilian and folk music. Rather use improvised music.

Because we are talking about comping in improvised music versus classical music.

FM: That brings to mind for me the “New Age” music that you were working on when I met with you in 1986.

ES: That was like the style at the time.

If you take a tune like Keith Jarrett’s *Country*. Is that jazz? It is more like rock and based on folk music.

Even though you would like to be looking at situations where there are no other comping instruments other than the vibes, you must take into account situations where there is some very effective comping behind guitar players. For example Gary’s *Carnegie Hall Concert* with Larry Coryell [Burton 1968]. That for me was one of the best albums that he did. When you listen to Gary play, even though Coryell is in the band, Gary is doing a lot of left hand stuff accompanying his own solo. So that is talking about vibes in conjunction with another comping instrument. So for example with Coryell playing guitar, when he was soloing then Gary was comping behind him. I think you could address some of that aspect of comping.

The instrument has a disadvantage of only having three octaves and limited colours. So any aspect of performance that can be used to keep it varied and interesting for the listener. It’s a tough instrument to do a four-hour gig with a trio for example. There are only so many colours that you have at your disposal to keep it interesting. We can do rolls behind bass solos to create a wash of sound.

If we lose dynamics, we lose a lot on the instrument. That to me is a very important thing - it’s a big part of the instrument. The way I think that the vibes should be played is as if you were playing a Bach *Sonatas and Partitas* or guitar transcription or maybe a piano piece, with nice dynamics. To me that’s how it should be played, versus getting a drummer and bashing out lines. Unfortunately we can’t always play like that because of the acoustics of the instrument.

APPENDIX F: GARY BURTON CLINIC (18 JUNE 2003)

Context: Berklee College of Music Mallet Festival
 Venue: David Friend Recital Hall
 Genko Uchida Building
 Berklee College of Music
 921 Boylston Street
 Boston, Massachusetts, USA
 Date: Wednesday 18 June 2003
 Clinician: Gary Burton

Gary Burton (GB): I'm going to start by playing a tune with piano accompaniment. Then I'll talk about the vibraphone and my approach to it. And last, I'll see if you have any questions or things that you would like to talk about. Then if there is time I will play another tune at the end.

[Burton plays Thelonius Monk's tune *Monk's Dream* with pre-recorded digital piano accompaniment by Makoto Ozone]

GB: I'll talk about my experience with the vibraphone. I've been playing it all my life. My approach to learning it was a little different than most people. In my generation, it was hard to find teachers for mallet instruments. I was fortunate at the very beginning. In fact the reason that I started on the vibraphone was because my parents wanted all three of us children in the family to play music, and to have music lessons of some kind. My older sister already played piano, so my parents looked around to see what else was available in this little town that we lived in. There happened to be a woman [Evelyn Tucker] in the neighbourhood who played the marimba and the vibraphone. So that's why I started on this instrument - that's what was available. I assumed that there were vibraphone teachers in every neighbourhood all around the world, but found out later that was not the case. So I took lessons from age six to eight. Then we moved to another even smaller town, and that was the end of the lessons. Fortunately my teacher was very good at getting me started in a very musical way. She of course taught me how to read the notes. But she also explained to me harmony and the names of the chords that were involved in the music. She also encouraged me to make up things. We would learn a piece and she would say, "This piece could use an introduction. Why don't you make something up that would fit here." Or "Make up an ending for this tune." So I would have to make up something. She actually got me started on the basics of improvising without realising it. She didn't really think of herself as an improviser - she didn't play jazz or anything. But the elements were there and I was introduced to them at a very early age, which was a fortunate thing for me.

When we moved, from then on I just kept on playing on my own because I had the basic building blocks. Which is - I knew how to read the notes on the music, and I knew the chords. So I just kept playing. She had also showed me

how to hold four mallets. First I played with two, and then later on I started playing pieces that were written for four mallets. I didn't use the grip that I use today – I used what is called the traditional grip, which was what she showed me. We'll talk about four mallet grips later on, and how I decided to switch to the method that I currently use.

As the years went by, I kept on playing this instrument and got more serious about it. By the time I was a teenager I had discovered jazz music and started really thinking of myself as a musician. Then I looked at what were the advantages and challenges of the vibraphone. The advantages - there are many actually. But one is - this is the easiest instrument to learn to play of any that I ever considered. Now that might not be encouraging news to you as you are struggling to learn how to play it. But if you think about it; we are always in tune, the tone quality is there the first time you step up to the instrument and hit it - it sounds like a vibraphone. The first time you pick up a clarinet, it doesn't sound like a clarinet - it takes about two or three years to get a decent sound, and to get in tune on the instruments. So we don't have to develop a lot of the basics that takes, in some cases, years - wind instruments and string instruments for instance. Even the piano is more complicated technically. In that, the challenge, if you play piano at all you will know, that the challenge is know how to keep from not tangling your fingers up when you try to play groups of notes. Which is why we have to learn fingering patterns as we play the piano. With the vibraphone or marimba there are only four mallets, for the most part, and a lot of the playing that you are doing is just with two. So, there is much less opportunity for things to get confusing.

The main technique of the vibraphone is manoeuvring around the instrument and working the pedal up and down. Getting the right notes, which applies to every instrument, is not really a technical challenge but an intellectual challenge that we all have to deal with. One of the more comical outcomes from the fact that the vibraphone is an easy instrument to get started on, is the thing that has happened a few times while I've been teaching here [at the Berklee College of Music], I've had students who will come in all depressed and upset. They got a new room mate, who happened to be a piano player, and while they were out the piano player started messing around with the vibes and by the time they came back to the apartment an hour later, the piano player was playing the vibes really great. "Wait a minute, I've been trying to play this thing for nearly five years now. How could you do that!" But it's true, in fact for many years, there were few people, in the music field, who started on it. Red Norvo started on xylophone and switched to vibraphone, but he was the only mallet player of the early generation that was really a mallet player to begin with. Hampton was a drummer. Milt Jackson was a guitar player. Victor Feldman was a piano player, and so on. I think that it was in my generation, I think, that Bobby Hutcherson and I both started on vibes. And people after us have.

This was a fairly easy instrument for someone to switch to in mid-career. If you have already mastered some other instrument but you wanted to switch to the vibes, you could pick it up in relatively a short amount of time, cause you didn't have to start from scratch with embouchure and fingering systems and

that sort of thing. So one bit advantage is that you can get right into playing the vibraphone.

By the same token, one of the challenges, is the fact that it tends to be a little bit impersonal, and shares the same characteristics with the piano. That's really a machine! You push a button and a bunch a levers move inside there and a hammer hits a string. You are not very connected to the part of the instrument that is making the sound – that string. Whereas if you are playing a horn, you are blowing air over a reed and that is where the sound is being made - you have a real up-close control over what that sound is going to be like and what you can do with it. In our case we do get to hit the thing that is going to make the sound. But it is always going to be at exactly the same pitch. We can't bend the note and do things like horn players can do. The minute we hit the note it starts to die out, like the piano does. We can't keep the note sustaining like a horn player can. So, we have our limitations. The challenge is to make the instrument as expressive and vocal as possible. The role model for expression in music is what the voice does. The way a voice rises and falls. High notes have a certain kind of sound and feel to them. Low notes have another sound a feel. Think of this for instance, [Burton hits a high note on the vibraphone] and this note [hits a lower note]. It takes the same amount of effort from me to do that. But a trumpet player, who has almost exactly the same range as this instrument, imagine a trumpet player playing that note, one of the highest ones, and then one of the lowest ones. There are much different sound and physical actions required to make those two different notes in the different ranges of their instrument.

So I think a lot, when I am playing, about how would other instruments play this phrase? Can I hear a tenor sax playing this line? Do I hear a trumpet playing this line? Do I hear someone singing this line? Because I want to phrase my melodies and my lines, as much as I can, the way horns and voices would phrase those lines. We owe a lot for this concept to Milt Jackson. Up until his era in vibraphone playing, it was really a very percussive approach to playing the instrument. Usually a fast vibrato, hard mallets and very little use of the pedal. It was mostly arpeggiating and running around quickly on lines with not much variation in dynamics, or linking up notes, and so on. Milt started playing with softer mallets, slower vibrato. He wanted it to sound like people sing, the way that he'd play guitar. He went for a more languid, lush sort of style, and showed all of us that this could be a much more expressive instrument than it first had appeared to be.

One of the things that I try to do, as much as I can, is to control how long each note is going to be. If I don't use the pedal at all [plays a middle of the range Bb note on the vibes] that's how long it will be [short]. If I want it to be a little longer, I will have to give it some pedal. [plays using the pedal to sustain the note] So if I play a line without any pedal, it sounds dry and short. But if I use some pedalling on some notes it changes that length of some of those notes and makes it sound more musical. I want to choose as much as possible whether the notes are going to be a little longer, a little shorter, or even shorter by dampening the note with another mallet. So, when I'm playing an improvised line, I'll use the pedal quite a bit. Almost every student that I ever

encountered did not use the pedal enough, was not controlling the expression of what they were playing enough. So, think about that as you play the vibraphone - "Am I really what I want to do with the notes?"

I learnt a lot by listening to myself recorded. When I was a kid my father bought me a tape recorder for Christmas one year. In those days it was a big huge thing – reel to reel. I would tape myself playing, and I noticed things that I had not thought of while I was actually playing. One of them was; this was way too dry and staccato sounding. I wanted it to sound a lot more legato the way jazz instruments that I was hearing on records sounded - they sounded more smooth and flowing. So I learnt to use more pedal with my melody lines.

Of course I use dampening as well to help with the phrasing. Everyone discovers this at some point in their playing that you can stop the bars from ringing. We first discover this when we hit a wrong note! And we dampen the note with, either a mallet, or hand, or even our body, to stop it from ringing. Then we discover that this can be used musically if we want to resolve a note in a voicing without having to re-strike all the notes again.

[plays and example of inner voice leading using dampening]

I messed around with it a little bit when I was a high school student and all. The first band I was in, and toured, was with a piano player named George Shearing, it was a great bit opportunity and experience. George played a lot of ballads, and the vibes part was typically slow and spacious single notes. So night after night we would play these slow moving simple sorts of things in unison. So, sort of out of laziness it was just easier to stand on the pedal and dampen the notes as I played. It also sounded smoother as there was no break between the notes. So I got used to doing this without really noticing that it was adding a new technique to my abilities. But then when I was in the midst of soloing that I started doing momentary dampening of notes. I thought, "Wow, look at that, I had never done that before!" I know where it had come from, that I had started doing this. And discovered, of course, that it was extremely useful with four mallet playing to change voicings. So even in my soloing if I wanted a more legato line with absolutely no break between the notes. As I hit the new note, I'd dampen the old one at the same time resulting in a perfect transition from one note to the next.

If you are going in one direction you would usually do all the attacking with one hand and the dampening with the other. When leaping back and forth you dampen with the same mallet that has just played the note. Playing a typical line, and you would include some of each. A student once showed me that you could dampen by sliding the mallet to dampen the adjacent note. He said that he had got the idea from watching his cat!

But the goal, of course, is to have as much control over what you can do with the bars. Decide for yourself - "How much is that note going to ring?" "How do I want to approach the next note?"

Dynamics - the volume levels at which we play, are incredibly important to individualize your style and your sound. If you play a horn, if you play a scalar line going up and down, you are naturally going to get louder as you get higher and softer as you get lower - just like the human voice does, and we want melody lines to do that. So we can't play them [the melodies] all evenly as we could on the vibraphone or the piano, we want to phrase them this way.

One rule of thumb for me is that, unless I am playing some sort of repetitive pattern like an ostinato figure, which you would want to stay the same volume level, every other melody line that you play should have some kind of shape to it. There is no group of melody notes that you will ever play that should be exactly the same volume. You are going to have some intended expression to them. Decide for yourself, as you are about to play a melody or phrase. "Ok what do I want to do with this?" I can't just play the notes - I have to decide how should I play them? "What do I want this melody line to say or express?" "What is its dramatic statement supposed to be?"

For me, I had a big awakening about dynamics. I thought I was really giving dynamics a lot of attention and doing quite well with this. Till I was in a recording studio and we recorded a tune and I listened to my solo and it sounded like there was almost no variation at all. I thought; "Wow, that was interesting, I thought I was giving a lot of expression here" But it didn't sound like it. So I said, "Lets do another take and I'll put more into it." I listened to it again and it still sounded as if it was barely making any variation. So I said, "One more time and this time I will overdo it!" It will be too much, it will be overdone, but it might help me find out where the right level is. So I overdid it, really over-expressed; too loud, too soft etc. When I listened to it back, it sounded absolutely perfect. That was a big revelation to me. I needed to put a lot more exaggeration into those dynamics than I had imagined.

Most musicians, and student musicians in particular, tend to play in a very narrow dynamic range. How you should really think of it is: "what is the softest I can play?" and "what is the loudest I can play?" - I want to use that range as I play - pretty much on every tune. Unless it is a soft ballad or something. On any normal piece I want to use that whole dynamic range, not the middle part of it, I want to use the loudest and the softest as well. So when I am playing a line you should be able to hear it rise and fall - there will be peaks, as loud as I can play comfortably, and it will get to the point where it almost disappears. There is a lot of power in the rise and fall of volume. It is one of the most expressive tools that a player has, whether you are playing written music or improvised music. This is particularly important, because we don't have an instrument that is guiding us dynamic expression, we have to make it happen on our own. We have to decide, "How is this supposed to sound?", "How do I image this to sound?" And then use those dynamics.

So when you practise, and I have, probably, radical ideas about practising compared to the traditional approach to doing exercises. I think that the kind of practising that is repetitive patterns of things helps in some ways and does damage in others. It does damage because we would never want to play music in that way. You would never want to play ten to fifteen minutes at a time at

the same volume level, with the same rhythms, the same eight notes over and over again, with repeated patterns. That is very non-musical. When Bach wanted to teach his children the keyboard, he wrote the *Inventions*. Nice pieces of music. There's melody, there's structure, there are themes, there's dynamics – they are pieces of music. Something happened about one hundred and fifty years ago when music became popular, to market music to the masses, so to speak, in Europe. Suddenly every middle-class home had some sort of keyboard instrument and the concept of exercises to practice to build technique became a standard part of teaching. I am not so sure that it's all that helpful a thing. I often tell people, “The best things you can play to build your technique and your musicality, are pieces of music.” Make sure there is a variety of them, different kind of things. I am not sure if exercises are all that essential, or that helpful, particularly to improvisers, for the example. Because you don't want to get settled into repetitive patterns, and so on. For us expression and dynamics are so important. With each piece that I learn, for me, I have to find out - “What is this piece about?” “This phrase - why is it there? What is it supposed to say to listener? What is its role within the context of the whole piece?” If I haven't thought about that, identified that, and made a decision about what that is - then I'm not going to play it correctly and I'm not going to get the most out of it. So I need music to be something that I can get my arms around. Exercises don't really offer that so much.

Technique. I don't think that there is any rigid orthodoxy about technique for mallet instruments the way there is for the violin for instance. There is really only one correct way to finger it and I wouldn't want to wander off into the experimental world to try and invent another way to play the violin. If you want to learn the right way to do that, it's the same as wanting to play with the right embouchure when trying to play the trumpet otherwise we will probably never master the trumpet effectively. With mallet instruments, the general rule of thumb is; what ever is simplest, what ever is most direct, is probably the best way to execute something, to play something. I don't lift my mallets very far off the keyboard. I stay about a few inches at best. You can play as hard as you want, or as soft as you want. You don't have to play from up here [plays a high stroke]. If you start hitting from up here [holds the mallets high off the bars] the chances are of hitting the right note goes down because you are coming from such a far distance. But if I'm this close to it when I make the hit, I'm probably not going to miss it – I still miss it. But I'm less likely to [miss it] if I am close to it. There is some psychological thing to it, particular as we get more excited when we play, that we should raise up more. This is not necessary. The power of a good attacking stroke is not up here [plays a high stroke]. You have so much more control if you stay down to the keys. I keep my wrists lined up with this row of posts [indicates the front posts supporting the natural bars]. You can get to any combination of notes on the keyboard with four mallets without moving away from this position. The vibraphone is a large instrument. We want to sense that we are playing all of it, that we have it at our disposal at all times.

Now maybe the marimba, which I only play occasionally, is a little different story because it is so much bigger you do have to move around some. But on the vibraphone you can't do a lot of moving because you have to stay with the

pedal. Piano teachers will always tell you, “Don’t get into thinking that this is the piano” [indicates the middle range of the piano] Remember you are responsible for the entire range of the thing. Many pianists, when they get out into the upper ranges, or lower ranges, it gets a little dicey as to where those exact notes are because they don’t use them so often. With us we want to feel like we are in command of this whole piece of territory. I can easily reach the ends of the instrument with either arm, either hand. So this is all physically possible without me having to step down here [the low end] or step up here [the high end]. I do lean, depending on what I am doing, as I play. Generally I try to keep the main part of my body centred because if I actually move my whole body, which I do occasionally if I’m going to be up here for a while [moves to the top part of the keyboard] playing something over and over and which is boring, then I will move my body and stand up there. If I suddenly needed to play a lower chord, it would take me a few seconds to move myself down there. Just doing this [leans towards the top of the instrument] I can move down very quickly because it is only my arms that have to move and my body doesn’t have to move, as that is slower. So I think a lot in terms of – what is simple, what is direct, what is the easiest way to stick something. I use the ends of the bars when it’s more convenient. One player I know says he insists on always using the ends of the bars. I could never think of doing that. Sometime it is more convenient to use the ends, sometimes it feels more natural to use the middle of the bars. A lot of it has to do with the shape of the line that I am playing. So, don’t get locked into any rules of; have to hit here or, have to hit there, have to stand this way, or whatever. Keep it simple. Of course we don’t hit where the string goes through the bars because there is no decent sound there. My usual thinking is - anywhere, but the nodal point is fair territory.

Sticking – there is some debate about this. When I was learning to play I was taught by Evelyn, my teacher at the beginning, that I was supposed to play left, right, left, right as much as possible. Only doing double sticking or something different if it meant that something would cause crossing over or awkward thing. But otherwise I was supposed to always alternate. I played that way for a few years until I started playing more with four mallets and then it became a problem and I realised this is way too restricting because I wanted to do something with one hand while the other hand was doing something else. And the one hand was not used to playing a whole line by itself. It felt really strange. A simple group of notes would of taken both hands to play. So I practised for a while phrasing with one hand to get used to varying the dynamics and phrasing of notes with just one mallet. And also developing some more independence of the two hands so that I could do things with one hand and something else with the other. I decided that the better rule for sticking is to have a high degree of flexibility. To be able to play any kinds of groups of notes with one mallet, or two mallets, or a combination of the two. I noticed that when I’m playing; sometimes I’m alternating sometimes I’m playing a whole line with one hand and this line with one hand. I don’t think about it, and of course you don’t think about these things once you are in the act of playing because there isn’t time to decide on the sticking. We train ourselves through practice and familiarity, and our unconscious mind eventually has this all figured out those decisions “rapid fire” while we are

actually playing. Sometimes I'll be playing the same song I've played night after night on gigs and I've always stuck it the same way and then I'd stick it a different way and I'd say, "Wow, why did I do that?" Sometimes I would decide to start it softer and have an accent on a different note and that caused my brain to say, "In that case it would be better to start on a different mallet." So flexibility, I think, is the goal – to be able to be comfortable to play different combinations of notes, with one hand or two hands or either way. I do use these two mallets for single lines [indicates mallets 1 and 3 - outside right hand and inside left hand] because of how my grip works. Some people use the inside two mallets.

We could talk briefly about four-mallet grips. There are three familiar ways of holding the four mallets. I am not real rigid about which one is better than the other or this is what one should do. As I told you, I started out with the traditional grip with the inside mallets on top, and soloed with the inner two. But found that it was clumsy and I didn't have as much control. When I got into soloing, I would always have to put two mallets down and play with two. That bothered me as I would get ideas for chords in my solos and wish I had the four mallets. So finally, and I can tell you that it was the summer of my junior year of high school, I said, "Ok, I've got to make a decision here. I'm either going to hold the four mallets and use them all the time, or I'm not going to." The first thing that I concluded was that I could not continue with the grip that I was using. So over that summer I started experimenting with different ways to hold them and came across that fact that if I held them the opposite way, with the outside mallets on top, there was a much smoother opening and closing motion possible. I could open them farther and I had much more control over each individual mallet. The nice thing was that; only the mallet that was attacking was bouncing up and down. Whereas in the other traditional grip you get a lot of the other mallet bouncing while you are playing. So this was a big improvement for me. This has been my way of playing ever since. I was not the first person to discover the way of holding the mallets, for some reason it has been called the "Burton grip" now for years, but I cannot take credit for it. I have met others, Bobby Christian for instance, who was a mallet player in Chicago in the 1930's and 40's, played this way. And I've met others through the years who have discovered also on their own. It is a relatively popular way of holding the mallets today. There is also the Musser grip, which is named after Clair Musser, he wasn't the first to use it either, but for some reason it got named after him. He is of course the man who founded the Musser Company back in the 1940's. He used to play a fair amount himself. His grip of course is also the Leigh Stevens grip concept of; the mallets don't touch and you have two fingers in-between. It is favoured by a lot of marimba players. I don't have a strong opinion as to why one might be better than another. I am not strong at the Musser grip because I don't do it. There are many wonderful technical players who use the Musser grip so it obviously works. For some reason it seems to be much more favoured by marimba players and the grip I use seems to be much more favoured by vibraphone players. People crossing back and forth as well. I know some players who use both grips – they use the Musser grip when they play marimba and this one [indicates his own grip] when they play vibes. To each their own when it comes to sticking and how you hold the mallets.

[Burton then opens the clinic up to questions from the floor.]

In response to a question related to “building a vocabulary as a jazz improviser” Burton replies:

GB: Learn lots of songs. Every song you learn introduces you to a different set of harmony structures, a different mood, a different style, different tempo etc. its like an actor. If an actor said to me, “What should I do to build my acting skills?” I would say, “Play as many roles as you can, because each new role that you do will stretch your talent into new areas and cause you to learn something else and get some new experience.” Each song is like a role that we take on. It’s got a character to it; this is dark and moody, a bossa feel, this is a punchy pop sort of thing, this if a fast bop sort of thing. Each piece will have its own set of characteristics and its harmonic sequence, which we’ll have to learn how to get from one chord to the next. Well after a while, lets say once you’ve learnt one hundred standard tunes, that people play as jazz musicians, there will be very few harmonic situations that you haven’t seen before or a least something similar. You will have a sense of - “Oh, yes, I sort of know how to handle this – it has sort of the same bridge as the other tune I used to play on this other tune.” That’s when you can flip to the point when you can put any new song in front of you and you can read through it and play on it. There will be nothing that foreign or new to you. A lot of time I ask students, when they’ve been playing a number of years: “How many songs do you know?” I was surprised, sometimes a student would say, “Probably thirty or forty.” Others would say; “Well I’ve learned these three or four, and I’ve been working on this one for the past year.” I said, “That’s not going to do it.” For one thing, if you get called for a gig you’re going to need more than four tunes! But you also need to learn the breadth of more tunes. So I say, “Start with easy tunes in fact.” Don’t try and play tunes that are so challenging that you are overwhelmed by then. Better that you pick things that are easy for you so that you can learn them relatively quickly and get some semblance of a flow going and get comfortable with them, but keep learning. I tell people: “Try to add one or two new pieces a week to your vocabulary”. If you are taking lessons that teacher should assign a new tune each week so that you have something new to work on each time. In this piece you are going to be; dealing with a chromatic progression here, it goes into a minor thing here, lets figure out what works here, and so on. That’s my suggestion for building a vocabulary.

In response to a question from vibraphonist Joe Locke related to “How to find your own voice as an improviser,” Burton paraphrases the question:

GB: “How do I get my own style?” This is a question that is often asked of me by students, particularly if they are more advanced students. It is one of the most elusive challenges. Because style, is to some extent, a reflection of your personality. And you might as well ask the question: “How do I get a personality? Do I go to a charm school, or what?” In some cases, I do believe, there are people who have a stronger natural personality, and people who have a more subdued personality that does not stand out as much. In fact if you

think about people and the way they talk, some people have a real “a gift for the gab.” They are very expressive talkers and communicators. Then other people who sort of talk normally and they can explain things and be understood. But they are not charismatic somehow when they get up in front of an audience to give a speech. Some musicians seem to have a more natural personality and uniqueness comes through. In some cases the music you choose to play is itself more unusual, out of the ordinary. A good example of this would be Theolonius Monk, who I played earlier. Composer and player whose music was instantly recognisable because it was so different from what most people were playing. Yet we liked it. We all as a community of musicians and listeners gravitated to Monk’s music even in its interesting childlike simplicity it was very compelling and interesting. But it was the fact that it was different from most of what we were hearing that made it stand out. Some musicians just by the fact that they are a little different from every one else, we see them as having their own style and own way of playing. I think in my case I’m very much a product of my experiences. I’ve played with a lot of great musicians over the years and I have learnt from, borrowed from, or even stolen from each of them, things. Starting with George Shearing and Stan Getz – the people I played with when I was nineteen, twenty and twenty-one years old. George was a master of harmony and had a sense of drama in his playing. There are many books that he published, fifty years ago, of just standards that were re-voiced with beautiful re-harmonisations. I bought those books and played them when I was in high school, very painstakingly figuring out the chords on the piano because I was so interested in these harmonies. When I played with him for a year, it was a real education. He also played solo pieces. When I heard him do this, I said, “I’d like to do that!” So I started playing solo pieces as soon as I left his band – I stole that from him, so to speak. When I joined Stan Getz’s band, the first thing he said was when Stan would take breaks occasionally during the set he would say, “Play something, and I’ll be back in a bit.” So I would play these solo pieces. To this day I have kept on doing that. I got the inspiration came from seeing George doing it. Stan was a fantastic melody player. This was a big discovery to me. For me up to that point the melody was just something you had to get through in order to get to the solo, which is where the real action was. So I started playing with Stan. And Stan I noticed, sometimes wouldn’t even solo, he’d just play the melody and said, “Go ahead and play”. And he would come back and play the melody again. But he would play it so compellingly that it would be the highlight of the piece. I would think, “Wow – I’d never seen that before. How does he do that?” Sometimes he would solo very simply and play almost the same phrase that he had played last night and the night before. Of course I would always be trying to play something radically different, God forbid I should repeat anything! I noticed that he’d formed this incredible connection with the audience. His melodies were so powerful and strong. I’d say, “I’m missing something here, ‘cause I’m not connecting with the audience nearly as well, and I had played ten times as many notes, and I’m much more impressive, and he is winning. I’m missing out on something here.” So during the three years I played with him I learned a lot about dynamics, and about phrasing, and about how to leave out notes. I think one of the big challenges that you go through as a player is editing yourself.

People will tell you that, “Finally after thirty years I was fairly satisfied with being able to leave out what was not essential that I didn’t have to do.”

In response to a question about Burton’s early involvement in “cross-over” music and the combining of rock music and jazz, Burton replies:

GB: I’d just left Stan’s band, and I was starting my own band. I knew that I wanted to do something that would be different, that would be uniquely mine. I wasn’t sure what it would be at first. But I noticed that Stan had had this big success by combining Brazilian music with jazz. He’d sort of stumbled onto it and discovered that he liked it and it worked well for him and it was a good fit for his style. It was a huge success for him. Right at that time I was twenty-three maybe twenty-four years old and I had just discovered “rock” music. Rock music, when I was a kid, was not really that interesting. It was Elvis and pre-Elvis and the music was fairly unsophisticated. In the mid-sixties the Beatles came along, Bob Dylan and other groups, and suddenly the music was getting much more interesting, structures, harmony, instrumentation, different eclectic styles mixed together, and so on. So I became very interested in this and I was quite a fan for quite a while. I actually saw the Beatles in person at Shey Stadium at their last concert. I went with Stan Getz and his family, the whole group, we all went. So, as I was starting the group, I got my first job at a club in Boston actually. I was living in New York actually. But a club in Boston offered me a week. I did not even know what musicians to hire. So I hired Bill Evan’s rhythm section – he was on vacation at the time. So I called Eddie Gomez and Joe Hunt and said; “Would you do this week in Boston with me?” We did it as a trio. I just happened to go to a session somewhere in New York with friends and there was this guitar player who was playing this very strange mixture of jazz and rock. I thought, “Perfect, this is just perfect for me.” So I introduced myself to him, it was Larry Coryell, and said, “Do you want to work a week in Boston?” We did, and that started it. I was looking for something, and I didn’t know it was going to be that particular combination of things until I heard him playing. Then I could see it working. That led me to it.

A question from the floor relating to Burton’s duo recordings particularly his work with Chick Corea.” How much of the music was pre-discussed, and how much was symbiosis on the stage?”

GB: I’ve been playing with Chick [Corea] for thirty-two years now. For me the duet setting is the best thing for me. If I had never to play in any other setting again but duets, I’d be happy. That’s all I do pretty much these days. For the past six years I have only played duets with Makoto [Ozone] or Chick [Corea]. It’s a good blend first of all, piano and vibes. We are both keyboard instruments, and yet there is a difference in sound so there is a lot of variety possible. It works very well as a combination – you can be very big and full, or you can be very simple and plain sounding as well. In terms of how the players interact – to me this is my favourite aspect of it. When you play solo, it’s like you’re the speaker and you are giving the speech, what you have to say to the audience. When you are playing in a band, it’s like being in a panel

discussion. You've got five people there and you are all going to take turns giving your opinion of the song as you work your way around the band doing your moment in the spotlight while the others cheer you on and help you from behind. While with a duet, it's like an intense conversation with your best friend. You know how, when you talk to someone one on one, and if you know them well, you can almost guess what they are going to say next and add to the next point and so on. That is what it feels like in a duet setting. Plus there is this extra thing about conversation - when we speak to each other we have to wait for the other person to speak and answer back and forth. But when we speak to each other musically we get to keep on talking at the same time as we converse, listen to each other, and talk to each other, we get to both keep on doing it. So it gets to be far more interactive than what a conversation is. So it is a wonderful setting if the two players have a rapport of course. If you don't then it is not as exciting.

As far as your question about how prepared was the music with Chick; It depends on the pieces - sometimes he would write out very extensive compositions that would mostly read and only small bits for improvising. Other pieces would be very open with only little bits pre-planned and then the rest is us playing. Most of the time we would be playing on some sort of agreed upon changes, sometimes it would be free and open, he is the only musician that I do that with. I tried occasionally in my youth playing in free situations without pre-planned structures. I kind of got over it after a while. It's fun to do with Chick for some reason, but I've never been attracted to be doing it with other players in recent years.

[Burton finishes the clinic with a duo performance of James William's *Soulful Bill* with pre-recorded digital piano accompaniment by Makoto Ozone]

End of clinic

APPENDIX G: ED SAINDON CLINIC (17 JUNE 2003)

Context: Berklee College of Music Mallet Festival
 Venue: Genko Uchida Building
 Berklee College of Music
 921 Boylston Street
 Boston, Massachusetts, USA
 Date: Tuesday 17 June 2003
 Clinician: Ed Saindon

[The general subject of comping is agreed upon, with specific reference to using the vibraphone in a group with no other harmonic comping instrument.]

Ed Saindon (ES): Lets say - playing in a band with no piano and no guitar. I think that is sort of untapped. That whole pianistic approach to playing the vibes. Playing in a group with no piano or guitar.

Student comment: Didn't Red Norvo record in a trio format with Tal Farlow and Charlie Mingus?

ES: Incredible stuff! That was very advanced with lots of nice arrangements.

[Discussion of Fats Waller's *Jitterbug Waltz* as played by Chick Corea]

ES: When you hear Chick play, it is very recognizable - his voicings. Lets just talk about that for a minute.

We don't have the range of the piano, so a lot of the things that he's doing with the bass we can't do. What we can do is play a lot of voicings; stacked voicings. We only have four mallets, but we can stack - I think that is a good technique to do. What I would usually do on the low end, I would play the guide tones [3rd and 7th notes of the chord]. I would play very straight on the low end. A good open voicing with maybe some dissonance in the middle is all right. And then up top I would throw in - and this could be very random - two, three or four notes. But try to make some of those notes tensions. Maybe play that on the "and of two" or something like that. So, not only are you filling it up, but you are also getting some nice rhythms happening. What makes jazz sound like jazz are the tensions, otherwise it would sound like a folk or a rock tune. So a lot of what pianists will do, is to superimpose chords over the original chords. So we can stack. I would keep the pedal down. It's kind of rich!

An upper structure triad is just a triad, but most of the notes are tensions. Played against the lower guide tones and chord tones we can land up with six, seven or even eight note voicings.

[Demonstrates with: Cmin7/Dbmaj 7, Ab upper structure triad/Gb7 and AbMaj7#5/Bb7. Uses the tune, *Jitterbug Waltz*, to play examples.]

ES: Another option is to play those notes in any order. What I might do is to start with the outside voice and then fill in-between - like contrary motion.

You could also do groups of notes, seconds or thirds or fourths, working from either the top or the bottom. This can create a very rhythmic figure.

This technique is very visual - as long as you can see the notes, then you can play the notes in any order. Keep in mind, if you play the top first, they are the tensions and will not give you the chord sound. So, generally I will play the bottom note first and then play an upper structure tension. So that is breaking up the chord.

I think the four-mallet players use this technique; Burton does it. Piano players definitely do it! Even guitar players will break up the change. As opposed to play concerted style.

Here are the options - when you play the notes together – that's concerted style. Versus broken or arpeggiated style.

The biggest thing to remember is to make sure that every chord you play has some nice tensions in it, or unusual tensions.

Now, Chick Corea, Herbie Hancock, Thelonius Monk have some very identifiable voicings. So, lets talk about that. We can talk about intervallic voicings.

[plays DbMaj7 made up of perfect fifths.]

A lot of the voicings used by piano players are based on perfect fourths or perfect fifths. Possibly throwing in a guide tone note, or chord note, if you need to hear a certain chord type. This would be a nice sound, especially if the change is heard from the previous chord change.

Sometimes vague voicings [not playing the 3rd or 7th of the chord] can be used depending on what comes before. Sort of like a shape or a texture. So if I play the II-V [chord progression] you can hear the resolution before I get to it. So when I get to it, instead of it being really obvious, I can take it out a bit. So you don't have to be really clear with all the voicings.

[plays the example of the II-V chord progression in Db]

So if you have a standard tune with a lot of II-Vs, and the progression is really clear, you can use more of these vague voicings and intervallic voicings.

Side-slipping or side-stepping can also be used. So, whatever chord you are approaching, you can approach the target chord by a half step above or a half step below.

[plays an example of C chord approaching the Db chord]

You could also do two half steps above or two half steps below. Once you have an intervallic shape, then it is easy to use these techniques. You must be careful not to make it sound too out. I wouldn't use it too much with older guys at a wedding or something! But rather use it at a jazz gig. It also depends on how much you lean on these half-step approaches. You can do it so that it's very in; you could just ghost these notes, and that wouldn't be as out.

[plays examples of II-V's and side slipping on the tune Jitterbug Waltz]

An example of perfect fourths, sort of like McCoy Tyner, Chick Corea, even Bill Evans.

[plays the example of the Db chord voiced – C F Bb Eb and moves the chord up a semitone and back]

So if you take some of these voicings: perfect fourths, perfect fifths and even sixths. They are very easy to duplicate all over the instrument because they give you a really identifiable shape.

Here is something else you can do - something that Bill Evans started. You have inner voices - so I'm not thinking of the chord vertically but rather horizontally. And you have tension resolution.

Taking a typical closed voicing. What really happens is that you have voice-leading going from change to change. What you would do is keep the pedal down, and dampen the notes that change, and let the notes that are common, you would let ring. This would give you a chromatic line through the change – a nice flow from one chord to the next. Counterpoint – leading from one chord to the next.

[plays examples Cm7 F7 Bb in closed voicings and then in open voicings]

If you analyse Bill Evan's comping – he does a lot of this stuff [inner voice-leading].

[demonstrates the Dm G7 chord progression using vague voicings.]

Sometimes it's best to leave out some notes, for example the 3rd on a I chord. You should be able to hear it [implied] if there has been a strong II-V cadence leading up to it.

I sometimes pick up lower notes after I have played the chord – and not necessarily the root!

[plays the example of a Dm chord followed by a low F and A]

The other option is to play notes above. I might play a voicing and then jump up and play a line. Again, a lot of what we play is pianistic – like counterpoint.

Whenever you have a II-V the most important guide-tone motion is the 7th moving down a half-step 3rd. So somewhere in the voicing you must make the resolution apparent. That movement makes the change clear.

Sometimes the root played above the chord gives the impression of being a tension.

[hands out a transcription of Keith Jarrett's version of *Over the Rainbow*. This transcription has many examples of inner voice leading.]

We can play this [transcription] on vibes – we may need to leave out some notes, but it is do-able. The counterpoint in the inner voices gives the music a nice flow.

[points out a number of interesting voice-leading situations in the Jarrett transcription and plays them on the vibes]

Resolution possibilities are:

- Tension resolve notes 9 to 1.
- sus4 to the 3rd on a dominant chord
- Tension note 9 to flat 9
- Sharp 4 to the 5

A lot of Jarrett's counterpoint to the melody is just tension resolution.

Examples of pianists using this inner voice-leading technique are: Bill Evans, Oscar Peterson, Brad Meldau, Fred Hersch.

The techniques of tension resolution and inner voice leading would work if you were playing solo playing, or comping with a group, or if you are playing the melody.

[hands out music to *Black Orpheus* and plays examples of tension resolve on the changes. Plays examples of inner guide tone lines leading to interesting counter point under the melody]

Also the use of line clichés and inner chromatic lines gives you a little more motion. For example:

- 5 to sharp 5 and back
- root to maj 7 to min7 to 6th on a minor chord
- 5 to sharp 5 to 6th
- Diminished approach chords on a minor chord

Another interesting aspect of comping is the use of reharmonisation. For example on a tonic chord play a diminished major seventh chord as an approach chord resolving to the tonic chord.

For example C7 Fdim-maj7 Fmaj7

So far we have covered:

- Counter point
- Linear motion
- Stacking
- Tensions

[hands out copies of Keith Jarrett's tune *Country*]

This is *Country*, a straight eighth tune that uses more triads.

[plays the tune giving examples of add 9 chords, triad usage and passing inner lines. For example the chord of Ab voiced with a 9th in closed position]

This is not like a jazz tune, but more rock. With comping we would need to think more like a rock piano player. Making sure we don't play sevenths but more triads with added 9s. Very small voicings - not really open – we are not really thinking of vague voicings or intervallic voicings. You can use inversions. You maybe could use a 13. Definitely no jazz chords! You could use passing chords like V of IV. Clichés and ostinato notes, as with country and western piano players, for example the fifth or root used as ostinato notes. This is more country and western but you will hear it in blues and rock. Everything resolves to a chord note.

[plays examples of ostinato and moving inner melodies. Demonstrates some mallet exercises that utilise the technique. Plays a blues using many of the same techniques – ostinato figures]

Blues licks could include using ostinato notes such as the root, 13th or 5ths. A very common technique used by all piano players. Could be used very effectively when comping.

Lets talk about Brazilian and Latin styles of music.

Latin piano players have a lot of nice things they do. If we take a simple Latin vamp. For example a minor seventh chord can be a minor seventh flat five. What they do are a lot of arpeggios and bringing out certain guide tones lines, like we've looked at before. For example:

Seventh to sixth [7th to 6th]

Ninth to root to major seventh [9 to 1 to maj7th]

Fifth to minor sixth to major sixth [5 to min6 to 6th]

Flat five to five [flat 5 to 5]

Root to major seventh to minor seventh to sixth [1 to maj7 to 7 to 6]

Remember always to be heading towards a target note or the next chord. You can jump back and forth using different lines and chromatic approach. An ostinato note can also be used over an arpeggiated pattern. So instead of playing a II-V straight, this gives you a lot more motion.

A useful technique is to play the guide tone lines or ostinato note with the outside mallets while filling in with the inside mallets using chord notes.

[demonstrates by comping using guide tone lines with a broken, arpeggiated and syncopated feel]

In a 3/4 time signature you can use rhythmic variations such as:

Two against three

Four against three

If you break up the chord you can use a lot of these types of rhythms, a very effective technique when just comping.

[plays the tune, *Someday My Prince Will Come*, giving examples of playing these rhythmic variations]

Sometimes when we comp it is sort of like a textural voicing, just diatonically in the scale. For example just taking a triad and moving that triad over a pedal tone. This is especially true for modal playing. Just to take a shape and play that shape diatonically in the key or chromatically to add interest.

[gives the example of playing diatonically over Bb]

When comping behind different soloists I change my approach. For example; if I am comping behind a bass player I will generally be on the low end and playing very simply, not too fancy, otherwise I might take the show away from the bass player. Play simply, try to get a good groove happening, leave some space, a lot of closed voicings. You don't want to take the focus away from the bass player, they are playing on the low end and are really not heard if you get in their way. I would also tend to play on the ends of the bars.

As opposed to comping behind a tenor or alto [saxophone] soloist where I would play more expansively, possibly playing more in the middle of the bars.

End of Part One of Clinic

[Ed Saindon Clinic continued]

Context: Berklee College of Music Mallet Festival
 Venue: Genko Uchida Building
 Berklee College of Music
 921 Boylston Street
 Boston, Massachusetts, USA
 Date: Friday 20 June 2003
 Clinician: Ed Saindon

[The subject of comping is continued]

Ed Saindon (ES): I'm not really a Latin [music] specialist. When I'm comping I just like to get a good groove happening. For a bass solo I would comp nice and low. Play right on the edge of the bars so you don't have to move too much. For Latin and Brazilian music the voicings tend to be less dense - a little bit simpler, not as many tensions. Rhythmically there is a lot of syncopation with a variety in the length of the note, some notes long, maybe the next is short or you could even dead-stroke it. You also want dynamics when you are comping. One attack may be hard and the next soft. You can play small voicings but with the top mallet moving to create a melody on top. Inversions work well. You can also break up the chord in a more arpeggiated style but still with very simple chord structures in octaves but very syncopated. You could play line clichés keeping common tones above. Play lots of thirds and sixths, just two notes or in octaves. You can create interest by playing interesting sticking patterns. You could also play staccato in one hand [using dead strokes] and legato in the other [relying on the pedalling] or visa versa. What ever you do, make sure it is clean.

You could play approach chords for example, A minor to E7flat9 and back - make sure you hook up with the bass player and the drummer. Space is very important when comping.

Another thing you can do to is to change the groove to create interest. Lay down the time with one hand and play polyrhythms with the other.

On a jazz tune you can add tensions and inner voicings to the basic chords to create interest in the style of Bill Evans. You can play pedal notes with chords changing above. You can alter the basic chord to a more interesting structure. For example, a major seventh chord to a sharp five chord. Play chords in fourths.

It depends on the soloist how you comp behind them. You don't want to get in the way. For a bass solo I tend to keep it real low. Whereas, for a trumpet or soprano sax, I might go to the mid-range or higher up. When I'm playing with the flute I will tend to match the range of the lines and I'm using the whole range of the instrument - which I like to do. For flute, clarinet and soprano [saxophone] I can use the whole range of the instrument when I'm

comping. With the tenor sax I really have to keep low. For the alto sax I can play more of the range but the instruments with the higher ranges like clarinet and flute are better. For bass players, they tend to want a nice cushion, and not to move the focus away from them.

If there is another harmonic comping instrument in the ensemble then either layout comping for the solos or play more of the colourful notes of the chords such as the upper structures. Give more space, possibly play more ostinato figures and such. I also might experiment with more interesting shapes while the pianist lays down the chords. The main think is that what everyone is playing locks into the groove.

It depends on the style of the tune – a more rock oriented tune requires a more block chord approach with full triadic sounds.

Comping is really like solo playing. All the voicings and lines come into play. If you have a good approach to solo playing then comping follows naturally.

[The clinic continues with a discussion and demonstrations of basic solo playing techniques - melody in the right hand, guide tones in the left and interesting counter lines in the middle]

End of clinic

APPENDIX H: DAVE SAMUELS CLINIC (17 JUNE 2003)

Context: Berklee College of Music Mallet Festival
 Venue: David Friend Recital Hall
 Genko Uchida Building
 Berklee College of Music
 921 Boylston Street
 Boston, Massachusetts, USA
 Date: Tuesday 17 June 2003
 Clinician: Dave Samuels

Dave Samuels (DS): ...Now the context has been completed. The scale is not just isolated notes, but has a harmonic component to it, and is now a musical sentence. These sorts of connections are really, really important. You can take simple idea like this [playing scales with related harmony] and practise it in all the keys. Figure out how to do it in a minor key, as well as major keys. You can take music that you like listening to, or you can take classical music as an example, as a source for learning about harmonic progressions taking, someone like Bach or Mozart or Haydn. Take an eight bar progression and look to see how they have created the melody on top of that harmony. How the harmony is defined in the melody, and not random notes. As you start to think and connect melody and harmony they start to make sense in terms of tonal music. Your understanding and ability to hear music is increased a thousand fold. Your ability to interpret the music is increased a thousand fold because they are no longer isolated letters and words, but words that have meaning – as they have been connected. There is nothing difficult about it, nothing insurmountable about it, it is something that should be done in terms of your own understanding of being able to play and interpret written music. It has nothing to do with jazz or any style. It has to do with tonal music. Once you are able to understand that, you will be able to go beyond that and start creating your own melodies. As you create your own melodies you ultimately learn how to compose and improvise. Which is exactly what we strive to do with language. I learn language, not to be able to read a script to you, but to be able to speak to you spontaneously. Just like you desire to speak to me spontaneously. I can't do that if I don't understand how to put the words together. I can't do that if I can't pronounce the words. I can't do that if I don't understand grammar. The analogy of music is exactly the same. I can't create tonal music unless I understand how tonality works, and how chords move, how melodies are intertwined with harmony. When I understand that, then I can call it music. And just like I can speak spontaneously, I can also improvise – and you can do exactly the same thing! It just requires effort. Whether or not, at the end of the day, I have anything worth listening to when I speak is someone else's decision. But that doesn't mean I don't know how to speak. Just like I know how to write, it doesn't mean that anyone wants to read what I have written. It doesn't stop me from learning how to write.

You can take that one step further. Once you understand how chords move - and by and large in tonal music they move in a traditional fashion, and not in a random fashion. They are connected to some sort of tradition. As those chords start to take on more meaning for you, as you start to expand on them so that your vocabulary changes. You then have the option to create many types of colours - things are not just black and white. But now you have the complete spectrum of colours that you can use. When you get there you can create melodies over chord progressions, which seem complicated but are essentially derived from this basic foundation. I'll give you an example of something like that;

[plays an original tune on vibraphone and marimba with backing tracks]

Part of that was to demonstrate a variety of different ways of playing so that it doesn't all sound the same. Again, I think the analogy between talking and playing is a very good one. In the sense that you don't always speak the same way, you don't always talk at the same volume, you don't always speak with the same articulation, you don't always emphasise words in exactly the same way. It all depends on what particular environment you are in. And you do the same thing with music. Sometimes you are talking your own words, and sometimes you are talking somebody else's words. It is exactly the same thing - it makes no difference. People make a distinction between - "he's an improviser" and "this person plays written music". That is completely incorrect. What is incorrect about it is, the improvisation is part and parcel with everything. When an actor is playing a role, on Broadway, eight shows, do you think that he or she does it the same way each time? It's not supposed to be the same way each time! Not only is their individual part not the same, but also nobody else that's around them is doing it the same way. The environment is always changing. It is never the same - it is not supposed to be the same. The amplitude of how much room they have in terms of improvising is different from someone who walks on stage and plays a "spontaneous" piece. But the process is exactly the same. So if someone says, "I play written music, what do I have to improvise for?" - Because that is part of what you have to do. That is part of the interpretation of the music. So of course you improvise, and everyone else around you is improvising. Is the ensemble the same every time you play? No! Are the acoustics the same? No! Do you sit next to the same person every time? No! There are a million different variables. It is supposed to be different. You are supposed to embrace the change, not fight it. Change is part of the nature of our whole existence - if you look at the bigger picture. Improvisation is interpretation.

[plays an original tune on Vibes and Marimba with backing tracks]

[clinic continues with responses to questions relating to:

- Writing techniques
- Listening to different music
- Finding your own musical voice
- Improvisational techniques
- Rhythm as affected by pitch
- What are the thought processes while you play

Progress of an artist's career
Making your own choices

End of Clinic

Context: Berklee College of Music Mallet Festival
 Venue: David Friend Recital Hall
 Genko Uchida Building
 Berklee College of Music
 921 Boylston Street
 Boston, Massachusetts, USA
 Date: Wednesday 18 June 2003
 Clinician: Dave Samuels

DS: Pedalling is done essentially to be able to control how long the note rings. It also gives you the opportunity to play in the way where you control the ringing from bar to bar. What happens is the pedal is not really an on-off switch. It actually takes time for the bar to settle into the felt. Which means that if I play two consecutive notes and I play as I strike each note, I may get ringing of the first note into the second note. So what I am doing is pedalling a little after I strike the bar. It depends on each individual instrument as to how the felt feels. It is no different when playing from piano to piano - they are all going to be a little different. You want to be able to control that.

Now the way you control it, is by how far you press the pedal down. You don't want to get in the habit of pressing the pedal down so that you end up all the way down on the floor, so that it takes longer for it to come back up. You want to get the damper off the bar so that the bar vibrates freely. It's not a volume pedal. The further you press it - there is no advantage to it, the further you press it there's a disadvantage as it's going to take longer for the damper bar to come back up.

[plays and gives examples of pedalling styles on the tune *On Green Dolphin Street*]

You can see that I am pedalling a lot after I strike the note.

[students are given opportunities to play]

DS: Try playing cleanly without mallet or hand dampening to begin with. So you don't think that the only way you can control the length of the note is by dampening. Mostly what happens with a lot of players as they start to play louder, they start to play more notes, things start ringing together. And it rings together because they are not pedalling correctly. There are times where you want lines to ring out - that's fine. But when you don't you don't want to

have the habit. So you want to be very careful on how you pedal. And remember to pedal for the melody!

[students are given opportunities to play on *Lullaby of Birdland*]

[The clinic continues with a discussion of soloing techniques and tension resolve in melody lines. Practising playing tunes with good time. Making sure that all the aspects of the playing are strong and under control.]

End of Clinic

University of Cape Town

APPENDIX I: JOE LOCKE CLINIC (18 JUNE 2003)

Context: Berklee College of Music Mallet Festival
 Venue: David Friend Recital Hall
 Genko Uchida Building
 Berklee College of Music
 921 Boylston Street
 Boston, Massachusetts, USA
 Date: Wednesday 18 June 2003
 Clinician: Joe Locke and pianist Henry Hey

[Clinic starts with a performance of Chick Corea's *Litha* by Joe Locke on vibraphone and marimba, accompanied by pianist Henry Hey.]

Question from the floor: Why do you use the Stevens grip?

Joe Locke (JL): Is that what it is! I use it because I was taking a couple of lessons, when I was a kid, with Gordon Stout while I was living in Rochester. I was playing the really basic traditional grip and Gordon suggested that I was going to have a problem with the grip in the future. Gordon told me to go and check out a guy who was practising down the hall as he had a great grip. And that was Leigh Howard Stevens. He was working on some Bach *Fugues* and doing what he was doing. He showed me the grip and told me how to do it.

At the time I was about sixteen years old. I remember that Gordon introduced me to Leigh and he showed me the grip. How I use it now, he would probably die if he knew how I used it. There is no reason why I use this grip, it just happened that way. I remember that at that time I was working with an organ trio in Rochester, New York, and I decided to stop playing with four mallets and just play with two, then at home I would practise the "Stevens" grip. I practised exercises that he gave me. It was really about opening and closing the mallets and getting my hands strong enough, so that on a gig I would eventually be able to hold all four of them and play. I remember that for a long time I didn't hold four mallets. I'd just practise with four at home. Then I got to a place where I would comp with four mallets and then when I soloed I would put two down because I didn't have the strength to hold all four. Then I got to the point where, no matter what I was doing, I could hold all four mallets. It took a long time before I got comfortable. Now I'm uncomfortable if I'm not holding four mallets – it feels strange to play with only two mallets. If I hold only two I feel completely lost.

My approach to playing the vibes, talking about four mallets versus two mallets, I'm a two mallet player - I just hold four mallets. There are times when I use all four mallets, but my approach to playing the vibes really comes out of my love for horn players. And of course Milt Jackson and Bobby Hutcherson were big influences on me. So I play with the inside two mallets. I play like how a two mallets player would, but if I want to punch out some

chords in the middle of the solo, I've got it in my hands. I've pursued trying to play in a linear fashion like the horn players that I admire. So basically I'm a two-mallet player who always holds four mallets.

Question from the floor: Why don't we see more players performing in the duo setting?

JL: The problem is how to amplify the vibes. We have to use pickups because we want everything we play to be heard and yet you lose some of the beauty and organic intrinsic quality of the vibraphone when you amplify with pickups. The chamber setting for the vibraphone is a beautiful setting. There should be more. For me, however, I love playing with a rhythm section. I love playing with a great drummer. I love piano, bass and drums, or guitar, bass and drums which has its validity and is still so much fun. The chamber concept with different combinations of instruments is great and it exposes the natural beauty of the instrument.

Question from the floor: Do you ever work in a setting where there is no piano or guitar player?

JL: In fact my new recording, which is a six-movement suite called *Four Walls of Freedom* [Locke 2003], is a suite that I wrote for the late Bob Berg. That is a quartet with Tenor Saxophone, Vibes, Bass and Drums.

Question from the floor: Talk about your approach to comping.

JL: I listen to piano players. I get a lot from the pianists that I play with. I find voicings that I find appealing to myself, whether they are expressing or outlining the fundamentals of the chord, or whether they are expressing the upper partials of the chord, but have a really nice colour to them. And I mix and match them as I feel like. [Locke demonstrates some concerted comping on *Woody n You*]. Just, whatever. I got some Bill Evans's left hand voicings for example. I just put them together in a way that feels good, and hopefully sounds good. It is such a broad question; there are just so many things. I got so many ideas from Mark Levine's books *The Jazz Piano Book* and *The Jazz Theory Book*. Many of the ideas presented in the book are so simple yet they sound so effective on the vibes. If you comp for a horn player you can use colours that are so pretty on the vibes. I just listen to piano players. I got voicings from Richie Bierach for example and some of the really interesting colours that he would use. He'd use voicings that were very close, and sometimes he would use just two notes but were effective and had that modern sound with the minimal amount of notes.

[Locke plays *Come Rain or Come Shine* to demonstrate some of his soloing and comping concepts. Concerted chords à la guitar comping, varying voicings and placement of rhythmic attacks. Adding in chromatic approach chords, passing chords, etc.]

Henry Hey (HH): Joe has been talking about comping and I thought I would like to throw something in here, which pertains to comping on any instrument

actually. The term comping really refers to “complement”. So whatever instrument you are actually playing make sure you are complementing and that you are playing something in response to, or in support of, the soloist. No place does that come into play more as when we are playing duo because we could easily stomp all over each other. Sometime we do, but most of the time we don’t.

JL: I think that this is a really interesting topic.

Question from the floor: How much should the compers lead the soloist?

HH: There is a general balance for every soloist. Every soloist is very individual about what they want to hear being played behind him. This is evidenced by the huge library of recordings that are available. Great compers like Bill Evans, and then people who were drastically different in their comping concept. Certainly there is a little bit of leading but a lot of support. Some soloists want more leading and pushing and jabbing. And then some soloists want very simple support and some soloists want hardly anything at all. So it is really specific to what the soloists wants, but listening is the key.

JL: This has to do with advanced musical concepts in improvisation and it doesn’t have to do with mallets at all. It has to do with harmony and jazz improvisation. I play with a trumpet player by the name of Dr Eddie Henderson. I have been in his band for thirteen years. We, I think, as improvisers, are polar opposites of each other. I tend to play a lot of upper-structure stuff where I superimpose things over the really basic harmony. Over a II-V progression I might superimpose some sort of *Countdown* [John Coltrane] stuff or getting from point A to point D getting there my own way. I want to hear the basic harmony underneath me so I don’t want the people supporting me throwing in a lot of their own stuff. I want to hear the basic harmony, but not so that it’s rigid, but the basic harmony being outlined so that I can ride above the standard harmony. Whereas playing with Eddie Henderson he almost wants to hear the opposite of that. He wants to hear the colours and harmonic nuances over the bass note at the changes so that he can react to that. Our pianist, Kevin Hays, is a master of responding to what the soloist wants to hear. So it is very interesting in the same band you have Kevin responding to two completely different soloists.

[The clinic continues with discussions of lines created from augmented scales and systems of improvising, playing shapes over different types of chords.]

Dave Samuels: Why did you end up playing vibes?

JL: I grew up in Rochester. I played drums when I was a little kid. My mother said that if I was to play the drum set then I must take piano lessons. How she had this wisdom I don’t know. Then I realised that I wanted to play a harmonic and melodic instrument and I didn’t want to play piano. I didn’t want that weight of literature, all that history, which the piano has. The vibraphone was the perfect instrument for me. I started playing drums and piano when I was eight and started on the vibes when I was thirteen. The

vibraphone to me is much more a piano than it is a drum. I think of it as a piano that you play with sticks. Gary was talking about the roommate who plays piano. The vibraphonist is having a hard time struggling to learn to play the vibes. He goes out and comes back a couple of hours later and the roommate, the pianist, is burning on the vibes. Because it really is a piano. The people, who have the harmonic knowledge, even over the rhythmic flair, are ones who are ahead of the game.

[The clinic continues with a discussion of using the marimba as an addition to the vibes player's arsenal of colours.]

[Clinic ends with Joe Locke and Henry Hey playing Henry Hey's original composition *Motion View*.]

University of Cape Town

APPENDIX J: VICTOR MENDOZA CLINIC (17 JUNE 2003)

Context: Berklee College of Music Mallet Festival
 Venue: Genko Uchida Building
 Berklee College of Music
 921 Boylston Street
 Boston, Massachusetts, USA
 Date: Thursday 19 June 2003
 Clinician: Victor Mendoza

Victor Mendoza (VM): One of the things that happens when musicians are interpreting rhythms. The thing about the vibes is we get to a certain point where you have like all the techniques, sort of like generic information. One thing that I think is important to talk about is when you are playing Latin music, or any of the genres, but specifically Latin music, is how you interpret melodies and how you improvise. So that you can play and feel comfortable when playing with really good Latin players. One of the things that you have to do is understand that the whole concept of clave and how it functions. We cannot turn it into a mystery, but it must be part of what we study. The other thing to make clear is that Brazilian music is a different bag altogether. People have a tendency of wanting to mix Latin with Brazilian. Sometimes rhythms can fit, but if you do it consistently it sounds as if you are out of sorts – it doesn't quite take off. This is because they are two different concepts all together. In the States and other places they assume the Latin rhythms and therefore everything is like that - it isn't.

Here is some very basic background. The original rhythm was called bembe.

[demonstrates the rhythm]

VM: It is important to go back to the roots. The reason is that if you do you can actually form your own conclusions and create your own idea of how to play this music. The original bembe rhythm was brought to America by the slaves. The clave is an abbreviated version of this original rhythm. What happened was that this shortened rhythm became the format. So what we have now is the clave.

[writes the rumba clave and son clave rhythms on the board]

VM: Generally speaking in the side of the clave that has three accents you will find lots of melodies that are anticipated. It's just the way that it locks up. You could also look at it as tension [on the three side] and release [on the two side]. There are many ways that people have described this aspect of clave.

A lot of people use the term clave very loosely. There is no Brazilian clave. Technically there is not such thing. There are patterns that are played and we

must keep it in mind when we are comping and improvising and interpreting a melody.

The important note is the third pulse on the three side [beat four when playing a 3-2 clave]. It is very important because if you are comping and playing the hits with the horns a lot of you notes will be landing on one of the notes of the clave. It is not blatantly played - it is not so obvious but rather suggesting and implied.

Just to give you an example. Take a tune like the *Peanut Vendor*. The line locks in with a 2:3 clave. That is a very obvious example. The clave is generally played throughout. So if a 3:2 clave is turned into a 2:3 clave generally a bar is added or a drum fill is used to change the clave. The mambo section often grooves harder than the rest of the tune and there we use a forward clave or 3:2 clave.

Let me give you an example of a basic form of a tune. You will have, introduction, melody, B section or development section, back it the melody again, and then the mambo section or repeated phase or lick, then they go back to the melody and finish the tune. The form of what happens is important to know when you are comping. In Sher's *Latin Real Book* a lot of the terminology is explained clearly. A lot of times mambo sections are added at the end of standard tunes. There are some specific patterns that you hear in Latin music that makes it sound Latin.

During the early sections of the tune, the introduction and the melody, then if you are comping you think just about the chords and the *clave* is being implied. But when you get to the mambo section then you really jump into the *clave*.

[Victor hands out example sheets of Latin patterns for the vibes]

- VM:** Make sure you take note of the bass line for these patterns as it pushes the harmony forward. It is important to realise that as a vibes player to comp in Latin music you need people to play all the right parts. So we need the bass line, the clave line or rhythmic patterns based on calve and the melody. To get the full flavour of clave you need to apply the correct articulation with in the clave. With the vibes being a percussion instrument it is much easier in a way.

[demonstrates how to apply the correct articulation to a Latin line]

When you have the correct articulation it creates a swaying motion that makes you dance and this is the nature of this music. When you stop feeling the call to dance then you are not playing with the correct feeling. With this music you have to feel like you want to dance.

A lot of piano players tend to over-comp. They get far too busy. You must use some judgement so you don't overdo it. You can develop the concept just by listening to the right players like Tito Puente for example.

How do we go about developing a sense for the clave? Take two measures at a time, memorising the phrase, and clap the clave while singing the two bar phrase. Ultimately you want the feeling of the clave to become intuitive. Then you can do anything in clave. It must become independent but driving the music. Listen to great players like Tito Puente. You want to start thinking in clave like those guys do. Be careful not to play rhythms that don't fit with the clave. The son clave or mambo clave is normally used for dance and salsa, whilst the rhumba clave is used for the more traditional styles, although it is starting to get used by more contemporary musicians nowadays as it's a little funkier – it breaks it up a little more.

[The clinic continues with further discussions of Latin and salsa music, and the application of clave.]

VM: How do you apply jazz vibes chord voicings to Latin music so that it can work? There are several ways of doing it. If you are laying traditional music, not contemporary jazz, you don't use so many chord alterations. The reason for it is that the rhythm is more important than notes. A lot of the chord is being played by someone else, so we don't have to worry too much about it. In a Latin jazz situation you would use more alterations.

[demonstrates a basic two bar phrase based on the chords I-IV-V-IV-I]

VM: A piano player would just out line the triads of the chords in a rhythmic fashion. This could be played in octaves. Remember, just the triad is used in traditional music, as the rhythm is most important. The music often moves so fast that you don't want to move too many voices. It must be clear.

The terms that you hear, for example cha-cha, were given by dancers so the differences between the song types is often just the tempo. Often times the patterns don't change, it's just the tempo. Unless it gets very fast and then something has to go – the bass has to change its line and the stress gets to be somewhere else and eventually the dance becomes something else.

How do we apply these patterns to the vibes? The guide tones are in the left hand. The chords must always be played in a rhythmic fashion either in block chord style, broken up or arpeggiated. In this way you are covering all the bases – creating melody, playing the harmony as well as the rhythm. You can take jazz standards and play them in this way [Latin style].

I am comfortable playing as the comper in the group, but if I have a pianist with me then I will think more as a horn player. The vibes is a different sound, it's not the piano and it's not meant to be. I can play the chords and fill out the sound. The strange thing is that vibes players are usually the leaders and it is not often that you get called because of the instrument. Generally it never dawns on people that the vibes can work in Latin music as the comping instrument. When people think of vibes, they think of elevator music. It has just got to do with a lack of imagination. So a lot of time you end up being a bandleader so that you can play what you want to play. A lot of times what

will end up happening is you [the vibraphonist] get together a bass player, percussionist and vocalist or horn player, and then it works.

[demonstrates various comping patterns on the vibes]

[demonstrates how to play a jazz tune in salsa style with clave using the tune, *Autumn Leaves*.]

VM: The difference between salsa and Brazilian music could be because of the different languages. Spanish is a very expressive language and Portuguese [spoken in Brazil] is very different, more laidback type of language. I think that is the very essence in the difference between salsa and Brazilian music. When you listen to Jobim for example, all the rhythms are a lot more laid back and not specifically in clave. The whole clave concept doesn't work for me in Brazilian music. The music doesn't lock in with that. When comping in Brazilian music you don't have to play montuno or anything like that. In Brazilian music the bass line moves from root and down to the fifth in a more triplet feel to emulate the sound of the surdo [the Brazilian low drum]. Voicings are more in a block style repeated rhythmically with a good articulation to get the style. The music is a lot more laidback and not based on clave.

[plays a recording of one of his original tunes]

VM: You will notice that when comping you can start with a more chordal sort of thing and eventually get to the more broken style and the intensity grows. What you must keep in mind is the range of the instrument [the vibraphone]. It usually works better if you comp in octaves to get a fuller sound. Even piano players when they are comping are not playing full voicings – they are playing single notes and spreading them out rhythmically. You don't have to be playing full chords all the time. With Brazilian music you wouldn't break it up that much, you would play full chords.

[demonstrates octave comping on the vibes]

End of the clinic

APPENDIX K: ED SAINDON PRIVATE LESSON (24 JUNE 2003)

Context: Berklee College of Music Mallet Festival
 Venue: Berklee College of Music
 Boston, Massachusetts, USA
 Date: 24 June 2003

Ed Saindon

Frank Mallows (FM): Can you discuss the development of vibes comping?

Ed Saindon (ES): Maybe I'll do that at the piano. You are very limited if you talk only about vibes players. Looking at the progression of the great piano players. We have the Fats Waller and Teddy Wilson in the 30's and 40's, Mel Powell, there were some great players back then. Art Tatum was in a league all of his own. That was more stride but Teddy Wilson took the stride and became more of a swinger.

With the stride style the beat is really steady, but even within this some of these players would use "hip" changes. Tatum would use a lot of upper structure triads. A lot of arpeggios but the pulse is really stated. Check out Dave McKenna and Errol Garner. A lot of closed position chords with a strong time feel.

Then George Shearing came and started playing block style with octaves and nice voicings. He really got it from Milt Buckner who was playing organ.

On the vibes you could do the same Shearing thing by taking out some notes but making sure that you have a guide tone with some tension in there.

You can hear how Oscar [Peterson] was excellent at soloing in this block chord style. Shearing as well - playing outside octaves with chord tones and tensions in the middle. That would be in more a big band arrangement style. Any melody line can be harmonised with passing diminished chords and approach chords in the middle. On a dominant chord or major chord you can use the five flat nine of that chord, or the diminished of that chord. So in the block chord style you would play the melody in octaves, above and below, and fill in the chord tones and tensions.

Going back to the Teddy Wilson style, you have guide tones or any chord tones in the left hand keeping the tempo going. They also used a lot of walking tenths in the left hand. On the vibes you would just invert it and play it in thirds or sixths. To create interest you could break up the chord and put a bit of a skip into the feel.

Someone who did a lot of this style with a great technique was Earl "Fatha" Hines. You know he was all over the place. He would do bass notes, runs, trills. Sort of like Tatum - all over the place. If you can hear what they are doing and put it down on the vibes, it really opens up a lot of possibilities.

Transcribed solos of Shearing, Garner, Tatum can all be used. Figure out the techniques that they are used to create interest and adapt it to the vibes.

I went from James P Johnson, who was before Fats, and just studied the whole piano lineage from a jazz standpoint. Moving from stride to swing to the bebop era of Bud Powell. Then there is Bill Evans and Jarrett. And then you get to Herbie Hancock, Richie Beirach and Brad Mehldau. If you can do it on the piano, then you can get a sense of how to do it on the vibes.

[takes a Tatum transcription of *Tea for Two*]

I would try and get the recording and follow along. I would try and work out what kind of voicings he was using. What chord alterations. How does he play the tune over the changes? What techniques like playing the melody in octave filling in the chord tones. The stride style using tenths. Look at all those different techniques. Try to figure out what are the inner voices, how he uses fifths, fourths, sixths etc. And then the runs – blues licks, pentatonics, chromatic approach. Walking tenths. Arpeggiated chords. Reharmonization. You could take one page of a transcription and study it for a lifetime.

A lot of players like Coltrane and “Bird” listened to Tatum.

[demonstrates how to play the Tatum transcription on the vibes, taking note of the various techniques as they appeared.]

Check out:

Bill Evans, he had great voicings and inner lines.

Red Garland.

Bebop players and their lines

Chick Corea, voicings in fourths is a whole different bag.

McCoy Tyner.

Dick Hyman used some great techniques – he was a Tatum fan - chromatic tenths, inner lines, bring out guide tone lines. His voicings were great, every beat he would change the voicing to create interest.

Oscar Peterson

For me, I treat playing the vibes like I would play the piano. You got to know the whole piano history from the stride through swing all the way the bebop and contemporary. If you can really know all that stuff and those players, then when you get to the vibes it is pretty easy to put it down and adapt.

[takes Thelonius Monk’s *Pannonica* and demonstrates different piano techniques and how they can be implemented on the vibes]

I think that comping is really just very subdued solo playing. Using all the kinds of textures that you would use when playing solo.

When I'm comping each chord has its own dynamic level. Some may be soft, others loud, so that you shape the comping. The range depends on who is soloing. Aim to create colours behind the soloist creating interest all the time.

The advantage comping with vibes rather than guitar is that you can stack the chords and create many textures behind the soloist. You must be careful not to overdo it and keep the clarity for the soloist. The clarity is sometimes not just the pedalling but also the dynamics. You can get three different levels happening simultaneously.

Ok, getting back to the pianists. Bud Powell, he played mainly bebop, but he was more lines. Basic left hand two note chords but nice lines in the right.

Looking at the vibes players, Gary [Burton], when he's playing in his bands with pianists like Makoto, tends to play lines and throws in the chord or two. But Gary is still a master of the solo type stuff. But when he's had bands with pianists for example Makoto, he has resorted more to playing lines. When he comps he is still playing in the Bill Evans style with maybe some upper structures but still in a fairly blocked style as opposed to a more counter point style.

[Keith] Jarrett plays more of the counterpoint style and even [Brad] Mehldau. I don't limit it to jazz. You want to be able to take something classical like Mozart and figure out what is happening, all the counterpoint, the thirds and counter point. I think that even most jazz pianists are kind of limited when it comes to this type stuff. They'll be playing changes and soloing. But Jarrett and Mehldau are coming from the classical. So if you are playing a tune like *Stella by Starlight* you can play with all these techniques where you have three voices going on at the same time. To me that is where the scope of the potential of the instrument is. You can get all these lines happening. When you start doing that [playing all the counterpoint lines] the instrument sounds much bigger – especially the vibes with its limited range.

[demonstrates playing with melody and counter point]

Create texture, take a shape and play it with in the scale of the chord or key of the moment. Creating colours. Contrary motion for example.

The other option is Richie Beirach. He is coming from twentieth century techniques. An excellent book that I used to work out of was *Twentieth Century Composition* by Vincent Persichetti. All kinds of twentieth century piano type stuff. And techniques that Beirach used to do. He used to have a quartet with Dave Liebman called Lookout Farm. So this is more the modern style.

Bill Evans sort of had two styles, he had the line thing, but he also had the hip voicings. He sort of started most of this stuff. He influenced Jarrett and Herbie Hancock. He was the guy who came out in the Miles Davis period. There are a lot of transcribed solos of Bill Evans.

Well that is not even getting in the Latin sort of stuff. There is a vibes player that you should check out Chritos Rafalides. He has a trio and plays montunos and that sort of stuff. He was a student of mine and then a pupil of Joe Locke's. A very good player, he plays just vibes, bass and drums. He is sort of pushing that in the Latin style.

I'll take a lot of classical music and play it on vibes.

[takes Franz Schubert's *Allegretto* from *Minuet in F* and demonstrates how to play it on the vibraphone]

What I like to explore the possibility of playing staccato with one hand, possibly playing a dead stroke with the left hand, while playing legato with the right. So you get different lines going with different articulation. That is why I like Mehldau. He'll be playing different articulation with the different hands, and that brings out the lines.

Bach's *Chorales* and guitar music are really useful in developing the technique of playing inner lines.

End of lesson
