When students begin an arrangement for big band, their first concern is usually big voicings. Students will sit and search for the ultimate chord for each individual note of a piece. The flaw in this conception is that instead of thinking horizontally, they are thinking vertically. The music will eventually be heard horizontally. One student, after hearing his arrangement played, and asked why it seemed so heavy and sluggish. The sluggishness was not because of a tempo beyond the reach of the band. The sluggishness was a result of too much emphasis on voicing and not enough on linear development. Each melody note of the piece was thickly voiced from the top to the bottom. On the bottom of each voicing was a bass trombone, a baritone saxophone and the bass playing roots. It is no wonder that the piece felt sluggish carrying all that weight. This section will discuss big band voicings for the individual sections and combinations of sections, with a warning to remember that melodic lines propel the piece, not voicings. One of the best voicings for any section is unison. Listen to eighteen first violins playing a melody in unison, or five saxes, or two trumpets and two alto saxophones, or a guitar, alto saxophone and flute playing in three octaves and decide if voicings are needed at all.

**SAX SOLI VOICINGS**

A common device for a saxophone section is to have them play a harmonized soli. Voice leading principles are not always relevant in this case. All the voices should move parallel in order to focus on the melodic contour. Identify the chord tones of the line first, then deal with the non-harmonic tones. Voicing is done from the top down from the melody note.

**FIVE PART BLOCK**

Five note block voicings are usually conceived within an octave finding chord tones from the top melodic note down. The top voice is usually doubled in the bottom voice an octave lower. These chords are agile and can move swiftly and lightly with saxophone sections. The five note block may be opened up using “drop 2” voicings where the second voice from the top is transposed down and octave. “Drop 2” voicings are usually chosen for range considerations when a line may get too high for the baritone saxophone to blend well. The melody note will still be doubled by the tenor 2 instead of the baritone.

11.36 shows a Gm7 chord with a B♭ melodic note. The chord tones for a Gm7 are G, B♭, D, and F. The ninth, A, would not be a good choice in this case as it may distract from the B♭ melody note. Begin with the melody note and find the next chord tones below. In m.2, a close position chord is shown where the alto 1 will play the B♭, the alto 2 the G, tenor 1 the F, tenor 2 the D and the B♭ melody note will be doubled an octave lower by the baritone. A “drop 2” voicing is shown where the tenor 2 has the melodic doubling at the octave. These block voicings are common in traditional arrangements.

A voicing that incorporates extra color tones is shown in m.3 of Ex. 11.36. Instead of just the Gm7 chord tones, a C has been added for color. The chord is comprised of the G minor pentatonic scale. It is shown in close and open positions. This type of voicing may produce a more modern sound and was often used by Thad Jones and others. These colorful voicings work beautifully, but they can detract from the melody for two reasons: the extra note eliminates the melodic doubling at the octave and the extra color tones may struggle with the melody for attention.

11.36 Saxophone voicings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Traditional</th>
<th>With extra color note</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Close</td>
<td>Close</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open</td>
<td>Open</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Gm7 | Gm7 | Gm7 | Gm7 | Gm7 |

ARRANGING VOICINGS in BRIEF
The Fmaj7 chord in ex. 11.37 is shown with C in the melody. The chord tones of a Fmaj7 are F, A, C, E and possibly G as the ninth. Close and open position voicings are shown in m.2 using just the 1-3-5-7 of the Fmaj7 chord. The root is usually covered by the bass, so it may be redundant in the saxophone section. Not having to use the root allows for a more colorful voicing to be used utilizing the upper 3-5-7-9 structure of the chord. The root can be replaced by the ninth (G). The ninth in no way conflicts with the melody note, and in fact may provide enhanced support at the interval of a fifth. Close and open position voicings without the root are shown in m.3.

The melody is not doubled at the octave in m.4, instead opting for the extra color tone D. The voicing includes all the pitches of a C major pentatonic scale used as a voicing over the Fmaj7. This is a more colorful chord, but comes with the same warning as the one shown in ex. 11.36: it does not have the doubled melody and the color tones may compete with the melody for attention.

Here are a number of different voicings for the Gm7 and Fmaj7 chord tones. The chords marked with an ‘*’ have no root in the chord using only the upper structure. The ninth was not used in the voicing if the melody note was the root or the third as the ninth may detract from the melodic clarity.

There are more voicings available for a dominant chord due to the numerous combinations of alterations and substitutions for the ninths and fifths of a dominant chord. Ex. 11.40 is not exhaustive, but lists several possible voicings for C dominant seventh chords. The voicings are shown in close position. Dropping the second voice from the top would create open position voicings.

---

2—ARRANGING VOICINGS in BRIEF
11.40 Saxophone section voicings for C7 chord tones

C9  C7#9  C7b13

NON HARMONIC TONES

Identify the chord tones to begin harmonizing a melody. Determine the best voicing for the chord tones before attempting to harmonize the non-harmonic tones. Non-harmonic tones may be harmonized in three ways: diatonic parallel motion, chromatic parallel motion, or tonicization by inserting a dominant or leading tone chord or a string of dominant chords before the resolution to a chord tone.

DIATONIC PARALLEL

The C is not a chord member of the Gm7 but occurs between the two chord tones B♭ and D. The first and third chords in ex. 11.41 are voiced as Gm7 or Gm9, the chord in between moves parallel using diatonic tones. The second chord is an Am7, but is heard on the weaker beat between two Gm7 chords and does nothing to confuse the harmonic passage. The chords are shown in close and open positions.

11.41 Diatonic parallel passing chords

Gm7  X  Gm7

The B♭ is not a chord tone of Fmaj7 but occurs between the chord tones A and F. The chords in ex. 11.42 move parallel using diatonic tones. The passing chord is a Gm7 between two Fmaj7 voicings. The chords are shown in close and open positions.

11.42 Diatonic parallel passing chords

Fmaj7  X  Fmaj7
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**CHROMATIC PARALLEL**

The notes marked with an “x” are not chord tones, but chromatically lead to chord tones of Gm7. Determine the type of voicing desired for the Gm7 chord tones and approach each voice of the chord from a half step below. Every Gm7 chord is preceded by an F#m7 chord. The chords are shown in traditional close position voicings and open position voicings with an added tone.

11.43 Parallel chromatic chords

```
Gm7  Gm7  Gm7
X     X     X
```

The line in ex. 11.44 is a sequence of ex. 11.43 for Fmaj7. Voicings should be first determined for the Fmaj9 chords and approached chromatically. Every Fmaj9 chord is preceded by an Emaj9 chord. The chords are shown in traditional close position voicings and open position voicings with an added tone.

11.44 Parallel chromatic chords

```
Fmaj7  Fmaj7  F
X     X     X
```

**DOMINANT or LEADING TONE**

Non-harmonic tones often belong to the dominant of the primary chord. In ex. 11.45, all of the non-harmonic tones could belong to a D7b9 (V7 of Gm), or a F#7 (Vii7 of Gm). Pitches marked with “↓” are chord tones of Gm7 and anticipate the downbeats of one and three. All other voicings use the 3-5-7-9 of the D7b9, or the 1-3-5-7 of the F#7: F# - A - C - Eb. The Gm7 voicing on the upbeat of beat four includes the root. The ninth might have been a more colorful choice, but the alto 2 would repeat the A. Having the alto move to the G retains the contour of the line which is more important than individual chords.

11.45 Functional dominant & leading tone chords

```
Gm7  Gm7
```

4—ARRANGING VOICINGS in BRIEF
In ex. 11.46 all of the non-harmonic tones are chord tones of a C⁷b⁹ (V7 of F minor), or a E⁷ (vii°7 of F minor). The F chord tones marked “↓” are preceded by E°7 chords.

11.46 Functional dominant & leading tone chords

Functional diminished chords may have tones added that are usually a whole step above one of the chord tones. These tones are derived from a symmetrical diminished and not the harmonic minor scale. Ex. 11.47 uses several diminished chords to voice non-harmonic tones. The passing tone between B♭ and G is voiced as an F♯⁷ without added tones. The F is voiced as a B°7 with an added D♭ and moves chromatically down to a C7b⁹. All of the melody notes spell out the E⁷ chord and are voiced with extra notes a whole step above one of the chord tones. The extra notes include a C, B♭, F♯, and A.

11.47 Diminished chords with added tones

Not all lines need to or should be voiced. Some lines are stronger in unison or octaves. A line may move from unison or octaves to being voiced at the top or ends of phrases.

11.48 Unison lines ending with harmony

Some lines lend themselves for the treatment illustrated in ex. 11.49. The line begins in unison, splits in contrary motion. The top line rises while the lower line descends creating an expanding wedge which produces a sense of growth to the passage. The widest spread between the outer voices occurs at the climax of the line.
11.49 Unison lines spread in contrary motion to voicings at high point

Many non-harmonic tones lend themselves to several harmonization choices. The melody note at (a.) in ex. 11.50 could be voiced using a functional \( F_\#^7 \) or a parallel chromatic \( F_\#m7 \) chord. The F (b.) is a chord tone of Gm7 or the secondary dominant G7 and its tritone substitute D. In the first setting, an \( F_\#^7 \) is used at (a.) and a Gm7 at (b.). The second setting uses the chromatic \( F_\#m7 \) at point (a.). At (b.) a \( D_7 \) chord is used which is both a chromatic parallel voicing and a functional tritone substitute dominant.

11.50 Functional \( F_\#^7 \) Parallel chromatic \( F_\#m7 \)

MELODIC LINE SHOWN with OPTIONS

Since there many harmonization possibilities, it would be useful to examine a number of options for a common line.

11.51a Basic line

This melody could be harmonized with four voice blocked with the melody doubled at the octave or five voices with added color tones in the style of Thad Jones. The three non-harmonic tones (a., b., and c.) could be treated in the following methods:

a. (1) Parallel chromatic: \( F_\#m7 \) moving up to Gm7.  
   (2) Functional dominant or leading tone: Gm7 preceded by a \( D_\#9 \) or \( F_\#^7 \).

b. (1) Parallel chromatic: B7 moving up to C7.  
   (2) Secondary dominant: G7 or tritone substitute dominant, \( D_\#7 \), resolving to C.

c. (1) Parallel chromatic: \( Gmaj7 \) moving down to Fmaj7.  
   (2) Secondary dominant: C7 or tritone substitute dominant \( G_7 \), resolving to Fmaj7.

11.51b illustrates all parallel motion using “drop 2” four part voicings with the melody doubled an octave lower by the tenor 2. Non-harmonic tone treatment: (a.) parallel chromatic motion: \( F_\#m7 \) up to Gm7; (b.) parallel chromatic motion:
B7 up to C7; and (c.) parallel chromatic motion: Gmaj7 down to Fmaj7. 11.51c illustrates all dominant functions using “drop 2” four part voicings with the melody doubled an octave lower by the tenor 2. Non-harmonic tone treatment: (a.) functional vii°7/ii: F#7 to Gm7; (b.) secondary dominant: D9 as a tritone substitute for G7 resolving to C13; and (c.) secondary dominant: G9 as a tritone substitute dominant for C7 resolving to Fmaj9.

11.51b “Drop 2” four voice using parallel chromatic motion

11.51c “Drop 2” four voice using 7 dominant substitutes

There is a slight difference between ex. 11.51b and 11.51d. Ex. 11.51b uses four distinct voices with the melody doubled at the octave; e. 11.51d uses five distinct voices. Non-harmonic tone treatment: (a.) parallel chromatic motion: Fm7 up to Gm7; (b.) parallel chromatic motion: B7 up to C7; and (c.) parallel chromatic motion: Gmaj7 down to Fmaj7. 11.51e harmonizes the passage using the same principles as shown in ex. 11.51c but eliminates the melodic doubling in favor of a fifth voice. Non-harmonic tone treatment: (a.) functional vii°7/ii: F#7 to Gm7, (b.) secondary dominant: D9 as a tritone substitute for G7 resolving to C13; and (c.) secondary dominant: G9 as a tritone substitute dominant for C7 resolving to Fmaj9.

11.51d “Drop 2” four voice using parallel chromatic motion

11.51e “Drop 2” five voice using 7 dominant substitutes

In the search for the best setting for a line, do not rule out simplicity for the sake of dense harmony. The setting in ex. 11.51f is quite useful. The melody is set as a single line over four voices providing a harmonic foundation.

11.51f Single line with harmonic accompaniment
Is there much difference in the previous settings that the listener will be able to discern? Maybe not. The listener may only remember the top line rather than some dense, incredibly “hip” voicing on the upbeat of two screaming by at 288 on the metronome. If the listener only comprehends the top melody line, then they have perceived the most important part of the piece. That is the important thing to remember: place the melody in the best setting and only do things that enhance and nothing that detracts from the melody. To make a decision about the best setting for a line, the following things may be considered:

- The forward flow and melodic integrity: Does the setting enhance the primary lines? Does it help or hinder the forward flow?
- Where does it occur in the arrangement: Nearer the beginning may need to be simpler and towards the end may want to gradually become more complex.
- Context: How will a particular setting blend or contrast with what came before and what comes next?
- Inner parts: Which settings lend themselves to the smoothest voice leading. Inner parts that are too awkward may detract from the melody and the forward flow.

Some harmonization concepts may be applied to several notes in the passage. The line from ex. 11.51 below is extended by a measure and uses extended chromatic parallel motion and dominant cycles. The Gm7 is chromatically preceded by the Dbm7 chord. The C7 is twice preceded by a D7 chord, which is both parallel chromatic motion and a functional dominant substitute. The C7 in m.3 is preceded chromatically by a B7 and a B7. The last six chords all point to the F7 through a series of dominants. Begin a harmonization like this from the destination chord and work backwards to the beginning point. The last chord is F so the preceding dominant must be C7. The dominant of C is G7, so it must be preceded by a D7. The dominant of D is A whose dominant is E7. All of the inner voices move smoothly, and while they may be a bit difficult to sing, the can be easily played by a saxophone section. The chromatic tones are shown below according to vertical chord spellings. If this passage was copied out for individual instruments, enharmonic spellings should adhere to linear considerations. In beat two of the second measure below, an Eb is in the melody resolving up to the Eb. The Eb was chosen to help visualize its relationship as the ninth of D9. It should be written as a concert D leading to Eb in the individual part. In order to avoid awkward repeated tones, some inner voices may cross as indicated by the lines in m.2.

11.51g  Extended chromatic and dominant devices

| Gm7 | F#m7 | Db7 C7 | Db7 C7 | B7 | B7 | C7 | E7 | A7 | D7 | G7 | C7 | F7 |

**BRASS VOICINGS**

Brass voicings are constructed from the top melodic pitch down as were saxophone voicings. There are two basic styles for combining the trumpets and the trombones. A more traditional approach is for the trombones to play an octave lower exactly the same thing as the trumpets. A more contemporary sound may have them playing independent parts of the chord. Some of the simpler combinations are shown in Ex. 11.52. The chord at (a.) would sound bland for a jazz chart. It can be improved by opening the chord up and adding a thirteenth as at (b.). The chords c., d., and e. illustrate matching voicings played by both sections. The root may be used in the lowest trombone as at f., g., and h., but is best suited for the end of a phrase. Using roots voiced low can be powerful during emphatic jabs, but can make the line feel sluggish if used too often.
One method for creating more interesting combinations and colorful chords is to voice the trumpets in various triads over the traditional chords in the trombones. Triads resonate well because of the physics laws of the overtone series, and this is true even when the superimposed triad does not agree with the underlying structure. An A major triad (a. and e.) over a C7 chord creates a C13b9. The Ab major triad (b. and f.) yields the #9 and b13 over a C7 chord. An F# major triad (c. and g.) creates a C7 with a b5 or #11 and a b9. A D major triad (d. and h.) creates a C#11. Notice that the fifth is often not used in the trombones so as not to disagree with the #5, #11, 13 or b13.

Tighter, close position voicings are more agile. Voicings with large spreads do not move briskly, but are quite effective as punctuation during and at the end of phrases or sections. The first three voicings would be useful during more rapidly moving lines; the last two for the culmination of a phrase. The first three illustrate again the idea of the trombones mimicking the trumpets at the octave. The root is not included in the first three voicings, since it would appear in the bass part. These chords are Fmaj9 constructed of the 3-5-7-9 of the chord.

Several voicings are shown below for Gm7. Chords a.-f. are suitable for moving lines and assertive statements. Chords g. and h. are better for the conclusion of lines or bold jabs, due to the wide range of the voicings and the root on the bottom.
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tom. Chords b. and c. are almost the same, except c. has the ninth, a more colorful note, instead of doubling the root.
Chords d., e., f., and h. illustrate the use of a triad voiced in the trumpets over the fundamental chord in the trombones.
The F triad creates a Gm11 chord.

11.55 Brass voicings for Gm7

TRUMPETS:

TROMBONES:

11.54 shows the triadic superimposition formulas over a turnaround in the style of Thad Jones. The first Dm7 chord is
voiced identically in the trumpets and trombones. The next four chords all feature parallel triads over the fundamental
voicings in the trombones. The A over a G7 creates a G9#11. The A♭ over the C becomes a C7(b9/b13). The two chords
are sequenced creating an F9#11 and a B♭7(b9/b13). The bass and fifth trombone are playing the roots. The next two
lowest notes on the four dominant chords were the third and seventh. Stacking triads and color tones over a dominant
chord works best when the tritone is on the bottom helping identify the basic dominant chord quality.

11.56

TRUMPETS: Dm7 G9#11 C7♭13 F9#11 B♭7♭9♭13

TROMBONES:

BASS:

The chords moved parallel up a half step to harmonize the upper neighbor tone in ex. 11.57 from Thad Jones. He man-
aged to keep the trumpet triads moving in half-steps when the chord moved to the dominant. The basic progression was
Dm7 - G7 - Cm7 - F7. The F triad over the Dm7 yielded the primary chord tones 3-5-7. When the F triad moved down
a half-step to E over the G7 it created a colorful G13♭9 chord. This was sequenced for Cm7 - F7 in the second measure.
The widest spread voicings with the lowest notes were the ones at the end of the eighth note lines.
Triads are used in this turnaround leading to F. An F triad is imposed over an A7 to create an $\text{A}7_{b9/b13}$; $\text{Bb}$ triad over the $\text{Ab7}$ creates an $\text{Ab}_{b9/11}$; $\text{Bb}$ triad over the G7 creates a $\text{G7}_{b9/b13}$; $\text{Ab}$ over the C7 results in a $\text{C7}_{b9/b13}$; and the G over the F7 creates an $\text{F9}_{#11}$.

The chord shown in ex. 11.59 is composed of two fully diminished seventh chords; one for the trumpets and one for the trombones. The result is a $\text{Bb}$ with a $b9$, $b9$, $b5$, and a $b13$. This chord is sometimes called the “Duke” chord [and jokingly referred to as $\text{Bb}$ “fully demolished.”] It is often used at the end of big sections or the end of the piece.

The concept of using dominants and dominant cycles can be illustrate beginning with this simple line. The original harmony might call for a basic ii7 - V7 progression leading to the $\text{Bb7}$. 
11.60a Simple line over ii7 - V7 harmony

\[ \text{Cm7} \quad \text{F7} \]

Using the method of working back from the final chord, a series of functional chords may be added.

11.60b Enhanced with V7/iii - iii7 - V7/ii - ii7 - V7

\[ \text{Cm7} \quad \text{F7} \quad \text{A7} \quad \text{Dm7} \quad \text{G7} \quad \text{Cm7} \quad \text{F7} \quad \text{Bb7} \]

The A7 could be preceded by its dominant E7. The F7 and Cm7 can be preceded by their dominants or by the tritone substitution. The ii7 and iii7 chords could be changed to dominants, and any of the other dominant chords may be changed to a tritone substitution.

The final example will be based on the chords shown in ex. 11.60c. It begins with the original ii7 chord Cm7 which is followed by its dominant which points back to Cm7. A secondary dominant (G7) is replaced by its tritone substitute (Gb9) which points to the original F7. An E7 points to A7 which is replaced by its tritone substitute (Eb9). A flat is substituted for the D7 which points to the G7. The dominant cycle continues through the C7 and F7 leading finally to the Bb7. Any number of bass lines are possible from the E7 in m.2 to the end. A cycle of fifths pattern would work: E7 - A7 - D7 - G7 - C7 - F7 - Bb7. Their tritone substitutes would also work: B7 - Eb7 - Ab7 - Db7 - Gb7 - C7 - Bb7. Many combinations of descending half-step or fifth motion would work: B7 - A7 - Ab7 - Gb7 - F7 - Bb7.

11.60c

\[ \text{Cm7} \quad \text{G7} \quad \text{Cm7} \quad \text{Gb7} \quad \text{F7} \quad \text{E7} \quad \text{A7} \quad \text{Dm7} \quad \text{G7} \quad \text{Cm7} \quad \text{F7} \quad \text{Bb7} \]

This passage works well voicing the trumpets with superimposed triads over the basic trombone chords. The triadic superimposition formulas used to create the complex chords in ex. 11.60d are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Triad</th>
<th>Chord</th>
<th>Creates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Eb</td>
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<td>G7#13</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ab</td>
<td>G#7</td>
<td>G#11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
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<td>F#9</td>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>F</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>Bb7</td>
<td>Bb#11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
11.60d  Voiced for eight brass

TRUMPETS:

Cm7  G7\#9  G\#9\#11  F1\#9  E7\#9  E\#9\#11  A\#9\#11  G7\#9  C7\#9  \#9  Bb\#11

TROMBONES:

SAXOPHONES:

BRASS & SAXOPHONE COMBINATION VOICINGS

There are times when an arrangement calls for the saxophones and brass to play large voicings as a combined ensemble. Each section should be approached as demonstrated earlier. The saxophone and brass sections should sound complete independent of the other. The melody in the passage below is played by at least three instruments at any moment. The trumpet 1 melody is doubled down an octave by trumpet 4 and alto 1.

Two parallel chromatic chords precede the F7 on the upbeat of two. A tritone substitute dominant resolves to the B7 on the upbeat of four. The triplet works better with the band in unison and octaves leading to the last three dominant chords, G7 - C7 - F7.

11.61  Brass & saxophone combination

The trumpets are voiced with triads exclusively in the ii\#7 - V7 sequence shown in ex. 11.62. The melody is played by trumpet 1 and doubled by trumpet 4 and alto 1. The brass and saxophone sections are independently harmonically clear.
In ex. 11.63, the G7 is the V7/ii and points to the Cm9. The G9 is the tritone substitute for the V7/V (C7). Rather than approach the final chord with its dominant, the A13 chord moves parallel up to the B7. This example ends with the eight tone chord created by stacking a fully diminished chord over another. The last chord is a B7 with a b9, #9, b5, and a 13 created by voicing a C#7 in the trumpets over a B°7 in the trombones (over the B in the rhythm section).
SPECIAL CASE & CLUSTERS VOICINGS

Contemporary settings may lend themselves to dense voicings using non-traditional structures. There are more examples of non-traditional approaches to harmony in Chapter 19. The harmonic passage in ex. 11.64 is a traditional ii7 - V7 - I, but the voicings emphasize colorful clusters rather than tertian chords.

11.64 Voicings emphasizing clusters

TRUMPETS:  
Cm9  F13  Bb maj7

TROMBONES:  

BASS:

A modal piece might suggest parallel planing of voicings as in ex. 11.65. Each of these muted brass voicings has many levels of tension. Several of the chords are symmetrical built of alternating thirds and seconds. The chords played by each section are simple, but the combinations are complex. These voicings occurred over an ostinato bass line in A phrygian.

11.65 Bert Ligon: excerpt from Arches

TRUMPETS:  
A Phrygian

TROMBONES:

Cluster voicings were used to harmonize this simple melodic line in ex. 11.66. The melody was conceived unrelated to a harmonic progression. The chosen voicings were more random so as not to suggest a traditional harmonic progression. The line includes a variety of structures including traditional tertian voicings, clusters, and quartal voicings.

11.66 Bert Ligon: Dancer

TRUMPETS:

TROMBONES:
VOCAL VOICINGS

Vocal harmony follows the voice leading principles that apply to any instrument. The inner parts should move very smoothly and logically. Many odd interval leaps in the inner voices can be difficult to hear and perform for a vocal group. Care must be taken to prepare dissonances with vocal groups more so than with other instrumental sections. The saxophone holds down a key, as does the pianist, but a singer has to produce the note from within. Any reference point or help given by the arranger is prudent. Copyrighted tunes are not available for examples in this book, but the example below works well in a vocal group. Any of the lines may move a bit more freely depending on the lyric. When the top line is at rest, the inner voices may advance the music as shown in mm.3-4.

11.67

STRING ENSEMBLE VOICINGS

A string ensemble will sound good using any of the voicings shown above. More players on each individual part creates a richer sound. If enough players are on a part, then sections may be divided or play divisi. Consult with other sources and individual players before writing double and triple stops in a section. The close position passage in ex. 11.68 would work well for a quintet of strings, saxophones, vocals or a combination of horns (trumpet, alto saxophone, tenor saxophone, trombone, and baritone saxophone). If more than a quintet of strings are available, the upper part may be doubled up an octave by a first violin.

11.68 Close voicings for string section

Open voicings, using “drop 2” voicings, allow the listener to better distinguish the individual lines. The open position voicings in ex. 11.69 work well for strings over a bass or several combinations of instruments or voices.
A larger string group can effectively use voicings with a wider range than “drop 2.” In order to voice the passage evenly over two octaves in ex. 11.70, two voices were moved to lower registers. The second voice (G) was dropped two octaves and the third voice (E) was dropped one octave. This passage works better with several strings on a part. It may sound a bit empty and separated with only one player per line. If there are enough on a part, the first and second violins could play divisi doubling the melody down an octave lower. It is difficult for a group of horns to achieve a blend with a voicing this wide. The trumpet would be in a very high register and the trombone and others in medium registers making the blend difficult due to the contrast of sound character.

There are numerous scores available for closer and further study. Many school libraries have scores to classic big band charts, vocal jazz charts and small combo charts. Study the interesting arrangers. Listen for attractive places in a chart and formulate questions regarding the effect. What made it interesting? Was it a voicing, a line, a contrapuntal treatment? What was the voicing? Did the voicing use mixed sections or standard sections? Were there doubles (flutes, clarinets) or mutes in the brass? What was the musical effect and how was it achieved? Where in the piece did it occur and why? What were the extreme ranges and how did the instruments sound at those points? What other devices were employed to make one section stand out against another? File these away in your memory for use later when arranging. The best writers (of prose and of music) keep notebooks of ideas, excerpts, quotes, and sketches for new works.

**LINES MOTIVATE MUSIC**

Voicings can enhance a piece but rarely are they the main focus. A drummer will speak of the beat; a bassist will remember some bass line; and the pianist will usually remember the chords of a piece. Listen to the listeners and how they describe or remember a piece. The listeners remember the melody and the lyrics. The are many great arrangements that rely on individual lines to propel the piece where the melody is in one or more voices over a bass and a counter line follows using an important guide tone or thumb line.