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James Houlik: life of a tenor saxophone specialist

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JAMES HOULIK:
LIFE OF A TENOR SAXOPHONE SPECIALIST

by

Scott David Sandberg

An essay submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the
Doctor of Musical Arts degree
in the Graduate College of
The University of Iowa

May 2010

Essay Supervisor: Associate Professor Kenneth Tse

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Graduate College
The University of Iowa
Iowa City, City

CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL

D.M.A. ESSAY

This is to certify that the D.M.A. essay of

Scott David Sandberg

has been approved by the Examining Committee for the essay requirement for the Doctor of Musical Arts degree at the May 2010 graduation.

Essay Committee: _____

Kenneth Tse, Essay Supervisor

Benjamin Coelho

Nicole Esposito

Richard Mark Heidel

Jerry Suls

To my wife Lisa

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INTRODUCTION

James Houlik has spent his life and career dedicated to the advancement and exposure of the tenor saxophone. This thesis documents his career as well as his views toward music, teaching, and the instrument. Because limited information has been published about him, this document is primarily based on interviews that took place in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, in 2009 and by email correspondence in 2009 and 2010.

His extensive performing career has not only given the tenor saxophone exposure as a concert instrument on an international level but also produced a repertoire to support solo, chamber, and concerto appearances. Houlik's specialization on the tenor saxophone has led to numerous collaborations with composers. To date there are over eighty works dedicated to him, which are detailed in Chapter 3. Despite the fact that his career has had the biggest impact in classical music, the majority of his early exposure was jazz, and he continued to play with jazz bands throughout his education. When I asked Houlik about this, he commented that, jazz or classical, to him it is all just music.

Houlik currently teaches at Duquesne University in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. He previously taught at East Carolina University and the North Carolina School of the Arts (recently renamed University of North Carolina School of the Arts), simultaneously maintaining adjunct positions at other institutions. As an educator, Houlik is focused on preparing students for life after college, which took form in a career development class he initiated at the North Carolina School of the Arts. Houlik's students have achieved success in prominent positions in a variety of areas within the music field. His current projects encompass a number of his long-standing interests, including collaborations with

composers, varied performance projects, and his study in ergonomics leading to the development of a modified saxophone.

My decision to write about James Houlik stems in part from my own interest in the tenor saxophone. Throughout years of researching and performing pieces for the instrument, I have routinely seen works dedicated to him. In the winter of 2008 I contacted Houlik about the possibility of writing my doctoral essay about him and his career. Upon agreeing, he asked if this meant that he was going to die soon, and I knew in that moment that I was going to be meeting a fascinating individual.

CHAPTER I BIOGRAPHY

Growing up on Long Island

An “unsophisticated time and unsophisticated place”¹ is how James Houlik describes his formative years in his hometown of Bay Shore, New York, where he was born on December 4, 1942. Bay Shore is located on the south shore of Long Island and is approximately fifty miles from Manhattan, though at that time its residents would rarely travel there. It was a sleepy fishing town, predominantly middle class, with the wealthy residents living along the bay and with very little poverty, if any. The landscape included beach and ocean to the south and forest to the north. It was exactly what one would imagine a fishing community to be, complete with whale bones scattered around town.²

Houlik describes his mother, Carolyn, as the “home engineer”³ of the family. His father, James Houlik, Sr., worked for Grumman Air Craft until the age of fifty-seven. He held a variety of positions with the company – his time there included a stint working on the Lunar Excursion Module – before retiring as a production manager. Houlik’s one sibling, Nancy, is a nurse administrator.

One of Houlik’s first jobs, beginning when he was eleven years old, was working for a ferry company owned by his mother’s side of the family. The ferry traveled to Fire Island, a small strip of vacation land south of Long Island. The summer homes on the island, owned by celebrities and wealthy families, were only accessible by the ferry, which made twelve to fourteen trips per day during the busy season from Memorial Day

¹ James Houlik, interview by author, digital recording, Pittsburgh, Pa., 27 July 2009.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

to Labor Day. Houlik's job was to collect fares from the passengers once on board, and during the rest of the trip he was free to do what he wished. Entertainers would also travel to Fire Island for performances. This included many of the top jazz musicians of the time; Houlik remembers collecting fares from and interacting with Coleman Hawkins, Cannonball Adderley, Oliver Nelson, and Benny Goodman, to name a few. He also recalls conversations with Max Gordon, owner of the Village Vanguard. These men had a dramatic, life-changing influence on Houlik. He would talk to them about their careers, music, and other musicians, and they would in turn recommend jazz recordings that he would immediately purchase upon his return home. Much of Houlik's early exposure to music was through meeting these men and listening to recordings and the radio. He recalls lying on the floor and listening to hour-long live broadcasts from Birdland.

Houlik attended and graduated from the Islip School, where all levels of education, elementary through high school, were located in a single building. Musically-speaking, the school had a suitable facility and a good band director named Harvey Egan. Egan was a strong musician who placed emphasis on melody, a quality he passed on to his students. In addition to his leadership of the band program, he also taught a class on music theory, which was not a common practice in public schools at that time. Islip lacked a marching band, which, in addition to giving Egan the time to teach music theory, gave the program a chance to focus on concert band literature.

Egan started Houlik on clarinet in the fifth grade. He found little success on the instrument and states, "It couldn't get much worse,"⁴ so he switched to tenor saxophone at the beginning of his seventh-grade year. The selection of tenor saxophone was

⁴ Ibid.

partially influenced by his uncle, Fred Zegel, who was in high school while Houlik was in elementary school. Zegel was a talented tenor saxophonist and performed often with his own jazz band; Houlik first heard him play at the Islip School and, unlike any other instrument he had heard, was instantly attracted to the sound of it. Choosing the tenor saxophone instead of the alto did not seem like an unusual choice to Houlik as many rock-and-roll and jazz saxophonists played tenor. He found instant success and gladly left the clarinet behind.

Weekly, Houlik had a lesson at school with Harvey Egan and then would come home and have a lesson with his uncle. Some of the exercises that he was studying were from the *Universal Method* by Paul DeVille, and he was also practicing overtones, altissimo, and what he describes as “good, melodic music.”⁵ He was simultaneously learning a number of “tunes” that he would occasionally have the opportunity to play with his uncle’s band. At these gigs he would sit in the back until it was his turn to come forward and play on one or two pieces. He soon started his own dance band, Jimmy Houlik and the Nomads, when he was about sixteen years old.

The band rehearsed after Houlik’s lesson with his uncle and got paid to perform gigs at the Elks Club, firehouses, weddings, and the like. To advertise and secure jobs, Houlik designed and mailed printed materials. Because he was not old enough to drive, his father would chauffeur the band then return home to sleep in his recliner until it was time to pick them up again. Houlik also acquired performance experience through school activities. He routinely participated in All-State and the New York State School Music Association solo and ensemble competitions.

⁵ Ibid.

In addition to listening to recordings, attending concerts influenced Houlik's musical development. He would often attend the South Bay Jazz Festival where he would hear musicians such as Paul Desmond and Cecil Taylor. The only orchestra that Houlik heard before going to college was a single performance of the South Shore Symphony. His uncle took him to the concert because Sigurd Rascher, one of the first masters of the saxophone, was scheduled to perform the *Concertino da Camera* by Jacques Ibert. After the concert Houlik went backstage to meet Rascher and to get his program autographed. While Houlik owned recordings of Rascher's recitals, he found that hearing him play in person was a profoundly different experience.

He graduated from the Islip School in 1960, and music was his strength during his time in high school. "I guess it was the only thing I did well, but I don't recall taking it that seriously; I mean, I wasn't a nerd."⁶ Regarding his schoolwork, he states that "I just wasn't that interested,"⁷ though he later discovered that he was quite intelligent and found a particular interest in English and writing. Overall, Houik describes his childhood as a "Norman Rockwell kind of life."⁸

Studies at State University of New York at Fredonia

During Houlik's senior year of high school he decided to apply to the State University of New York at Fredonia. Representatives from colleges and universities contacted high schools to set up times and locations to meet with prospective students; SUNY Fredonia's meetings, which also served as an audition time, took place in a hotel

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Ibid.

in Manhattan. There were no set audition requirements so Houlik played whatever music he was currently working on. It was the only school he applied to, and he was accepted. He enrolled in the fall of 1960 and immediately registered as a music education major as he had aspirations of becoming a high school band director. This was due in part to the great respect he had for his band director, Harvey Egan.

There were very few performance opportunities at Fredonia. The school lacked a university jazz ensemble, and saxophone quartets were not organized. Students were not required to perform in end-of-semester juries or even perform a senior recital. Weekly recital hours were available as an opportunity to perform but were optional. One performing ensemble that did exist was a wind band, which toured often, and Houlik states that the conductor, Dr. Donald Hartman, was a superior musician.⁹ The band focused on concert literature and did not march for sporting events.

During his time there, a group of musicians at SUNY Fredonia decided to form their own jazz ensemble. Don Menza, who later toured with and wrote music for Maynard Ferguson, Stan Kenton, and Buddy Rich, wrote and arranged the majority of the music for the band. Houlik states that Menza had a tremendous impact on him and that a friendship developed between them.¹⁰ During their initial years at SUNY Fredonia, they lived in a house together with other jazz musicians. “Jazz was always playing. In the morning the needle would go on, and you wouldn’t take it off until the end of the night.”¹¹

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Ibid.

Houlik also continued to perform with his own jazz ensemble as many members of his band, Jimmy Houlik and the Nomads, attended SUNY Fredonia. At this time, they re-formed under the name Jim Harris Orchestra because people had a hard time finding the name “Houlik” in the phone book. They gigged often, including performances at college bars, weddings, and proms. Houlik once again promoted the band through mailings he produced.

SUNY Fredonia’s academics were strong, and it was here that Houlik was able to fully explore his interest in language. He took every speech class that was offered, including upper-level classes that were comprised almost entirely of speech majors. Regarding his musical studies, Houlik researched extensively on his own. At the library he would examine periodicals, searching out the word “saxophone.” He would find articles specific to the instrument but would also look for mentions of performances featuring saxophone, and from these listings he compiled a catalog of saxophone compositions.

While at SUNY Fredonia, Houlik practiced many hours each day, routinely arriving at school early and staying well into the evening. He got to know the night janitor so well that he occasionally had dinner at the janitor’s home. His rigorous practice schedule paid off when Houlik won the SUNY Fredonia Concerto Competition, performing the *Concerto* by Frank Erickson. The piece was originally composed for alto saxophone, but Houlik reworked the solo part to be performed on tenor. The award for winning the competition was the opportunity to perform the piece with the wind band.

Houlik’s first saxophone instructor at SUNY Fredonia was Jim Pyne, who, along with his teaching position, held the position of principal clarinetist with the Buffalo

Philharmonic Orchestra. Unsatisfied with his lessons with Pyne, Houlik studied with William Willett after his first semester. Clarinet was Willett's primary instrument, though he also played and taught saxophone. It was a valuable opportunity for Houlik as Willett was friends with Sigurd Rascher.

Houlik, until he was twenty years old, continued to go home to Long Island during the summers to work on the ferry. At that time, one of his other relatives held the position of administrative assistant at the Brookhaven National Laboratory, which is a research facility for nuclear energy. After receiving FBI clearance, Houlik took a summer job there as a night janitor. The job was structured in such a way that the work could take no longer than four hours, and Houlik would spend the remainder of his shift practicing. When he arrived at work his boss would ask him if he brought his saxophone, and, when Houlik stated that he had, he was assigned to clean the weather station because it was far from everyone else. Toward the end of the night his boss would venture there in an effort to hear Houlik play.

In 1964, Houlik graduated from SUNY Fredonia with a bachelor degree in music education. He particularly recalls great experiences playing in the unofficial jazz ensemble and as a freelance musician. It was during this time that he started his own teaching studio, had his first pieces composed for him, and had his first performance as a soloist with a large ensemble.

Studies at University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

While a student at SUNY Fredonia Houlik had a job as a night manager at a hotel on Lake Erie where Danlee Mitchell, a percussion professor who was a one-year sabbatical replacement for SUNY Fredonia's primary professor, occupied one of the

cottages. Houlik soon discovered that Mitchell was a graduate of the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, which often became a topic of conversation because Houlik was researching graduate schools. Other options he was considering were to study with a young Fred Hemke at Northwestern University in Evanston, Illinois, or with Larry Teal at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor, Michigan. One of the primary reasons he was interested in attending Illinois was because of a contemporary music festival that the university hosted every other year. The year Houlik was to enroll was a festival year, and, with some convincing from Mitchell, he decided to attend Illinois for graduate studies.

Houlik describes the academics at Illinois as being “good courses with brilliant professors.”¹² Due to the contemporary music festival, he found himself in classes taught by such composers as John Cage, Luciano Berio, Milton Babbitt, and Luigi Dallapiccola. It was a very educational time for Houlik, particularly because he could hear quality performances of new music.

Willis Coggins, Houlik’s saxophone professor at Illinois, was a clarinetist like many of Houlik’s past teachers. In lessons it was mandated that he play alto saxophone and study alto repertoire. Much like his time at Fredonia, Houlik spent many hours a day studying in the library and practicing. He became friends with the music librarian, Johnny Cranford, who had his own dance band, the Johnny Cranford Orchestra, and soon hired Houlik to play tenor saxophone in the band. The group performed often, usually six nights a week.

¹² Ibid.

Houlik also performed in the University of Illinois band, which was under the baton of Mark Hindsley. Hindsley was one of the leading band directors of the time, and his ensemble often performed transcriptions because band repertoire was quite limited in comparison to today. Otherwise, performing ensembles were limited; he performed in the contemporary ensemble, but the department was without saxophone quartets, and the jazz band was more of a semi-professional ensemble than a university group. Houlik did not have the opportunity to perform with the jazz band, but did not mind because he had a busy schedule of paying gigs.

Houlik states that he learned little during his time at Illinois and that his lessons there were quite unproductive. What he did take away was the opportunity to “jump ahead a century” through his first exposure to avant-garde music and the formation of an idea that career development was an important topic to be studied.¹³ He also continued to gain experience as a private teacher and as a performing musician. In the summer of 1965, after only three semesters, Houlik graduated with a masters degree in music education.

Studies at Ball State University

After finishing his masters degree Houlik decided to apply for a Fulbright grant to study with Marcel Mule in France and wrote to him stating his intent and interest. A short while later, Houlik received a denial letter stating that to be accepted he would have to play alto saxophone. He did not pursue it further. At about the same time, Houlik heard that there was a new doctor of musical arts degree program being established at Ball State University in Muncie, Indiana. He had heard recordings of the saxophone

¹³ Ibid., 17 December 2009.

professor, Cecil Leeson, and the prospect seemed promising. After meeting with Leeson he decided to start his doctoral degree in saxophone performance.

One of the benefits of attending Ball State University was that he was hired as an adjunct instructor with the responsibility of teaching clarinet to the music education majors and music minors. The saxophone studio, however, took him by surprise. First, there were few saxophonists studying at Ball State University. Second, he realized that Leeson wanted to re-make him. Leeson referred to his desired tonal concept as “glowing,” which Houlik understood to mean a bright and shrill tone. They were constantly at odds, and essentially the time was spent at a stalemate. Lessons were very abstract and were spent working out of the Gabriel Parès scale book, never on a piece of music. Houlik did not enjoy any aspect of it.

Similar to his previous schools, Ball State University lacked performing opportunities. Houlik never played in a university ensemble of any type but instead took matters into his own hands and made opportunities for himself as he had done during his previous studies. There was a saxophonist at Ball State University named Lee Patrick whom Houlik knew because they both had studied with Sigurd Rascher at Eastman during previous summers. Patrick was beginning his masters degree at Ball State University, and he and Houlik became friends. Houlik came up with the idea that they should organize a duo concert tour. Patrick’s responsibility was to arrange a few pieces while Houlik’s responsibility was to promote the ensemble and schedule concerts.

One of the duo’s performances was at the University of Louisville in Louisville, Kentucky. It was at that concert that Houlik planned to give the premiere performance of the Tuthill *Concerto*, which had been composed for Leeson, though he had never played

it. Houlik was interested in performing the piece but knew that Leeson would not give him the music, so Houlik wrote a letter to Tuthill asking for a copy. He had the letter sent from his home address on Long Island so Tuthill would not realize his connection to Leeson. Shortly after, the tenor saxophone and piano parts arrived, and the premiere performance was given unbeknownst to Leeson.

While Houlik did not feel his lessons with Leeson were productive, touring with Patrick proved to be very educational. He learned how to put a tour together, book dates, and assemble programs. As he was finding success on his own and was disappointed in his studies with Leeson, Houlik decided to leave Ball State University after one year to begin looking for employment.

Studies with Sigurd Rascher

It was during Houlik's first year at SUNY Fredonia that Willett introduced him to Sigurd Rascher, saying, "Why don't you play for him?"¹⁴ Houlik did, and after the meeting Rascher invited Houlik to study with him at Eastman during the summer. This was of great value to Houlik, and he routinely spent a week there during the summers of his college years.

Houlik found these lessons to be an eye-opening experience. One of the aspects of his studies that had the greatest impact on him was that Rascher was an intellectual, sophisticated individual who believed that music was a thoughtful activity and who put his focus on the music, not just the technique. Before students arrived for summer studies, Rascher sent out a sheet of music that lacked bar lines, rhythm, meter, dynamics, and articulations – it would essentially just be a series of noteheads. It was the

¹⁴ Ibid., 27 July 2009.

responsibility of the students to figure out the piece from there, and Houlik recalls it to be a great exercise in phrasing.

In lessons, students chose what they would like to play for Rascher, and he would base his teaching on that. He did not use lesson time to technically work a piece from the ground up, but rather the time was spent discussing the choices that the student made in playing the piece and deciding what could be changed or improved. Houlik learned the importance of viewing the piece as a whole, putting the music into words, and making intentional choices throughout the piece. In lessons they also discussed alternate fingerings and how such options are not personal choices but are expressly dictated by the music. Rascher was known for his control of *altissimo*. While teaching a session on it, Houlik recalls Rascher saying “This is hard, and you will probably fail, but we can try.”¹⁵

Throughout Houlik’s career, he stayed in contact with Rascher. Rascher asked Houlik to perform within a large ensemble at the second World Saxophone Congress, primarily because there was a significant tenor saxophone solo in one of the pieces. Houlik agreed, and it was through this exposure that he was invited to perform in Japan, his first of many tours in Asia.

On another occasion, Steven Mauk, professor of saxophone at Ithaca College in Ithaca, New York, invited Houlik to perform as a featured soloist at a North American Saxophone Alliance Conference held in Ithaca. He had only a very brief rehearsal with the ensemble before his performance. Houlik walked on stage, bowed, and was surprised to see Rascher sitting in the audience. After the performance Rascher came backstage,

¹⁵ Ibid.

shook Houlik's hand, and said, "You shake hands like you play." "I'm not sure what you mean," replied Houlik. Rascher asked, "Who wants to shake hands with a doughnut?" A puzzled Houlik stated, "I'm still not sure what you mean." They stepped to the side and Rascher proceeded to compliment Houlik, "You are not a saxophonist, you are a MUSICIAN." He then put his finger in Houlik's belly and joked, "Lose twenty pounds."¹⁶ This was the last time they spoke in person before Rascher died in 2001.

Houlik enjoyed studying with an intellectual, someone who took a rational and intelligent approach to music, while also placing emphasis on phrasing and musical interpretation. Such aspects of Rascher's teaching became fundamental to Houlik's approach to the instrument.

Faculty at East Carolina University

After Houlik decided to leave Ball State University and pursue a job he received offers from Bluefield State College in Bluefield, West Virginia, and Xavier University of Louisiana in New Orleans without interviewing at either school. At that time colleges and universities found their faculty through companies that would match potential teachers with schools as per the schools' stated criteria. Houlik also received an invitation to come interview at his own expense at East Carolina University in Greenville, North Carolina. He discussed the position with a fellow University of Illinois graduate who was employed by East Carolina University and decided to take the interview. It took place during the summer, which limited it to performing a small recital and a meeting with faculty and administration. Because a pianist was not offered for the recital Houlik played unaccompanied repertoire. During the performance he found himself educating

¹⁶ Ibid.

the committee about the music he selected, as they were unfamiliar with it, and the exchange gave him the sense that he would fit in well with the rest of the faculty.

East Carolina University offered Houlik the position in 1966, and he became the University's first full-time saxophone professor. His responsibilities were to build a saxophone studio and to teach a woodwind technique class. He did not feel comfortable or qualified to teach the woodwind class and quickly restructured it so that specialists on each instrument taught their respective sections while he taught the saxophone part and oversaw the class as a whole. Houlik's saxophone studio quickly increased to thirty-one students, including graduate assistants. He was also hired by Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C., to be an adjunct professor, and those students traveled to Greenville for their lessons with him. This was the start of a very successful teaching career.

While at East Carolina University Houlik continued to perform often. He began working with a pianist by the name of Paul Tardif with whom he played a variety of different gigs and tours. Houlik was routinely hired by other musicians to play in their bands, and he also organized a chamber group named James Houlik and Friends that included oboe, clarinet, tenor saxophone, and eventually piano. They commissioned pieces by Seymour Brandon, Gregory Kosteck, Marvin Lamb, Richard Lane, and Paul Harvey. It was during this time that Houlik started performing frequently as a featured soloist with large ensembles, the first of which was at Davidson College in Davidson, North Carolina, where he performed William Duckworth's *Fragments* with the North Carolina Intercollegiate Band in 1967.

Faculty at North Carolina School of the Arts

In his fourth year of teaching at East Carolina University he received a telephone call from Robert Ward, who was the president of the North Carolina School of the Arts at the time. He was looking for a saxophone instructor and wanted Houlik to teach part time. Houlik was interested in the position, and he was also interested in having Ward compose a piece for him. Negotiations took place, and eventually an offer was made. After clearing it with the dean of East Carolina University, Houlik became an adjunct professor at the North Carolina School of the Arts, and from 1970 to 1976 he taught at East Carolina University full-time and the North Carolina School of the Arts part-time.

The program at the North Carolina School of the Arts was not growing as fast as it could with the influence of a full-time faculty member. In 1976 Houlik received a call from the assistant dean asking if he would be interested in teaching there full-time as professor of saxophone and director of special projects, which was later changed to assistant dean. His administrative duties were to include dealing with external affairs, since he already had many years of experience teaching within the state, and to assist in recruiting. As a professor he was to establish a larger saxophone studio and to develop a jazz program.

Houlik decided to accept the position but only on the condition that he would be allowed to teach a class on career development. Both sides agreed, and he left East Carolina University in 1976 to begin his full-time position at the North Carolina School of the Arts, becoming their first full-time saxophone professor. Houlik considered this move to be a “happy situation.”¹⁷ During his tenure at the North Carolina School of the

¹⁷ Ibid.

Arts he also held adjunct positions at Boston University, Duke University, and Wake Forest University.

The idea of offering a career development class started while Houlik was completing his masters degree from the University of Illinois, and he became fully convinced of its importance while he was splitting his time between East Carolina University and the North Carolina School of the Arts. At the end of a student's senior year, East Carolina University music faculty would hold a meeting with the student to discuss his or her plans after graduation. Houlik was dissatisfied with many of the answers that were given. He discussed this with the chair of music education, voicing his concerns that students were not being prepared for the real world. Upon graduation they did not know how to handle the six-figure budgets of public schools, how to manage public relations, or how to survive independently until getting a job. These were just a few of the topics that Houlik aimed to address in his career development class.

The class was designed to be year-long and to include a wide variety of speakers including performers, lawyers, accountants, graphic designers, and financial advisers. One of the ways Houlik secured performers to speak was by going to the Winston-Salem Symphony and talking with the guest performers. He would buy them lunch in exchange for an hour of their time in front of the class. Topics discussed throughout the course included contracts, copyright, resumes, establishing a private studio, and developing public relation materials, among others. Houlik states that one of the primary things he taught was awareness. "Where are you going to be in five years, what do you have to do to get there, and how much money do you expect to be making? It is important for

students to think of their careers in this graphic way.”¹⁸ Many students have taken this class, and many have found jobs in music. It might not have been the jobs they originally thought they wanted when they were in college, but they are successfully working in the music field.¹⁹

Houlik continued to maintain his active performance schedule during his years at the North Carolina School of the Arts. He no longer led his own bands but was hired by a variety of others, including performances with The Four Tops, The Platters, and the Tommy Dorsey Orchestra. His solo career also grew.

In 1978 Houlik decided to challenge himself by arranging a performance in New York City at Carnegie Hall’s Recital Hall. He decided to perform with pianist Scott Schillin, the other assistant dean at the North Carolina School of the Arts, who Houlik continued to play with for years in both jazz and classical performances. He promoted the recital similarly to how he had been promoting his gigs since he was a teenager. He mailed promotional materials to critics in New York City, later sending follow-up materials that were intentionally left out of the first packets so that they could serve as a reminder. His promotion included purchasing advertising space in *The New York Times*.

Houlik struggled with stage fright throughout his life and, despite the fact that he had been performing extensively for years, his Carnegie Hall performance was no exception. One way Houlik worked to combat this was by starting the concert with a slow, lyrical piece. This provided him with the opportunity to “reassure the audience,

¹⁸ Ibid., 28 July 2009.

¹⁹ Ibid.

hear the acoustics, and calm down.”²⁰ The concert went well, and he received positive reviews from *The New York Times*, *Newsday*, and the *Daily News*. Houlik states that the performance “grew out of being in an environment with people who were living that life,”²¹ as his colleagues at the North Carolina School of the Arts were pursuing similar professional activities.

In 1981 he booked another performance in New York City, this time at Alice Tully Hall of Lincoln Center. The performance was scheduled on Adolphe Sax’s birthday, and Houlik decided to hire a New York concert promoter. With his help, Houlik was scheduled to meet with the head music writer of *The Associated Press* to discuss the upcoming performance. The reception became larger than Houlik had anticipated, as it was assigned as the top-level story that ran in papers from coast to coast. The publicity was overwhelming, and it subsequently led to extensive coverage of the performance and to outstanding reviews.

In 1983 Houlik’s colleague Robert Ward completed the *Concerto* for tenor saxophone and orchestra, the piece that Houlik was lobbying to have composed at the time he was initially hired at the North Carolina School of the Arts. It was premiered with the Charlotte Symphony Orchestra with Ward conducting. In 1995 Houlik received the rare opportunity to perform for the President of the United States. Because the North Carolina School of the Arts was a newer institution, they had hired a public relations firm to assist in school publicity, and this firm had a connection to the White House. Houlik was engaged to perform there for President Bill Clinton, as he and some of his students

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Ibid., 27 July 2009.

were selected to perform for the Medal of the Arts award ceremony. They were first to perform and were followed by the Air Force Band.

Due to inclement weather the private plane that was chartering everyone from the North Carolina School of the Arts had to land at Dulles International Airport instead of Washington National Airport (now Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport). Therefore, the scheduled limousines were unable to pick them up so they took taxis to the White House. As guests rarely arrive at the White House in taxis they had to convince security that they were scheduled to perform, and they were then sent to a room to warm up. Shortly thereafter, a young staffer came and told Houlik that the President would like to see him in the East Room before his performance, and he soon found himself discussing music and the saxophone with President Bill Clinton. After the performance, the staffer approached Houlik and said that the President would like to see him again and to have him play once more. He presented a short recital before the President had to leave to attend the award ceremony banquet.

Commissions and Dedications

In addition to performing almost exclusively on the tenor saxophone, Houlik has promoted the instrument by expanding its repertoire with the many pieces that have been composed for him. To date there are over eighty works commissioned by and/or dedicated to him, many of which were made possible through commissions and grants he received.

“I have raised a lot of money. I could not have done the things I am doing without raising a lot of money. I have taken very little from the institutions that I taught at because it was never enough; it wouldn’t have made any difference. So I have written a lot of grants and been successful.”²²

²² Ibid., 17 December 2009.

Many of these pieces are for the tenor saxophone as a featured soloist with the accompaniment of large ensembles, either symphony orchestras or concert bands.

One of the more significant pieces written for Houlik was composed by Morton Gould. It is titled *Diversions* and is for tenor saxophone and orchestra, though it can be performed with piano reduction. It is a five-movement work, and the timing is approximately twenty minutes. A Pulitzer Prize winner, Gould was an American composer and conductor. Houlik's manager recommended that he contact Gould to commission a piece, and, though Houlik initially was unconvinced, he quickly changed his mind after hearing a piece of Gould's on the radio. After much correspondence Gould agreed to write the piece.

Another Pulitzer Prize winner who wrote a piece for Houlik was Robert Ward, who is a graduate of the Eastman School of Music and the Juilliard School of Music. Ward was the dean at the North Carolina School of the Arts when Houlik began teaching there, and while Ward was attempting to persuade Houlik to teach at the school Houlik was attempting to persuade Ward to write a piece for him. In 1983 the *Concerto* for tenor saxophone and orchestra was finished and premiered with Ward conducting.

These are just two of the many significant pieces written for Houlik. Often the composers that Houlik works with write more than one piece for him, which is especially true of his colleagues Gregory Kosteck, who wrote six pieces for Houlik, and Sherwood Shaffer, who wrote nine. Houlik met Kosteck at East Carolina University when they were both teaching there and met Shaffer when they were both at the North Carolina School of the Arts.

With the repertoire his commissioning work has established, in addition to other tenor repertoire and arrangements, Houlik performs many times each year including solos with All-State Bands, military bands, community ensembles, and professional orchestras all over the world. Houlik has repertoire that can fit a wide variety of themes and genres, including children's shows. For example, *Sroufie The Saxophone* by Marvin Lamb was composed for Houlik and is scored for tenor saxophone and orchestra with narration by the conductor. In addition to being entertaining and showcasing the tenor saxophone, it teaches about discrimination, as Sroufie is not like the other members of the orchestra.

Many of the works composed for Houlik have become standards in the tenor saxophone repertoire. In addition to the above, pieces that have been commissioned by and/or dedicated to Houlik include Michael Cunningham's *Trigon*, William Duckworth's *Pitt County Excursions*, Walter Hartley's *Poem*, William Schmidt's *Sonata*, John Worley's *September Sonata*, and Russell Peck's *The Upward Stream*. Houlik's relationships with composers, ability to fund commissions, and dedication to promoting the tenor saxophone as a solo instrument has produced an extensive repertoire.

Current

Houlik became eligible to retire from the state educational system of North Carolina in 1996. He decided it was time to look for a new location, as "change provides opportunity for growth."²³ After a performance with the band from the Indiana University of Pennsylvania in Indiana, Pennsylvania, he met the band director from Duquesne University in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. As they talked, Houlik let it be known that he was looking for a new job, and by the middle of the next week they had made an

²³ Ibid., 28 July 2009.

offer. He later had an informal interview and presented a short recital for the faculty. Throughout his career, Houlik has not followed traditional methods in obtaining jobs. “I have never come in the front door. The job at ECU would be the closest I have come to the front door.”²⁴

Since 1996 Houlik has been the professor of saxophone and chair of woodwinds at Duquesne University. He maintains a studio of about twenty-four students majoring in a variety of areas of music. “I do not distinguish. I take them all.”²⁵ His students all perform in quartets as “that is where the action is.”²⁶ He supports his students in musical competitions, but he does not favor the competition process as he feels the winners are not usually the best musicians but rather the most technically proficient players.

He performs as a soloist approximately six to eight times per year with bands and four to six times per year with orchestras. He also tries to arrange two tours each year with a pianist, with each tour consisting of up to eight stops and including teaching a few masterclasses at different schools where he performs. To promote his concertizing and secure these performances he sends out many packets of materials every year to conductors all around the world.

Extending his teaching to many different groups of students beyond his studio at Duquesne University is a priority for Houlik. He travels to teach in Taiwan every other year, and in 1990 he started his Summer Saxophone Retreat at Wildacres in North Carolina. As it nears its twentieth session, the Retreat continues its purpose that has

²⁴ Ibid., 17 December 2009.

²⁵ Ibid., 28 July 2009.

²⁶ Ibid.

allowed saxophone students of all ages and abilities to enjoy and grow from the experience.

In 2007 Houlik co-authored *The Complete Saxophonist: An essential resource for the serious saxophonist* with one of his past students, Eric Lauver. The book covers Houlik's pedagogical methods, covering a range of material including assembling the saxophone, breathing musically, articulation, and vibrato. The last third of the book features melodies to reinforce the concepts already discussed. He is considering writing a more comprehensive method book in the future.

Houlik is currently working on the development of a modified saxophone. He is interested in science and anatomy and, after studying the hand, decided that changes could be made to the saxophone construction to eliminate certain performance injuries. Overall, he has made about thirteen alterations that have been applied to soprano, alto, and tenor saxophones. He also has developed the James Houlik mouthpiece that has already been in production for several years.

To date Houlik can be heard on a number of compact discs. His solo recordings include *Tenor Tapestry* and *American Saxophone*, which is soon to be re-released. Other recordings include *The Upward Stream: Music of Russell Peck; Night Fantasy, Music for Winds; Robert Ward: Jubilation Overture, Symphony No. 4, Concerto for Saxophone, Sonic Structure; and Orchestral Music & Concertos by Eric Ewazen*. Soon to be released are a recording of the saxophone music of Sherwood Shaffer and a solo recording titled *On Wings of Song*.

It is probable that Houlik has, throughout his career, done more for the concert tenor saxophone than any other artist to date. He maintains his mission to perform for

“the great unwashed...When I play for a group of people who really don’t know the saxophone, I leave the instrument in a better place than I found it.”²⁷

²⁷ Ibid., 27 July 2009.

CHAPTER 2 INTERVIEW

Performing

Sandberg: How do you prepare for a performance?

Houlik: One of the things that I do rather religiously is put checks in the margins next to those lines where the challenges reside. As long as those spots are there to vex me, the quality of the rest of it will go down a little bit, in anticipation of and then looking back. I work pretty hard, but I am not a relentless, mindless practicer. When I hear it I knock on the practice room door and tell them that they are getting absolutely nothing done – we throw ourselves at it and we mean well, but there is nothing going on. No cognition is happening. In my case, I come into the practice room and I'll start at the back of the piece and go forward. I will work only those highlighted spots where there are difficulties, because where else am I going to grow? I am not going to grow where it falls easily. I practice with huge specificity. I never play from front to back. There is no point – I know where the issue is. I have this book with HP on the cover, which stands for hard parts. They are divided into technical issues and altissimo issues, and I do those licks everyday. That is my etude book.

Sandberg: So you don't follow a routine in preparing for a performance?

Houlik: What does that have to do with the reality of the circumstance? All of these pieces are different as are the difficulties that are presented to me. I have to go according to what the piece tells me – I am alert to the piece. I let each piece educate and direct me. That is the goal. If I apply the same method to every piece, I am going to get a more similar product than the composers perhaps hoped for. One of the things I know is this, because I have had [more than] a few new pieces come across my stand: take the first eight bars and prepare them as if for performance. That will tell you so much.

Sandberg: How do you program recitals?

Houlik: Variety. There is historical variety. We just have to come to grips that we must be thieves, and that doesn't bother me in the slightest. In some cases I think we are capable of giving better performances of some of the music that we steal from other instruments than those folks could have given themselves. I do song sets, and sometimes they may be theme-driven; there are lots of songs that have to do with seasons. In the process I almost always read some of the lyrics before I play those pieces. We are so convinced that the music is so beautiful that the audience will get it – what is wrong with giving them the first or closing line that makes it so evident what it is really about? I don't play a recital without speaking from the stage unless there is a dramatic theatric reason not to.

Sandberg: How did you start getting booked as a “concert” saxophonist?

Houlik: We had a big concert series at East Carolina University, and they had file cabinets full of materials from managements, so I asked for permission to look through it. I began immediately to get an education on how it all works. Although my product did not match theirs, I began to find the words that I thought I should steal to describe what it was I was hoping to sell. I did mailings to concert presenters all over the Southeast. I had listed the Hartley *Petit Suite*, which I didn't own. I got a call from Walter Hartley, who was the chair of the music department at Davis & Elkins College in Elkins, West Virginia, saying that he would be interested in having me come and certainly play his *Suite*. In addition to saying I would love to, I also bought a copy of his *Suite*. By the time I got there he had written the *Poem* for me. So, I had some success and began picking up [concert] dates.

Sandberg: How about your first performance as a featured soloist?

Houlik: Bill Duckworth and I had Illinois in common – we were not there at the same time, but you sort of are in that “fraternity.” He was running the contemporary festival at what was then called Atlantic Christian College. I went over and played the festival, and he then wrote me my first piece with band, called *Fragments*. There was an all-collegiate band at Davidson College and I went over and played the premiere, and that gave me the opportunity to storm ahead and get a few more folks to write band pieces – some of which don't see the light of day, which is a shame. I began to push the band thing a little bit. I ended up in front of All-State bands in Florida, Alabama, and Mississippi, and I kept adding pieces.

Sandberg: Do you perform by memory?

Houlik: No. It has never been that much fun. We now know about learning styles. When I stand in the studio, I just wonder – was I really this aware before we really identified these types of things? I am a visual type. For me, pianists memorize for obvious reasons – they can't turn the pages. If my students want to memorize I'll be helpful, but I don't see it as a requisite.

Sandberg: How are you able to perform as often as you do?

Houlik: The repertoire is one of the answers, isn't it? Well, where are the outlets? You know whom we are not serving? We are not serving community bands. They are wonderful. Many are very good. I love playing with them. You can play with a regional orchestra where the people are not making enough money, they may be just a little cynical, and you can smell it. It's in the air. You go into the Charlotte Concert Band and those people are so excited, enthusiastic, and passionate. Of course it is not as good as playing with the Phoenix Symphony, but that is not entirely what it is about! So I think we need to see where we can do some good. I have done all sorts of crazy things, so the answer is how to make it interesting.

Another way is how do we hustle? I know that email is the communication *de jour*, but actually a fax has a slightly different impact – it is a piece of paper – so I send them and

say that I will follow up. Then a package arrives. After the package arrives, the phone rings. Most of us don't have the stomach for that.

Sandberg: What were some of your most memorable performances? Obviously, Carnegie Hall would be one of them.

Houlik: That was [just] a recital. The memorable ones are the ones where I stand in front of an orchestra and actually do combat. Certainly the world premiere of the Russell Peck, because it was such a musical journey. I would have to say, the premiere of the Gould at Alice Tully Hall, with Gould conducting, which was good fun.

Sandberg: Why do you say that Russell Peck's *The Upward Stream* was a musical journey?

Houlik: It is an interesting piece. You can turn it into an athletic exercise, or you could catch the philosophical thing, as Russell was very philosophical. I think the piece is utterly American. It is, as he suggests in his title, a piece that just grows and grows. There is a certain challenge to the musician to let it out – to let the excitement out in a measured way. I couldn't play the piece when I got it. It's just too hard. I marvel at the fact that these days kids come to my masterclasses and play it. It really is quite a message, isn't it? It forced me to grow hugely; I was utterly engaged. I was up before the sun rose everyday. I beat myself senseless. It was a huge opportunity for growth – but then to work that hard and see it come together. The Peck is the one that always turns out to be utterly exciting, to the extent that there is a palpable communication with the audience.

Sandberg: Do you give composers instructions/preferences when commissioning a piece?

Houlik: I have not had to much. With the young guys, you have to. They need to know what you are looking for. I can't sell it if it is something completely off target.

Sandberg: What are some of the pieces you enjoy performing the most?

Houlik: I enjoy the Ewazen [*Classical Concerto*], the Peck [*The Upward Stream*], and am hoping to get a couple more performances of the Gould [*Diversions*]. Frankly, a lot of the band pieces are quite fun. I am a melody guy. I don't mind the athletic side of it; I am willing to work hard to get it to happen, but some of these pieces really have wonderful, catchy tunes and beautiful melody.

Sandberg: Have you played in many saxophone quartets?

Houlik: Not a lot. Rascher used me for a while when he was just putting his quartet together. I think it was pretty apparent that I was not going to sacrifice my life for the saxophone quartet, but I think that it is a wonderful medium.

Sandberg: Who do you most enjoy performing for?

Houlik: My career has been made by playing for non-saxophonists – that’s the key. It is where the mission is. We are looking for fresh meat. I want to play for the “great unwashed” – this is really the essence for me. I want to have a real “musical” career; I didn’t want to have a “saxophone” career. I’m not going to be buried, but if I were, I would want my tombstone to read, “Musician, Teacher, Businessman.” When I play for a group of people who really don’t know the saxophone, I leave the instrument in a better place than I found it.

Equipment

Sandberg: What brands of saxophones have you played?

Houlik: I started on a Selmer Balanced Action. That was my first saxophone, and I know where it is – the jazz guy at ECU still plays it. Then I played a Buescher 400; it was a nice horn. Then I went to the Couf, and I thought that was a fine instrument. I was then hustled by Yamaha – I was on my way to play the world premiere of the Morton Gould *Diversions* at Lincoln Center, and they asked if I would like to have their newest model, a handmade Custom. They then called me to play a date somewhere, and I bought a plane ticket and hotel. I played the performance and then got a little note saying that their budget dried up for the year, and they would not be able to compensate me for the date. Well, I was out money. So, because I am who I am, I packed up the saxophone and shipped it back to them. I think it took the Selmer representative two days to get to my office door in Winston-Salem. They flew me out, and I spent a couple of days at the factory. They wined and dined me and I went home with a couple of tenors. I have been back once since, when they came out with the [Series] III.

Sandberg: What do you play now?

Houlik: A [Selmer Series] III.

Sandberg: Did you play a Series II?

Houlik: Yes

Sandberg: So, you went from the Yamaha Custom, to a Selmer Series II, to a Series III?

Houlik: Yes.

Education

Sandberg: Has not having your doctorate affected your career?

Houlik: Yes – it has allowed me to become a musician. First of all, I was heading nowhere at Ball State, and I am not so sure that I would have done that much better

anywhere else except marking time and being obedient. I have enjoyed being a street kid. And yes, it has probably kept me from getting one or another jobs that I thought I wanted. I know it cost me some work opportunities, but so did playing the tenor. Committees would look, and I didn't look like them, and that frightened them. I decided to be a musician who teaches. All I want to do is touch people with what I do.

Sandberg: How important do you feel advanced degrees are?

Houlik: They are licenses, and the problem is if you earn a bachelors degree and then you set out to travel the world finding people who inspire you or experiences that inspire you, you become a fine and passionate musician. That won't get you through the first part of the interview process. What we basically do is hire in our own image – our image is this academic paradigm. However, some of the most interesting people, some of the most likely to inspire young people have not followed that route at all. John Cage didn't have a doctorate. He was merely one of the brighter, interesting, philosophical guys. What he could do to a room full of kids was amazing. I guess the truth of it is, in the process of overestimating the process, we underestimate the fact that there are some people whose profile will get them to the goal, and some people who will know a great deal but will be missing that little bit.

Sandberg: How has having degrees in music education affected your career?

Houlik: It got me my first job, but it hasn't cost me any provocative thought whatsoever. These guys with their EdDs have diminished it to a process, once again to a formula, where in fact it is a way of life, a way of being. I think about teaching all the time. My education degree was of no particular use. It did not spark any thought at all.

Sandberg: Has having music education degrees hurt your career at all?

Houlik: I have never had anyone stop me at the edge of the stage to ask me about my degrees before I walk out to play a concerto. I do what it is I do.

Music and Composers

Sandberg: Who are some of the composers you particularly enjoyed working with?

Houlik: Morton Gould, tremendously. I never thought there would be a friendship there. I couldn't have imagined it, because the man was so busy. He would phone me out of the blue, and we would meet and have a wonderful time. Russell Peck would be another. He and I were tight and would travel to funny places. Bob Ward, here he is ninety-two and we call each other and chat. If I have a dead night in North Carolina, I stay at his place. He is a wonderful guy; he is the real deal. I have enjoyed many of the others. Eric Ewazen is a terrific guy. When I am in New York, we will often connect and go for a drink. It is that way – I don't have many enemies.

Sandberg: Tell me about Russell Peck's piece, *The Upward Stream*.

Houlik: When I arrived at the [North Carolina] School of the Arts, my dean had hired Russell Peck to teach in the theory area, and Russell was a really bright guy. He had been teaching at Eastman covering someone's sabbatical and [then] took this job. I wouldn't say that we became great friends, but we certainly communicated a lot. He came in my office one day and said, "You know, I wrote this saxophone quartet when I was at Michigan. Maybe you would like to do it." It was *Drastic Measures*, and he hadn't had many performances of it, so I took my top quartet and it turned out to be a fairly respectable piece of music.

I don't think he was there two full years, and he resigned one Christmas. He had been seduced by a guy of means who was concerned about the world in the bigger sense, and together they were going to solve the problems of hunger, shift technology, wealth, and agriculture, so that everyone would be taken care of. They were terribly excited. They were writing telegrams to the United Nations, the Kremlin, and the White House. The only difference is that Russell didn't have any money and this other fellow was okay. I admire the fact that he was willing to spend his time and money in pursuit of such a noble thing, but they couldn't get there. So at a certain point I called Russell and said, "Russell I know that you are away doing other things, but would you consider writing a piece for me?" He later told me that there was so little food in his house that even the mice had left. So he said yes, and I dropped the proposal [for the grant] in the mail and got the piece. They made the award, and the conductor in Winston-Salem was Peter Perret, and Peter agreed to do the world premieres. I began working on it, as it was above my ability. In the fall we did two premiere performances in town. They [the Winston-Salem Symphony Orchestra] had a woman who had come to the city from Las Vegas, and she was doing their public relations, and she had those big Hollywood-style spotlights out front along with the red carpet. We arrive in a white limo, and there was a group from the [North Carolina] School of the Arts screaming and shouting as we entered, which was caught by the television, which then meant the next night they did not have enough seats for the performance – so it was everything it should be. It was a delightful beginning. The piece was just successful, and I have played it all over the place.

That piece indeed has been a huge item for me. The truth of it is you can't see it coming. That saxophone quartet convinced me that he liked the saxophone. Russell thought that the tenor was probably the best wind concerto instrument, so he really wrote it with that in mind.

Sandberg: What other pieces, other than the Peck and Ward really stand out?

Houlik: The *Ewazen* I get good mileage out of. I would say with regret that Morton [Gould] wrote too complex a piece [*Diversions*] for the orchestra. Conductors look at it and shake their heads, because they are looking for a one-hour rehearsal, tops. I can remember being in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. I went into the rehearsal and we played it down. The conductor looked at me and said, "I have a premiere in the second half, would you mind if we leave it at this?" I said, "Well, I shouldn't have come."

Sandberg: How did the *Diversions* come about?

Houlik: I sometimes do not plan ahead as much as I should. I was trying to figure out who to commission a piece from, and my manager called and said, “How about Morton Gould?” I was not really interested. Then on the way to school this piece is on the public radio. In the end the announcer said, “You have just heard *Burchfield Gallery* by Morton Gould.” It was good music. So, I called my manager and said, “You are right. Maybe Morton is the thing.” I called Morton, and [he was] polite, always a gentleman, “But Mr. Houlik, I have a violin concerto in my head and a piano concerto in my head. I do not want to make room for a saxophone concerto.” I said, “Well, may I send you a sample of my playing?” and I sent him the Peck [*The Upward Stream*].

I have my horn on my shoulder and am on my way out to the country club to make some money, and I pick up the phone. “Mr. Houlik, Morton Gould. You are a great artist.” I said, “You’ll write it!” “No, I didn’t say I would write it, but it would be cruel to hear someone play as beautiful as you play and not at least tell them.” I said, “Well, Mr. Gould, what do I have to do to get you to ‘yes’?” He said, “How many performances will there be?” I said, “I will get back to you, and thank you for calling.”

My manager got us Phoenix, New Hampshire Festival Orchestra, and others that I can’t remember, but I think we got it up to six in three or four days. I called him and gave him the list, and he said, “You are tenacious, but then there is always the matter of the price.” I said, “Well, what are we talking about?” and he said, “Forty-thousand.” I said, “Great, we’ll do that.” Well, you know, money is easier than getting to “yes”! So, we started hustling and got to thirty, and Morton knew that. I then get a phone call, “Mr. Houlik, Morton Gould. I am in France and have just connected with a promoter who is doing a concert in New York, and I believe I have sold him the *Concerto* for ten thousand dollars.” The sponsor was Absolut Vodka. They did a thing in New York called “Absolut Concerto.” They had four concerti played in an evening, all premiers. So we got to forty. The thing that was interesting is that that friendship went on. That is part of the picture here isn’t it? That indeed these are pieces and that is important, but that the experiences are so rich. When you are in that kind of creative clutch with somebody, you just have a different experience.

Sandberg: From the list of compositions that were composed for you, there seems to be many from Gregory Kosteck and Sherwood Shaffer. Why?

Houlik: I ran head-on into Kosteck. He was composer-in-residence at East Carolina University when I got there. He has a doctorate from Michigan in composition. He studied with Ross Lee Finney and also studied in Holland. He was a product of that era of Michigan, which is complex chromaticism. It is very difficult to learn because it is just enough out of the range of expectation that you fall down and skin your knee. We established our own chamber music series. We played great stuff, plus Greg would write. He kept cranking pieces out because I kept playing them.

Sherwood Shaffer was a student at Juilliard. He is seventy-five now. He left New York and went to North Carolina to be a founding faculty member at the [North Carolina]

School of the Arts. He stayed there for the remainder of his career. He has a huge catalog, maybe 150 works. He has been performed widely.

Sandberg: Who then, is the composer you work with here at Duquesne, or is it more national and international?

Houlik: There is an Irani composer down at Pitt that I like quite a bit, and I would consider having him do something, especially with piano – I have neglected that for the big pieces. So, I would consider him. There is a big new music scene in this town that frankly doesn't interest me. Highly intellectual, pushing the envelope beyond that which I can sell to any other group but an avant[-garde] group. I am not interested in limiting myself that way. What I have done is a ridiculously limiting activity. I have dedicated myself to one saxophone voice that I think is the superior voice that has been neglected. I don't know if that is worth any attention or not, but it is what I have done. I would have liked to think that I have made some sort of a difference. I am trying to leave things a little better than I found them and that includes this instrument.

Sandberg: Tell me about your work with composers.

Houlik: I don't just commission pieces, I have relationships. The reason Sherwood [Shaffer] has written so many pieces is because, among other things, we were in the same building – but I kept coming up with ideas. Sometimes it is only one piece, but often it is several pieces. I work with them intentionally. I have had relationships where I call them and say, "I have this crazy idea." Either they buy or they don't. I think almost always composers stretch instruments, not performers. Performers do not go up and say, "Hey, I have discovered a new hard thing." The composers stretch us. My relationship with composers has made some of that happen. If we were talking twenty or thirty years ago, no one was doing what Ward asked me to do. To me that is part of what grows out of these things. I have always been in a cooperative mode with composers.

Projects

Sandberg: How did the James Houlik mouthpiece come about?

Houlik: When I got home after selecting instruments [at Couf], Herb [Couf] shipped me the saxophones he promised. I was maybe playing a Selmer metal [at the time], but it had a round chamber, which was a step in the right direction. Then, when I ordered a new [Selmer] mouthpiece, I found that they made the chamber smaller and lengthened the mouthpiece. It was much brighter and had too much presence. I opened the [Couf] saxophone case and looked, and there was this still-wrapped mouthpiece. So I took out this Couf [mouthpiece], and it played really well. I played that one and ordered some more; I kept on playing that and looking at it and trying to figure it out.

Then Dave Bilger called and wanted to know if I would like to do a deal with him. We worked on mouthpieces, and we eventually turned out a Houlik mouthpiece, and then he died. His widow wasn't really up to running the business, so I couldn't go forward with

her. I then went to Ralph Morgan, and I never really liked Morgans that much, but I thought that we would find ground. I told him what I wanted to charge for the mouthpiece, which is roughly what I am charging for the mouthpiece today, and no, it is not as much as I could make. He wrote me back telling me the prices on the Teal and all these other mouthpieces. “You see, you could charge much more.” I did not want to charge as much as he wanted, so I let him know that I decided to discontinue the project at this time.

I then went to the guys at the Babbitt Company. We looked at what I had done thus far, and we worked more on the interior. There is a little variation once we get near the inside of the tip, because there is a little handwork that has to happen. [The Houlik mouthpiece] is my answer to all the stupid mouthpieces that are being made. The square chamber? That is for all intents and purposes not a cone. Ideally, no matter what you read, if it is written by an intelligent person, it basically says that the mouthpiece is the continuation of the cone until it closes at its tip, so this is not rocket science for me by a long shot. However, one of the things that I have discovered, is that you need to have someone testing stuff who has a fairly fine sense and who is really motivated to understand what is really going on. I play every mouthpiece they ship me, and there are very few that I reject. I only have one facing at this time, and that is fine with me. If you don’t like it, I understand – it is just not that big a deal for me. I’ll take the profit if you want to buy it, and I’ll send the money back if you don’t; it is really okay. But a lot of people are buying and enjoying this mouthpiece.

Sandberg: You are also developing a saxophone?

Houlik: This is an epic story. Years ago a young doctor came to me in Winston-Salem and said that he wanted lessons, but he didn’t really have the money because he was an intern. I said, “I’ll teach you if you will spring me into the hospital.” I began to study the hand, just so I could understand the fundamental stuff. I write all of these exercises that could be in the worst of all situations a prescription for injury, and I didn’t want to do that. So I started going to the Friday hand meetings at the hospital with all these young surgeons in training. In time, my doctor friend asked if I would like a cadaver. It is really rather interesting. There is like a music stand built onto the table, so you can have your book there and follow along with what you are discovering. I worked on the hand and forearm and could see the whole thing and get a much better idea of the tolerances that we are working with. It is a magnificent mechanism. I did that to my satisfaction.

I was then out at my summer encampment [a men’s club in California]. We have these things that look like fire trucks with just seats down the back. Those are our buses, because it is a big hunk of property. So, I saw this guy waiting at the bus stop with his alto case in his hand, and I didn’t speak to him. Later that day I was at one of the camps talking about what I was doing with the hand and forearm and this guy says, “I’ve got to go get Bob Marcusson for you.” Back he comes with the guy from the bus stop, and here the guy turns out to be a hand surgeon and medical professor at the University of California, San Francisco. I got a grant, and we would go to the hospital, and I would watch him do his work. Then in the evenings we talked about me designing an

ergonomic [saxophone] keyboard. He didn't bring a lot to the table, but had some thoughts.

I have been designing an ergonomic keyboard for about the last three to four years. All six side-keys are adjustable with an Allen wrench. I have changed the upper stack and added a roller to the auxiliary F and a roller to the bis B-flat. I have changed the octave key so that it is universally accessible to any size hand. I have about thirteen alterations. I have chosen a classic finish – I am not going to have a thousand choices, and there are not going to be blue saxophones; it is all about class. Either you like it or you don't. The acoustics will be better, and the pitch will be better. Suppose I produce this instrument that will preclude injuries and will certainly do away with some of the difficult spots of the instrument. That is a nice legacy. I think this project, because I started with the science, really makes sense.

Sandberg: What are some of your upcoming musical projects?

Houlik: On a commercial level, right now I am putting together a tango show with symphony orchestra. I am buying the charts, and I am the tastemaker. I have an orchestra that has agreed to launch it with me, and we will do a recording of it. It will have high theater value with lots of variety. I continue to play that music because it is part of the saxophone's voice – like it or not! I just don't know how my saxophone colleagues can stay at it for thirty-five or forty years sitting in their room teaching Ferling Etudes.

Sandberg: How do you keep so many projects going?

Houlik: Part of the challenge for those of us who are working for a living is to have all of these projects in the air simultaneously. First of all, sometimes you feel like a fool. I have started any number of projects that haven't gone anywhere, but it is the life of a Chinese plate juggler – when one starts to wobble you go over and give it a little tweak. There are two things that I am grateful for, and they stand side-by-side – an inexplicable curiosity serviced by endless energy. That makes me a lucky guy.

Pedagogy

Sandberg: What are some of your teaching philosophies?

Houlik: I cannot endure mindlessness – to have a kid stand there and run these scales from top to bottom, passing the difficult spot once on the way up and once on the way down but never pausing to fix it. Probably my weakest spot is the Olympic-style technique development because I find it so incredibly boring and pointless. We somehow believe that repetition is our friend. It is only our friend when we are repeating the right stuff and repeating it with exactitude. We often repeat sloppily. I think for the saxophone, because it is a closed-hole instrument, we just slap our hands down on the thing. We don't only send information – we send and receive. I encourage that level of technical sophistication. I am interested in hand position. I don't let my kids shove their

fingers past the pearls and slap the life out of them. One of the things I have discovered in the last forty-plus years is that we have gone further and further toward slapping the life out of the keys. Maybe it is a product of the computer keyboard? There are a lot of crude approaches to the [saxophone] keyboard, which I find unacceptable, so, I have exercises that I have created that are about touch.

As I have gotten older I have realized that we do a lousy job of teaching breath management. It is all about air. You can't really do vibrato very well without fast air, and I distinguish between quantity and quality. I think of the air like an archery target, with the "bulls-eye" being fast air. We all know that to play softly is equally as challenging physically, and in some ways more so, so I do yogi breathing with my kids. We are about creating contrast. There is a lot of saxophone playing that doesn't do much with the contrasts. That is hugely important. I am amazed at how much unmusical playing there is going on with our instrument, in part because it is a forgiving instrument. It is pretty easy to blow a saxophone, and thus you can think a little less about the details. We don't seem to be burdened by the need to serve the music.

Sandberg: What kind of repertoire do you have your students play?

Houlik: Are we talking about repertoire in the educational framework, rather than the framework of making music, for actual people? Not people who are imprisoned in the recital hour? I try to assign music for my students based upon where they are in the moment. I need to know you. I tailor what they are playing to whatever corner they have gotten themselves in. I try to create as much opportunity and discomfort as possible, meanwhile really digging away at understanding the music and wanting more and more to serve it. The more you understand what is there the more you want to make it happen. I also ask my students to listen to different pieces of music, but never saxophone. We are not there yet. We are really in a musical ghetto, in my estimation. It is where I seek not to be as a performer.

Sandberg: What about exercises?

Houlik: I have written dozens of pages of exercises. Increasingly it has been about how to develop technique and how to intelligently break problems down so that we solve them and get on with the business of making music as quickly as possible. That is what practice should be.

Sandberg: What etude books do you like?

Houlik: For the kids good enough to get in [to the school] but not sophisticated, I use the Rossari [*53 Melodious Etudes*]. They are good. Ferling [*48 Famous Studies*] has always been the mainstay. The lyric stuff I like very much, and the other stuff is okay. For older students I use the Bach *Suites*. I don't want to think of them as etudes, but they have their own problems. I use the Karg-Elert [*25 Caprices*], which are wonderfully challenging and varied. I really want what I give them to be so relevant that they get it. I

can't stand the idea of a kid in a practice room dutifully doing what you asked while not understanding how it relates to them. So it is very hard to define what I do.

Sandberg: When should a teacher introduce altissimo to their students?

Houlik: The point at which the student can hold a long note and have an embouchure that is consistent. First of all, if we don't tell them it is difficult, they won't know it. You have probably seen what I do [in *The Complete Saxophonist*] in terms of sneaking up on it, where we just don't use the octave key, and it encourages the use of air, and it is painless. They are doing it, and they are not frightened. Part of the problem is that everyone tightens their embouchure, and then we are in deep trouble. I think that it is a gift that we have this instrument that has this wonderful overtone series. Composers need more range than the keyed range of the saxophone, so let's get it going. I am able, not willingly, but am able to take kids who come to me who have been taught to fear the altissimo and to bring it to them as a new study. Very quickly they are playing way beyond anything they could have imagined if the goal is range, but, more importantly, they are connecting with the instrument in a way that is so much more vital than before.

Sandberg: What do you feel is lacking in the education of saxophonists today?

Houlik: Back to the topic of selecting literature – proposing challenges that can hopefully insure that it is going to be a process of discovery and growth for the student. First of all, I see a lot of that not happening. There is not a tailor-made approach to this individual and his or her ghosts. Let's break it down. I think for many the whole digital thing [technique] is frankly everything, and it is done top to bottom, up and down, without an analytical approach in place. I recommend practicing fragments toward playing scales, not playing scales to develop technique, because it consistently leaves out the problem spots.

I know how the hand works – it is predictable. If you were a student, and I watched you play, first of all, I could say, “Would you play this exercise for me?” knowing full well that you would not be able to do it because I watched you play and I can feel the weakness that you are not tending to. It is a far more specific approach. There is not a lot of that kind of teaching going on, because we believe that we can somehow apply the solution, and it is always in larger hunks. We also do not use scales and exercises for the development of true rhythmic sense. There is a lot of bad time.

Sandberg: How about interpretation?

Houlik: That is an element that I think is missing or diminishing. We don't talk about interpretation to the extent that we should. In fact, it disappoints me that that's where we are.

Sandberg: What are the common mistakes saxophonists make?

Houlik: Here is where we drop the ball. If our students are studying in wind bands in the contexts of the public schools and the teacher is neither well enough informed nor strong enough of spirit to teach them how to breathe, we are already in the deep grass. We do not teach kids how to breathe. It is the greatest oversight in public school wind education. I have never had a student come to me who didn't need to be taught how to breathe. I know they knew how to breathe sufficient to sustain life, but not sufficient to play a wind instrument. That means that they play with a tight embouchure, in response to not enough air, so there is more long-pipe sharpness, extreme brightness above high A, and they can't play low notes.

Sandberg: Do people seek you out as a tenor saxophone teacher?

Houlik: No, not really. I think they see me as a saxophone teacher.

Sandberg: What do you look for in a potential student?

Houlik: To the extent that you can discern it, musicality. I don't have a very rigid expectation of what one plays in an audition, because I trust my ears, but I ask for something lyric and something technical. If their hands are betraying them and they want to be a performance major and they are truly not equipped, I bring it to their attention. It may not be what they want to hear. I am looking for a certain amount of expressiveness. Every now and then a kid comes along, and there it is. It is everything.

Sandberg: How do you teach your students to practice?

Houlik: That is probably one of the things that I do best. One of the great questions is how do we approach a new piece? I think that is where we really drop the ball. People play from the beginning to the end, again and again. I basically suggest that they play the first eight bars of the A section, and they try to figure out what it is about. They should be able to put names on it, adjectives. What kind of music is this? If a student plays a piece for a week and comes back and doesn't have an adjective, then they were not present at the practice, even if they practiced five hours a day. So I ask for some decision-making. On the emotional scale, is this happy music, sad music, or in the middle? Is this introspective music-making, or is this exuberant and "will-tell-the-world" type of a thing. Is it a dance or a song? It sounds simple, but frankly, if you haven't made some of those decisions, what have you got? What are the clues? What has the composer left me as some kind of information as to how I am going to begin to put this together? There is this essential analysis that has to take place. Why would you want to play twenty-four bars so you can get further lost in the woods?

Sandberg: How about in terms of motivation?

Houlik: If a student needs to be motivated too many times, then I suggest another major. I don't want to contend with that. Why would anyone come and spend this much money and bother to stand in a room with me? If they are music education majors then they are not interested enough to teach my grandchildren, so they have to go. If they are [music]

technology majors they are going to have to stand up and play a recital, and they are here, supposedly, because they love music. If they are performance majors, get out of here. I will ask students, because I feel this is my obligation. I will say, “This didn’t go so well today. Is this a time management issue?” If they answer “yes,” then I say, “Show me your schedule, and show me your to-do list.” If they can’t produce something like that, then I say, “You have to get it down on paper and realize that you can get it all done.” We owe young professionals as much attention in the area of time management as we can, because this is a tough business that way. I also work on the idea that they have to be practicing more wisely. That is why I am a little systematic on how they go after learning. You can stand around in the practice room and listen to your fingers dance around, and nothing happens, but if you are really purposeful you can get a lot done. I deal with practicing in terms of efficiency and productivity and then in terms of motivation, mostly because they feel daunted and defeated by the goal.

Sandberg: In *The Complete Saxophonist* are the pedagogical ideas yours?

Houlik: Yes.

Sandberg: It seems, in the book, that you advocate using the long C and C-sharp. Why?

Houlik: Open C is flat because its location is at the shortest spot on the tube. It is very hard to warm that up. If we are playing in an upward direction, and we go A, B, a flat C-sharp, and a sharp D, the juxtaposition is not very good. Given the time we can all prepare and try to minimize the disproportionate interval. Moreover, if you play closed C-sharp by itself, it is a beautiful note. The problem we have is that we do not like the way it compares to the rest of the instrument. I think it is probably in the book, but I ask my students to play up and down in half-steps returning to the closed C-sharp each time and allowing that to be the tonal goal. Let’s make the rest of the horn sound like that closed C-sharp, since it is really rather lovely on its own. We can deal with the sharpness. It is a color issue and a pitch issue. It is a good benchmark for saxophone tone.

Sandberg: Many saxophonists would consider that fingering a Rascher tendency.

Houlik: I don’t have labels, I have functional or not.

Sandberg: How about with venting the C-sharp?

Houlik: Does that really improve it, and how is that at 132 beats per minute? Beyond this question, I do not have any steadfast fingerings. I use whatever works. I think we have an obligation to make fingering choices that provide the greatest possibility of accessing our musical goal.

Sandberg: How did you pick the musical examples in *The Complete Saxophonist*?

Houlik: We wanted to get rid of a lot of the stuff that was commonly used. We wanted to be a little more international. The *gigues* are great articulation exercises. In some cases, there are examples that include a lot of thirds, which has to do with finger coordination, which leads to some of the exercises that we wrote. Some of the more lyric stuff was chosen to provide musicality and variety.

Sandberg: What is the target demographic?

Houlik: The target demographic is some guy who has a saxophone studio with thirty kids who wants access to a lot of topics that are not dealt with very well anywhere else. Though the Rascher *Exercises in Top Tones* make sense, this is a far more comprehensive, less painful, and less risky approach to the altissimo. I see it as a private studio resource.

Sandberg: Do you support anchor tonguing?

Houlik: For many people it is one of the ways to get clean, controlled tonguing and get the bulk of the tongue off of the reed. Part of it has to do with what are the dimensions of your particular tongue. I remember watching Leeson talk to me and try to do something about articulation, and he had a tongue about the size of my thumb where I have this delight. Honestly, I stumbled into it [anchor tonguing] – it was not a conscience effort. I was with Don Sinta, as we were running the World Saxophone Congress at that point, and he was doing a clinic in Washington, because it was an easy drive for me, I drove up and we had a meeting. He was doing his clinic and someone asked about articulation, and he said, “Well, actually I anchor-tongue.” When I discovered it in myself, I thought that I just would not tell anyone about this. I thought it was abhorrent and didn’t want to share it.

Sandberg: So you anchor-tongue as well?

Houlik: Absolutely. If there is too much flesh on the reed, what actually happens is that the moment of articulation is elongated. If people are put together in such a way that they cannot seem to get the first half-inch of their tongue off of the reed, anchor tonguing solves that instantly.

Sandberg: Do you double tongue?

Houlik: No. I have. I have practiced it. I tongue very fast and am almost never challenged to tongue faster, and there is a presence, power, and quality loss that I don’t want. Part of teaching is coming to grips that some do and some don’t. We are a package of strengths and weaknesses. But my articulation has always been fairly dazzling so I don’t bother with it, and I practice a little bit every day.

Advice

Sandberg: What advice do you have for other students who are looking at going into music?

Houlik: Don't. I ask them if they have gone to pharmacy camp over the summer. The only reason to go into music is if you absolutely need to go into music. A lot of people want to go into music, and in my estimation that means that they are somehow or other in love with the perception or celebrity of it. They certainly want to define themselves as compared to the rest of society, and they love the image of the artist. I tell kids that it is hard work and it is 24/7, especially if you are trying to get anything done. I enjoy being this occupied. Most people don't – most people actually demand weekends. I don't encourage anyone to do this, and I will in the same breath tell them that I wouldn't have it any other way. I am having a wonderful time. I believe in a profile – I believe that successful people identify with teachers that influenced them. There are very few introspective, depressed teachers who are grandly successful. They make better poets. So, when we talk profile, I think it becomes pretty quickly apparent who is going to go the distance. I spend much more of my time administering to those who are not going to go the distance in their chosen art just so we can find a niche for them somewhere. I don't think that it is fair for me to just stand here and administer my little pedagogical trick and then send them out in the street and wish them good luck. I don't want to find them on the other side of the counter saying, "Do you want fries with that burger?"

Sandberg: What advice can you give to future saxophonists?

Houlik: Repent! Turn back! Well, I think it is be creative. You asked what do I think about quartets. I think quartets are wonderful, but it seems to me that the only quartet that can be successful on the current scene would be one that has very creative programming and an entirely different approach. I think we also have to come to grips with the fact that if you read, for example, chamber music magazines, they are constantly talking about the teaching artist. Every concert is a teaching opportunity, in my estimation. That isn't necessarily the way it gets done. You see, we are overcoming our screwed up past. We don't get out of the box enough. It is possible that someone can have a [performing] career, but it is not likely. Let's look at it this way and take the orchestral world. All of the wind slots are promised to the principals of the orchestra. Since there is not a saxophone, there is at least some chance that we might be hired based on the overall popularity of the instrument. The recital world – what recital world? We are going around swapping spit. I'll play at your university if you play at mine. It brings us back to the profile. I have less opportunity here [at Duquesne] to have masterclasses than I did at the [North Carolina] School of the Arts. It was a conservatory; therefore, time was a little more malleable, but here I am locked into a university schedule. In those days I would hand out a new set of exercises that I had written. Very quickly it was clear. A couple of folks were really kicking it up, and I said, "Do you notice how much this is like a horse race? We come out of the gate together, and the guys who either have it or are working hard go running down the track, and we follow them around."

If music education were a real field, I would feel better about it. I know there are jobs there, but we are not creating passionate, empowered, teaching artists. We hardly care if they can play! I caused, in the last year, for everyone in music education to play a half-recital. In my studio they play a junior and senior recital and play the real deal. I have a dim view. Well, I have to – the other view isn't accurate; I think we are dealing with a huge amount of dishonesty. So my advice to saxophonists is that you have to find who you are, and a lot of them don't love it as much as they think they do. It is a lovely dream, but it is a dirty business. It seems to me that they need to also come to grips with "how much am I willing to pay for this?"

The saxophone is a beguiling instrument. I think if you really want to get better you have to set clear goals and you have to cultivate the true skill of self-analysis and loving self-criticism. Many people play and don't listen. It is how we get all of those sharp Ds and D-sharps. I listen to people of reputation, and – pitch, pitch, pitch. Is anyone listening? One of the things we do is we use a tuner and look at it and then let our eyes tell us what to do, but we have left our ears out of the mix. I have my students play interval exercises, big intervals. Unless they have a huge deficit, they can hear it. It is the process of analysis and correction that is missing for so many. It has to do with how we put our fingers on and off of the keyboard, including slapping the life out of the keyboard so that the sounds begin to be louder than the notes themselves, like someone in the room playing castanets. I love the idea of elegance of connection. That doesn't mean that one cannot play funky while connecting elegantly with the keyboard. Less damage will be done to the hand, and there is a better chance that melody will take place.

Sandberg: What advice would you give to saxophonists who are interested in starting to solo with large ensembles?

Houlik: I turned down the North Carolina Symphony when I was very young. I wasn't ready. In retrospect, I don't think I did myself any damage, but I gave up my first opportunity with an orchestra because I was not convinced it was something I should do. I wound through the band thing for the longest time, and I played a bunch that way, then I began getting dates. I really just did it one personality at a time, and my manager had nothing to do with any of it except high-end recitals and orchestral stuff. All the band stuff and commissions I invented. Recognizing opportunities is one of the ways. So the answer is: one, give it away; two, sell it as soon as you can but don't be in a hurry. It is more about getting up there because the rest of it takes care of itself. Above all, never depend on it as a living.

Sandberg: What advice would you give people who are interested in commissioning works or receiving grants?

Houlik: Very few of us have the horsepower to start with a big guy. I would think that we find a composer whose music we genuinely like, who is in a professional spot that is not significantly different from yours, and you have shared interest in the project. You can only get from a foundation what they intend to give. People go in trying to get a foundation to rethink their emphasis. In the morning, when those guys wake up, they

have to give that money away. But, a lot of this early career stuff has to do with developing partnerships with other people who are in similar professional circumstances. That is a large part of it. In some cases I have worked hand in glove with composers, and with others it was outside of their comfort zone.

Sandberg: What advice would you have for someone looking to release their first saxophone and piano CD?

Houlik: It is a tough one. These days there are no labels. You would be far better off to have a piano colleague who wants the same kind of experience that you do, so it is not a budget item, and who will also practice with you to the extent that it is necessary for saxophone music, which is considerably more difficult than a lot of other stuff. Then after that, it calls for a plan. What am I recording? Is this truly a vanity recording? Where do you get rid of it? How do you get rid of it? Why would someone buy it? It might help you get a promotion at your university because they cannot discern. What happened to me is my friend, Paul Brodie, who opened more doors for me for no particular reason, had [Golden] Crest call me and say, "We would like to have you make a recording." They paid my transportation and my pianist's transportation to New York. They put us up and they made the recording and produced it, and I never spent a penny. I would get royalties when they recouped their investment, which they, of course, never did. That was good fortune beyond any reasonable expectation.

Sandberg: What advice do you have for someone looking for their first academic job?

Houlik: I am watching the job openings on the College Music Society, and there is not one. So, get licensed to kill [degrees]. If you assume you play well enough to have any of these jobs, simply be ready. Make wise choices to show your relationship to the rest of the musical world in terms of musicianship that is accessible to people who do not play the saxophone and may not, frankly, love it. The interview is hugely important, since we teach with words. I think that is the two parts. To exhibit musicality that relates to the larger musical population and to be prepared to be personable.

Future

Sandberg: How many more years do you think you will be teaching?

Houlik: We have to be realistic about the time in which we are living. I probably, under any circumstances, would not run to retirement as an option. Why would you leave the world's best part-time job? I like what I do. I think I am youthful for my age, and I think it is because I am surrounded by kids. They keep me rolling and up with the times. I don't find much to admire about retirement – I think it is another American illusion. My personal take is that we don't look back and try to build our lives on what we have done earlier. A career is a series of projects, and the career is over when you just cannot think of another project, when you can't find the energy to implement one, or when you have simply lost interest. But the minute you stopped having at least a project and a twinkle of

several ideas ahead of you, then that's the deal. That's the way I live, and I think it is healthy. I don't have any problem with the thought of dying with projects on the burner.

Sandberg: What would you change?

Houlik: Information at the beginning. I would have had someone take me aside and say, "You know, I think you are holding the goods. Let's run with it." With different information, I think that I'm gifted enough that had I had a certain more disciplined preparation and the information and encouragement, I might have done something better for our instrument. But as it is I am having a wonderful time.

Sandberg: What goals do you have for the rest of your career?

Houlik: Let's see what comes along and interests me. I continue to be interested in being a better, more comprehensive teacher. I am terribly interested in neuroscience and its impact on the information that we now have on how we behave ourselves in the studio. I got lucky, and I'm giving a rather significant speech in Florida on music and neuroscience. It gives me a chance to try to find some continuity for all this information so that it flows and makes sense. I guess what I want to do is in categories. In terms of teaching, I want to do exactly what I am doing, which is just expanding my understanding of what makes students "tick." I don't just want to teach people to push buttons. In terms of my playing, I simply want to keep practicing and playing as well or better and taking on new projects. I continue to be interested in traveling but always with my saxophone.

Sandberg: What would you like your legacy to be?

Houlik: Suppose I have improved the keyboard of the instrument and four-and-a-half people have fewer injuries – that would be nice. I think legacy is probably, in our business, about students. I have touched a lot of people. If, after things have cooled and I have been gone awhile, ten percent of the music that has been written for me is of any importance, I will have probably done okay.

CHAPTER 3 WORKS WRITTEN FOR JAMES HOULIK

The following pieces were composed for James Houlik throughout his career. The first section includes more significant works, which have been annotated, and the second section completes the list of works that have been composed for Houlik to date. Both sections are sorted by instrumentation and include comments by Houlik on several of the pieces and citations of recordings. The third section is a list of works that have been erroneously listed as dedicated to James Houlik.

The comments on the pieces were obtained in an interview with Houlik on December 18, 2009. An asterisk (*) next to the title of a piece signifies that Houlik has yet to perform it. The difficulty levels were assigned by Houlik and are categorized as follows: 1 = easy, 2 = moderately easy, 3 = moderate, 4 = moderately difficult, 5 = difficult.

Selected Works and Annotations

Tenor Saxophone and Piano

Composer: Cunningham, Michael

Title: Trigon

Year: 1969

Publisher: MMB Music, Inc.

Difficulty: 5

Timing: 10:00 (I. Constant Driving Rhythm, 2:45; II. Quiet and Calm, 3:30; III. Quite Fast, 3:45)

Annotation:

Cunningham's *Trigon* is for tenor saxophone and piano. The first movement is intense and assertive, primarily in cut time with a great deal of interplay between the saxophone and piano, and it includes one altissimo G. The second movement is lyrical, with the challenge presented in controlling the dynamics and pitch. The third movement is technically challenging, in part because of the tempo (running sixteenth-notes at quarter-note = 152), and can be challenging to coordinate with the piano in sections. It includes occasional passages asking for "a very high note," pitch not specified.

Houlik's Comments:

Cunningham was a student of Bernerd Heiden, and Heiden was a student of Hindemith. When you look at the first movement there is this very Hindemith kind of thing – I call it the Hindemith shuffle. As you look at *Trigon*, especially the first movement, the lines are much like Coltrane. Sometimes I'll play a Coltrane lick before I play the piece in recital to make it clear to the audience that this might be a possibility. I met Cunningham through Kosteck, and he wrote that piece without us ever getting together. I have played it a lot.

Recordings:

Houlik, James. *James Houlik: A Tenor Saxophone Recital*. Golden Crest RE-7088, 1979. LP.

Houlik, James. *Tenor Tapestry*. Aerophon Recordings AERO 01-2, 2002. CD.

Walsh, Tom. *Shaking the Pumpkin*. RIAX RICA-2001, 1998. CD.

Composer: Duckworth, William

Title: A Ballad in Time & Space

Year: 1968

Publisher: Seesaw Music Corp.

Difficulty: 3

Timing: 2:55

Annotation:

Duckworth's *A Ballad in Time & Space* is meterless, notated in five-second increments. It is avant-garde, including keys clicks, key clicks with air sound, multiphonics, varied vibrato speed, and small quasi-improvised sections.

Houlik's Comments:

A Ballad in Time & Space is an intellectual game of time.

Recordings:

Hemke, Fred. *The American Saxophonist*. EnF Records 1203-2, 2006, 1971. CD.

Hemke, Fred. *Music for Tenor Saxophone*. Brewster Records BR 1204, 1972. LP.

Composer: Duckworth, William

Title: Pitt County Excursions

Year: 1972

Publisher: Seesaw Music Corp.

Difficulty: 3-4

Timing: 3:20 (1. March, 1:00; 2. Serenade, 1:15; 3. Air, :20; 4. Ragtime, :45)

Annotation:

Pitt County Excursions for tenor saxophone and piano is in four short, interesting movements. Both performers read from scores. The first movement features some changes in meter and syncopations but is not difficult in either part or in ensemble. The

last four measures include an optional 8va, which would then end on an altissimo G-sharp and A. In the second movement, *Serenade*, the piano has a light eighth-note line that is vamped while the saxophone plays expansive multiphonics out of time. The third movement is seven measures of contrasting dynamics and accents played by unaccompanied tenor saxophone. The fourth movement is in a modern ragtime feel.

Houlik's Comments:

Pitt County Excursions is almost a little tongue-in-cheek. When I moved to eastern North Carolina it was truly an armpit; however, in the years since, the East Carolina University and that little city have flourished. But he was sticking his tongue in his cheek as he was leaving – that he was leaving me in Pitt County, North Carolina. The piece uses multiphonics. It is a cute little thing, and I played it a lot.

Recordings:

Gee, Harry. *Live in Concert Vol. I*. Roncorp EMS-003, 1983. Cassette.

Houlik, James. *James Houlik, tenor saxophone; Paul Tardif, piano*. Golden Crest Records RE-7060, 1975. LP.

Mauk, Steven. *Tenor Excursions*. Open Loop 019, 1995. CD.

Composer: Hartley, Walter

Title: Poem

Year: 1967

Publisher: Theodore Presser Company

Difficulty: 3

Timing: 3:30

Annotation:

Walter Hartley's *Poem* is written in a single movement. It is moderately easy to coordinate the ensemble, and it alternates between lyrical and intense sections. In 3/4 time, the tempo marking is *Andante molto* and the challenge for the saxophonist lies in the control needed through the dynamic range. No altissimo is used.

Houlik's Comments:

Hartley's *Poem* is really pretty interesting. He did a good thing because he grabbed the subtle, gentle side of the saxophone and then juxtaposed it with those wonderful outbursts in the lower register, so it shows both sides of the instrument.

Recordings:

Hemke, Fred. *The American Saxophonist*. EnF Records 1203-2, 2006, 1971. CD.

Hemke, Fred. *Music for Tenor Saxophone*. Brewster Records BR 1204, 1972. LP.

Houlik, James. *James Houlik, tenor saxophone; Paul Tardif, piano*. Golden Crest Records RE-7060, 1975. LP.

Houlik, James. *Tenor Tapestry*. Aerophon Recordings AERO 01-2, 2002. CD.

Mauk, Steven. *Tenor Excursions*. Open Loop 019, 1995. CD.

Composer: Schmidt, William

Title: Sonata

Year: 1979

Publisher: Western International Music

Difficulty: 4

Timing: 16:30 (1. Lyrical, 5:12; 2. Improvisatorial, 5:24; 3. Rhythmic, 5:37)

Annotation:

Schmidt's *Sonata* features frequent meter changes and no *altissimo* throughout the three movements, which are fast-slow-fast. The first movement builds speed through rhythmic values, as the saxophone starts primarily with half and whole notes and near the end of the piece primarily plays running eighths. The second movement features passages of metrical structure and passages of free time. The third movement features more rhythmic diversity among the meter changes.

Houlik's Comments:

William Schmidt's *Sonata* represents a huge departure from his *Sonatina* – he had a style change. I have played the piece several times, though I don't feel as though it has the same appeal as the simple *Sonatina*. The *Sonata* provides great challenges, especially for a student tenor player.

Recordings:

Greenberg, Roger. *Art of the Tenor Saxophone: Music of William Schmidt*. Western International Music WIMCD131, 2001. CD.

Composer: Worley, John

Title: A Down East Sonata

Year: 1993

Publisher: Dorn Publications

Difficulty: 4

Timing: 17:30 (I. New Brunswick, 6:20; II. Prince Edward Island, 6:10; III. Nova Scotia, 5:00)

Annotation:

A Down East Sonata is published in its hand manuscript. Both the saxophone and piano parts feature straightforward rhythms, but the saxophone has several *altissimo* passages, and the piano generally features extensive movement between chords.

Houlik's Comments:

The Rockefellers put money into a transportation museum in Maine and bi-planes would fly around on the weekends. Worley wrote a piece that, in his mind, was about an airplane race.

Composer: Worley, John

Title: September Sonata

Year: 1985

Publisher: Dorn Publications

Difficulty: 4

Timing: 15:30 (I. *Moderato*, 4:30; II. *Adagio*, 4:00; III. *Scherzo*, 2:30; IV. *Allegro con brio*, 4:30)

Annotation:

September Sonata is a challenging work in four movements that is straightforward rhythmically but technically demanding. The first movement features regular use of altissimo and rapid technical passages. The second movement, an homage to Jerome Kern, is a very rubato *adagio* needing a “delicacy and warm tone throughout,” as the composer notes on the score. The third is a relatively traditional *scherzo* with no altissimo. The fourth features regular use of altissimo and is quick with the exception of a short slow passage approximately one-third of the way in, and the intensity builds greatly to the end. The piano part is also challenging.

Houlik’s Comments:

Worley’s *September Sonata* contains pretty generous hunks of *September Song* from the *Great American Songbook*.

Tenor Saxophone and Band

Composer: Follas, Ronald

Title: Ballade and Allegro

Year: 1985

Publisher: Dorn Publications

Difficulty: 4-5

Timing: ca. 9:00

Annotation:

The *Ballade and Allegro* is available for tenor saxophone and band or with piano reduction. The movements are played *attacca*, and the accompaniment is straightforward, making the parts relatively simple to coordinate. The challenges lie in the altissimo and technical passages in the saxophone part. Short cadenzas close both sections, and a more extended cadenza is present in the *Allegro*. The *Allegro* also features a slow, twelve-measure improvised section with chord changes and the piano part provided.

Houlik’s Comments:

I have played this piece dozens of times. Follas is a bassoonist, probably more so a contra-bassoonist, and he also loves the bass saxophone. *Ballade and Allegro* has lots of altissimo – it ends on a fourth-octave E-flat, quietly. It is a crowd-pleaser; it’s very songful in the beginning, which allows for me to do one of the things that I do well. The *Allegro* is kind-of a virtuoso thing with plenty of wonderful climaxes. High school bands can play it, and college bands can play it with ease. It is a good piece.

Composer: Hartley, Walter

Title: Concertino

Year: 1977-78

Publisher: Dorn Publications

Difficulty: 5

Timing: 9:00 (*Humoresque*, 3:00; *Reverie*, 3:45; *Toccata*, 2:05)

Annotation:

The *Concertino* for tenor saxophone and band is also available with piano reduction. It is in three movements, the first of which features occasional metric changes between 2/4 and 3/8, running sixteenth notes, syncopated rhythms, and occasional altissimo. The second movement, *Reverie*, is a simple lyric piece in 4/4 allowing for the utmost in expressive playing. The third movement is straightforward in rhythm but presents challenges with the fast tempo and sustained altissimo F at the end.

Houlik's Comments:

I called him and said, "Walter, I want a Walter Hartley encore to do in my band concerts." A *Humoresque* arrived. It starts on a low B-flat and just takes off – it is absolutely wonderful. There is not a moment of relief. I have played it at Carnegie Hall and lots of places. Then comes a phone call. "Jim, it snowed here, and I'm writing a slow movement as a companion piece." It arrived, then I get another call. "Jim, it snowed again, and it's a *Concertino* now." That is exactly how it happened. I believe I premiered the *Concertino* at Baylor.

Tenor Saxophone and Orchestra

Composer: Gould, Morton

Title: Diversions

Year: 1990

Publisher: Schirmer

Difficulty: 5

Timing: 25:00 (I. Recitatives and Preludes, 5:00; II. Serenades and Airs, 6:00; III. Rags and Waltzes, 3:30; IV. Ballads and Lovenotes, 4:40; V. Quicksteps and Trios (Finale), 5:40)

Annotation:

Morton Gould's *Diversions* is a very large and challenging work for tenor saxophone or bass clarinet and orchestra (piano reduction available). It is in five movements that are diverse in character, and throughout it features extensive meter changes, occasional use of slap tongue, and an absence of altissimo. The first movement has rapid tonguing passages and a cadenza very early in the piece. The rhythmic and metric difficulties present challenges to coordinate the ensemble.

Houlik's Comments:

The Morton Gould *Diversions* is in five movements. Morton was one of the brilliant orchestrators. He would call me and say, "Would you come to New York for lunch?" His office sat several floors up, directly across the street from Lincoln Center. We would sit, and they would bring a poached salmon – we would have this New York view and eat lunch, and then we would take the train out to Long Island where he lived and would play through sketches. Some of it was quite amazing. He would go to the bottom drawer of his desk and say, "You know, I wrote this. We are not going to use it, I think it is a little sappy, but I like it." At the bottom of the sheet, it would say, "San Francisco," the date, and 3 AM. He didn't need a piano to compose. He composed vertically not horizontally – he didn't write a solo line like Mozart, he was just able to produce score.

On my first visit to his home he brought a lovely antique, wooden music stand over near the piano, with candelabras on the side. I said, "Wow, what a music stand," and he said, "Benny [Goodman] left it to me in his will." So, you have to remember that he wrote music for Benny Goodman, and they were pals. There are licks that are Benny Goodman incarnate; he was using those kinds of lines.

In the last movement I am almost sure that we are in New Orleans. There is a tuba solo of some significance. The forth movement is really interesting, because I could picture it. It is a guy and a gal on a blanket in the sunlight at a picnic. The fellow is entreating her best favors and she is saying that "we have the rest of our lives, there is no hurry." I play ardently and then the violins demurely back away. There is something to be said about interpreting music. We can't assume that because it is a remarkable complex product that it is not coming from another human being who is driven by exactly the same emotions. If it is not being driven by the same emotions, I would like to pass it on to the next saxophonist to play it. The beginning is the lonely detective. It starts with the saxophone by itself in that kind of broad, smoky style. It is American beyond description. I think it is a wonderful piece.

Recordings:

Roberts, Timothy. *Vocalise*. Open Loop 035, 1997. CD.

Houlik, James. *American Saxophone*. Koch International Classics 3-7390-2 H1, 1996, 1987. CD.

Composer: Peck, Russell

Title: The Upward Stream

Year: 1985-86

Publisher: Pecktackular Music

Difficulty: 5

Timing: 19:30 (*Adagietto espressivo*, 4:30; *Allegro*, 8:30; *Allegro molto*, 6:30)

Annotation:

The Upward Stream, written for tenor saxophone and orchestra, is also available with piano reduction. It is a substantial and challenging piece needing a high level of technical facility as well as control of the altissimo register, including an optional altissimo F. It is in three movements, including a lengthy cadenza in movement II, and it builds in intensity through the bulk of the piece.

Houlik's Comments:

The Upward Stream is optimistic, virtuosic, and American. It is a crowd-pleaser deluxe. I have played it all over the world – I have played it where there isn't a word of English in the hall, and they nearly stood up and shouted. It is an almost guaranteed standing-ovation piece. Russell wrote it when he was destitute, and I got him a grant – in any rate it brought him back to music, and the piece was grandly successful. It was performed by the Winston-Salem Symphony. The first section of *The Upward Stream* is really quite somber. The remainder of it is spirited and haughtily American, with the exception of this Beethoven quote in the trumpet, though it is tongue-in-cheek. The piece is distinctly Peck. He had beautiful orchestration skills. It is right up there in my top-ten.

Recordings:

Houlik, James. *American Saxophone*. Koch International Classics 3-7390-2 H1, 1996, 1987. CD. Works by Gould, Peck, Ward.

Peck, Russell. *The Upward Stream*. Albany Records TROY 040, 1991, 1988. CD.

Composer: Ward, Robert

Title: Concerto

Year: 1983

Publisher: Galaxy Music Corp.

Difficulty: 5

Timing: 14:30 (Lento, 4:30; Allegro, 10:00)

Annotation:

The Concerto is available in three forms: the original version for tenor saxophone and orchestra, an arrangement for tenor saxophone and band, and tenor saxophone and piano reduction. It is in two movements (*Lento*, *Allegro*), and the ensemble is straightforward to coordinate. The largest challenge presented is the relatively frequent use of altissimo, and at times the speed of articulation required may present difficulties. The *Lento* is entirely in 4/4, and, after an introduction in cut time, the *Allegro* is primarily in 12/8 with occasional shifts to 4/4. Its melodic lines and rhythmic energy make the piece audience-friendly.

Houlik's Comments:

Ward used themes from music he wrote during World War II as he was a band leader in the Pacific. Most of the tunes he wrote were about men wondering about their girlfriends and wives. The opening theme is from one of these tunes. There is a bluesy style to it, as he fell prey to that side of the saxophone, but there are operatic moments to

be sure, as this is where he has had his greatest artistic success. I have played it extensively in both [band and orchestra] iterations. Ward chose Robert Leist to do the band arrangement of the *Concerto*.

Recordings:

Houlik, James. *American Saxophone*. Koch International Classics 3-7390-2 H1, 1996, 1987. CD. Works by Gould, Peck, Ward.

Roberts, Timothy. *Vocalise*. Open Loop 035, 1997. CD.

Ward, Robert. *Jubilation Overture; Symphony No. 4; Concerto for Saxophone and Orchestra; Sonic Structure*. Albany Records AR001, 1988, 1987. CD.

Ward, Robert. *Night Fantasy*. Citadel CTD 88103, 1994. CD.

Other Works

Tenor Saxophone Alone

Composer: Brandon, Seymour

Title: Micro Pieces

Year: 1973

Publisher: Manuscript Publications

Difficulty: 4

Houlik's Comments:

The *Micro Pieces* are very short, unaccompanied movements with altissimo.

Composer: Eisma, Will

Title: Non-Lecture II

Year: 1971

Publisher: Donemus

Difficulty: 3

Houlik's Comments:

Eisma is a Dutchman; for some reason this piece was commissioned for me by the Dutch government. I played the premiere at Bloomington while I was teaching for Rousseau during the summer. It is an intellectual but subtle contemporary piece with no multiphonics.

Tenor Saxophone and Piano

Composer: Arnaud, Leo

Title: Sambacita Brasileira

Year: 1983

Publisher: Unpublished

Difficulty: 3

Houlik's Comments:

Leo Arnaud was a student of Ravel who became an arranger/composer in the United States and made a virtual fortune in Hollywood. One day I brought him a recording, and he listened to it and said, "I like it very much – I'll write a piece for you." After about five days this little samba arrived. It is cute as it can be, and I program it between big pieces; I have played it a great deal. It is in one movement and is around three minutes in length.

Composer: Blyton, Carey

Title: Mock Joplin

Year: 1974

Publisher: Kendor Music

Difficulty: 2

Recordings:

Blyton, Carey. *Sherlock Holmes meets Dr. Who*. Upbeat URCD148, 1999. CD.

Composer: Blyton, Carey

Title: Saxe Blue

Year: 1972

Publisher: Unpublished

Difficulty: 2

Recordings:

Blyton, Carey. *Sherlock Holmes meets Dr. Who*. Upbeat URCD148, 1999. CD.

Composer: Cope, David

Title: Clone

Year: 1976

Publisher: Seesaw Music Corp.

Difficulty: 4

Houlik's Comments:

This is very avant-garde music.

Composer: Daravelis, George

Title: Sonate of Return

Year: 2003

Publisher: GDAR – Athens

Difficulty: 4

Houlik's Comments:

Daravelis is Greek and teaches in Athens. *Sonate of Return* is light, as in it is not a heavy-duty contemporary piece, and it is multiple movements. It is another piece that is dedicated to me, but the composer and I did not talk about it in advance.

Composer: Farina, Daniel

Title: Tralfamador

Year: 1972

Publisher: Unpublished

Difficulty: 3

Composer: Granger, Christian

Title: Sonata

Year: 1965

Publisher: Unpublished

Difficulty: 3

Houlik's Comments:

Granger was a student at Fredonia. I played it a lot in the early years and have students play it every now and then.

Composer: Harris, David

Title: Moments

Year: 1971

Publisher: Unpublished

Difficulty: 3

Composer: Henry, Otto

Title: The Cube

Year: 1974

Publisher: Unpublished

Composer: Henry, Otto

Title: Dark Visitors

Year: 1976

Publisher: Unpublished; Manuscript at East Carolina Joyner Library

Difficulty: 3

Composer: Kaptur, Terese

Title: Sylvan Aire

Year: 1990

Publisher: Unpublished

Difficulty: 1

Composer: Kosteck, Gregory

Title: Duo Concertante*

Year: 1969

Publisher: Unpublished

Difficulty: 5

Composer: Kosteck, Gregory

Title: Mini-Variations

Year: 1967

Publisher: Media Press

Difficulty: 3

Houlik's Comments:

The piano has accented moments, and the saxophone is winding through these semi-chromatic statements. Just when you think you are going in one direction, you are going another. I have played it dozens and dozens of times. It is probably three minutes.

Recordings:

Houlik, James. *James Houlik, tenor saxophone; Paul Tardif, piano*. Golden Crest Records RE-7060, 1975. LP.

Composer: Kosteck, Gregory

Title: Music for Tenor Saxophone and Piano

Year: 1979

Publisher: Unpublished

Difficulty: 5

Houlik's Comments:

It is in three movements, each in a vastly different style. I may have played it a half-dozen times.

Composer: Kosteck, Gregory

Title: Two Songs

Year: 1968

Publisher: Unpublished

Difficulty: 1

Composer: McGlohon, Loonis

Title: The Empty Chair

Year: 1981

Publisher: Unpublished

Difficulty: 2

Houlik's Comments:

McGlohon was a jazz player and even accompanied Sinatra on the road. This piece notes the passing of Stan Getz. It is an American ballad with a sense of loss woven into it.

Composer: Padova, Andrea

Title: Double Moon

Year: 2006

Publisher: Unpublished

Difficulty: 2

Composer: Padova, Andrea

Title: Kaddish

Year: 2006

Publisher: Unpublished

Difficulty: 2

Composer: Padova, Andrea

Title: Prelude

Year: 2006

Publisher: Unpublished

Difficulty: 2

Composer: Padova, Andrea

Title: Song Without a Voice

Year: 2006

Publisher: Unpublished

Difficulty: 2

Composer: Padova, Andrea

Title: Turning Point

Year: 2006

Publisher: Unpublished

Difficulty: 2

Composer: Perna, Dana

Title: Bagatelles

Year: 1979

Publisher: Unpublished

Difficulty: 3-4

Arranger: Rudkin, Ronald

Title: American Love Song Medley (arr.)

Year: ca. 1985-89

Publisher: Self-published

Difficulty: 2

Houlik's Comments:

I asked Rudkin to take three American love songs because it is what the saxophone does well. They are great arrangements that I have played repeatedly.

Composer: Shaffer, Sherwood

Title: Barcarolle

Year: 1990

Publisher: Unpublished

Difficulty: 4

Houlik's Comments:

The *Barcarolle* is the slow movement from the *Charades*. I asked Shaffer to write it because I pictured a *Bozza Aria* kind of piece. In *Charades* it is about a page of music or less, and this is about three to four pages. It has a change of meter and a change of style and then moves back to the original material. There is a cruelly-placed high A. I have played it a lot.

Composer: Shaffer, Sherwood

Title: Sicilienne

Year: 1991

Publisher: Dorn Publications

Difficulty: 2

Houlik's Comments:

It is dancing along in 6/8 – a one-size-fits-all *sicilienne* with a lovely melody.

Composer: Turner, Thomas

Title: Fantasy

Year: 1982

Publisher: Seesaw Music Corp.

Difficulty: 4

Houlik's Comments:

Fantasy is a wonderful piece with a hard saxophone part and a hard piano part. There are lots of cascading lines. It is tonal and has huge energy. I think it would be safe to call it neo-romantic.

Composer: Verhiel, Ton

Title: Movements Sentimentales*

Year: 2009

Publisher: Ton Verhiel Music Editions – Holland

Difficulty: 3

Houlik's Comments:

It is four movements and tonal. I haven't played it yet but will; I have only had it a matter of weeks.

Tenor Saxophone and Organ

Composer: Shaffer, Sherwood

Title: Jubilees

Year: 1996

Publisher: Unpublished

Difficulty: 5

Houlik's Comments:

In Italy I was introduced to a man who was running an organ festival. He asked if I had a piece with organ, and I said yes, which was a lie. I had this piece written and premiered it in that festival. It has a hugely challenging organ part and a challenging saxophone part that are not necessarily easy to put together. It is about fifteen minutes in length.

Tenor Saxophone and Band

Composer: Borwick, Douglas

Title: Coronation

Year: 1984

Publisher: Unpublished

Difficulty: 5

Houlik's Comments:

This piece has had one performance, which was with the Navy Band.

Composer: Brandon, Seymour

Title: Bachburg Concerto

Year: 1977

Publisher: Unpublished

Difficulty: 4

Houlik's Comments:

The *Bachburg Concerto* is a piece with band that I have played several times. It does include references to Bach but is not overbearing. It is through-composed and is around nine minutes.

Composer: Cunningham, Michael

Title: French Rhapsody

Year: 1985

Publisher: Seesaw Music Corp.

Difficulty: 5

Houlik's Comments:

Like most of Cunningham's music it is composed well. The saxophone part is plenty difficult, but it is not difficult to put together with the accompaniment.

Composer: de Gastyne, Serge

Title: Concerto*

Year: 1974

Publisher: Unpublished

Difficulty: 5

Composer: Duckworth, William

Title: Fragments

Year: 1967

Publisher: Seesaw Music Corp.

Difficulty: 3

Houlik's Comments:

This is the first band piece written for me. Bill Duckworth became a good friend of John Cage, and over time he became an ultra-contemporary guy. However, this piece is conventional. It is a charming piece in one movement and is about six or seven minutes.

Composer: Foley, Daniel

Title: Serenade*

Year: 1977

Publisher: Unpublished

Difficulty: 4

Houlik's Comments:

This piece has not been performed. I think it could be a good piece; it is a little athletic, but it looks a little more complex than it actually is.

Composer: Lane, Richard

Title: Suite

Year: 1970

Publisher: Boosey & Hawkes

Difficulty: 4

Composer: Leist, Robert

Title: Excursion

Year: 1991

Publisher: Unpublished

Difficulty: 4

Houlik's Comments:

Excursion is a lovely piece with some excitement to it. It is through-composed. It was originally titled *Excursion to Blacksburg* because it was for the Blacksburg High School band. It has lots of altissimo and rhythmic complexity – dramatic stuff and an exciting piece.

Composer: Ott, David

Title: Essay

Year: 1983

Publisher: MMB Music, Inc.

Difficulty: 5

Houlik's Comments:

David Ott is a fine composer, and *Essay* is just a good, virtuoso, saxophone piece. He is a guy capable of drama. I premiered it with the Navy Band.

Composer: Shaffer, Sherwood

Title: Rhapsody

Year: 1987

Publisher: Unpublished

Difficulty: 5

Houlik's Comments:

It is extremely difficult – lots of altissimo and lots of technique. I think we did it at Baylor, and I'm sure we did it with the Navy band. He writes a lot of music that just comes at you.

Composer: Stamp, Jack

Title: Jigsaw

Year: 1992

Publisher: Self-published

Difficulty: 4

Houlik's Comments:

It is a good band piece. It has lots of spirit, interesting rhythms, metric silliness, and altissimo. I played the premiere with a brief rehearsal.

Recordings:

Stamp, Jack. *Past the Equinox: Music of Jack Stamp*. Citadel CTD 88105, 1994, 1993. CD.

Composer: Trevarthan, Richard

Title: Coleman Paraphrase

Year: 1970

Publisher: Unpublished

Difficulty: 3-4

Houlik's Comments:

Coleman Paraphrase is a rewriting of the famous chorus from *Body and Soul* that Coleman Hawkins recorded. Hawkins was a fine, surviving musician, but that was a moment of brilliance. This band piece builds on that chorus and is about five or six minutes in length. I premiered it with a high school band.

Composer: Williams, J. Clifton

Title: Pandean Fable

Year: Unknown

Publisher: Unpublished

Difficulty: 4

Houlik's Comments:

Williams was one of the guys who really broke out after bands stopped playing transcriptions. He wrote a piece for bass flute and band, which had to be amplified. He was at East Carolina [University] and said, "I would like to rewrite a piece for you. That bass flute piece is never going to see the light of day again." He reworked it, and it is a charming piece. It has a wonderful lyric section, then the *allegro* section is Prokofiev-like.

Tenor Saxophone and Orchestra

Composer: Cope, David

Title: Concerto

Year: 1975

Publisher: Unpublished

Difficulty: 4

Houlik's Comments:

The *Concerto* requires an orange crate to be performed.

Composer: Cutler, David

Title: Maristella

Year: 2003

Publisher: Helius Press

Difficulty: 5

Houlik's Comments:

Cutler is on faculty here [at Duquesne University]. He is a young, bright composer and a fine pianist, both jazz and classical. He wrote this piece, and it has a Latin kind of background. It has a very hard piano part, which makes it more difficult and is a drawback. We did the premiere with an orchestra in Milan. I am asking him to consider reworking it for my Latin show because it would fit very nicely. It has a certain *Boléro*-like style to it that makes it interesting. It is through-composed, about five or six minute in length, and I have played it a number of times.

Composer: Ewazen, Eric

Title: Classical Concerto

Year: 1993

Publisher: Self-published

Difficulty: 5

Houlik's Comments:

The *Classical Concerto* is a wonderful piece of American music. I think it is outrageously American, except for the third movement where he slips into a Celtic kick. The second movement is absolutely beautiful – I adore playing it. There is a spot in that movement where I go from an F-sharp to G, and the sun comes out from behind the cloud – it is absolutely gorgeous. The *Classical Concerto* is one of the pieces that I am pleased to leave behind – I am happy to have my name on that piece.

Recordings:

Ewazen, Eric. *Orchestral Music and Concertos*. Albany Records TROY 477, 2002.
CD.

Composer: Harvey, Paul

Title: Concertino

Year: 1974

Publisher: Maurer

Difficulty: 5

Houlik's Comments:

Harvey studied with Ralph Vaughan Williams. He wrote a concertino for each of the saxophone voices and each uses the Ibert instrumentation. This is a wonderful piece with extensive altissimo.

Composer: Kaptur, Terese

Title: Dragon Song

Year: 1975

Publisher: Unpublished

Difficulty: 4

Instrumentation: Tenor Saxophone, Rapper, and Orchestra

Houlik's Comments:

This is a piece for children's concerts. The dragon is being discriminated against by all the other creatures of the forest.

Composer: Kaptur, Terese

Title: Dream Song

Year: Unknown

Publisher: Unpublished

Difficulty: 3

Instrumentation: Tenor Saxophone, Narrator, and Orchestra

Houlik's Comments:

Dream Song is the story of Adolph Sax getting his inspiration. I wrote the text, and Kaptur wrote the music.

Composer: Kosteck, Gregory

Title: Concerto for Tenor Saxophone and Orchestra*

Year: 1972

Publisher: Unpublished

Difficulty: 5

Composer: Lamb, Marvin

Title: Concerto for Tenor Saxophone and Orchestra*

Year: 1976

Publisher: The Fleischer Collection of the Free Library of Philadelphia

Difficulty: 5

Houlik's Comments:

Marvin Lamb wrote this piece for his doctoral dissertation at the University of Illinois.

Composer: Lamb, Marvin

Title: Sroufie the Saxophone

Year: 1988

Publisher: Unpublished, available from composer

Difficulty: 4

Instrumentation: Tenor Saxophone, Narrator, and Orchestra

Houlik's Comments:

Sroufie the Saxophone teaches lessons on discrimination. It even had slides of the other instruments. The conductor narrates.

Composer: Ott, David

Title: Concerto

Year: 1991

Publisher: Unpublished

Difficulty: 5

Houlik's Comments:

Concerto was premiered by the Canton Symphony in Ohio. It is really a wonderful piece. It is primarily tonal, and the outer movements are dramatic. In the middle movement the tenor saxophone and violin solo weave in and out, and the tenor is way up in the altissimo so it is challenging to achieve with delicacy. In the third movement there is a cadenza that I wrote. Ott thinks in a trombone sensibility, and his original cadenza didn't really seem idiomatic. He said, "If you want to you can rewrite it following my flow of energy, but writing it in saxophone." It is quite zany and fun. It occurs as if suddenly a troop of clowns arrived in the middle of an otherwise serious effort. I would adore to record it.

Composer: Padova, Andrea

Title: Double Concerto for Sax, Piano, and Orchestra*

Year: 2005

Publisher: Unpublished

Difficulty: 4-5

Instrumentation: Tenor Saxophone, Piano, and Orchestra

Composer: Rendleman, Richard

Title: Concertino

Year: 1991

Publisher: Albany

Difficulty: 4-5

Houlik's Comments:

Richard Rendleman is a professor of business at [the University of North Carolina at] Chapel Hill. He is a composition student of Robert Ward. I don't know if I have ever played it outside of North Carolina. In the piece there are lovely melodies. It is not complex but has pleasant orchestration.

Recordings:

The North Carolinians. Albany Records TROY 111, 1993. CD.

Composer: Rendleman, Richard

Title: Say Goodbye

Year: 1990

Publisher: Unpublished

Difficulty: 3

Houlik's Comments:

It is a gentle closer for the first half of my pop shows. It is just charming, sweet, and lovely.

Composer: Rudkin, Ronald

Title: Danza Volante

Year: 1989

Publisher: Self-published

Difficulty: 4

Houlik's Comments:

Rudkin is a former ECU student of mine. *Danza Volante* is a pop show piece with a Latin feel to it. It will probably reappear in my Latin show. It includes an improvised section.

Arranger: Rudkin, Ronald

Title: Ellington Rhapsody

Year: ca. 1983-84

Publisher: Self-published

Difficulty: 5

Houlik's Comments:

This arrangement includes three Ellington tunes. It is challenging to the winds. In one part of the arrangement he asks the violins to swing.

Composer: Saidaminova, Dilorom

Title: Concerto

Year: 2005

Publisher: Unpublished

Difficulty: 5

Houlik's Comments:

The Concerto is a busy, hard piece with extensive range. I played it at Carnegie Hall. There is also a band version.

Composer: Shaffer, Sherwood

Title: Concerto*

Year: 1987

Publisher: Unpublished

Difficulty: 5

Composer: Shaffer, Sherwood

Title: Stargaze

Year: 1991

Publisher: Unpublished

Difficulty: 5

Instrumentation: Tenor Saxophone/Narrator and Orchestra

Houlik's Comments:

Stargaze is for children's show, and I also narrate. It includes slides.

Composer: Shaffer, Sherwood

Title: Unicorn Music

Year: 1996

Publisher: Unpublished

Difficulty: 5

Houlik's Comments:

Unicorn Music has been performed and recorded [yet to be released]. It alternates between beautiful, lyric lines and incredibly technical parts. The bassoon and brass are prominent.

Composer: Sharafyan, Vache

Title: Concerto: for tenor saxophone & symphony orchestra

Year: 2003

Publisher: Unpublished

Difficulty: 5

Houlik's Comments:

Sharafyan is an Armenian composer who has written for Yo-Yo Ma. His music is mystical and is in no hurry to get anywhere. The audience liked it.

Composer: Smith, Gregg

Title: Farewell

Year: 1986

Publisher: Unpublished

Difficulty: 3

Houlik's Comments:

You know Smith's music, but you don't know you know his music – he writes for Disney and NPR. This is one of the goodbye pieces for my pops shows.

Tenor Saxophone and Mixed Ensemble

Composer: Brandon, Seymour

Title: Trio da Camera

Year: 1968

Publisher: Unpublished

Instrumentation: Oboe, Clarinet, Tenor Saxophone, and Piano

Houlik's Comments:

The *Trio da Camera* was written for James Houlik and Friends and was played up and down the East Coast. It is light in character.

Composer: Byers, Patrick

Title: Trio "Mariner"

Year: 1974

Publisher: Unpublished

Instrumentation: Clarinet, Tenor Saxophone, and Piano

Houlik's Comments:

This is an ornate and complex piece. It is tonal.

Composer: Harvey, Paul

Title: Trio

Year: 1981

Publisher: Dorn Publications

Instrumentation: Oboe, Clarinet, and Tenor Saxophone

Houlik's Comments:

The *Trio* was written for James Houlik and Friends but doesn't include piano.

Composer: Kosteck, Gregory

Title: Summer Music

Year: 1969

Publisher: Dorn Publications

Instrumentation: Oboe, Clarinet, and Tenor Saxophone

Houlik's Comments:

This piece was the beginning of James Houlik and Friends.

Composer: Lamb, Marvin

Title: Serenade for Unknown Friends

Year: 1974

Publisher: Dorn Publications

Instrumentation: Oboe, Clarinet, and Tenor Saxophone

Composer: Lane, Richard

Title: A Few Bits and Pieces

Year: 1973

Publisher: Unpublished

Instrumentation: Oboe, Clarinet, Tenor Saxophone, and Piano

Houlik's Comments:

A Few Bits and Pieces is exactly that – small and charming.

Composer: Petra, Fred

Title: Petite Suite

Year: 1984

Publisher: Unpublished

Instrumentation: Tenor Saxophone and Jazz Trio

Composer: Shaffer, Sherwood

Title: Charades

Year: 1985

Publisher: Unpublished

Instrumentation: Violin, Tenor Saxophone, and Piano

Houlik's Comments:

This is a game of charades between the three performers, with lots of complex exchanges of lines and interjections.

Composer: Shaffer, Sherwood

Title: Jack-In-The-Box*

Year: Unknown

Publisher: Unpublished

Instrumentation: Alto Saxophone, Tenor Saxophone, and Piano

Houlik's Comments:

Jack-In-The-Box was written for Drew Hays and me to perform. It will be on an upcoming recording. This piece is busy without the complexity.

Composer: Wilder, Alec

Title: Air

Year: 1981

Publisher: Dorn Publications

Instrumentation: Tenor Saxophone and Brass Quintet

Houlik's Comments:

Wilder wrote sophisticated tunes that jazzers still play. *Air* is lyrical, and I have played it a handful of times.

Erroneous Dedications

The following are works that Houlik states are incorrectly listed as dedications to him in Jean-Marie Londeix's book *A Comprehensive Guide to the Saxophone Repertoire 1844-2003*.

Composer: Di Pasquale, James

Title: Sonata

Year: 1967

Publisher: Southern Music Company

Instrumentation: Tenor Saxophone and Piano

Composer: Hartley, Walter

Title: Rhapsody

Year: 1979

Publisher: Dorn Publications

Instrumentation: Tenor Saxophone and String Quartet

Composer: Hartley, Walter

Title: Sonata

Year: 1974

Publisher: Dorn Publications

Instrumentation: Tenor Saxophone and Piano

Composer: Kosteck, Gregory

Title: Music: A Design for Dance

Year: 1980

Publisher: Rochester Music Publishers

Instrumentation: Tenor Saxophone and Piano

Composer: Peck, Russell

Title: Sonatina

Year: 1967

Publisher: Western International Music

Instrumentation: Tenor Saxophone and Piano

Composer: Stringfield, Lamar Edwin

Title: To a Star

Instrumentation: Tenor Saxophone and Piano

APPENDIX A
DISCOGRAPHY

- 1972 MENC biennial at Atlanta.* Silver Crest ME72-10, 1972. LP. Works by Benson, Dahl, Lane, Mailman, Mayuzumi, Persichetti.
- 1977 MENC-Southern Division.* Crest Records ATL-77-6, 1977. LP. Works by Bartok, Harvey, Revueltas, Weber.
- The Baylor University Wind Ensemble.* Mark Records TMEA95MCD-4, 1995. CD. Works by Grainger (ed. Fennell), Husa, Stamp, Turina (trans. Reed).
- Ewazen, Eric. *Orchestral Music and Concertos.* Albany Records TROY 477, 2002. CD. Works by Ewazen.
- Festival '70.* Century Records 38727, 1970. LP. Works by Cooper, Dello Joio, Ives, Kosteck, Orff, Persichetti, Rimsky-Korsakov, Stravinsky.
- Houlik, James. *American Saxophone.* Koch International Classics 3-7390-2 H1, 1996, 1987. CD. Works by Gould, Peck, Ward.
- _____. *James Houlik, tenor saxophone; Paul Tardif, piano.* Golden Crest Records RE-7060, 1975. LP. Works by Boni, Chopin, Debussy, Duckworth, Hartley, Kosteck, Schmidt.
- _____. *James Houlik: A Tenor Saxophone Recital.* Golden Crest RE-7088, 1979. LP. Works by Cunningham, Glick, Karlins, Kisza, Ozi (arr.), Schmitt, Wiedoeft.
- _____. *Tenor Tapestry.* Aerophon Recordings AERO 01-2, 2002. CD. Works by Boccherini, Demersseman, Bach, Schmitt, Glick, Hartley, Chopin, Cunningham, D'Rivera, Frackenpohl, Doerr, Wiedoeft.
- Lenoir Saxophone Ensemble. *Fascinatin' Rhythms.* Lenoir Saxophone Ensemble LSE-002, 2000. CD.
- The North Carolinians.* Albany Records TROY 111, 1993. CD. Works by Johnson, Rendleman, Ross, Ward.
- Peck, Russell. *The Upward Stream.* Albany Records TROY 040, 1991, 1988. CD. Works by Peck.

Stamp, Jack. *Past the Equinox: Music of Jack Stamp*. Citadel CTD 88105, 1994, 1993. CD. Works by Stamp.

Ward, Robert. *Jubilation Overture; Symphony No. 4; Concerto for Saxophone and Orchestra; Sonic Structure*. Albany Records AR001, 1988, 1987. CD. Works by Ward.

_____. *Night Fantasy*. Citadel CTD 88103, 1994. CD. Works by Ward.

APPENDIX B
CONCERT PROGRAMS AND PROMOTION

announcing the . . .

WORLD PREMIERES OF MORTON GOULD'S
"DIVERSIONS" **CONCERTO FOR TENOR SAXOPHONE**
AND ORCHESTRA

1990-91: American Symphony Orchestra at Avery Fisher Hall —
Lincoln Center

1991-92: Phoenix Symphony, Winston-Salem Symphony, Evansville
Philharmonic, Akron Symphony, New Hampshire Music Festival





JAMES HOULIK, SOLOIST
"spectacular" — *The New York Times*
"one of the world's great virtuosi" — *The Daily Mail • London*

MR. HOULIK IS AVAILABLE
TO PERFORM "DIVERSIONS"
WITH OTHER ORCHESTRAS
BEGINNING AUGUST 1992.

In the US:
Stanton Consulting & Mgmt.
45-05 Newtown Road
Astoria, New York 11103
718/956-6092

In Canada:
NovaTer Artists, Inc.
276 Carlaw Ave. - Suite 211
Toronto, Ontario M4M 3L1
416/463-0983

Figure B1. Flier, world premiere of Morton Gould's *Diversions*



**Avery Fisher Hall
Lincoln Center**

Home of
The New York Philharmonic

Wednesday Evening, November 28, 1990, at 7:30

ABSOLUT VODKA
in association with Ettore Stratta and Pat Philips
presents

ABSOLUT CONCERTO

A Celebration of New American Music

AMERICAN SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA
Catherine Comet, *Conductor*
Martin Bookspan, *Host*

ROUSE Concerto per Corde
(*World Premiere*)
Adagio-Doloroso
Allegro molto
Largo lamentoso

ZYMAN Concerto for Cello and Orchestra
(*World Premiere*)
Tranquillo e molto espressivo—Allegro molto
Lento ma poco rubato
Andante con fantasia—Allegro con spirito
CARLOS PRIETO, *Cello*

Intermission

ROREM The Schuyler Songs
(*New York Premiere*)
LUCY SHELTON, *Soprano*

GOULD "Diversions" for Tenor Saxophone
and Orchestra
(*World Premiere*)
I. Recitatives and Preludes
II. Serenades and Airs
III. Rags and Waltzes
IV. Ballads and Lovenotes
V. Quicksteps and Trios
JAMES HOULIK, *Saxophone*
MORTON GOULD, *Conductor*

Special Consultant: Jeffrey Kaufman

Figure B2. Program, world premiere of Morton Gould's *Diversions*

The Winston-Salem Symphony

Peter Perret, Music Director

Thirty-Ninth Season

1985-86

Sunday Afternoon, October 20, 1985 at 3:00 p.m.

Tuesday Evening, October 22, 1985 at 8:00 p.m.

STEVENS CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS

Joan Hanes Theatre

Peter Perret, *Conductor*

James Houlik, *Saxophone*

BRAHMS Academic Festival Overture, Op. 80

PECK The Upward Stream (World Premiere)

I. Adagietto espressivo; con brio

II. Allegro; Adagietto

III. Allegro molto marcato

Mr. Houlik

Intermission

STRAVINSKY Rite of Spring

First Part:

Adoration of the Earth

Second Part:

The Sacrifice

The Winston-Salem Symphony Guild cordially invites the audience to "Symphony Splash" - a reception at Mercantile Plaza immediately following the Symphony's performance to meet Mr. Perret, Mr. Houlik and members of the orchestra.

A performance of this concert will be broadcast over WFDD-FM, 88.5, Wake Forest University Radio on Piedmont Showcase, November 24 at 8:00 p.m.

The commissioning of *The Upward Stream* for premiere performance by the Winston-Salem Symphony has been made possible by a grant from the North Carolina Arts Council.

NATIONAL ENDOWMENT
FOR THE ARTS



1965-1985

Figure B3. Program, world premiere of Russell Peck's *The Upward Stream*

CARNEGIE HALL

1987 - 88 SEASON

Sunday Afternoon, October 4, 1987, at 3:00

THE ROBERT WARD CELEBRATION

Honoring the Composer on his Seventieth Birthday

The North Carolina Symphony
Gerhardt Zimmermann, *Music Director*

James Houlik, *Saxophone*
Victoria Livengood, *Mezzo-soprano*
Eugene Perry, *Baritone*

Symphony No. 4 (1958)

- I. Adagio—Allegro
- II. Grave
- III. Vivo

Concerto for Saxophone and Orchestra (1983)

- I. Lento
 - II. Allegro
- MR. HOULIK

Intermission

I Ride Along, and I'm Makin' A Play For You, from "The Lady From Colorado" (1964) (Bernard Stambler, *libretto*)

MISS LIVENGOOD and MR. PERRY
DR. WARD, *Conducting*

Oh, Cosmos With Your Myriad Stars, from "Minutes Till Midnight" (1982) (David Lang, *libretto*)

MR. PERRY
DR. WARD, *Conducting*

Act II, Scene I from "The Crucible" (1961) (Bernard Stambler, *libretto*)


MISS LIVENGOOD and MR. PERRY
DR. WARD, *Conducting*

Sonic Structure (1980)

The photographing or sound recording of any performance or the possession of any device for such photographing or sound recording inside this theater, without the written permission of the management, is prohibited by law. Offenders may be ejected and liable for damages and other lawful remedies.

Figure B4. Program, Robert Ward Seventieth Birthday Celebration Concert

JAMES
HOULIK
concert saxophonist
with Scott Schillin, pianist



"remarkable" - The New York Times

"CELEBRATING THE BIRTHDAY OF ADOLPHE SAX"

ALICE TULLY HALL - LINCOLN CENTER
Thursday Evening at 8:00 - November 6, 1980

Figure B5. Flier (front), James Houlik Alice Tully Hall recital

ALICE TULLY HALL – LINCOLN CENTER
THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 6 AT 8:00

JAMES HOULIK, Saxophonist Scott Schillin, Pianist

James Houlik has emerged as a leading performer on his instrument and a uniquely effective artist. He blends robust virtuosity, interpretive insight and expressive playing to bring forth electrifying performances. His audiences experience a special sense of involvement and communication – he is, at one time, profound and entertaining. His vital and lively performances have contributed significantly to the appreciation of the often misunderstood saxophone, as does his informative commentary in recital.

James Houlik has earned an international reputation as a result of his recital and solo engagements in the United States, Canada, Europe and Japan. His highly varied repertoire makes for stimulating programs which range from the baroque to ragtime and include more than fifty works composed especially for him.

James Houlik is an extraordinary performer who combines the appeal of a popular instrument with exciting artistry.

NEW YORK – *“Saxophone virtuosos are rarely discernible outside the pop and jazz fields. One exception is James Houlik . . . He is an accomplished technician on the tenor saxophone, and he made everything sound easy as well as mellifluous . . . He is a persuasive musician, who embraced 18th-century music and a variety of 20th-century styles with insight. He made an evening of solo saxophone music enjoyable.”* – **THE NEW YORK TIMES**

WASHINGTON – *“James Houlik displays virtuosity on saxophone in D.C. debut . . . A capacity audience was on hand, which should prove something about the public thirst for unusual programming . . . His playing bursts with easy virtuosity.”* – **THE STAR**

NEW YORK – *“Saxophone recitals like the one by James Houlik are not easy to come by, not even in this town . . . Houlik is a genuinely brilliant player . . . It was a fascinating recital.”* – **CUE MAGAZINE**

Scott Schillin began his piano studies in his home state of New Jersey. He attended Chatham Square Music School in New York City on a full scholarship for six years before his acceptance as a scholarship student to the Oberlin Conservatory of Music where he studied with Emil Danenberg. His graduate study took place at Indiana University under pianists Gyorgy Sebok and Menachem Pressler. Mr. Schillin has performed throughout the United States as soloist with orchestras, and in recital as soloist and collaborative pianist. He is Assistant Dean and Professor of Piano at the North Carolina School of the Arts.

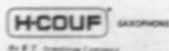
TICKETS: \$8.00, \$7.00, \$6.00

At Box Office, Or Call Centercharge (212) 874-6770

This event is made possible with the assistance of:

R. Philip Hanes, Jr. – Ampersand, Inc.
Mary Duke Biddle Foundation
North Carolina School of the Arts
W. T. Armstrong Company

New York Recital Management: Concerts, Advertising and Publicity, Inc.



Golden Crest Records

Figure B6. Flier (back), James Houlik Alice Tully Hall recital

THE UNITED STATES NAVY BAND
 Commander Joseph Phillips, USN, Leader
 Sixth International Saxophone Symposium

Tawes Auditorium
 University of Maryland
 January 28, 1983 8:15 P.M.

Musician First Class Chuck Yates, Narrator

COLOSSUS OF COLUMBIA March	Russell Alexander
AEGEAN FESTIVAL Overture	Andreas Makris Trans. Albert Bader
GOSSAMER RINGS* <i>Dr. Steven G. Mauk, Soprano Saxophone</i>	David Deason
THE GIRL WITH THE FLAXEN HAIR	Claude Debussy Trans. Anton Weiss
CONCERTO FOR ALTO SAXOPHONE AND CONCERT BAND <i>Mr. Fred Hemke, Alto Saxophone</i>	Karel Husa
GLORY OF THE YANKEE NAVY	John Philip Sousa
ESSAY FOR TENOR SAXOPHONE AND BAND* <i>Mr. James Houlik, Tenor Saxophone</i>	David Ott
MOLLY ON THE SHORE	Percy Grainger
FANTASIA* <i>Senior Chief Musician Dale Underwood, Alto Saxophone</i>	Claude Smith
FESTIVAL VARIATIONS	Claude Smith

*Premiere performance

Figure B7. Program, world premiere of David Ott's *Essay*

THE AMBASSADOR OF BELGIUM

THE SMITHSONIAN ASSOCIATES DEPARTMENT OF
PERFORMING ARTS

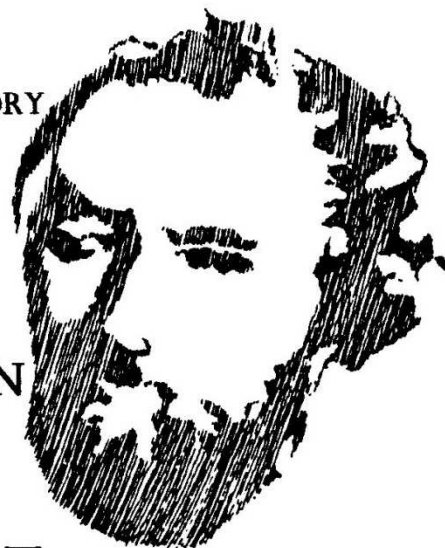
THE DIVISION OF MUSICAL HISTORY
NATIONAL MUSEUM OF AMERICAN HISTORY

present

JAMES HOULIK
KENNY G.
DAVID "FATHEAD" NEWMAN

in

THE ADOLPHE SAX CENTENNIAL CONCERT



BAIRD AUDITORIUM
THE NATIONAL MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY
10TH STREET AND CONSTITUTION AVENUE, N.W.
FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 4, 1994 AT 7:30 PM

The Saxophone, long a mainstay of American music, was the sole invention of the brilliant Belgian musician/instrument maker Adolphe Sax (1814-1894). In commemoration of the 100th anniversary of Sax's death, three of America's leading saxophonists will be presented in an evening of saxophone music celebrating the rich diversity of Sax's invention as it has flourished in America.

Additional support is being provided by:
THE SELMER COMPANY
YAMAHA CORPORATION OF AMERICA

Figure B8. Flier, The Adolphe Sax Centennial Concert

Western European Concert Traditions

James Houlik, with Bang-Won Han

Chant d'église		François-André Philidor (1726–1795)
Premiere Solo	<i>Andante et Bolero</i>	Jules Demersseman (1833–1866)
Song de Coppélius, Opus 30, No. 11		Florent Schmitt (1870–1958)
Suite Hebraïque (1968)	<i>Cantorial Chant Circle</i>	Srul Irving Glick (1934–)
Adagio and Rondo		Carl Maria von Weber (1786–1826)
Lied Zonder Woorden		Jan Decadt (1914–)
Two Pieces (1968)	Poem Scherzino	Walter S. Hartley (1927–)
Sambacita Brasileira (1983)		Leo Arnaud (1904–)
Saxema		Rudy Wiedoeft (1893–1940)

The American Influence

David “Fathead” Newman, with Ruben Brown

The Contemporary Sound

Kenny G, with Robert Damper

Piano courtesy of the Yamaha Corporation of America.

THE ARTISTS

Curator of American Music in the Smithsonian's Division of Musical History and this evening's master of ceremonies, **Anthony Brown** is a percussionist, composer, and scholar. He maintains an active schedule as the leader of several ensembles and director of the Smithsonian's Jazz Oral History Program, while completing a book on the history of jazz drumming. He has performed and recorded around the world with Max Roach, David Murray, Anthony Davis, Sir Roland Hanna, James Newton, and the San Francisco Symphony. His original works have been commissioned, choreographed, and performed in Berlin, New York, and his hometown, San Francisco. Anthony Brown is a musical consultant for the National Endowment for the Arts and a Ford Foundation Doctoral Fellow at the University of California, Berkeley.

Figure B9. Program, The Adolphe Sax Centennial Concert (February 4, 1994; The National Museum of American History, Washington, D.C.)

SCHOOL OF MUSIC
COLLEGE OF THE ARTS

GUEST ARTIST RECITAL

JAMES HOULIK, TENOR SAXOPHONE & BANG-WON HAN, PIANO
ASSISTED BY **LAWRENCE GWOZDZ, ALTO SAXOPHONE**

Marsh Auditorium
Monday, October 23, 1995 at 8:30 p.m.

Adagio	Luigi Boccherini (1743-1805)
Sonata in G Minor, BWV 1020 Allegro Adagio Allegro	Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)
Songe de Coppelius	Florent Schmitt (1870-1958)
Suite Hebraique (1968) Chasidic Dance Hora Cantorial Chant Circle Dance	Srl Irving Glick (b. 1934)
Two Pieces Poem (1967) Scherzino (1986)	Walter S. Hartley (b. 1927)

INTERMISSION

Adagio and Rondo	Carl Maria von Weber (1786-1826)
Miniature - Andante con passione (1968)	Alojzy Thomys (b. 1929)
Trigon, Opus 31 (1969) Constant Driving Rhythm Quiet and Calm Quite Fast	Michael Cunningham (b. 1937)
Dialogue for Alto and Tenor Saxophones (1987) Slowly with Freedom Playfully	Fisher Tull (1934-1994)
<i>Lawrence Gwozdz and James Houlik</i>	
Sambacita Brasileira (1984)	Leo Arnaud
Valse Hilda (1922)	Clyde Doerr
Saxema (1921)	Rudy Wiedoeft (1893-1940)

THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN MISSISSIPPI

Figure B10. Program, James Houlik recital at the University of Southern Mississippi

PROGRAM

ANDANTE AND RONDO	HAYDN MILLARS (19th c.)
SUITE HEBRAIQUE (1965) Chasidic Dance Hora Cantorial Chant Circle Dance	SRUL IRVING GLICK
THREE AMERICAN SONGS OF LOVE A Time for Love - Johnny Mandel When I Fall in Love - Victor Young My One and Only Love - Robert Mellin	RONALD RUDKIN, ARRANGER
CHARADES (1985) For violin, tenor saxophone and piano WORLD PREMIERE	SHERWOOD SHAFFER
* * INTERMISSION * *	
ADAGIO AND RONDO	CARL MARIA VON WEBER (1786-1826)
SONATA (1982) I. Fast II. Slowly III. Fast	AURTHUR FRACKENPOHL
TROUBADOR' SONG, OPUS 71	ALEXANDRE GLAZUNOV (1865-1936)
SAMBACITA BRAZILEIRA (1984)	LEO ARNAUD
FROM THE GOLDEN AGE OF THE SAXOPHONE..... Valse Hilda (1922) Saxema (1922)	Clyde Doerr Rudy Wiedoeft

This Project is supported by the South Carolina Arts Commission and
the National Endowment for the Arts.

Figure B11. Program, Sarah Johnson & Friends concert (November 19, 1985; Dock Street Theatre, Charleston, South Carolina)

PROGRAM

SHASTA SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA * 40th Concert Season * 1989-90

- | | | |
|------|---|--|
| I. | Selections from "My Fair Lady"
Arranged by Robert Russell Bennett | Friedrich Lowe
(1904-1988) |
| II. | Two by Richard Rodgers (1902-1979)
1. We Kiss in A Shadow
2. You Are Beautiful | Arranged by Jim Golden |
| III. | Cascade Suite
Orchestrated by Jim Golden
1. Lakes and Meadows
2. Lava Flow
3. Forest | John Farruggia

4. Hat Creek
5. Lassen
6. Shasta |
| IV. | Jerome Kern Medley (1885-1945)
1. All The Things You Are
2. Can't Help Lovin' That Man
3. Pick Yourself Up | Arranged by Roger Hogan |

INTERMISSION

JAMES HOULIK, tenor saxophone

- | | | |
|-------|--|-----------------------------------|
| V. | Troubador's Song | Alexander Glazunov
(1865-1936) |
| VI. | Night in Tunisia | Dizzy Gillespie
(1917 -) |
| VII. | Theme from "Summer of '42" | Michel Legrand |
| VIII. | Ragtime: Velma | Leon Rosebrook |
| IX. | Ragtime: Kathryne (Waltz) | Jascha Gurewicz |
| X. | Concerto for Tenor Saxophone and Orchestra
1. Lento
2. Allegro | Robert Ward
(1917 -) |
| XI. | Saxema: A Ragtime Showpiece | Rudy Weidoeft |

PLEASE NOTE: To preserve the dignity of our performance, cameras and all recording devices are prohibited in the Theatre. Please silence all digital watches before the performance begins in consideration of your fellow audience members' enjoyment of the concert. Thank you for your cooperation!

Figure B12. Program, Shasta Symphony Orchestra Pops Concert (October 22, 1989; Shasta College Theatre, Redding, California)

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