

CONCERTO FOR SOPRANO SAXOPHONE AND: BAND/or ORCHESTRA/or PIANO

Introduction – Cadenzas – Relaxed and floating – Chaconne – Finale

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“Concerto for Soprano Saxophone and BAND” was composed in 1995. The work was dedicated to Mike Marshall, principal saxophonist with the USAF Air Combat Command Heritage of America Band, who asked me to compose an original work for him. He and the band premiered the piece in October 1995 under the direction of then Acting Commander/Conductor Doug Monroe.

From its humble beginnings in Virginia and after several rejections, the concerto has gone on to be performed by many superb musicians in prestigious venues in the U.S. and abroad. Irvin Peterson, saxophonist with “The President’s Own” U.S. Marine Band, mastered the work and played it with the band under Commander/Conductor Col. Timothy Foley on a U.S. Capitol steps concert in 1998. In October 2000 they performed it throughout their Southwest U.S. tour. Later in 2002 Irvin and the Marine Band performed the work again under their Deputy Commander/Conductor Capt. Michelle Rakers. In 2003 Dutch conductor Bert Langelier debuted the work in Europe and soon thereafter Dutch saxophonist Linda Arnoldus along with the Nationaal Jeugd Harmonie Orkest conducted by Alex Schillings performed the piece at The Royal Conservatory of Music in The Hague in an all Forte concert. Subsequently, in 2005 they recorded the work on their “Vintage” CD. Later they took the piece on tour to include performances in Switzerland and at the famed Schladming Festival in Austria.

2017 REVISED EDITION - In **2016/2017** I typeset my original handwritten score and in the process made several edits to better “punctuate” musical ideas, etc. Then in **2020** I transcribed the work for orchestra and also did a piano reduction of the composition. The work is published by Aldo Forte Music Press and is available at www.aldoforte.com

Instrumentation of the RESPECTIVE EDITIONS: The Solo soprano sax part is the same for all editions except in bars 1 – 33 of the sax and piano reduction. **The concert band edition** is scored for standard American concert band instrumentation. **The orchestral edition** instrumentation is as follows: 2 fl, 1 picc, 2 ob, 2 cl, 2 bsn, 4 hn, 3 Bb trp, 2 tbn, bass tbn, tuba, timp, 4 Perc (Chimes, xylo, vibes, glock, Sus. Cym, s.d., tamb, crash cym, 2 timbales, B.D.).

The concerto is about 15 minutes in length and in five distinct sections which are played virtually without pause. In bar 2 of the first section, *Introduction*, the “tonic chord” (F, C, G, Bb, D, Eb, and A) is presented and followed by several contrasting ideas all of which form the basis for the entire work. The pitches of A and Bb quickly establish themselves as the primary pitches with D and Eb performing a secondary role. These pitches are found in the “tonic chord” of the piece. The soloist enters in bar 38 with a series of *Cadenzas* (the second section) accompanied by harmonies from the introduction. Afterward, in bar 73, the third section “*Relaxed and Floating*” begins in a “Relaxed” tempo. The “relaxed” segment is neoclassical in nature and often focuses on A and Bb. In contrast the “floating” segment (bar 119) is much faster. Here the sax intones an expressive melody over a cacophony of minimalist ostinati. There is a return to the “relaxed” segment (bar 178) which proceeds directly to the slow and somber fourth section titled *Chaconne* (bar 210). The fifth section, *Finale* (bar 264), features the soloist in a technical tour de force and brings back the thematic and harmonic material which opened the work. This last section aims to tax the technical capabilities of the soloist!

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