Playing Together
A Chamber Music Guide
by Nick Matherne

Bb Trumpet, Bb Clarinet
Dear Musicians and Music Teachers,

For ten years I have been encouraged by band directors, music scholars, and professional musicians alike to engage in chamber music experiences. Musicians believe that chamber music is an effective way to learn music and expand technique. It was, therefore, a surprise to find that no chamber music method book exists in the popular canon. While technical chamber music textbooks exist, they describe the intricacies of specific chamber ensembles in a complex manner; there are no student-friendly books explaining how to practice and perform chamber music. Seeing this deficit, I began to ponder how to approach the subject and produced this book to serve as a chamber music guide for growing musicians.

In order to create a method of teaching chamber music in conjunction with teaching music I began by researching the benefits of this type of music. After discovering the key benefits and components of performing in a chamber ensemble, I began to compile materials to create the exercises found in this book. I chose to arrange pieces tailored specifically to the needs of the developing musician, both in range and technique. To complete the method, I extrapolated chamber music components and techniques into intuitive exercises that teach music through chamber music.

I developed this method with flexible instrumentation in mind so that any group of five instrumentalists can play together. Some of the most common chamber ensemble instrumentations are listed on the following page, but feel free to use any instrumentation you like. In school I was fortunate to have friends who played instruments found in a traditional brass quintet. The experience of making music with your friends is invaluable, and therefore I strove to overcome the limitations of traditional ensembles with this book. You can even switch around the parts for individual songs so that you have a tuba on part 1 and a flute on part 5 (although you may or may not like every arrangement). Ultimately, use the book as a tool to build your musicianship and have fun playing with the other musicians in your group. Most importantly: keep playing and making music with each other!

-Nick Matherne
**Traditional Quintet Instrumentations:**

**Brass Quintet**
- Trumpet
- Trumpet
- Horn
- Trombone
- Tuba or Bass Trombone

**Woodwind Quintet**
- Flute
- Oboe
- Bb Clarinet
- Horn
- Bassoon

**Reed Quintet**
- Oboe
- Bb Clarinet
- Alto Saxophone
- Bassoon
- Bass Clarinet

**Quintet of the Same Instrument**
*e.g. Trumpets 1-5, Flutes 1-5, etc.*
1. Song Lesson (Luigi Cherubini)
2. Ein’ Feste Burg (J.S. Bach)
3. Oh Shenandoah (Traditional Folk Song)
4. Mwana Wange (African Traditional)
5. Selections from *Twelve German Dances* (Ludwig Beethoven)
6. Skye Boat Song (Scottish Traditional)
7. Jupiter Hymn (Gustav Holst)
8. Irish Tune from Country Derry (Percy Grainger)
9. Thinkin’ Blues (Bessie Smith)
10. A Stephen Foster Medley (Stephen Foster)
    "O Susanna" - "Beautiful Dreamer" - "Camptown Races"
11. Choose Your Own Adventure
**Piece:**
Song Lesson

**Composer:**
Luigi Cherubini

**History:**
Luigi Cherubini was a contemporary of Ludwig van Beethoven, studying and composing music in his home country of Italy and later France. Composing predominantly operas and church music, Cherubini was a popular composer in his day, regarded as a talented peer by Beethoven. In addition to his opera and church music works, Cherubini wrote a series of motets, other choral pieces, and string chamber pieces. His early music is typical of the Classical period, but during his long life, his music evolved and changed in character to match the prevailing style of Romanticism. His works, particularly his *Requiem in C minor*, were admired by his fellow composers such as Brahms, Beethoven, and Schumann. By the end of his life, he was fully assimilated into French Culture and had become the director of the Paris Conservatory. Although often less performed than his contemporaries’, Cherubini’s music survives to this day as a testament to its composer.
Exercises:

1) **Practice trading the underlying scale back and forth across the ensemble to make the transitions seamless.** The entire piece comprises what is essentially a three-part round, beginning with a scale in whole notes. In this arrangement, the scale is rarely completed entirely by one part and players must be aware of the line as they receive it and pass it to other players. This is typical of chamber music and being able to identify how the melodic content fits together is an essential skill in any type of ensemble. Try playing *just the scale passages* and practice making smooth transitions to make the piece flow naturally. Be sure to match dynamics and style of the person from who you take the line.

2) **As you begin this piece, practice using a single breath as a preparation to play.** In this piece, the first four bars are essentially a solo in the 2nd voice. In order to set a clear tempo for the other players to internalize, a clear and rhythmic breath is essential, especially since the rhythm of the first eight bars is entirely whole notes. If you want practice with preparatory breaths, trade the parts around so that everyone in your ensemble has an opportunity to begin the piece by playing the 2nd voice. Make sure to carry effective breathing throughout the piece as well so that you are rhythmically engaged before you even begin a note.

3) **Throughout the piece, identify and balance your part to the dominant texture.** Make sure to pay attention to the series of dynamics provide as the piece progresses. Cherubini essentially wrote a three part round that morphs toward the end of the piece and becomes more complex. Cherubini indicated that each new statement of the melody, beginning with the scale passage, should have a strong dynamic and presence within the texture. Make sure that new statements of the melody are apparent and that each part can be heard as the piece progresses. This holds true for many pieces, especially in chamber music, in which each player's individual part is essential to the overall texture of the piece.
Song Lesson

Luigi Cherubini
Arr. Matherne

Bb3

Allegro $\frac{\text{ accent}}{\text{ cresc.}}$

$\text{Acc.} = 128-142$

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Song Lesson

Luigi Cherubini
Arr. Matherne

Allegro $\frac{1}{4} = 128-142$

Bb4
**Piece:**
Ein’ Feste Burg (is unser Gott)

**Composer:**
Martin Luther, harmonized by J.S. Bach

**History:**
During his lifetime, Martin Luther was responsible not only for the protestant reformation, but also for a great number of hymn tunes that he composed for his congregation. One of his most beloved and famous compositions is the tune *Ein’ Feste Burg is unser Gott*, literally “A Mighty Fortress is Our God,” which was used as the theme for several pieces and arrangements throughout the late baroque and early classical periods. This setting is derived from the four-part harmonization completed by Johann Sebastian Bach and published in his extensive series of chorales. Like most arrangements of Bach chorales, the piece has no rests. Players should try to replicate the smooth vocal style as it was originally conceived.

**Lyrics:**
A mighty fortress is our God, a bulwark never failing;
Our helper He, amid the flood of mortal ills prevailing;
For still our ancient foe doth seek to work us woe;
His craft and power are great, and, armed with cruel hate,
On earth is not his equal.
Exercises:

1) Using the lyrics provided* sing through the arrangement after determining your starting pitches. Use this as exercises to help you better hear the intervals between your notes. Singing will also help you to hear and play the phrasing when you play the piece on your instruments. Phrasing makes up the overall organization of when you breath and where the climactic moments of the music arrive. Because it was originally conceived as a vocal piece, you might find it interesting to hear it as it was originally intended.

*Or your own lyrics, a neutral syllable such as “la,” or humming.

2) As you begin this piece, practice using a single breath as a preparation to play. Though ideally the player giving the prep breath should be the person playing part 1, try either trading parts so that each player can practice leading or simply have each player in turn give the prep beat while maintaining your parts. Remember: the ideal prep beat indicates a full musician’s breath and also both tempo and style in some way. For a chorale such as Ein’ Feste Burg, remember the lyric quality of the piece as well as the indicated tempo. The associated breath might be something like breath you take at a doctor’s office when the doctor is checking your breathing: a slow deep breath that allows for a long exhalation.

3) As you play through this chorale use the indications of melody and not melody as guides for dynamics and phrasing. Bear in mind the earlier rules of foreground and background as you switch to different voicing in the chorale. Remember to drop down in dynamic level so the melody is always in the foreground, especially if you are using a diverse instrumentation: lower instruments often do not break through the texture as easily so make sure to play in the context of your group. Throughout the remainder of the book, the indications are not made so practice understanding how the melodic and harmonic content fit together so you better understand it as you progress.

4) Maintain eye contact and pay attention to the non-verbal cues from your ensemble members. Throughout the exercise the melody shifts from one part to another as indicated in the score. To help build smoothness of line between all parts, try playing just the melody throughout using non-verbal communication such as breathing, eye contact, and small nods to keep the melody going continuously.

5) Use your aural skills to help better tune each chord, especially those at the end of phrases. Bach chorales are often used for tuning exercises because they are slow and allow ample time to both hear and tune the chords. As you are playing, try to make sure you balance each chord and play your part in tune with the other musicians. As you grow as a musician you will begin to hear the nuances of different tuning errors and can apply your knowledge to improve intonation within your group.
Ein' Feste Burg

J.S. Bach
Arr. Nicholas Matherne
**Piece:**
Oh Shenandoah

**Composer:**
American Folk Song

**History:**
*Oh Shenandoah* is one of the most performed folk songs in all of America. The tune originated in the 19th century and has had various text settings. The Shenandoah and Missouri Rivers are always central themes in the song in one way or another across the various arrangements. As a folk song, it is unclear who originally wrote the melody, but it first appeared in *The New Dominion Monthly* in an article titled “Sailors’ Songs” by Captain Robert Chamblet Adams. Both the text and the flowing melody are evocative of the flowing rivers to which they refer, which is perhaps why so many people have a strong connection to this song and to the Shenandoah River Valley after which the song is named.

**Lyrics:**
Oh Shenandoah, I long to hear you,
Away you rolling river.
Oh Shenandoah, I long to hear you,
Away, I'm bound away,
'cross the wide Missouri.

'Tis seven years, since last I've seen you,
And hear your rolling river.
'Tis seven years, since last I've seen you,
Away, we're bound away,
Across the wide Missouri.

Oh Shenandoah, I long to hear you,
And hear your rolling river.
Oh Shenandoah, I long to hear you,
Away, we're bound away,
Across the wide Missouri.
Exercises:

1) **Using the lyrics provided sing through the arrangement after determining your starting pitches.** This tune, originally performed by sailors traveling down rivers, is a folk melody passed between the 1st, 4th, and 2nd voices throughout the three verses in this arrangement. Try singing through the verses (referring to one of these parts to discern the melody) and connect the text to the way in which you would like the melody to be heard. Use this exercise to decide how long you want each phrase to be and how you want to articulate each note. The 2nd verse, heard in the 4th voice, is written with more rests than the other verses to match the accompaniment style, but these rests are not mandatory. Play the melody the way you hear it and make clear choices about your phrasing.

2) **Listen to recordings of various groups performing the piece and decide what you like and don’t like about their performances.** This piece is more of the most recorded American Folk Songs of all time and there are a great variety of performances to which you can listen. There are recordings ranging from large ensembles, to choirs, to chamber ensembles, all with their own interpretations. Listen to a variety of recordings in various styles and evaluate the recordings. You can use your evaluations to inform your own performance and to influence decisions about phrasing, dynamics, and articulation.

3) **Throughout the piece, identify and balance your part to the dominant texture.** This piece has a variety of accompanimental styles as well as both a countermelody and a descant. Make sure you know your role so you can balance to the rest of the ensemble at any given moment. The melody should always take the foreground, but the countermelodic material is still generally more important than the background accompanimental figures. The end of the piece includes a descant, or a countermelody written above the melody line, in the 1st voice. Make sure to balance this accordingly; a descant is important, but despite the fact that it is written above the melody, it should not overpower the tune.
Oh Shenandoah

Traditional
Arr. Matherne

Bb3

Introduction (Fanfare)

Song
Oh Shenandoah

Traditional
Arr. Matherne

Bb4

Introduction (Fanfare)

Song
Oh Shenandoah

Traditional
Arr. Matherne

Bb5

Introduction (Fanfare)
**Piece:**
Mwana Wange

**Composer:**
African Folk Lullaby

**History:**
*Mwana Wange* is a lullaby from Uganda, originally meant to be sung to a child, telling the story of a hard-working family and a child who needs to go to sleep. The arrangement created from this lullaby uses the original melody, but then infuses it with a slightly more energetic feeling. The introduction uses a sweeter style, like one might use in a lullaby, but then the remainder of the tune is slightly more upbeat, incorporating an optional conga part to help the piece groove.

**Lyrics:**
Mwana Wange, wesirikire
Kyenalyako nakuterekera
Baa! Akaliga kanwa taba.

Sleep now my child, rest your weary head.
Sunlight is gone, darkness is here again.
Rest while your poor father works on.
Exercises:

1) **Trade around the drumming part throughout the ensemble to give each player an opportunity to keep the beat.** This piece is written for only four voices, but has an optional drum part, intended to be played on congas. Take advantage of this extra part and practice keeping a steady beat for the rest of the ensemble. While you are drumming, be sensitive to the melody and accompaniment while still being aware of your own role in the piece.

2) **Have someone sit out and critique the group.** Since there are only four wind parts for the arrangement, this piece allows the perfect opportunity to have one player sit out and listen to the rest of the group. Make comments on balance, style, and any other musical thing you notice. It is important to be able to analyze and evaluate your own performances and to use what you find to improve for the future.

3) **Dance, sway, or move in some way!** Movement almost always accompanies African music of any kind. While a lullaby might only be the gentle swaying of a mother rocking her child to sleep, think about how the groove of this piece connects to movement. Think about how you can put the beat in your body, either physically moving around your performance space or just moving in some way while sitting in your chair. Putting the groove in your movement will help to keep the tempo steady and improve time in any type of music, regardless of continent of origin.
Mwana Wange

African Lullaby
Arr. Matherne

Peacefully $\frac{\text{ quarter notes}}{4} = 80$

A Groove $\frac{\text{ quarter notes}}{4} = 90$

B

C

subito mp

D

E

rit.
Mwana Wange

Percussion

Peacefully $\frac{\text{4}}{\text{4}}$ $\text{Groove } \frac{\text{4}}{\text{4}}$

\begin{align*}
\text{Peacefully } & \frac{\text{4}}{\text{4}} \quad \text{Groove } \frac{\text{4}}{\text{4}} \\
\text{f} & \quad \text{mf}
\end{align*}

C

D

E

\text{rit.}

African Lullaby
Arr. Matherne
**Piece:**
Selections from *Twelve German Dances*

**Composer:**
Ludwig van Beethoven

**History:**
Ludwig van Beethoven is known as the father of the Romantic period. He played an important role in changing the musical styles of the classical period and ushering in the new musical period. The Romantic period ushered in a time of high emotions and grand musical ideas that pervade all of Beethoven’s music. Beethoven spent his early life in Germany before moving to Vienna, Austria, the musical capital of the world at that time. He was known for his grand symphonies and highly emotional and intense orchestral pieces, but also for his piano works, including tremendous concertos that are still widely performed today. The two dances arranged here are the first of a set of twelve German dances Beethoven wrote for piano, echoing his childhood heritage in his prolific composition.
**Exercises:**

1) **Listen to recordings of various groups performing the pieces and decide what you like and don’t like about their performances.** Since this piece was originally written for and performed on piano, the piano recordings you will find offer a unique perspective. Listen to a variety of pianists perform the dances and incorporate their style into your performance. Beethoven’s dances have also been arranged for a variety of instruments in chamber ensembles ranging from duets to quintets. Try to find some recordings of these arrangements and analyze how the performers interpreted Beethoven’s original work in order to help you make your own decisions about the pieces.

2) **Pay close attention to articulation and style throughout these pieces.** These two dances are stereotypical waltzes and Beethoven indicated a great number of articulations to help clarify the style for performers. Make sure you are both playing the articulations as marked and matching your articulations to the other member’s of your group. Especially in a small ensemble, it is apparent when two players intended to have the same articulation vary their interpretation. Make sure you are always matching character and articulation with your those players with whom you share musical content to create a cohesive sound.

3) **Throughout the piece, identify and balance your part to the dominant texture.** These waltzes have distinct melodic and countermelodic material distinguishable from the accompanimental figures. While a pianist must separate their hands, and even parts of their hands sometimes, to accompany themselves as they play the melody, this arrangement gives you a distinct advantage; while the melody is transferred from voice to voice, you only have to play one at a time so make sure to balance your part to the melody and to bring your part out when you have the melody. This will help your listening skills and will improve the overall musicality of your performance.
Two German Dances

Ludwig van Beethoven
Arr. Matherne

Bb1
No repeats on D.C.
Two German Dances

Ludwig van Beethoven
Arr. Matherne

Bb2
No repeats on D.C.
Two German Dances

1

Ludwig van Beethoven
Arr. Matherne

Bb3
No repeats on D.C.

Fine

D.C. al Fine
Two German Dances

1

Ludwig van Beethoven
Arr. Matherne
No repeats on D.C.

Fine

D.C. al Fine
No repeats on D.C.
**Piece:**  
Skye Boat Song  

**Composer:**  
Scottish Folk Tune  

**History:**  
The text for the Skye Boat Song tells the tale of how Prince Charles Edward Stuart escaped to the Isle of Skye after his defeat after the Battle of Culloden in 1745. This defeat marked the end of an uprising with the Bonnie Prince Charlie, as he is now known, at the helm. The text, written in the late nineteenth century to accompany this folk melody has been re-written slightly over the years to accommodate varied versions of the tale, although all telling of his failure and subsequent escape to Skye. It is popular as a lullaby and is often written in a gentle 6/8 meter instead to indicate the rocking motion of the ocean or a child’s basinet.  

**Lyrics:**  
Sing me a song of a lad that is gone,  
Say could that lad be I.  
Merry of soul, he sailed on a day,  
Over the sea to Skye.  

Mull was astern, Rùm to the port,  
Eigg on the starboard bow.  
Glory of youth glowed in his soul,  
Where is that glory now?  

Speed bonny boat like a bird on a wing,  
Onward the sailors cry.  
Carry the lad that's born to be King,  
Over the sea to Skye.
Exercises:

1) Maintain eye contact and pay attention to the non-verbal cues from your ensemble members. The placement of the melody from voice to voice, as well as the voicing itself changes substantially throughout the piece. Try to maintain eye contact with those players with whom you have an entrance or with whom you share melodic or accompanimental content. This will help to unify entrances and shared material, creating a better sense of flow throughout the piece and helping the group to communicate more effectively in performance.

2) Practice call and response throughout the piece, paying attention to how other lines call and respond to yours. In this arrangement, there are several places in which one or more voice plays a melodic statement that is answered by another voice. Think about how your dynamics, articulation, and other musical devices can be used to make a clear response to a call. This is especially relevant for the middle section, in which two voices at a time will make a statement followed by a rhythmically identical statement in other voices. Remember that these are directional commands in the song and could easily have been called out by different voices on a boat sailing through the region and incorporate this idea into your phrasing.

3) Using the lyrics provided sing through the arrangement after determining your starting pitches. This piece, often sung as a lullaby, has a gentle rocking nature that is evocative of the sea-based text, which is set to it. Try singing the melody as it appears in your part while your fellow musicians continue playing. This will help you better understand how the text fits into the arrangement as well as the melody.

4) Analyze the way in which the piece transitions from the bridge back into the first melodic statement. In this arrangement, the return to the first melodic idea after the bridge is marked by a key change. Determine the two key signatures and then try to analyze the chord preceding the key change. The when you understand the way in which the piece transitions, it will help you to better understand how your line functions in context.
Skye Boat Song

Scottish Traditional
Arr. Matherne

Bb1

Smoothly $\frac{3}{4} \quad \bar{\text{4}} = 90$

\begin{musicnotation}
\begin{music}
\begin{notation}
\begin{lyric}
\text{Skye Boat Song}
\end{lyric}
\end{notation}
\end{music}
\end{musicnotation}
Smoothly $\dot{=} 90$

Skye Boat Song
Scottish Traditional
Arr. Matherne

Bb3
Skye Boat Song

Scottish Traditional
Arr. Matherne

Bb5

Smoothly $\frac{\text{d}}{\text{d}_4} = 90$

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Skye Boat Song

Scottish Traditional
Arr. Matherne

Bb5
**Piece:**
‘Jupiter’ Hymn

**Composer:**
Gustav Holst

**History:**
Gustav Holst was one of the most famous composers for wind band of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. This selection comes from Holst’s most popular and widely performed works, *The Planets*, a multi-movement work devoted to the planets in our solar system. The hymn from *Jupiter, Bringer of Jollity* is widely used as a hymn tune, largely due to the popularity of the setting of Sir Cecil Spring Rice’s poem, *I vow to thee, my country*. As a hymn tune, *Jupiter Hymn* is often set with an instrumental ensemble such as a brass quintet to support the choir.

**Lyrics:**
I vow to thee, my country, all earthly things above,
Entire and whole and perfect, the service of my love;
The love that asks no question, the love that stands the test,
That lays upon the altar the dearest and the best;
The love that never falters, the love that pays the price,
The love that makes undaunted the final sacrifice.

I heard my country calling, away across the sea,
Across the waste of waters she calls and calls to me.
Her sword is girded at her side, her helmet on her head,
And round her feet are lying the dying and the dead.
I hear the noise of battle, the thunder of her guns,
I haste to thee my mother, a son among thy sons.

And there's another country, I've heard of long ago,
Most dear to them that love her, most great to them that know;
We may not count her armies, we may not see her King;
Her fortress is a faithful heart, her pride is suffering;
And soul by soul and silently her shining bounds increase,
And her ways are ways of gentleness, and all her paths are peace.
Exercises:

1) **Using the lyrics provided sing through the arrangement after determining your starting pitches.** Discern the melody through playing through the piece and then practice performing the melody vocally to determine phrasing. Once you have determined the entire melody, try singing your parts through on lyrics to better understand the harmony and how each part fits into the greater whole of the piece.

2) **Throughout the piece, identify and balance your part to the dominant texture.** As with the other pieces in this book of vocal origin, it is important to determine when you have the lead line and when your line is harmonic. In particular, this hymn is written largely in rhythmic unison and therefore the structure of the harmony is extremely important because it is less apparent than a melody and accompaniment style. This hymn/choral style is requires a cohesive articulation and style choice within the ensemble that you then balance in context.

3) **Try performing the piece with a choir and practice balance within this new texture.** As previously stated, this piece is often performed with a choral group as a hymn or an arrangement of *I vow to thee, My Country*. See if you can find a choir to sing along with your performance, even if it is just a few friends. You can try to adapt a previously arranged arrangement of the piece or just have them sing the melody, but balancing your group to a choir yields new challenges. Performing as an accompaniment requires a high level of sensitivity that you can take back to your performances in other contexts.
Jupiter Hymn

Maestoso \( \text{\textit{\textcopyright}}} = 80

Optional Repeat
If Not Repeating,
Take 2nd Ending

Bb2

Gustav Holst
Arr. Matherne

Bb2
**Piece:**
Irish Tune from County Derry

**Composer:**
Percy Grainger

**History:**
An Australian composer, Percy Grainger wrote extensively for wind band in the early to mid nineteenth century. Grainger was extremely interested in British folk music, and after moving to Great Britain in 1901 he began a project to collect and arrange folk melodies from around the country. Among these tunes, in a set he titled *British Folk-Music Settings*, was the *Irish Tune from County Derry*, which is popularly known as *Londonderry Air* and *Oh Danny Boy*. His arrangement is largely Homorhythmic and follows the lead melodic texture indicated by large phrase marks in the score. Grainger began his wind band arrangement with the melody in the baritone voices, here indicated in the 4th voice. From here, Grainger applies a variety of textures, gradually building the piece through two verses of the melody.

**Lyrics:**
Oh, Danny Boy, the pipes, the pipes are calling
From glen to glen, and down the mountain side,
The summer's gone, and all the roses falling,
It's you, it's you must go and I must bide.

But come ye back when summer's in the meadow,
Or when the valley's hushed and white with snow,
And I'll be here in sunshine or in shadow,
Oh, Danny Boy, oh Danny Boy, I love you so!

But when ye come, and all the flowers are dying,
If I am dead, as dead I well may be,
Ye'll come and find the place where I am lying,
And kneel and say an Ave there for me;

And I shall hear, though soft you tread above me,
And all my grave will warmer, sweeter be,
For you will bend and tell me that you love me,
And I shall sleep in peace until you come to me!
Exercises:

1) Listen to recordings of various groups performing the pieces and decide what you like and don’t like about their performances. Percy Grainger’s pieces are performed all over the world by ensembles of all ages. Listen to recordings of ensembles playing Irish Tune and other pieces from Grainger’s British Folk-Music Settings to better understand how the original arrangement fit together. Use the style and interpretations you find to make decisions about how to approach phrasing and articulation throughout this arrangement.

2) Throughout the piece, identify and balance your part to the dominant texture. This piece is almost entirely Homorhythmic and it can be difficult to discern the melody, especially depending on the instrumentation you are using. Make sure you know the melody well before beginning the piece and you an always clearly hear the melody in relationship to the harmonic background supplied by the rest of the ensemble. Along with this, make sure to match your articulations to the melody as you play, listening closely to ensure that the piece retains the same character in all voices.

3) Discuss phrasing with your group and plan how you will implement breathing and dynamics to match the indicated phrase marks. While at first glance, it may seem that Grainger doesn’t believe in articulating more than once in eight bars, the marks indicated in this score are phrase marks, not slur marks. It is important to decide how the phrase markings will define your breaths and dynamics. As an ensemble you can decide when to stagger breath, when to swell and decay, or when to implement any other musical device to help bolster the phrasing already indicated by Grainger.
Irish Tune from County Derry

Percey Grainger
Arr. Matherne

Bb1

Flowing $d = 80$

SLACKEN SLOWER

SLOW OFF 1ST SPEED

FULL

SLIGHTLY SLOWER

SLOW OFF LOTS
Irish Tune from County Derry

Percey Grainger
Arr. Matherne

Bb2

Flowing \( \frac{d}{d} = 80 \)

\[\text{Irish Tune from County Derry} \]

\[\text{Percey Grainger} \]

\[\text{Arr. Matherne} \]

\[\text{Bb2} \]
Irish Tune from County Derry

Percey Grainger
Arr. Matherne

Flowing \( \frac{\text{q}}{\text{p}} = 80 \)

SLIGHTLY SLOWER

SLOW OFF LOTS

1ST SPEED

FULL

SLACKEN

SLOWER

2

SLOW OFF

Irish Tune from County Derry

Percey Grainger
Arr. Matherne

Flowing \( \frac{\text{q}}{\text{p}} = 80 \)
Irish Tune from County Derry

Percey Grainger
Arr. Matherne

Bb4

Flowing \( \dot{=} \) 80

\[ \begin{align*}
&\text{Irish Tune from County Derry} \\
&\text{Percey Grainger} \\
&\text{Arr. Matherne} \\
&\text{Bb4} \\
&\text{Flowing \( \dot{=} \) 80} \\
&\text{\[ \begin{align*}
&\text{Irish Tune from County Derry} \\
&\text{Percey Grainger} \\
&\text{Arr. Matherne} \\
&\text{Bb4} \\
&\text{Flowing \( \dot{=} \) 80}
\end{align*} \]}
\end{align*} \]
Irish Tune from County Derry

Percey Grainger
Arr. Matherne

Bb5

Flowing $\frac{d}{d} = 80$

\[ \text{SLACKEN SLOWER} \]

\[ \text{SLOW OFF} \]

\[ \text{1ST SPEED} \]

\[ \text{FULL} \]

\[ \text{SLIGHTLY SLOWER} \]

\[ \text{SLOW OFF LOTS} \]
**Piece:**
Thinkin' Blues

**Composer:**
Bessie Smith

**History: The Artist**
Bessie Smith, The Empress of the Blues from the 1920’s and 1930’s was a widely popular blues vocalist, influencing the birth of jazz and blues in America. She was widely known for her performances of blues melodies, first performing in the South and then all over the nation as her reputation spread. Her performances featured a great deal of rhythmic blurring due to her tendency to smear notes, but most of her songs were in the blues style, featuring repeated melodies, altered slightly each time.

**History: The Blues**
The Blues are derived largely from African American work songs, ballads, and spirituals from the time of slavery in the United States. The typical blues follows a 12 bar progression with a twice repeated melody over the first 8 bars and a continuation of or response to the idea making up the final 4 bars. The chord progression, as seen on the following page allows for the possibility of either using the repeat to add verses to the blues or ending, the former using a dominant V chord to cycle back into the blues and the latter simply ending on a repeated tonic I chord. The blues, like its predecessor in work song, is largely comprised of a call and response type of melody. In the original recording of Bessie Smith’s *Thinkin’ Blues* the notated melody was sung by Bessie and various horns interjected a response during the notated rests in the vocal part. This fit perfectly into the blues style forming during that era and is typical of many vocal recordings of blues tunes at that time. The generic chord progression as well as the lead sheet for *Thinkin’ Blues* on the following page are written representations of this style and can be used to improvise and play over a twelve bar blues progression.

**Lyrics:**
Did you ever sit thinking with a thousand things on your mind?
Did you ever sit thinking with a thousand things on your mind?
Thinking about someone who has treated you so nice and kind…
Exercises:

1) **Consider your instrumentation carefully before you begin this piece.** While this book and all of the arrangements can be performed with any instrumentation, you should determine what the most logical instrumentation might be in some circumstances. The 5th voice is a walking bass line and might sound more idiomatic and logical to the ear if it were played in a bass/baritone voice. Beyond this you also should think about what type of texture you want to play the lead part and which type of texture you want to respond to the call of the written melody. It would also be worthwhile to consider adding a drum set to increase the rhythmic style of the blues. There are a variety of options for this (and any arrangement) that go beyond just what is on the page. Put some thought into it and make each arrangement your own!

2) **Listen to recordings of various groups performing the pieces and decide what you like and don’t like about their performances.** Jazz has a large component of its tradition comprised in aural skills and transcriptions. Jazz Musicians often will listen to and copy the style, solos, or even music of other performers in a respectful way that pays homage to the original. Bessie Smith’s original recording is available online and can provide great insight into the way in which she originally intended the song to sound. You can take ideas from her or come up with your own, but listening gives you one more place to look for interpretation. Also, if the musician playing the 2nd voice is uncomfortable improvising over the response segments of the blues, you can transcribe the original responses from Bessie Smith’s recording and use them as a starting point for your own work.

3) **Improvise over the indicated bars in the 2nd voice or over the entire twelve bar progression.** One of the most common parts of playing jazz is improvising over the progression that the original tune was written. Practice playing over the blues progression and then experiment with the response segments in the 2nd voice or open up the middle of your arrangement for solos. The way that the blues works, you can continue to loop the progression and have different ideas or changes that alter the overall perception of the piece each time. As you are beginning to solo, try playing the “guide tones” for each chord as a way of seeing what fits into each harmonic shift and how they relate to one another. The “guide tones” are the 3rd and the 7th note of each chord (E and Bb in a C7 chord) and they are the notes that define the quality of the chord, making it major, minor, dominant, etc. Once you have mastered these notes you can branch out and explore the endless possibilities. The most important thing is to just keep playing! There are no specifically wrong notes, but you won’t figure out what you think sounds good unless you give it a try.

4) **Plan out some rhythmic “hits” or background material beyond the whole notes in the 3rd and 4th voices.** The 3rd and 4th voices in this arrangement have the “guide tones” (see exercise 3) written as whole notes in their parts. While these can serve as “pads,” providing the harmonic context for the melody, these parts can be changed and altered to add rhythmic contrast or to accent certain parts of the melody. Be sure to talk with your ensemble about any thoughts you may have about different note lengths and placement within each bar that you think would make the arrangement more interesting. Experiment and try a bunch of different ideas, starting just with one voice to leave the harmonic foundation intact, but then branch out and see what you like. This can be a fun compositional exercise that puts you in control of the arrangement.
Thinkin' Blues

Bessie Smith

Edited and Arr. Matherne

Bb1

Bb2

Bb3

Bb4

Bb5

G7
C7
G7
G7

G7
C7
G7
G7

G7
C7
G7
G7

C7
C7
G7
G7

C7
C7
G7
G7

G7
G7
G7
G7

G7
G7
G7
G7
**Piece:**
A Stephen Foster Medley

**Composer:**
Stephen Foster

**History:**
Stephen Foster is widely known as the “father of American Music” because of his prolific writing, much of which remains popular and widely performed to this day. Foster wrote many of the popular songs from his time in the early to mid nineteenth century, including those combined in this medley: *Oh! Susanna*, *Beautiful Dreamer*, and *Camptown Races*. His music was used both as material for musical performance and for inclusion in the popular “minstrel shows” of the time. Though he had a great difficulty making a living off of his compositions as copyright laws were not in effect in his lifetime, his compositions were very popular then and now.
Exercises:

1) **Analyze the way in which the piece transitions from song to song.** The medley contains three songs, beginning with *Oh! Susanna*, transitioning to *Beautiful Dreamer*, and ending with *Camptown Races*. The transitions between songs have both similarities and differences, but each one implies certain things about the way in which you perform them. Look at what is happening as you shift between songs and make sure the relevant voices are heard as you transition.

2) **Throughout the piece, identify and balance your part to the dominant texture.** Throughout the piece there is a careful balance of melody vs. accompaniment vs. countermelody that must be observed to create the desired effect and overall balance for arrangement. In this piece in particular there are clear accompanimental figures that support the melody, but in no way mirror its rhythmic context. There are also countermelodies throughout *Beautiful Dreamer* that play a middle role in the overall process, but must be balanced as well. Make sure you know where you fit in so that your part doesn’t overpower the melody when you are the accompaniment.

3) **Maintain eye contact and pay attention to the non-verbal cues from your ensemble members.** This piece can really be an exercise in keeping track of who has the same material as you, but it can also be an exercise in entrances and transitions. Keeping eye contact with the other players and breathing together will help make transitions smoother and entrances more clear and united. It is especially important that you watch and listen for the players with moving lines during the transition segments so that each new song begins effectively.
A Stephen Foster Medley

Stephen Foster
Arr. Matherne

"Oh Susanna"

Moderato $q = 60$

"Beautiful Dreamer"

"Camptown Races"

Allegro $q = 120$

"Camptown Races"
A Stephen Foster Medley

"Oh Susanna"

Moderato \( \frac{d}{\text{d}} = 60 \)

"Beautiful Dreamer"

Allegro \( \frac{d}{\text{d}} = 120 \)

"Camptown Races"

Arr. Matherne
A Stephen Foster Medley

Slightly Slower, Maestoso

A tempo, \( \frac{\text{d}}{\text{r}} = 120 \)
A Stephen Foster Medley

Stephen Foster
Arr. Matherne

"Oh Susanna"

Moderato $q. = 60$

"Beautiful Dreamer"

"Camptown Races"

Allegro $j=120$

Bb3
A Stephen Foster Medley

Slightly Slower, Maestoso

\( \text{\textcopyright} \) a tempo, \( \mathcal{J} = 120 \)
A Stephen Foster Medley

"Camptown Races"
Allegro $\mathbb{F}=120$

Slightly Slower, Maestoso

a tempo, $\mathbb{F} = 120$
**Piece:**
Choose Your Own Adventure!

**Composer:**
You!

**Context:**
Now that you have performed a variety of pieces (or you’ve skipped to the end of the book to do this exercise first), a new task befalls you. Use all that you know about music, and specifically chamber music, to write something for you and your fellow musicians to play together. You can approach the process from many different angles and directions, but ultimately the important thing is that you create something that you can play together (or alone if it just ends up being a solo). There are *no rules* when it comes to the process, but there are some suggested exercises provided to help you along the way. Good luck!
Exercises:

1) Write a melody! A melody is really just a string of notes that you think sound good together in some rhythmic pattern. You can plan a melody around a specific harmonic progression that you like or you can just imagine the line and then find a progression that fits under the melody afterwards. Experiment and try putting together different ideas. Sometimes writing small ideas and then building them together can create a melody that you didn’t even see coming. Think about whether or not you want it to stay entirely within one key’s set of notes (diatonic). An accidental here and there can provide an interesting flavor to a melody that repeats and is in need of variation. Theme and variation is another great idea. Also, don’t be afraid to steal ideas from other places. Take something you like from a piece of music you know and expand upon it and turn it into something new!

2) Write a chord progression! Sometimes the best way to get started is to try to play a progression that creates a tonal color that you like. Maybe you want to write a piece that has a common chord progression such as the modern pop progression (I-V-iv-IV) or the twelve bar blues. Chord progressions cannot be copyrighted so you can take any chord progression in existence and write a new melody over the top of it. You can always write your own as well, using your knowledge of music and the pieces you have played to create something new, that sounds pleasant to your ear.

3) Write a piece! Just start writing and don’t let yourself get bogged down in the details. You don’t have to know everything about how the final product will turn out in order to start writing a piece. Get the ideas you have out on the page and sometimes the rest of the piece will just fall into place. Don’t be afraid to ask for help and to use the breadth of your music knowledge as well as the knowledge of the people you know to work on your piece. Play it with the other members of your group once you have something written and have fun writing!