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FROM PENCIL TO PERFORMANCE:

The creative nexus of arranging, orchestration and music direction in works of contemporary pop/rock musical theatre

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ABSTRACT

In the art form of musical theatre, available literature on the creative musical aspects of musicals has focused primarily on the composers and/or lyricists; their works having been extensively analysed and documented. There is, however, comparatively less literature and documentation on the processes that guide the transformation of the theatre composer's work to an eventual performance embracing arranging, orchestration and music direction. This dissertation explores these practices from two perspectives – the creative and the recreative.

First, from the creative perspective, I challenge Joseph P. Swain who makes a compelling case for composition as a tool of dramaturgy in his book *The Broadway Musical: A Critical and Musical Survey* (2002). I contest that his argument cannot hold true for pop/rock musicals in which the scores are comprised of pre-existing popular music that was not originally or intentionally composed for the stage. In order to understand how music functions as a dramatic element in musical theatre, it must follow that all collaborative creative forces that contribute to this music must be evaluated in a holistic manner. Dramaturgy contextualises and elucidates storytelling and artistic vision. While Swain has postulated that composition is an element of dramaturgy, I offer the notion that since arranging and orchestration contextualise and elucidate the composition they therefore cannot be excluded as dramaturgical devices. I support my thesis with analyses of select examples from the scores of the Broadway musicals *Jersey Boys* and *American Idiot*, as well as introducing and analysing my own arrangement and orchestration of *Streets of Gold*, an original South African pop/rock musical. Second, from the recreative perspective, I offer insights and perspectives into music direction in musical theatre; a multi-layered practice that is often misunderstood and underestimated and consequently remains largely under-documented.

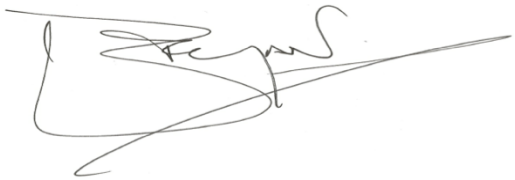
In my Conclusion I connect the two perspectives and reflect on the nexus of practices that lies between the composer's pencil and the eventual performance of a work of pop/rock musical theatre.

DECLARATION

I know that plagiarism is wrong. Plagiarism is to use another's work and to pretend that it is one's own.

I have used the author date convention for citation and referencing. Each significant contribution to and quotation in this dissertation from the work/s of other people has been acknowledged through citation and reference.

I declare that this dissertation is my own unaided work. It is submitted for the degree of Master of Music in the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. It has not been submitted before for any other degree or examination in any other university.



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CONTENTS

VOLUME 1

Music Examples…….. vii
Dedication and Acknowledgements..... viii
Author's note…….. ix

Prologue…….. 1

ACT I – The Creative……. 2

Overture: The Music Was Telling the Story of the Music……..... 3
Scene One: Only That Which Is Well Written Can Be Well Orchestrated…… 7
Scene Two: And Never the Twain Shall Meet…….. 16
Scene Three: Bit By Bit Putting It Together…….. 25
Scene Four: What Is Best in Music Is Not to Be Found In the Notes…… 40
Scene Five: Every Minor Detail Is a Major Decision…… 93

ACT II – The Recreative…….. 115

Entr'acte: The Spark Of Creation Is Blazing In My Blood…… 116
Scene One: In Art As In Love Instinct Is Enough…… 121
Scene Two: Make Them Hear You……... 131
Scene Three: All They Ever Want Is Repetition…….. 141
Scene Four: Come Follow the Band Wherever It's At…… 149
Finale: Where Is My Storybook Ending?..... 159

References……. 161

VOLUME 2

Streets of Gold – Score

1. Opening Animation
2. Fight For Gold and Liberty
3. Who Do You Trust?
4. Bracelet Snatch
5. Partners in Crime
6. We Can Work It Out
7. SWAT Team
8. Sheba's Entrance
9. Tango For Traitors
10. Ngudu has 9
11. Part of Me
12. Vault Opening and Romantic Underscore
13. Golden Future
14. Bows

Enclosed CD – Track list

1. Opening Animation
2. Fight for Gold and Liberty – Reference Version
3. Fight for Gold and Liberty – Performance Version
4. Who Do You Trust? – Reference Version
5. Who Do You Trust? – Additional Material – Reference Version
6. Who Do You Trust? – Performance Version
7. Bracelet Snatch – Performance Version
8. Partners in Crime – Reference Version
9. Partners in Crime – Performance Version
10. We Can Work It Out – Reference Version
11. We Can Work It Out – Performance Version
12. SWAT Team – Reference Version
13. SWAT Team – Performance Version
14. Sheba's Entrance – Performance Version

15. Tango For Traitors – Reference Version
16. Tango For Traitors – Performance Version
17. Ngudu9 Underscore – Reference Version
18. Ngudu Has 9 – Reference Version
19. Ngudu Has 9 – Performance Version
20. Part of Me – Reference Version
21. Part of Me – Performance Version
22. Vault Opening and Romantic Underscore – Performance Version
23. Golden Future – Recorded Version
24. Golden Future and Bows – Performance Version

Enclosed DVD

Chapter 1 – Complete Performance

MUSIC EXAMPLES

Ex. 1: ‘Wilkommen’, *Cabaret* piano-vocal score, mm1-2.

Ex. 2: The generic Bo-Diddley rhythm.

Ex. 3: ‘No. 1 – Ces Soiree-La’, *Jersey Boys* piano-vocal score mm. 1-2.

Ex. 4: ‘No. 16 – Oh What a Night”, *Jersey Boys* piano-vocal score mm. 1-2.

Ex. 5: ‘No. 20 – Big Man In Town’, *Jersey Boys* piano-vocal score mm. 1-2.

Ex. 6: ‘No. 1 – Ces Soiree-La’, *Jersey Boys* drum part mm. 5-13.

Ex. 7: ‘No. 2 – Silhouettes’. *Jersey Boys* piano-vocal score, mm. 5-12.

Ex. 8: ‘No. 12a – Cry/Silhouettes Underscore’, *Jersey Boys* piano-vocal score, mm. 21-28.

Ex. 9: ‘No. 20a – Lorraine Underscores’, *Jersey Boys* piano-vocal score, mm. 70-73.

Ex. 10: ‘No. 20a – Lorraine Underscores’, *Jersey Boys* piano-vocal score, mm. 75-78.

Ex. 11: ‘No. 20a – Lorraine Underscores’, *Jersey Boys* piano-vocal score, mm. 79-82.

Ex. 12: ‘American Idiot’, *American Idiot* piano-vocal score, mm. 103-130.

Ex. 13: ‘Last Night On Earth’, author’s transcription of recording (Green Day, 2007).

Ex. 14: ‘Last Night On Earth’, *American Idiot* piano-vocal score, mm 1-99.

Ex 15: ‘We Can Work It Out’, *Streets of Gold* score, mm. 1-87.

Ex 16: ‘Golden Future’, *Streets of Gold* score, mm.106-107.

Ex 17: Reduction of voice parts shown in Ex. 16.

DEDICATION AND ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

In 2007, Professor Jeanne Zaidel-Rudolph, then Professor of Composition at the University of the Witwatersrand, invited me to lecture 3rd and 4th year students (the American equivalent of Juniors and Seniors) in popular music arranging and orchestration in the music division of the School of Arts. Having only ever been a field practitioner, never having taught at an academic institution, I reluctantly agreed to a few trial lectures with the proviso that I had the latitude to follow my instinct, and not to be confined by the usual academic norms and regulations. Seven years later I am still lecturing. Drawn to the academic environment, it occurred to me how little is written and documented about the practices in which I already had over twenty years' experience – arranging, orchestration and music direction in musical theatre. Feeling the urge to contribute to the paucity of literature in this field, I contacted the then head of the Music Division, Dr Grant Olwage, and expressed my desire to write a dissertation in this regard. I am inordinately grateful and deeply indebted to both Grant and Jeanne, two extraordinarily gifted individuals, whose quiet wisdom, inexhaustible knowledge and unfailing support have guided me to the completion of this work.

I dedicate this dissertation to the women in my life who have most affected my love of music and theatre: my mother, Maureen, who always told me I had a gift for writing and that I should put it to good use (well… here it is, Mom!); my aunt, Sylvia Broomberg who always encouraged my musical aspirations and who would have loved reading this thesis; my piano teacher Pauline Nossel who graciously accepted that I did not want to be a concert pianist yet she still taught me with uncompromising love and devotion; theatre producer Hazel Feldman, who has given me so many opportunities to experience the joy and soul satisfaction that comes from working on a Broadway musical. For my sisters Bev and Pam, thank you for always being there.

This is also for Bryan Hill – my best friend and Broadway soul mate – who understands my obsession more than anyone else (and who was astonished at how many books I actually read for this research).

AUTHOR'S NOTE

As a South African writer, I have intentionally chosen to use the literary convention of British-English spelling. For example: 'synthesised' as opposed to 'synthesized'; 'analyse' rather than 'analyze'; 'colour' instead of 'color'. However, in instances where I have quoted an American author or informant, I maintain the integrity of the source's original or native spellings.

In the case of musical terminology, rather than using traditional art music terms, I have chosen to use field terms common in popular music practice. For example: 'measure' instead of 'bar'; whole-note, half-note, quarter-note, eighth note etc. in favour of semibreve, minim, crotchet and quaver.

The terms 'music director/direction' and/or 'musical director/direction', are used interchangeably and indiscriminately within the musical theatre profession, with seemingly no formal distinction privileging one over the other; both terms mean exactly the same thing. My personal choice is 'music director/direction' as I believe that music as a noun – implying *director* of the *music* – resonates more powerfully than the adjective. I raise this point to alleviate any confusion when 'musical director' is used in direct quotations or bibliographic references.

While not ignoring the importance of London's West End as a mecca of musical theatre, I have limited this research to the Broadway musical as the point of reference. Therefore, where applicable, the initial naming of any musical is followed only by the year in which it opened on Broadway.

PROLOGUE

In July of 1973, at age nine, I spent my school vacation with my aunt and uncle who lived on a farm in what was then Rhodesia before it became Zimbabwe. With my passion for music already burgeoning, I would spend hours every day at their gramophone playing all their vinyl 'LP' records repeatedly. One day I stumbled upon a record sleeve emblazoned with tie-dye colouring of bright yellow and purple, and the intriguing title: *Jesus Christ Superstar*. From the moment the needle touched the vinyl I experienced an epiphany that curiously had nothing to do with the subject matter of the record. Rather, it had to do with the *sound* that was emanating from it. As a kid, I was unable to articulate what that sound was or how it made me feel or how it was created, in the way that I would be able to now do as an adult. However, what I did know right there and then was that my rabid hunger for the intoxicating mix of rock music and musical theatre was born, and I knew what I wanted to do for the rest of my life.

ACT ONE:

THE CREATIVE

ACT I

OVERTURE

"The *music* was telling the story of the *music*" (Miller, 2007: 234)

More than two decades ago Barbara Lee Horn observed that "the Broadway musical, while recognized as a distinct and uniquely American art form, does not occupy a central position in theatre arts scholarship. Despite its widespread popularity it has seldom received serious attention from the academic community" (1991: xiii). In contrast, a great deal of scholarly work has been written about rock's socio-historical development, performative approaches and aesthetics (see Burns, 2000; Everett, 2000; Meltzer, 1987; Wicke, 1990). A substantial amount of scholarly literature and documentation has been written and undertaken since Horn's statement. Composers, lyricists, book writers, designers, directors and choreographers are celebrated and examined; their creative output analysed and studied. However, literature on the practice of theatrical arranging and orchestration remains curiously elusive. This reality is affirmed in recent observations: "the subject of orchestration has been largely invisible in literature on the Broadway musical" (Frisch, 2006: 126) and "the subject of Broadway orchestration is a relatively unmined field" (Suskin, 2009: 634).

The work of the theatre music director has received even less attention. Critical writing, specifically on this subject, is practically non-existent and what little exists doesn't explore the multitude of skills that fully encompass the practice. *So, You're The New Musical Director?,* a short volume that is super-titled *An Introduction to Conducting a Broadway Musical,* is a rudimentary handbook – a kind of 'Idiots Guide to Music Direction for Musicals'. In the author's own words it "will not begin to tell you everything that is involved nor will it provide you with the single most essential element you will need to guide you through this situation…*experience"* (Laster, 2001: vii). I am of the opinion that the strata of requirements and responsibilities that form the bedrock of that experience run so deep that the abstruse practice of music direction in musicals is too often underestimated and misunderstood and has therefore remained largely undocumented. Very recently,

however, the advent of under- and post-graduate degree courses in Music Direction for Musical Theatre – available at institutions such as Penn State University, Arizona State University and the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland – has given the practice of theatre music direction a measure of academic legitimacy that is long overdue.[1]

From the tragedies of ancient Greek theatre through the classic works of William Shakespeare to the most contemporary writings of Tom Stoppard, storytelling, compelling characters and complex plotlines have provided the foundation for great works of drama. In the world of opera: the greatest works ranging from George Frederic Handel to George Gershwin are almost always propelled by the impetus of great storytelling. However, proponents of opera are more likely to view the musical score as the most important component of creativity and originality, made all the more significant by the availability and accessibility of audio recordings of operatic performances. This also holds true for musical theatre – with very few exceptions – in which storytelling is the most common engine running through the seemingly uncontainable plethora of topics and subject matter that encompass the canon of musical theatre. In his *New York Post* review of *Jersey Boys* (2005), Clive Barnes wrote: "It's a Broadway commonplace that the most important thing about a musical is the book – but no one goes out singing the book, so it's a commonplace often forgotten. Then comes a show like *Jersey* Boys, with a book that's as tight and absorbing as an Arthur Miller play…it's a show still dynamically alive in music while, as in drama, it catches the very texture, almost the actual smell, of its time" (quoted in Miller, 2007: 234).[2] It's somewhat ironic that long after the curtain falls, a cast recording remains the most enduring and publicly accessible means to a musical theatre performance rather than the script which is not usually available for public consumption.[3]

[1] There is no formal study of theatre music direction in South Africa.

[2] Arthur Miller (1915-2005) is one of the most important American playwrights of the twentieth century, whose works include *Death of a Salesman* and *The Crucible.*

[3] See *The Theatermania Guide to Musical Theater Recordings* (Portantiere, 2004). In a seemingly new and unusual practice, the fully published script and libretto of the Tony Award winning Best Musical *The Book of Mormon* (2011) is available for public purchase even while the production is running.

Storytelling proves to be fundamental to the creative choices of the arranger, orchestrator and music director in musical theatre.[4] At the core of great storytelling is conflict. At once concordant and discordant, the backdrop to my research is the volatile relationship between pop and rock as genres of popular music and musical theatre as art form. In the crossfire of this relationship, the composer and lyricist are almost always the most compelling characters in music and score-related literature, while the arranger, orchestrator and music director remain supporting, if not, underdeveloped characters. In my research, I bring these supporting players to the forefront to analyse and determine their responsibility in this setting as the creative link between the composer's pencil (or software) and the eventual performance of a work of pop/rock musical theatre.

In keeping with conventional musical theatre storytelling structure, I present my dissertation in the format of two Acts in which each Chapter is a Scene. My original intention was for Act I to focus on arranging and orchestration, and for Act II to focus on music direction, since I had initially viewed these as two distinct and separate focal points of discussion. Through the course of my research, I realised that these practices are so inextricably intertwined and inter-dependent that I questioned the effectiveness of the two-act structure in presentation. After analysis of the data, however, I chose to retain this format since two distinct and overarching phases emerged by which I frame my findings – Act I: The Creative and Act II: The Recreative.

I begin Act I by engaging extensively with literature in the exposition scenes followed by a development of ideas that interacts with interview material.[5] The Act builds towards an argument and a series of analyses concluding with a presentation and analysis of my own creative work. Act II unfolds in a series of thematic analyses derived from empirical methods of research reliant on field participation, participant observation and semi-structured in-person interviews that produced qualitative data within a broadly ethnographic research paradigm. The

[4] In Act I - Scene One I explore these terms more fully.

[5] Exposition is a term that is used in both music and drama vocabularies having similar meanings in both worlds as introductory subject material. In music, the exposition is the initial statement of thematic ideas established for later development. In drama, the exposition introduces important background information pertinent to the story that is being told.

data are drawn from twenty-seven years of personal field experience, as well as the testimony of a selection of other field experts currently working on Broadway and in South Africa. I am extremely grateful to my American informants – music directors, arrangers, orchestrators and musicians – all of whom embraced this research and generously gave of their time and information: two-time Tony Award and Grammy Award winner Stephen Oremus, Adam Ben-David, Sam Davis, Ben Cohn, Brent-Alan Huffman, Ron Melrose and Sean McDaniel.[6] I am also indebted to South African music directors Graham Scott, Charl-Johan Lingenfelder and Rowan Grant Bakker for their invaluable contributions, as well as theatre sound designer Mark Malherbe. The overwhelming enthusiasm and support of these working professionals for this research is evident in these interviews, and underscores the need for available and accessible information about the practices of arranging, orchestration and music direction in musical theatre.

[6] The Grammy Award bestowed by the National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences of America is considered the highest accolade of achievement in the recording industry. The Antoinette Perry Award, known commonly as the Tony Award, is considered the highest accolade of achievement in commercial Broadway theatre.

ACT I

SCENE ONE

"Only that which is well written can be well orchestrated" (Rimsky-Korsakov)

The century-old art form of the Broadway musical was, at first, influenced primarily by European opera, comic operetta, and late nineteenth-century entertainments such as vaudeville, minstrel shows, French burlesque, and British music hall (Frisch, 2006: 123). Amongst the most luminescent composers of musical theatre during the first fifty years of the art form's existence were Jerome Kern, Cole Porter, George Gershwin, Irving Berlin and Richard Rodgers. However, some authors suggest that at that time it was orchestrators like Irving Kostal, Hans Spialek, Sid Ramen, Don Walker and, most importantly, Robert Russell Bennett, who were responsible for the creation of the quintessential sonic identity of Broadway musicals (Stempel, 2010: 245; Suskin, 2009). Composer Leonard Bernstein, a seminal figure in musical theatre history, described Broadway orchestrators as "subcomposers who turn a series of songs into a unified score, who make it all sound like a 'work'" (quoted in Stempel, 2010: 246), and composer Richard Rogers declared: "in a great musical, the orchestrations sound the way the costumes look" (337). With comments such as these, it is bewildering that literature focused specifically on the work of musical theatre orchestrators and orchestrations has only started emerging in the last twenty years, and even then, scholarship and academic attention remain limited. *The Sound of Broadway Music: Broadway Orchestrators and Orchestrations* is a compendious tome that author Suskin makes clear is not intended as a "technical primer on orchestration, nor for that matter is it a treatise on music theory" (2009: 178).

Musical theatre literature is more often than not shaped into some form of chronological arc that traces the development of the art form from its early beginnings at the turn of the twentieth century to its current forms.[7] These texts generally devote extensive amounts of ink to composers and lyricists as the principal creators of a score yet make no more than passing references to the arrangers and

[7] The bibliography contains numerous examples to illustrate this.

orchestrators, and even less to music directors. Rather than looking at the history of musical theatre as a series of 'who-what-where-and-when', Mark N. Grant takes the unusual approach of exploring the history of the musical through creative elements such as book writing, choreography, stage direction, sound design and so on. In so doing he devotes a rare but entire chapter to orchestration and decries the fact that the orchestrator, the unsung hero of so many familiar Broadway scores, doesn't earn recognition commensurate with his contribution to a score (2004: 169-187). Legendary choreographer Agnes De Mille once put it thus:

> Few Broadway composers are responsible for any of their own orchestrations. Most of them furnish only the song melodies, while the overtures, the incidental action accompaniments, the transition pieces, the ballet and vocal variations, the musical reinforcement, the 'glue' of the show will be arranged by someone else (quoted in Grant, 2004:170).

While inferring that arrangements and orchestrations are usually done by people other than the composer, De Mille doesn't provide clear definitions of arranging and orchestration. Grant attempts to clarify this:

> An orchestrator takes a completed arrangement – fully notated melodies, countermelodies, accompanimental patterns, rhythm, harmony and so on – and sets it out for a designated instrumentation. An arranger begins earlier in the process, introducing his own tunes, riffs, licks, connective material, and harmonies to color and fill out the so-called lead sheet – the melody of the song with a few skeletal harmonies. An arranger is really a ghost composer. A skilled arranger can be like a make-over artist extracting musical silk purses from sow's ears (2004: 177).

In 2009, the New York Public Library hosted four panel discussions entitled The Sound of Broadway Music: The Craft and Art of Theatrical Orchestration. An array of highly esteemed and respected professionals offered their opinions on the differences between arranging and orchestration. Among these, Jonathan Tunick, renowned orchestrator for Stephen Sondheim, offered an opinion that is less pedantic about strict definitions:

> Arranging is a generic term. It generally refers to completing a piece of music that is in some way, incomplete whether it's in form, in harmony, in melody, in counterpoint, or in orchestration. Orchestration is specifically arranging for orchestra. Those are academic terms. In real life it's not so simple. We are called the orchestrators but we find ourselves composing, harmonizing, writing counterpoint, whatever is necessary, whatever is left undone we have to do.

> That is as close as to a general explanation that I can get ('Broadway Orchestration', 2009).

Steven Suskin offers a more simplistic definition: "The song is what they sing. The arrangement is how they sing it. The orchestration is how it sounds" (2009: 4). However glib, the accuracy of this description is not to be underestimated. Generally speaking, what is little known, is that much of the task of arranging and vocal arranging that is created in the rehearsal room falls to the music director who is more than just a conductor. Contrary to what De Mille says, sometimes the composer might, in fact, be his own orchestrator. A dedicated and specialised dance arranger is usually called in to work with the choreographer to develop dance sequences that deploy the composer's thematic material.

Despite the attempts at various definitions that delineate and differentiate each of these practices, the line between them can become obfuscated and designations can overlap. In popular music traditions the terms are almost indistinguishable. *The Harvard Dictionary of Music* draws distinction between defining arranging in Western art music and popular music traditions (Randel, 2003: 58). In terms of this research I focus on the latter definition in which the act of orchestration is incorporated into the act of arranging, where they come to mean one and the same thing and the distinction between them is often blurred. This idea is evidenced in the titles of practical primers which privilege the word 'arranging' or 'arranger', yet the majority of their content speaks more to techniques of orchestration and applied use of instrumentation.[8] Dick Grove describes arranging as "the art of being able to conceive a musical effect and then transfer it to paper so that the particular effect comes alive" (1985: iv). From my perspective as a practitioner, this description could just as well describe orchestration. Whether discussing these practices in the context of popular music or musical theatre, exact definitions, designations and creative responsibilities remain unclear.

"Musical theatre being a collaborative and commercial medium, to understand who wrote what and how and when in a show is a potentially difficult task, not least because a modus operandi that is true for one artist or team may not apply to others"

[8] *Arranging for Large Jazz Ensemble* (Lowell and Pullig, 2003), *Rock, Jazz and Pop Arranging* (Runswick, 1992) and *The Contemporary Arranger* (Sebesky, 1994).

(Banfield, 1993: 61). Determining these creative responsibilities is also predicated upon issues of rights allocation and ownership. Every creative team on a musical finds its own dynamic and the input of the arranger and orchestrator can shift significantly depending on the composer's degree of literacy and prescriptiveness. Music director, arranger and vocal arranger Ron Melrose suggests that one of the reasons why there is a dearth of documentation on this topic is because it is "awfully elusive and awfully mutable. Depending on how much a composer has specified, what's left is what some combination of arrangers, orchestrators and music directors have to do" (2012). Some composers are highly schooled and trained musicians, for example Stephen Schwartz, Stephen Sondheim and Andrew Lloyd Webber; and some are not, for example Irving Berlin (who composed every single piece of music in the key of F#) and Henry Krieger who composed *Dreamgirls* (1981) by playing the piano and recording himself to tape for someone else to transcribe. A brief insight into these variances in creative responsibilities and approaches is revealed by Tony Award winner, arranger, orchestrator and music director Stephen Oremus who I interviewed in New York in 2012, and who shared some of the collaborative process of working with composer Stephen Schwartz on the creation of *Wicked* (2004):[9]

> It's about layers. It's writing on top of writing of writing. When we started *Wicked* Stephen [Schwartz] gave me some very written out stuff. Every note of 'No Good Deed'. I mean all of it, every single note was written out. Other songs would be eight bars with a very specific thing or just a lead sheet. And as we developed it, we solidified what those things were. Every song that we did, he played for me on to cassette tapes. He played and sang it in his key to show me what they were because even if it wasn't written down, he wanted me to understand how he felt something or what he wanted me to play. And usually we had no time so I just had to pick it up. 'Popular', for three years before we went into production, I played off a lead sheet and though I may have channelled it a little bit through myself it's his song and I would never say that I wrote that song. And if it wasn't what he wanted he changed it because he is also incredibly literate. Some composers may not be able to read music which I have also run into as well. There are many like that. But I am not gonna sit and say, well on this show, that whole ending, I put that there. There are situations where yes I blew up a song into something that the composer never really imagined initially. And then we continue to tweak it together. But that doesn't mean that I should get any more ownership for that. I feel that I am still serving the piece and serving their vision by helping to blow up to the next level what they already did (2012).

[9] *Wicked* is widely considered to be the most important, if not the most successful, musical of the first decade of the twenty-first century.

Some early composers like John Philip Sousa, Victor Herbert, and Reginald de Koven prepared their own orchestrations. Later composers such as Kurt Weill orchestrated his own work, Andrew Lloyd Webber wrote orchestrations for *The Phantom of the Opera* (1986) and more recently Tom Kitt composed *Next to Normal* (2008) and orchestrated it together with Michael Starobin.[10] Notwithstanding these examples, Banfield claims that "critical ink is periodically spilled in regret that Broadway composers generally don't orchestrate their own music" (1993: 79). The labour intensiveness of producing a full score and the pressures of revision and collaboration (discussed in Scene Three), as well as the fact that composers like Jerome Kern had no skills in instrumentation, led to the rise of the professional arranger and orchestrator.

> Since the Broadway orchestra is not only out of sight but out of mind to most producers and directors, professional orchestration has to be a highly specialized craft that can produce reliable results with the minimum of fuss and rehearsal. If the balance of power and responsibility shifted further toward the composer, the creative stakes would be precariously raised in a collaborative world where, for most of the participants' appetites, they are quite high enough already (ibid.).

One arranger-orchestrator who epitomises the importance of these creative practices to the sound of musical theatre is Robert Russell Bennett, who between the 1920s and 1970s, orchestrated over three hundred musicals and is described variously as the "dean of Broadway orchestration" (Grant, 2004: 175) and "the president of the Broadway orchestrators" (Suskin, 2009: 24). *Robert Russell Bennett: A Bio-bibliography* (Ferencz, 1990) and *The Broadway Sound: The Autobiography and Selected Essays of Robert Russell Bennett* (Bennett and Ferencz, 1999) are two periscopes into the life and work of the man for whom the terms arranger and orchestrator fail to capture the full scope of his activities. Much of the sonic complexity of the scores that we tend to attribute to the composers came from the pen of Bennett, who was "the ghost composer of Broadway's Golden Age, having been largely responsible for the harmonies, accompaniments, and God-knows-what-

[10] Apart from being a Tony Award winning composer in his own right, Kitt also arranged and orchestrated *American Idiot* (2010) with music composed by punk rock group Green Day.

else of many of the scores of the canonical tunesmiths" (Grant, 2004: 177).[11] Grant shares ear-opening anecdotes about Bennett's involvement in some of the most fundamental aspects of the music of *Show Boat*, including its most famous number 'Ol' Man River'. Bennett claimed that when "Kern handed me his sketch [of the song] it had no name and no lyric. It was thirty-two not wholly convincing measures that sounded to me like they wanted to be wanted" (quoted in Grant, 2004: 178). In 'Shall We Dance?' from *The King and I* (1951), the *boom boom boom* that forms the orchestral response to the first vocal phrase, and that is for every listener indelibly associated with the song, is as Grant astutely observes, pure Bennett, not Rodgers (ibid.). In the Golden Age, almost every musical began with an overture that was created by the orchestrator.[12] Apart from introducing the audience to the forthcoming tunes of the musical, the overture provided orchestrators with an opportunity to convey storytelling information before a single lyric or a word of dialogue was heard. Bennett was a master at this. From the very first note of the overture of *The King and I* the sound of the tam-tam and the sustained open fifth interval immediately establish the location of Siam and the regality of the King's palace. The sixteenth-note strings and clarinets that swirl above the 2/4 rhythm that accompanies the theme of 'The Farmer and the Cowman' in the overture to *Oklahoma!* (1943), instantly conjure up visual images of sprawling prairies in the American mid-west.

After reading Grant's chapter on orchestration, Walter Frisch remarked how one is struck by how even the best literature on American musical theatre may give the composers – great melodists though they were – too much credit (2006: 126). In *Enchanted Evenings: The Broadway Musical from Show Boat to Sondheim*, Geoffrey Block analyses quasi-Wagnerian aspects of *Show Boat* as "a vast network of thematic foreshadowing and reminiscences" and admires "structural integrity" and "organicism" in *On Your Toes* (1997: 33, 101). These features, which Block credits to Kern and Rodgers respectively, may well be primarily the work of Bennett and Hans Spialek.

[11] Many theatre historians and commentators define the Golden Age of the American musical as the years between 1943 and 1964, or more specifically, from *Oklahoma!* to *Fiddler on the Roof* (Miller, 2007: 98; Suskin, 2009: 6).

[12] The overture to *Gypsy* (1959) is widely regarded by musical theatre aficionados as the "greatest overture ever written".

Sondheim, though immensely literate and extraordinarily detailed in his piano composing, leaves orchestration to Jonathan Tunick. “Jonathan gets more out of what I have in my head than just the notes on the paper” (Sondheim quoted in Banfield, 1993: 80). In terms of the sonic identity of a Sondheim score, there are two different types of listeners: “you’ll have one type hearing Sondheim’s music as the melodies and the lyrics and the ‘cerebralness’ of that, and that’s how they will identify Sondheim. Then you will have another type who will identify Sondheim’s music by the orchestrations. Neither is correct nor incorrect other than Sondheim himself didn’t write the orchestrations” (Huffman, 2014). Moments like the first thematic quodlibet in ‘Being Alive’ from *Company* (1970) or the scalar countermelody in ‘Losing My Mind’ from *Follies* (1971) were actually written by Tunick (Zadan, 1990: 159).

The extent to which music directors and orchestrators carry responsibility for the sound of *current* Broadway musicals when collaborating with unschooled composers is discussed by Tony Award winner Jason Robert Brown, one of the most prolific and educated contemporary Broadway composers:[13]

> In the case of *Bonnie and Clyde* (2012) and *Once* (2012), for example, the composers of those shows cannot (to the best of my knowledge) read or notate music. They do not have the language to communicate with an orchestra how to play their songs. They don't have any vocabulary about building a cohesive musical universe on stage. There is a vast reservoir of technical and theatrical information that the music staff brings to bear on the songs those composers write in order to make a *score* out of them (2012).

The opening line of Suskin’s book poses a question: “Theatre orchestration is the art of – well, *is* it a creative art or the work of skilled craftspeople?” (2009: 3). For me it is unequivocal that the arranger, orchestrator and music director play crucial creative roles in the journey from composer’s pencil to the performance. It is therefore confounding that the creative value of orchestration has not been supported by literature on the general subject of musical theatre history and Western pop culture until very recently. “Without diminishing the aura of originality about the contributions of the songwriters, it was the orchestrator’s creative work that adapted a songwriter’s music to the trajectory of a complete theatre production” (Stempel, 2010: 246).

[13] Works include *Songs for a New World* (1995), *Parade* (1998), *The Last Five Years* (2001), *The Bridges of Madison County* (2014).

Despite such an affirming remark, in Stempel's 800-page volume on the history of the Broadway musical, the discussion of orchestration and orchestrators occupies no more than a few paragraphs.

This indifference was emphasised when The American Theatre Wing's Tony Awards, established in 1947 to honour the creative forces at work in Broadway theatre, did not include categories for arrangement and orchestration despite their involvement in the final score. The Tony Award for Best Musical Score is awarded solely to the composer (and the lyricist), a fact that did not go unnoticed by Stephen Sondheim. On accepting his third consecutive Tony Award for Best Musical Score in 1973, he exclaimed: "few people who go to the theatre even know what an orchestrator is! The contribution he makes to a show should not be ignored and his function should no longer be a mystery" (quoted in Zadan, 1989: 154).[14]

From 1948 to 1962 music direction was honoured with a Tony, yet despite the music director being a creative force in the development of a musical, the award was discontinued, and music direction has remained unrecognised for more than fifty years with no formal explanation. This led a group of Broadway music directors to meet with the Tony Awards administration in 1994 at which they unveiled a presentation demonstrating the transformation of a piece of music from the composer's draft to the final product in an effort to have the music direction Tony Award reinstated; they failed in their quest for reinstatement. Instead, almost as if taking heed from Sondheim's acceptance speech of 1973, a category honouring orchestrations was finally added in 1997. A physical score provides a written representation of orchestrations and therefore might seem more tangible than the more obscured and abstract work of the music director. It is doubtful, though, that the Tony voting committee makes its assessment by reading the score. It is more likely that their assessment is based on the aural experience of watching a performance. *The Tony Award Book* is a 270-page history of the awards that features exactly *one* page on music directors; author Morrow acknowledges the creative input of the music director stating that s/he "helps the composer and orchestrator arrange the music" (1987: 134), yet provides no insight into the discontinuation of the award.

[14] The Tony for Best Score is awarded to the composer even though the final score of a musical encompasses the work of the arranger and orchestrator as well.

Martin Lowe noted this egregious lack of attention in his speech on accepting the 2012 Tony Award for Best Orchestrations for the Irish folk-rock infused musical *Once*:

> Because *Once* is a musical about the healing power of music, I would like to say thank you to all the musical directors and music supervisors working on Broadway… there is no Tony award for them and they are as creative and as deserving of an award as any of the other creatives who will be honored this evening. This doesn't mean much but I would like to dedicate this award to them in the hope that maybe in the future we could give them an award because that would be a brilliant, brilliant thing.

In musicals of today sound design has gone beyond mere amplification to become a creative practice in itself that is so integral to the aural experience of a musical that it is honoured annually with a Tony Award. So it is baffling to me how a committee of voters is able to adjudicate the merits of sound design, yet is not able to comprehend the creative work of the music director whose multiple functions include arranger and vocal arranger, as well as, interpreter and executant.

Steven Suskin proposes that Broadway orchestrators can be categorised into two definite eras: "the acoustic age, with full orchestras and minimal use of electronic instruments; and the synthesized age, with plugged-in amplification and machinery replacing naturally produced sounds" (2009: 6). Since much of the literature that I have cited provides considerable information on works of 'the acoustic age', my attention has been drawn instead towards works of the less explored 'synthesised age' in which I have limited my research specifically to arranging, orchestration and music direction of pop/rock musicals.

ACT I

SCENE TWO

"… and never the twain shall meet" (Kipling)

'Pop/rock' musicals are a sub-genre of musical theatre that developed in the late 1960s with the emergence of American popular musics such as rock 'n roll, rock, pop, soul, disco, funk, r&b, rap, Latin and gospel. Established creators of works of musical theatre resisted the onslaught of these popular musics, while new creators "searched for a new mould that might combine new musical styles and contemporary thinking with the tradition, building upon the genre's proud history" (Everett and Laird, 2008: 220). Amplification, electronic instrumentation, wailing electric guitars, thumping drum grooves, chord recycling, all integral to these musics, were to become constitutive parameters in the creation of musicals in the synthesised age much to the chagrin of many traditionalists. Manning (2001: 12-19), Stempel (2010: ch. 15), Warfield (2008: ch. 13) and Wollman (2004, 2006) address the polarisation between the worlds of rock music and theatre citing compositional, performative and ideological differences.

Referring to the title of his book *The Rise and Fall of the Broadway Musical,* Mark N. Grant argues that the American musical peaked during the Golden Age and has been in decline ever since (2004: 5). He launches a scathing attack on the use of amplification and is unapologetic in his hypothesis over why rock music in all its aspects contributed to this decline. His feelings are clearly reflected in the headings of two of the book's chapters: 'Revolutions in Broadway Rhythm: How the Rock Groove Decomposed the Musical and Dismantled the Fourth Wall' and 'The Loudspeakers Are Alive with The Sound of Music: How Electronics Trumped the Artful Acoustics of Broadway'. While traditionalists like Grant see the 1960s as a period of decline for the musical theatre, Scott Miller has a contrary view:

> The 1960s were a time of expansion and explosion and deconstruction, a time when musical theatre artists (and some who had never worked in musical theatre at all) began experimenting with the form, finding new ways to use music in theatre. It was no longer the same AABA song structure of the so-

> called Golden Age, nor the same song-scene-song-scene-song plot structure of the Rodgers and Hammerstein musicals, and the possibilities for subject matter blew wide open. The art form entered its most exciting, most daring and most thrilling time in decades (2007: 98).

Despite the move to break away from the AABA song form in musicals, songwriters like Jerry Leiber and Mike Stoller, Bob Gaudio and Bob Crewe were writing pop and rock songs in that form destined for radio that became multi-million selling Billboard chart and international commercial hits. It is somewhat ironic that many of these songs would find their way to the Broadway stage decades later in some of the most successful pop/rock musicals like *Smokey Joe's Café* (1995) and *Jersey Boys* and, in so doing, bring the AABA form back to the stage. They were subsumed into a sub-category of pop/rock musicals somewhat pejoratively entitled 'jukebox' musicals.

The AABA and 12-bar blues form associated with 50s rock 'n roll fractured as the turbulent socio-political climate of 1960s America gave rise to radical-minded artists like Jefferson Airplane and Jimi Hendrix.

> More than any previous generation, the youth of the 1960s lived their lives to popular music. It was a philosophical expression and communal experience more than just an escape or soundtrack for social dancing. It had been decades since people had listened to music this intently. And the creators of rock music understood its paradoxical nature - at once, both commercial product and social commentary, both entertainment and catalyst for awareness and action (Miller, 2007: 114).

The divide between rock music and the theatre became increasingly extreme and seemingly irreparable as rock drove a stylistic wedge between generations. "Broadway partisans decried it as music whose stylistic inflexibility made it inherently 'non-theatrical' – though, in truth, it was a music that redefined theatricality in its own terms" (Stempel, 2010: 509). *The Theater Will Rock: A History of the Rock Musical* is, in the author's own words, "a social history and not a book of music analysis" (Wollman, 2006: 10). It studies the tempestuous relationship between rock music, a genre of popular music that is ephemeral and constantly evolving, and musical theatre, an art form that remains "rooted in its canonized, celebrated, illustrious past" (226). Kara Manning's statement that "the worlds of rock music and theatre have clashed continually despite a string of successful rock musicals" (2001: 12), and Scott Warfield's question, "is 'rock' a four-letter word on Broadway?" (2008: 235),

suggest that the subject of pop/rock musicals remains contentious and that the rift between the worlds of popular music and musical theatre appears to be firmly in place despite the galvanising presence of pop and rock music in musical theatre that has proliferated to the present.[15]

For much of the twentieth century, popular music and theatre music were one and the same. Broadway produced hundreds of songs that became the pop songs of the day from the 1930s to the 1960s born out of musical scores composed by Rodgers and Hart, Rodgers and Hammerstein, Berlin, Gershwin and Porter. (Many of these songs have endured as jazz standards.) However, when pop and rock took over the popular music scene in the 60s Broadway was no longer the hit machine. During the 70s Broadway producers tried to use rock to give theatre attendance a boost, but at that time the people who were listening to rock were not the people who were buying theatre tickets (Miller, 2007: 128). In 1971 composer Stephen Sondheim captured the mood of the traditionalists arguing:

> Rock is much too monotonous for a musical. You can't have 12, or 20, songs like that...I'm glad rock is around; people now listen to my lyrics because rock has forced them to listen. When somebody who has rock on says 'I can't understand what they're saying', that means they're listening (quoted in Topor,).

Thirty years later Manning wrote that there remains a "resistance of the rock community and the Broadway community to each other despite the existence of successful rock musicals beginning with *Hair"* (2001: 12).

The first musical in the context of rock instrumentation and stylistic usage was *Expresso Bongo* (1958), a London West End musical that featured musical parodies of 50s pop and rock, Latin jazz and skiffle bands. The first commercial Broadway

[15] A selection of pop/rock musicals that have recently been or are currently playing on Broadway includes scores written directly for the stage, as well as a mix of 'jukebox' musicals: the Abba musical *Mamma Mia* (2001); the 'Frankie Valli and the Four Seasons' docu-musical *Jersey Boys* (2005); the hip-hop/Latin fusion musical *In the Heights* (2009) with music by Lin-Manuel Miranda; the punk-rock musical *American Idiot* (2010) with music by Green Day; *Spiderman – Turn off the Dark* (2011) with music by Bono and The Edge; the 'emo-rock' musical *Bloody, Bloody Andrew Jackson* (2010); the 70s disco-infused *Sister Act* (2011) with music by Alan Menken; the 80s collection-of-back-catalogue-hits musical *Rock of Ages* (2009); the Motown-catalogued *Motown* (2013); and *Kinky Boots* (2013) with music by 80s pop icon Cyndi Lauper.

musical to feature rock 'n roll music was *Bye Bye Birdie* (1960) with a score by Charles Strouse that parodied the songs of Elvis Presley. Musicals that satirised the sound of the 50s were inconsequential in shifting the psyche of the musical into a pop/rock music sensibility. It would take honest engagement with the new popular musics to achieve the seismic shift in consciousness that occurred with the arrival of *Hair*. Literature on musical theatre history unanimously acknowledges *Hair,* the theatrical paean of protest against the Vietnam war which opened on Broadway in April of 1968, as the first legitimate Broadway rock musical (Bloom and Vlastnik, 2004; Everett and Laird, 2008; Jones, 2003; Stempel, 2010; Wollman, 2006). *Hair* signified the undisputed arrival of rock music on Broadway bringing its compositional styling, component instrumentation and amplification to an art form that through the Golden Age had been primarily shaded in orchestral colours and acoustic textures. Despite this acknowledgement, a formal definition of the term 'rock musical' remains elusive.

> No formal definition has ever appeared in print. The term, inadvertently coined by the creative team of *Hair* when they jokingly subtitled their creation 'The American Tribal Love-Rock Musical', has been applied with maddening unpredictability ever since, and thus remains elusive, inconsistent, protean and contradictory. Many musicals that reveal even trace hints of contemporary popular music influence have been dubbed rock musicals by theatre critics and historians. Conversely, there have been many musicals with scores that borrow a great deal from rock music, but have never been identified as such (Wollman, 2006: 2).

Bloom and Vlastnik think it was merely the use of rock voices that defined *Hair* as the first rock musical (2004: 150). While *Hair* was certainly the first musical that utilised the identifiable instrumentation of a rock band, that is, two guitars, electric bass, drums and keyboard, there are conflicting arguments as to whether its score was 'authentic' rock (see Horn, 1991, and Miller, 2003). Although the term 'rock musical' is explicit in the subtitle of *Hair,* both Horn and Miller agree that composer Galt Macdermot was not a rock composer.[16] They argue, rather, that he managed artfully to incorporate various styles and aspects of subgenres of rock in *Hair*, thereby setting him apart from previous composers who attempted to bring rock to the Broadway stage by simply featuring recurring grooves, bass-lines or repetitive

[16] It is worth noting that Galt Macdermot studied music at the University of Cape Town in the 1950s. Prior to *Hair* he had never written for the theatre. He is said to have drawn on his knowledge of African rhythms that he had been exposed to in South Africa (Dance, 1970).

lyrics that parodied rock rather than harnessing it. In *The New Grove Dictionary of Opera*, John Rockwell presupposes that "the 'rock opera' and the 'rock musical' are simply variants of their parent genre 'in which the musical idiom is rock 'n roll'" (quoted in Warfield, 2008: 235).

Because of the pliability of its definition, a Broadway rock musical could be *Jesus Christ Superstar* (1971), *Two Gentleman of Verona* (1971)*, Grease* (1971), *The Rocky Horror Show* (1973), *The Who's Tommy* (1992), *Bring in Da Noise Bring in Da Funk* (1995)*, Rent* (1996), *Hairspray* (2002)*, Spring Awakening* (2006)*, Next to Normal* (2008) or *American Idiot* (2010), none of which sound like the others. What they do share is a "disdain for authority and a taste for rebellion to which only the language of rock and roll could give full voice" (Miller, 2007: 116). Wollman acknowledges that the terms rock, rock 'n roll and pop have become "exasperatingly difficult to define, especially in relationship to one another" (2006: 2). She goes on to explain how the terms carry not only musical and sociological connotations, but also ideological ones: "one critic's rock 'n roll is another critic's rock; one fan's rock is another fan's pop" (ibid.).

Six months after *Hair* opened, the sound of pop also found its way onto the Broadway stage. With a score by pop-chart friendly writers Burt Bacharach and Hal David, *Promises, Promises* had real songwriters who created completely integrated theatre songs. "No one had ever written music like this for the stage before, constant shifting rhythms, unusual harmonies and melodic intervals, dropping and adding beats, changing time signatures and key signatures seemingly at random, yet all in the vocabulary of 60's pop" (Miller, 2007: 112). In *Promises, Promises* orchestrator Jonathan Tunick made extensive use of electronic instruments for the first time in a Broadway musical, and used backing vocals sung from the orchestra pit. Although microphones had been used on Broadway since the 1940s, this was the first show to consciously create a 'studio' sound with a trained sound designer – pop record producer Phil Ramone – who won a Grammy Award for co-producing the original cast album. Ramone recalled that the Bacharach-David sound was "highly feared" because it was noisy and different, especially once the drums kicked in (quoted in Manning, 2001: 13). *Hair* and *Promises, Promises* opened in the same year and both made use of popular music idioms, rhythm section instrumentation and amplification,

a significant departure from the sonic identity of Robert Russell Bennett. Since musicals of the synthesised age encompass both the sonic identities of pop and rock, for the purposes of this research, the term pop/rock, as used frequently by Stempel (2010) and Miller (2007), satisfies the description of all musicals where the idiom is in any one or more of the American popular musics listed at the beginning of this scene, in which 'riff' and 'groove' based accompaniment – played by instrumentation of electric guitars, electronic keyboards, electric bass, drums – and amplification, are the constant and predominant forces. This is not to say that they are the exclusive forces. The presence of orchestral elements including strings, percussion, reeds and brass as supplementary instrumentation does not obviate the use of the term pop/rock.

One of the cardinal reasons that the worlds of musical theatre and pop and rock music have found difficulty coexisting lies in the compositional intent and purpose. The primary function of a theatre song is to convey information about storytelling, "A show song is a heightened action springing from a dramatic context, and as a result reveals character, develops situation, forwards plot. A pop [or rock] song has no such specific pressure and function. It is an entity to itself, which does not go anywhere" (Frankel, 1977: 81). In the structural convention of the musicals of the Golden Age, speaking characters for example suddenly burst into song, a device that is anathema to rock music. Grant goes further in his comparison of the melodic and harmonic aspects of the rock song versus the theatre song. He claims that rock songs are most frequently constructed of "chains of minimelodic curves that correspond to the improvised melismas of rock's vulgate bel canto. Melisma is improvisatory and mutable. Melody must have something stable and immutable to imprint itself on the ear and the memory" (2004: 46-49). He adds that rock songs have a static and blocklike harmony that lacks the dynamic, functional, chromatic harmony of the [Golden Age] theatre song. If the harmonic changes are static, and the melody mutable, the rhythm is anything but; the groove is the cornerstone of rock. Whether it's the muted bass groove that instantly identifies Lieber and Stoller's *Stand By Me* (1960), the jagged angularity of the guitar groove of Led Zeppelin's *Whole Lotta Love* (1969), or the pulsating quarter-note groove of the Black Eyed Peas' *I Got A Feeling* (2009), in pop and rock it is the rhythmic construct that is pushed to the forefront.

In no better place are insistent *ostinato* figures, driving hard-rock licks, electro-dance pop pulses, tango rhythms and gospel grooves more evident than in *Rent* (1996) which, in my view, became the first musical in decades to breathe new life into the Broadway musical, and which possibly signalled the beginning of the end of the great divide between the worlds of musical theatre and popular music. Composer Jonathan Larson's lifelong goal was to successfully combine the Broadway tradition with contemporary pop and rock music, a seemingly impossible task at which many before him had failed. As a protégé of Stephen Sondheim, Larson's score was dense in its melodic and harmonic complexity all in service to the storytelling and character interaction. Larson dubbed *Rent* a "*Hair* for the 90s" (McDonnel, 1997: 8) and, as numerous as the divergences are from *Hair*, there are just as many parallels. As in the case of *Hair*, the genesis of *Rent* began Off-Broadway where alternative, less mainstream creations, find an enabling space for experimentation. Like *Hair* in the 60s, *Rent* held up a mirror to a cross section of youth in the 90s who rejected the norms of contemporary society, expressing themselves in a rock musical idiom.

Despite the instrumentation of a five-piece rock band and a significant amount of groove-driven material, *Rent* has not always been considered an authentic rock score as was percipiently noted by Stephen Trask, one of the composers of *Hedwig and the Angry Inch,* who remarked contemptuously: "*Rent* isn't rock music. It just isn't. It's theatre music played with guitars and drums" (Manning, 2001: 16). In my interview with New York-based composer, music director, orchestrator, and dance arranger Sam Davis, he elaborates on Trask's observation, illustrating how the sound of Broadway has shifted significantly since the quintessential Golden Age sound:

> In *Rent*, the lyrics and the character development in the songs, and the way that there are always perfect rhymes [that] come out of conversational passages, that's not real rock music. It's just rock-influenced music just like *Fiddler on the Roof* is not Klezmer music, it's Klezmer-influenced. And *Once on this Island* is not real Caribbean music but it's influenced by Caribbean music. So *Rent, Fiddler on the Roof* and *Once on this Island*, as different as they are, have a Broadway sound just influenced by different musical genres and styles. They all have ride-outs and buttons and key changes. The second chorus of the opening number of *Rent* goes up a whole step just like 'Wilkommen' [from *Cabaret*] does because that is theatrically effective. You need buttons in the theatre for the audience to know when to applaud. You

> can't have fade-outs because that's a recording technique. *Dreamgirls* is Motown-influenced theatre music. And it sounds like Broadway, but with a different sound than *Hello, Dolly*. In the 40s they didn't have that many different types of scores. Now we have a huge variety of scores. So what defines a Broadway sound has become a lot more than boom-chick-boom-chick-boom-chick (2012).

Davis' commentary suggests that, despite musicals being influenced by a range of styles and idioms, there are numerous identifying characteristics of theatre music that separate it from pure rock music (or any other popular musics). These characteristics noted by Davis – ride-outs, buttons and key changes – are three examples of arranging techniques that are primarily motivated by theatricality rather than musicality, a notion that I explore in greater detail in Scene Four.

Also developed in the exploratory domain of Off-Broadway, *Hedwig and the Angry Inch* (1998) is a work rich in the traditions of alternative rock, glam-rock, punk and grunge, with a story involving a title character who has undergone botched sex-change surgery and is confused about his/her gender. *Hedwig* was unusual in so many ways, not the least being that the entire work, every note of music, is realistic; the character of Hedwig sings because she's performing a concert in real time. Trask, who was the front man of a rock band called Cheater, and whose background was rock music and not theatre, said, "Most rock musicals are just silly because they're made by people who don't know anything about rock music" (quoted in Miller, 2003: 193). *Hedwig and the Angry Inch* offers one the most successful blends of rock and musical theatre because "not since *Hair* had a musical succeeded, not by integrating the divergent traditions of rock and musical theatre so much as allowing them to co-exist" (Stempel, 2010: 666; Wollman, 2004: 322).[17]

If co-existence was the means by which *Hedwig* succeeded in bringing the clashing worlds together, it has to be asked whether anyone *has*, in fact, succeeded in fully integrating rock and pop with musical theatre. Despite his penchant for unashamed commercialism, I cannot ignore Andrew Lloyd Webber (*Jesus Christ Superstar* defined the direction of my musical life, after all). He has an uncanny instinct for melodic and thematic construction, the intuitive gift of the Golden Age composers.

[17] *Hedwig and the Angry Inch* has been revived in 2014, this time as a Broadway production earning eight Tony nominations as of the writing of this thesis.

Yet, as is particularly evident in *Jesus Christ Superstar* and *Evita* (1976), he also has an innate ability to cunningly situate these gloriously theatrical and dramatic melodies comfortably within rock and pop grooves and contexts.

Although *Hair* was embraced as the first rock musical on Broadway one has to consider whether it properly redefined the course of the musical in terms of its use of rock band instrumentation and its incorporation of American popular musics. Because while the death of the theatre-song-as-pop-song posed challenges to traditional theatre composers who clung desperately to the identities that their predecessors had defined for fifty years prior, forward thinking composers like Andrew Lloyd Webber reinvented the art form by successfully synthesising pop and rock music with classic operatic melodic and harmonic structure and form. The tradition-bound art form of musical theatre was irrevocably destined to evolve in a world dominated, at different times, by Billboard Charts, YouTube, instant music downloads and ‘American Idol’.

ACT I

SCENE THREE

"Bit by bit putting it together" (Sondheim)

Stephen Sondheim once quipped: "Musical comedies are not written; they are rewritten".[18] Despite the truth to this understatement, it provides no insight into the series of developmental processes that encompass the revisions that a musical undergoes on its way to the Broadway stage – a journey that has been known to take as long as ten years from the first draft of the composition, lyrics and script; and even then does not guarantee that it will enjoy critical and box-office success.[19] Legendary Broadway music director Paul Gemignani offers the following summary of a song's metamorphosis from composer's pencil to final performance, emphasising the inevitability of collaboration in the creation of a musical: [20]

> Usually, you [the music director] get the song from the composer. He plays it for you, tells you what he thinks, tells you how if fits into the score. You do any vocal arrangement that is necessary. When that is done and everybody is signed off on it – the composer, the director, the choreographer and anybody else who has to sign off – it goes to the orchestrator. You give him instructions, meaning, you tell him what you feel about the song, the composer tells him what he feels about the song, you give him as much info as possible to create an atmosphere or a scene around this piece of music. Sometimes an arranger or music director will disagree with a composer. That speaks to his creative input. Any art form other than painting, or the initial composing of a piece of music, is a collaborative art form. The more minds you have around something, the more minds you have talking about a song, the better it is going to be eventually. I am yet to run into a composer who is not open to this idea ('Arrangers and Musical Directors', 2009).

Gemignani's explanation is an accurate, yet possibly over-simplified account of what happens at the nexus of arranging, orchestration and music direction. His

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[18] Until the advent of Rodgers and Hammerstein's *Oklahoma!* (1943), what we know now as the musical was called the musical comedy. The quote used here is commonly attributed to Sondheim; although the original source is unknown, it is to be found on numerous websites.

[19] *Leap of Faith* (2012), a score composed by Alan Menken, took ten years from first reading to eventual Broadway production, only to close within a month of opening due to poor reviews and attendance.

[20] Gemignani received a Tony Award in 2003 for Lifetime Achievement in the Theatre for his consistently outstanding music direction and commitment to the theatre.

explanation does not elaborate on the processes within which this nexus occurs nor does it suggest a time span. In Scene One, I introduced the musical forces that collaborate on the creation of a musical – the composer, music director, arranger, orchestrator, dance arranger and vocal arranger. I provided some insights into the dynamics between these forces, explaining how they sometimes overlap, and how more than one practice may be attributed to the same person. There is no fixed combination of these forces and the permutations of a creative team may vary from one musical to the next. Due to the paucity of literature on this subject I draw, instead, on the rich material from my informants to discover further perspectives into some of these forces, and how they operate within the developmental stages of a musical's genesis.

I begin by sketching a broad picture of the traditional developmental processes that have historically taken place once the first draft of a musical has been written. I stress that these processes are not strict or formulaic in structure and the variables are infinite; some processes may recur a number of times, some may be skipped entirely and the time frame from initial phase to final Broadway production can take anywhere from a few months to a number of years. The unique requirements of every musical, from creative decisions and disputes to economic factors, dictate the course and direction of these processes.

The process begins with a table reading, typically involving the key creative team of the book writer, composer, lyricist, producer, music supervisor, music director, choreographer and director sitting around a table reading the script without the involvement of actors. In this phase, the expression of the music may be a simple piano accompaniment by the music supervisor, music director or composer. With the broad range of music software available today, composers may create a scratch midi recording with a basic suggestive arrangement that could include programmed drums, strings and vocal harmonies. According to music director Brent-Alan Huffman, the most significant changes to script, lyrics and composition are made after the first table reading.[21] A second table reading frequently takes place which

[21] Huffman, who was music director of the Broadway productions of *Sister Act* (2011) and *Leap of Faith* (2012) – both composed by Alan Menken – was involved in the creative processes of both

involves some actors reading and singing multiple parts. Further changes are made which may require songs to be cut, added, or revised depending on the needs of character or narrative information. Since every musical has its own singular set of demands, there are any number of ways in which these readings are executed. For example, at a recent table reading of the forthcoming *Hunchback*, in addition to actors reading parts there was a small ensemble that had been booked to sing because the score has a significant choral element that impacts on the overarching tone and narrative of the musical. (Huffman, 2014) In this instance, hearing a suggestion of what these choral parts might sound like could clarify a number of other creative choices.

Following the table readings is the '29-hour reading' entailing a rehearsal process and a presentation that typically utilises actors who learn the songs and read the script but who are not required to memorise anything. This reading is neither fully staged nor choreographed. The fixed time frame is imposed by Actors' Equity who permits Union actors to work for twenty-nine hours spread over a period of no more than two weeks at a total salary of $1000 US. The music director has, in all likelihood, written vocal arrangements by now and keys may be altered to suit the actors. For example, a role which may have been originally written with a tenor in mind may have a baritone singing it in the reading. These readings could be accompanied by solo piano, or sometimes piano, bass and drums, and possibly a second keyboard. Orchestrations have not usually been written at this stage so the hired musicians are generally good rhythm section players capable of on-the-spot improvisation who receive a piano-vocal part to work from and create their own accompaniment. This method is an extension of a traditional popular music practice in which an improvisatory approach is used to create rhythm and groove-driven music. The improvised accompaniments that emerge in the 29-hour reading (or in later stages) are often transcribed and given to the orchestrator because what has transpired serves the creative process and the creative team wants to preserve the organic developments emerging during these early stages. For example, on *Dreamgirls* (1981), many of the rhythm parts were created in the rehearsal room by pianist Miles Chase and the original drummer. Since these rhythm parts then formed

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musicals. He is currently working on the development of *Hunchback*, a stage adaptation of Disney's animated film *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*, also composed by Menken.

an essential component of the sound of the show, orchestrator Harold Wheeler basically took what everyone had played in the rehearsal and added a brass section. (Davis, 2012). The issue of credit and rights ownership of the original ad hoc improvisations remains a subject of on going contention.

The following stage of development is the workshop phase which, according to Actors' Equity, is a five-week process in which actors are paid full salary for the period and involves extensive rehearsal and a presentation. Unlike readings, actors are required to memorise everything during the workshop phase. There is a contractual obligation on the part of producers that any actors used in the workshop are automatically attached to the subsequent production. By this stage, the dance arranger is on board and works with the choreographer as some musical numbers are choreographed for the workshop. The final presentation is performed for an audience of invited guests that includes backers, investors, producers, co-producers, designers, and finally, the orchestrator is officially brought in. With orchestration being a key feature of the sonic identity of a musical, it is ironic that the orchestrator comes into the process so late in the development and, as Gemignani indicates above, only after so much has been signed off and agreed to by other members of the creative team.

Historically, the next phase is a rehearsal period for a fully realised production that runs for a short season of anywhere between a few weeks and several months, and historically takes place outside of New York City away from the glare of Broadway scrutiny. This is known as the 'out-of-town-try-out', the last stop before the Broadway production. Revisions, cuts, edits, additions, replacements, amendments and so on occur throughout each and every one of the abovementioned processes, and continue right through the preview performance period of the Broadway mounting, until the musical is considered 'frozen', a term that is understood by the profession to mean the moment when no more changes occur.

Very recently, Actors' Equity instituted an intermediate development phase which occurs between the 29-hour reading and the workshop, or may even replace one of these. Called a 'lab', it permits the employment of Union actors for a maximum of forty hours. The important distinction here is that this phase provides the creative

team with latitude to develop the work without obligation to carry the actors that are involved in the developmental stages into the final production. With frequent revisions being made to so many creative aspects, which may include changes in character descriptions and evolving storylines, if the team is legally bound to a particular casting choice, this can become creatively restrictive. The newly instituted lab circumvents that obligation.

The above description covers the developmental processes in very basic terms. In contemporary pop/rock musicals, however, the paths of development can be as diverse as the musicals themselves. The variations within different genres of pop or rock, rap or hip-hop and so on, demand that a musical creative team is familiar with music production techniques, electronic instrumentation and amplification – all pre-requisites of current pop/rock musicals – that have evolved into the creative practice of sound design. I asked Stephen Oremus whether he considers sound design as a creative component in the developmental stages when he is arranging a new musical, or whether it comes later. In answer, he spoke about the creative process of *Kinky Boots* (2012), composed by 80s pop icon Cyndi Lauper, on which Oremus worked:

> Until we get to the crucial point of moving forward with amplified sound, we do readings and workshops acoustically with a piano. I have been working with Cyndi Lauper on *Kinky Boots* and we did that for a long time. It was just like me and her and a guitar. A couple of times we had drums. But the last few times before the big workshop, it was piano, a little acoustic guitar and Cyndi Lauper. But when it came time to do it with a larger band including bass, guitar, drums and two keys, and because we were using so many electronics as far as loops and electronic drums, we needed to go to that next level and work with the sound designer who could really do that pop thing and still make it feel like it was organic in the room and that we were all experiencing it for the first time. It's never a matter of figuring it out during the creative process, thinking as I'm arranging it…well…unless there are special effects. But in general it's more of just kind of adding it when it needs to be added (2012).

Developed over a period of three years, *Kinky Boots* followed traditional patterns of development to an extent. But since Lauper is a pop artist and is used to music production as an essential creative component, in addition to live musicians the developmental process of *Kinky Boots* introduced divergences from the norm such as the inclusion of electronic drums and loops, both elements of a musically 'produced' sound.

In addition to the creation of new musicals, Broadway is always peppered with revivals of existing works. A remounting of an original production does not necessarily constitute a revival, as a revival is very often a re-imagining that calls for a creative team to revisit, reread and re-workshop to achieve a new vision. Occasionally revivals are more successful than the original productions.[22] *The Wiz* opened on Broadway in 1975. With an original score by composer Charlie Smalls that drew on the styles of 70s rhythm 'n blues, soul and disco, *The Wiz* was a retelling of the *story* of *The Wizard of Oz* designed for an African-American cast. As a means of illustrating the differences between the arranger, orchestrator and music director, and how these forces interact, Ron Melrose describes a situation in the 2006 revival of *The Wiz* that was staged at La Jolla Playhouse in San Diego. While this was not a Broadway revival, the process described is nonetheless relevant:

> One of its stated goals was to take the score, honour it, and say that black music has come a long way since the 70s to the turn of the new century. How do you update it while being respectful to it? How do you create a *Wiz* for now? And for other storytelling and dramaturgical reasons we wanted to make some changes. We had a gift in Harold Wheeler who is the original orchestrator and the orchestrator of our changes. For instance, 'Be A Lion', which is in the [original] score as a solo for Dorothy, we wanted it to be a duet between Dorothy and the Lion. You can't just say to an orchestrator 'Here's the cast album, go do it in 12/8'. I had to sit and figure out the dramatic story of how 'Be A Lion' evolves, when does the Lion take over, what does Dorothy do after the Lion takes over, what should the key relationships be between their sections partly based on the talent I had in the room for that production and partly based upon what made the arrangement soar. After I had an arrangement, and I am sort of in the middle… I do a complete piano staff and two lines above that, plus vocals, suggested counter melodies or sometimes three word phrases for the orchestrator. I was able to present to Harold and say 'Okay instead of this in this key for one person, it's this many bars in these keys for two people, and here are the key moments, and here's how I want to get from this key to this key, and this is where I want to stretch the melody by adding a bar and I hear reeds here, I don't know why but I feel like it reverts to an almost Scriabin sound right there'. He takes that away and all of a sudden it becomes large sheets covered with music for a ten piece band, twelve piece band, synthesizers whatever, and you sit down at the band rehearsal and you listen to it and you cry 'cos there is stuff that Harold added to that that you didn't dream of but everything that he is doing is based on an arrangement he was handed which in turn is based on a song or songs that I was handed. So as music director I was responsive to my director saying that we need something special here – 'what if they both sing?'. As arranger I took that idea of what if they both sing and try to make a great powerful

[22] The original production of *Chicago* opened in 1975 and ran for only three years. The current revival has been running for eighteen years and is the longest running revival in Broadway history.

> arrangement that would lift both characters, tell the story and get the audience on its feet plus give enough information to an orchestrator that he, working 250 miles away at four in the morning, could come back with something that not only supported what the show was looking for but went past it due to his creativity (Melrose, 2012).

In the last three decades the role of the music director in the creative process has shifted due to the emergence of the music supervisor, a position that is accepted within the profession as senior to the music director in terms of creative decision-making and responsibility. The music director is no longer the creative decision-maker at the top of the music pyramid. My interviews reveal inconsistent views as to when the role of the music supervisor formally came into existence; one view is that it was instituted in the mid-70s with *A Chorus Line* (1975) to ensure that all mountings of the production, subsequent to the monumentally successful Broadway run, preserved the integrity of the original; other views cite the British invasion of Broadway in the 1980s, beginning with *Cats* (1982), in which David Caddick was the music supervisor.[23] His primary function as supervisor was to monitor and ensure that every production of *Cats* across the globe adhered to the template of the original. "I think that supervision is largely protecting the show or that there has been a production on one side of the pond and now a supervisor comes to make sure the other side of the pond is faithful to the vision" (Melrose, 2012). Regardless of when the music supervisor was introduced, it is now a firmly entrenched position on almost every new musical.

Brent-Alan Huffman has been the music director on three developmental processes of major musicals all composed by Alan Menken, two of which have had Broadway productions and one which is still in development, and all of which have been supervised by Michael Kosarin. Huffman clarifies the distinction between the roles of the music supervisor and the music director and speaks directly to my research by offering invaluable insights into why the role of the music director in the creative process is so underestimated and misunderstood:

[23] If The Beatles led the British music invasion of America in the 1960s, British producer Cameron Mackintosh was the musical theatre equivalent in the 1980s. He reinvented the way musicals were marketed, by creating instantly identifiable logos of franchised 'mega-musicals' that would be identical no matter where in the world they were produced. In so doing, the disparaging term 'McMusicals' was coined.

> Koz [Michael Kosarin, the music supervisor] is Alan Menken's right hand man and does all the arrangement. Koz is the one who is going to determine where a *ritard* is and how much it is and what's the difference between a *ritard* and a *rallentando*. He has very specific ideas about the difference between the two, which may not translate to the next supervisor. In our team, [as music director] I am the teacher and the conductor and the scheduler. I have very little to no artistic input into these shows. I pretty much execute and he is the overall decision maker. You are the point person for so many people: stage managers, choreographers, assistant choreographers, cast members, the composer, the dance arranger; the copyist needs your attention; stage managers want to schedule things. You are the point person for so much happening at one time and that part is underestimated. The amount of compartmentalisation you have to have going so that you can be handling all these things at one time, I don't see any other position that is quite like that except for stage managers. Then at 6 o'clock I quietly collapse into my chair. I enjoy the silence of the room so much. And then I grab a bite and from 7 or 7.30 until 2,3,4 in the morning, the amount of work that I have to do is completely overlooked. No one knows the number of hours that go into making sure that every comma has been fixed in the score, that every dialogue change that someone made in the room when you weren't there has been noted… did you get that from the stage manager and put it in the score? On our team we are meticulous beyond belief to make sure that our piano vocal scores are properly updated. It's necessary but thankless (2014).

Despite the challenges of the job, Huffman acknowledges that there are three events that make the tedious aspect of being the music director in the creative space worthwhile: first, teaching the score and making a connection with the cast; second, the *Sitzprobe* – that unrepeatable moment when the cast hears the never-before-heard orchestrations for the first time; third, recording the cast album, preserving the aural record of the score without the distraction of any other creative elements. "Teaching, *Sitzprobe* and cast album. These [events] each happen only one time. So for however long you run a show, you never get to do those again" (Huffman, 2014).

While the music supervisor and the music director are generally two different people, there are times when they are one and the same person for a limited period, where one person is both decision-maker and conductor. (I reiterate how duties can overlap and one person can hold multiple credits.) For example, David Caddick was both music supervisor and music director (conductor) of the original Broadway productions of *Cats*, *Phantom of the Opera* and *Sunset Boulevard* (1994). Similarly, Stephen Oremus carried both titles when *Wicked* and *The Book of Mormon* (2011) first opened on Broadway. After a period of conducting the productions, the conducting duties were passed on, whereas Caddick and Oremus retained their music supervisor positions, always approving changes in cast, auditioning new

music directors and overseeing the musical execution of all subsequent productions. If a music supervisor is in place, and s/he is the creative decision-maker, the question may arise as to why the music director, stripped of creative decisions, isn't simply called the conductor. Stephen Oremus responds by noting the many other duties undertaken by the music director which I address more fully in Act II Scene 3:

> For me to just give someone a conductor credit when they are there every day making that show sound as great as it can sound, it isn't fair. I wouldn't want that if I were them. I would want to be the music director of that production. The music supervisor might say 'I'm in charge of the music directors' but that person is maintaining my original music direction in so many ways (2012).

A specific type of arranging that enters the developmental process at a certain stage is dance arranging, a form of composition using existing thematic content. For example, the ballet in *Oklahoma!* (1943) has nothing to do with composer Richard Rodgers other than that he wrote the melodies used in the ballet. Dance arranger David Krane explains further:

> You are given a song and the song is simply sixteen or thirty-two bars. And we know from the very beginning that it is going to be developed into a huge dance number. There is usually a goal that happens with the number based on the story. What a dance arranger basically does is create an entire three-act play from what is usually a minute worth of a song. We discuss, we work in a room with the choreographer and we figure out what the steps are going to be, but also what the goal in the number is. All of this would happen without the director or the composer in the room ('Arrangers and Musical Directors', 2009).[24]

The dance arranger and vocal arranger enjoy royalty participation and stand-alone credits due to the distinctly specialised nature of both practices. Despite being a dance arranger of recent Broadway musicals, Sam Davis feels that dance arrangers get too much credit even though he enjoys royalty benefits.[25] In the Golden Age, dance arrangers such as Trudie Rutman, who wrote the entire Uncle Tom ballet in *The King and I*, did not receive a royalty. "In those days, dance arrangers were simply rehearsal pianists who contributed [to the end product]" (Davis, 2012).

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[24] David Krane's dance arrangement credits include the Broadway productions of *Kiss of the Spiderwoman* (1993), *Victor/Victoria* (1995), *Ragtime* (1998) and both the 1998 and current 2014 revivals of *Cabaret.*

[25] Sam Davis was dance arranger for the Broadway revival of *The Mystery of Edwin Drood* (2012), *Scandalous* (2012) and *Big Fish* (2013)

Since the work of dance arranger precedes the orchestrator in the creative sequence of events, he/she tends to be more specific in his/her prescriptions to the orchestrator. For example, he/she may indicate an inner line, or create an extra staff above the basic piano sketch suggesting, though not enforcing, what instrument might play the line. This indicates to the orchestrator that the specific line is choreographically important. For choreographic luminaries like Bob Fosse, the dance arrangement was paramount to the success of his iconic stylised work.

It is commonplace for the music supervisor to also have the credit of vocal arranger.[26] This combination is driven by two motivations: first, financial benefit; second, the supervisor is almost always working in the same room as the director and the cast, and vocal arrangements are often created in that same space impelled by the needs of the story. Or, the supervisor may need to know, from a directorial perspective, which cast members are vocally available to him/her at a given moment. The second reason explains why supervisors are very rarely dance arrangers. Music supervisor Ron Melrose explains: "I can't do a good job of keeping my eye on the whole pie, certainly not coaching the principals, listening to the director, if I am off in the dance room. So I would choose always to be vocal arranger, never dance arranger" (2012).

I stated earlier that the orchestrator enters the creative process very late, only once numbers have undergone arrangement, revisions, workshopping and choreography has been set. Apart from the pressure of time required to complete the work, a good orchestrator will create orchestrations that feel like they have been there all the time and were not one of the last pieces of the creative puzzle. They should feel organic and not like an 'add-on'. I stated in Scene One that the sonic identity of acoustic age Broadway was created by the orchestrators. With primarily an orchestral palette at their disposal, the sound of those musicals is fairly homogenous. Through the past half century of the synthesised age, I believe that Broadway has lost its uniform sonic identity due to the eclecticism within the repertoire and the vast range of sonic options precipitated by popular musics and electronic instrumentation. *The Phantom*

[26] Tom Kitt carries both music supervisor and vocal arranger credits on *American Idiot* (2010); Stephen Oremus on *Tick, Tick… Boom* (2001), *Wicked, The Book of Mormon* and *Kinky Boots*; Michael Kosarin on *The Secret Garden* (1991)*, The Little Mermaid* (2008) and *Newsies* (2012).

of the Opera's quasi-classical orchestral score; the Irish indie-rock imbued *Once*; *Memphis* (2009) inspired by rock 'n roll and rhythm 'n blues; *The Lion King* (1998) with its cheesy faux-African score; *In the Heights*' fusion of salsa and hip-hop; and the variety of 'juke-box' musicals discussed in the previous scene, are all representative of the Broadway landscape of today and yet none of them possesses a common sound. Whereas in the acoustic age, there was a conscious move made by musical creators to solidify an instantly identifiable Broadway sound, in the synthesised age, it is as if they have swung in the opposite direction, trying to make every musical sound as different from one another as possible.

Consequently, today's orchestrators need a thorough grasp of a variety of styles, knowledge of writing for small and large acoustic ensembles, as well as writing for amplified rhythm sections and electronic instruments. Apart from writing for a rhythm section in a pop/rock context, they should be able to orchestrate successfully for an instrumental compliment of nine players and yet make them sound like nineteen. For example, *The Book of Mormon* is a fairly new musical but is not a pop/rock score. It is written with an old-fashioned sensibility paying loving homage to the Golden Age in moments of delightful pastiche. In March 2012 I was fortunate enough to be invited to sit in the orchestra pit at a performance of *The Book of Mormon* at the Eugene O' Neill Theatre on Broadway and discovered how many keyboards and electronic devices are used to create that old-fashioned acoustic sound. Synthesiser programming and sound sampling has evolved to such an extent that I had been deceived into believing that there was a full string section in the pit. Instead, all the string parts were being carried in the Keyboard 2 book. Today's sophisticated technology has all but perfected the string sound almost to the resin on the bow.

Synthesiser programming is considered its own specialised practice and many Broadway productions hire a programmer, usually at the recommendation of the music supervisor and the orchestrator. The programmer selects the sound samples, such as fast strings or slow strings, sustained strings or pizzicato, and so on, in consultation with the orchestrator. S/he maps the keyboard and sets up an entire midi network to be able to execute the orchestrator's vision in a user-friendly playable manner.

The choice of instrumentation for a musical is decided upon by the orchestrator in discussion with the composer and the music supervisor. The size of the instrumentation is, however, dictated by the Music Union (Local 802) and the League of American Theatres who prescribe a minimum number of players determined by the size of the auditorium seating capacity. There are, however, exceptions to the minimum requirement rule. Pop/rock musicals may only require a rhythm section and, perhaps, one or two supplementary instruments. Motivation can be made for a smaller ensemble in the interest of musical integrity and, in these instances, producers can invoke what is known as the 'special situation' clause. Thus, for example, the punk-rock musical *American Idiot* only has a rhythm section and three strings, a number which is far below the Union required minimum of nineteen players for the St. James Theatre where it played.

One of the most integral instrumentalists in the creative process of a pop/rock musical is the drummer. Drummers who play Broadway musicals typically come from the jazz or rock worlds and they play in musicals because it is a well-paid job and provides a modicum of financial stability. Sean McDaniel, who is one of the leading drummers on Broadway, is something of an anomaly. He is a drummer who holds a Master's Degree in Musical Theatre Composition from NYU and for whom Broadway is a passion. Consequently McDaniel is frequently summoned to bring his creative expertise into developmental phases. Observing from behind a drum kit, McDaniel shares a hands-on account of the developmental and creative processes, describing how he, as a drummer, contributes to the end result. His observation paints a vivid image of the inter-dependence and collaboration of the disciplines discussed in this scene and also exposes the hitherto unknown creative input of ancillary participants such as himself; and he suggests how this input may be credited and acknowledged. The relevance of his observations is pivotal and so I include the following unexpurgated transcript from my 2012 interview:

> SM: Most people working on new shows don't realize that when I come in, I am reading off a lead sheet or a piano vocal. I do readings every year of new shows and I have gotten to the point where I can interpret a piano vocal and know what to play. And so it's a very fast process because the music director won't have to tell me what to play because I can read it down off the piano vocal. And so in the course of the reading I will just remember what I did everywhere and then at some point down the line I will notate it. With

Newsies, which was my best situation yet, I was hired and paid to write the drum parts. I wrote them in *Finale*, sent them to Brendan [the music assistant] and he put them in [orchestrator] Danny Troob's master score. I am hoping that on future Broadway shows, that that becomes the norm and I am hired to do that.

BS: Wouldn't one normally expect that the orchestrator does that or the arranger does that? So is that a shift in the development?

SM: I think it depends on the show. A lot of times an orchestrator will see a production being developed and they will say 'I like what you did here'. When a show is so heavily choreographed and the choreographer stands with the drummer and he is asking the drummer for things, the dance arranger is asking the drummer for things, there are times when the orchestrator doesn't want to rock the boat and so he will write what you did in the room because it's already become part of the show. A lot of times they will come into rehearsals and transcribe what the drummer is doing. For [*The Book of*] *Mormon* we had an intern that would just sit and notate what I was doing. It's a fine line because I don't want to overstep my bounds but a lot of times I am creating the parts. Depending on who the conductor or the arranger is, they will ask me for more things.

BS: So in wanting credit, how would you bill that credit?

SM: I am not sure. A friend of mine who has been doing the same kind of thing got credit on one show as additional orchestrations. I think that is what his credit was. A guitar player friend of mine got a credit that said guitar arrangements by… I think that's what it was.

BS: It begs the question, which I asked of Stephen [Oremus] the other day, and I get different opinions from different people. The line between the definitions of what is arranging and what is orchestration is so blurred. What is it for you?

SM: On Broadway and all the shows I have done, there is always a vocal arranger, a musical arranger and a dance arranger, sometimes all the same person, sometimes it's two different people, sometimes it's three different people. And most of the time on the shows I have done we get a pretty bare bones lead sheet, or a piano vocal from the composer, or the composer's work has been transcribed because they don't read music. And so a lot of times, it's like a really short piece of music. So then the arranger is going to start expanding that. I worked with a great arranger named Glen Kelly. He worked on *Mormon* and *Spamalot* with me. He worked on *The Producers* and practically co-wrote *The Producers* with Mel Brooks. So when he is in rehearsal he likes to be the one at the piano so most of the music is passing through him. So if the choreographer asks for a longer section, he will come up with something and then he will go home and finesse it. But for *Mormon* Glen was there just for dancing so Stephen [Oremus] would be for arranging. So, if it was a musical thing like expanding an intro or a verse, that would be Stephen's job. The dancing would be Glen's job. Stephen would always do vocals. So they're adding that stuff. And really the orchestration comes later. The orchestration in the shows I have done hasn't really added much to the drum part. Usually it's just voicing what the piano vocal has on it. And Glen Kelly will even get specific in his dance arrangements and put a third staff in

> his dance arrangements and sometimes he will even give instrument suggestions.
>
> BS: Are orchestrators open to that or are they territorial?
>
> SM: A lot are open. Some of them like to have more control and they just kinda do their own thing. Everything is so collaborative. With *Mormon* the orchestrators were Larry Hochman and Stephen but I came with the drums and the guitar player came with the guitar. Everything kind of evolved in the room.

I introduced this Scene with two concepts that underpin the nexus of arranging, orchestration and music direction: revision and collaboration. Successful collaboration is reliant on each person in a team respecting the others' creativity, expressing ideas in a way that is not threatening to the other members of the team. Don Pippin, music director of *A Chorus Line* advises: "Knowing your timing, when to come in with something that is a hot situation that you really feel is a hot situation is its own talent. You gotta know when to choose it. You gotta know how to do things in a very constructive way so they don't feel that you're criticizing them" ('Arrangers and Musical Directors', 2009). I conclude with a personal anecdote that epitomises this ethos.

In 1998 I attended one of the BMI musical theatre workshops in New York City.[27] The moderator of this particular workshop was Maury Yeston, the composer of the rich, sweeping orchestral score of *Titanic* (1997) the musical. When *Titanic* was in its preview season on Broadway, word on the street was that it was 'sinking', destined to be a disaster. Contrary to what was anticipated, *Titanic* opened to rave reviews and won five Tony Awards including Best Musical, Best Score and Best Orchestrations.[28] A member of the audience at the workshop asked Yeston how the musical transformed itself from near disaster to award-winning success. After explaining how songs and entire scenes were cut; how the cast performed one version at night and rehearsed a revised version in the day; how new songs went into the show for a few nights accompanied by a solo piano while orchestrator

[27] BMI is the largest music rights organisation in the U.S.A. according to its website www.bmi.com. It holds musical theatre writing workshops in New York City on a regular basis. The workshops are platforms for new and aspiring writers to present material from a musical that they may be writing and affords them an opportunity to receive immediate feedback from the moderator and audience.

[28] Jonathan Tunick was the first recipient of the Tony for Best Orchestrations in 1997 when this award was finally introduced.

Jonathan Tunick furiously raced the clock to complete the orchestration of the new material, he concluded his discussion with a simple and powerful message: “Love what you do, but don’t be *in* love with what you do. Don’t be precious about anything. If it isn’t serving the story, get rid of it.”

ACT I

SCENE FOUR

"What is best in music is not to be found in the notes" (Mahler)

I have established that storytelling is the motivational thrust for the creative collaborators on a musical. With this in mind, I introduce the topic of dramaturgy. *An International Dictionary of Theatre Language* defines dramaturgy as "the art or technique of playwriting" (Trapido, 1985: 253). The Merriam-Webster dictionary defines dramaturgy as the "art or technique of dramatic composition and theatrical representation". While Wikipedia might not be viewed as a reliable or respected source of academic references, it nevertheless provided me with what I consider to be a rather astute description. It describes the dramaturg as: "the resident expert on the physical, social, political, and economic milieus in which the action takes place, the psychological underpinnings of the characters, the various metaphorical expressions in the play of thematic concerns; as well as on the technical consideration of the play as a piece of writing: structure, rhythm, flow, even individual word choices".[29] Joseph P. Swain's *The Broadway Musical* regards the traditional tools of composition – melody, its harmonisation, modulation, rhythm and texture – as elements of dramaturgy, and claims that "this sort of analysis has never been applied to Broadway stage music before" (2002: 6). Swain has formulated a means of analysing the relationship between dramatic content, context, storytelling and character development and musical composition in an attempt to provide an insight into the composer's craft as dramatist. He outlines his rationale as such

> The broad semantic range typical of western music, the very quality that makes it unsuitable for conveying fact and idea, makes it an ideal symbol of psychological or emotional action. The first association of a musical phrase with a character or situation carries over throughout the drama, and so not only the overt actions of the characters but also their thoughts and states of feeling become sensible to the audience. That is the rationale behind the *leitmotif*, a fragment of music that comes to represent a character or object of importance.

[29] In an exercise unprecedented in any rehearsal process of a musical with a South African company, at the commencement of rehearsals for the South African/Asian tour of *Jersey Boys*, Associate Director West Hyler, spent two and a half days discussing dramaturgy before the actors began work on the script. Time, place, socio-cultural history, character analysis, musical context, all formed part of this process.

> It is possible to deny music a dramatic role, then, only if one insists that drama is a product of words alone. Once anything else – stage gestures, facial expressions, lighting – is allowed to contribute, then music too must be admitted as a powerful and subtle analogue to the emotional and psychological action. To understand how music performs as a significant dramatic element in the Broadway tradition, a musical analysis is needed that connects the songs in their detail with the dramatic elements of plot, character and action (2002: 2).

I argue that in order to understand how music functions as a dramatic element in musical theatre, it must follow that all collaborative creative forces that contribute to this music should be evaluated in a holistic manner. To this end Swain's analyses fall short as they are limited to the work of the composer, ignoring the work of the arranger and orchestrator whose input propagates dramaturgical information beyond the boundaries of the composition. One of Swain's case studies is *West Side Story* (1957). In terms of the composition, Swain analyses Bernstein's use of thematic and motivic integration to communicate information about character and plot, a principle that is fundamental to my formulation of a method of analysis for this study (2002: 221-264). However, he makes no mention of the dramaturgical impact that the orchestrators Irwin Kostal and Sid Ramen could potentially have had on the process of creating *West Side Story*. Kostal recalled that "Bernstein took keen delight in his own creativity and jumped for joy whenever Sid or I added a little originality of our own" (quoted in Suskin, 2007: 16); and to identify exactly what their original contributions are would make for an intriguing study. Swain has, however, focused specifically on composition. While his study makes provision for original scores written specifically for the theatre, in limiting his analysis of the drama-music axis to composition only, his findings cannot hold true for the pop/rock 'jukebox' musicals such as *Mamma Mia* (2001), *All Shook Up* (2005), *Jersey Boys* (2005)*, Rock of Ages* (2009), *Million Dollar Quartet* (2010), *Motown* (2013) or *Beautiful – The Carole King Musical* (2014) all of which carry a narrative text – be they fictional or non-fictional. In these instances, the music was written originally for recording and stand-alone performance with no dramaturgical intention, but is now situated within a dramatic context. That said, Swain's study does not exclude pop/rock musicals written directly for the stage. He analyses *Godspell* (1970) – one of the earliest scores of composer Stephen Schwartz – and also gives a critical view of the scores of *Jesus Christ Superstar* and *Evita* (2002: 295-332). But even in these instances his analysis is

limited to the composer with no consideration of the work of the arranger and orchestrator.

Musicologist Paul R. Laird, on the other hand, has taken a leap forward in this regard in his expansive analysis of *Wicked*, the Stephen Schwartz musical that opened more than thirty years after *Godspell*. *Wicked: A Musical Biography* (2009) is one of the very few texts that has emerged in recent years that attempts to fully articulate the nexus of arranging, orchestrating and music directing; how these complex practices interact, and more importantly, how they serve the storytelling. Laird makes mention of the work of Ferencz and Suskin – both cited in this dissertation – as the only other notable literary references on this relatively under-explored topic, stating that "the arcane nature of the field has made orchestration one of the least understood of the specialties brought together to create a Broadway musical" (214).

Laird provides a detailed analysis of *Wicked*'s composition, outlining the various incarnations that the score underwent to arrive at the point that it is known today. He then analyses the orchestrations and explains how they relate to the storytelling, character development, dramatic intention and emotional thrust of the work (89-250). He describes the inextricable collaboration of music direction, arranging and orchestration between Stephen Oremus, Alex Lacamoire and William David Brohn. Oremus discusses the sonic environments that he helped Schwartz establish for *Wicked*, fusing the "grandiosity of the big MGM Musical" with elements of pop (Oremus quoted in Laird, 2011: 219). *Wicked* became a hybrid of so many styles deliberately designed to describe the "other world" of Oz (ibid.). While Schwartz's compositions are immensely detailed and thoroughly pianistic, *Wicked* would be unthinkable without its orchestrations and signature synthesiser sounds. Brohn orchestrated all the lush orchestral elements – features of the acoustic age – while Oremus and Lacamoire arranged the pop elements – features of the synthesised age – in addition to creating the vocal arrangements and incidental music. Oremus describes this collaboration as a "fluid process" with every element dependent on the needs of the story (ibid.).

Dramaturgy contextualises and elucidates storytelling and artistic vision. While Swain has postulated that composition is an element of dramaturgy, I offer the notion

that arranging and orchestration contextualise and elucidate the composition (as evidenced in *Wicked*). Therefore, I argue that contrary to Swain's thesis, these practices cannot be disregarded as dramaturgical devices. To expound my argument, I offer a very brief analysis of a profound example from the acoustic age written directly for the stage, namely 'Wilkommen' from *Cabaret* (1966) followed by more elaborate analyses of two musicals from the synthesised age, neither of which contain music written for the stage, namely *Jersey Boys* (which I have conducted), and *American Idiot*. *Jersey Boys* has a score comprised of songs written originally for radio; *American Idiot*'s score was adapted from a concept album.[30]

In *Cabaret* the setting is Berlin at the dawn of the 1930s with the beginning of the rise of the Third Reich. In 'Wilkommen', the opening number, the sinister narrating character called Emcee (M.C.) invites the audience into the seedy, decadent underworld of the Kit Kat Club, a den of iniquity and substandard talent but, nevertheless, a place where its patrons could escape for a few hours from the dark spectre of foreboding that loomed outside its doors. The orchestration of the original Broadway production of *Cabaret* featured two instrumental units; one which accompanied the inter-personal and plot-driven scenes that took place outside of the Kit Kat Club, and one for the presentational numbers performed in the club. The pit orchestra comprised four reed books,[31] two trumpets, two trombones, one horn which could be substituted by a third tenor trombone, accordion-celeste doubling, percussion, guitar-banjo doubling, two violins, viola, cello, bass. The stage band comprised tenor saxophone, trombone, drum set and piano. Orchestrator Don Walker, whose career had already spanned four decades by the time he wrote the orchestrations for *Cabaret,* became known for his jazz and swing-influenced orchestrations and predominant use of saxophones. In 1968 he reflected: "[I restricted] myself to productions that have a need for, and offer me the opportunity to create, a musical ambience supporting the story and the time and place of the play"

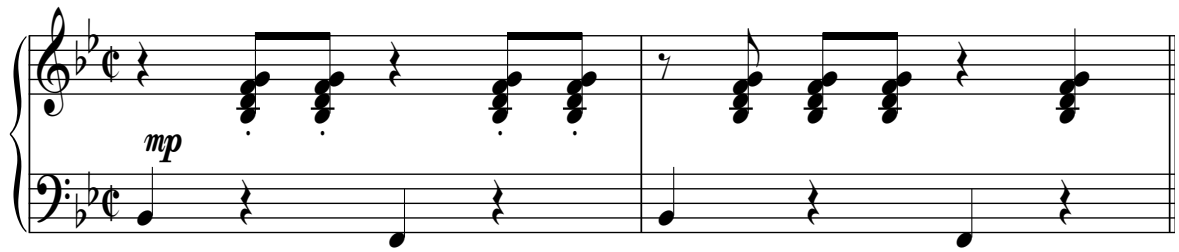
[30] A concept album is generally an album of studio recorded material in which all the tracks are linked lyrically and/or musically to a central idea, theme or story. Other examples of renowned concept albums include The Beatles' *Sgt Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band* and Pink Floyd's *The Wall*.

[31] In order to economise on the number of players in a Broadway pit, while maximising the spectrum of available orchestral colours, Broadway orchestrators frequently write multi-instrument parts for one player. In the context of musical theatre, the 'Reeds' is a collective noun that embraces all single and double reed instruments in addition to flute and piccolo. A number of musicals contain reed books that require up to four or five doublings. The Reed 1 book on *Cabaret* requires a player who can double Piccolo, Flute, E Flat Clarinet, B Flat Clarinet, Soprano Saxophone and Alto Saxophone.

(quoted in Suskin, 2009: 110). Such an opportunity was *Cabaret* and I examine an excerpt from 'Wilkommen' referencing both the original Broadway cast recording (*Cabaret*, 2009) and the piano-conductor vocal score (*Cabaret*, 1968).

The ambience that Don Walker speaks of is apparent from the opening two-measure vamp of 'Wilkommen' (see Ex. 1), a figure that evokes the Germanic gloom of composer Kurt Weill.[32] The tonic major VI chord is played in a close voiced repetitive eighth-note figure played by the banjo, piano and clarinets over an alternating movement of the tonic and dominant degrees of the scale on beats 1 and 3 played by pizzicato bass and bassoon.

Example 1: 'Wilkommen', *Cabaret* piano-vocal score, mm. 1-2.



This rhythmic figure is the motivic engine of the entire piece and it bounces along at a tempo that makes it both hypnotically inviting and curiously unsettling at the same time. The piece is a 24-measure A – A – B – A – C form which begins in B flat major sung by Emcee. Walker introduces the accordion as an echo of the last two eighth notes of the first stated melodic figure – scale notes sharp 5 resolving to 6. The end of the B-section features a five-note turnaround figure of eighth notes in the accordion and woodwinds starting on an F rising two semitones and resolving back down two semitones to the F before returning to the A-section of the form. The clarinets are playing soft long sustained background notes in the subdued lower range of the instrument contrasting the movement of the two-measure vamp figure and the intervallic vocal line. This sparing use of materials and timbral contrast in

[32] A vamp is the accepted term for a figure or passage of music that is repeated an indeterminate number of times.

instrumentation create a chilling starkness that subtly comments on the malevolence that lurks beneath the welcoming façade of Emcee.

Following the first cycle of the form, it repeats with the same instrumental textures, this time as underscore, with the clarinets stating the melody in 'sub-tone' (*sotto voce*) while Emcee delivers dialogue.[33] He returns to the vocal line from the turnaround at the end of the B- section to the end of the form. The opening vamp returns, this time underscoring more dialogue from Emcee, whose line 'even the orchestra is beautiful' is the cue to exit the vamp at which point the mood and feel change completely. The dynamic element shifts from *pianissimo* to *forte* as a full-measure drum solo introduces the onstage band within the Kit Kat Club. The trombone begins a raucous glissando on a B flat major slide on beat 3 of the same measure setting up the Vaudevillian character of the band. This B flat is now no longer the tonic but becomes the dominant note as the key modulates to E flat major. The trombone lands on a G above middle C – the third note of the scale of the new key – and is the primary instrument that states the melody through a boisterous instrumental rendition of the form coupled with the tenor saxophone. The out-of-tune piano fills the space at the end of the first two phrases with deliberately common descending scalar passages of eighth notes while the drums and bass play an even two-beat rhythm filling in between phrases with intentionally unsubtle woodblock and cowbell triplet figures. The Kit Kat Club would not likely attract a high calibre of musician and the whole effect here is one of a second-rate German *oom-pah* band whose playing style is somewhat brash and tasteless. The orchestration here reflects that and highlights the irony in Emcee's quip 'even the orchestra is beautiful'. At the end of that completion of the form the music snaps back to the pit orchestra playing the opening motif modulated up a half step to E major, brightening up the sound-world and bringing the focus back to Emcee.

Having introduced the band, the dynamic drops to *piano* as Emcee continues his dialogue over the underscoring, setting up the next variation of the 24-measure form that introduces the 'Cabaret Girls'. On cue, the first A-section of the form breaks into

[33] The use of the word 'underscore', 'underscored' or 'underscoring' as used in this scene refers specifically to music that is played underneath spoken dialogue rather than its alternate meaning of highlighting or emphasising, for example, the mood or dramatic action.

forte with a statement of the melody fully harmonised in the reeds and the brass and the drums playing out with accented cymbal crashes on beats two and four. Still in the key of E major this variation in orchestration and rhythmic feel evokes Burlesque and supports the shift in visual focus to the Girls. In the second A-section and the B-section the drums are *tacet* and the dynamic drops to *piano* as Emcee continues his dialogue, and at the end of the B-section we hear the Girls singing for the first time, at which point the key modulates up a whole step to G flat major for the final A and C sections of this cycle of the form. The end of the cycle has the music modulating yet again down a half step to F major for a choreographed sequence entitled 'Waiter's dance'.

Regardless of how many times the form of the piece is cycled in various orchestral guises, the constant switching from underscored dialogue to presentational sequence and back again establishes Emcee as both the charismatic Master of Ceremonies of the Kit Kat Club, as well as the ominous narrator of the entire musical. There are five subsequent modulations before the end of this opening number of the musical. Frequent and unexpected modulation is a commonly used device by Broadway arrangers and orchestrators to maintain momentum and interest, or to accommodate vocal and instrumental ranges at a given moment, or to elicit emotional and psychological responses triggered by the tone and colour of a particular key. Thus *Ragtime* (1998) composer Stephen Flaherty reflected on his collaboration with orchestrator William David Brohn saying, "much of our time was not spent talking about instruments but talking about emotion, drama and intent. We would talk about colors and how they might transform themselves into sounds" (quoted in Bryer, 2005: 21). From this brief discussion, it is clear that arrangers and orchestrators are also crucial creative agents of dramaturgy.

The above analysis introduces my argument that the composition alone cannot be held solely accountable as the musical tool of dramaturgy in the context of an acoustic age musical with material written directly for the stage. I now explore the argument for arrangement and orchestration as agents of dramaturgy more fully in the context of synthesised age musicals with material not originally written for the stage.

Set against a backdrop of crime, gambling, womanising, the Italian Mafia and blue-collar America in the 1960s, *Jersey Boys* is a biographical account of the emergence and eventual collapse of the pop band The Four Seasons and the resurgence of its lead vocalist Frankie Valli as the front man of a new pop group Frankie Valli and The Four Seasons.[34] *Jersey Boys* is an intriguing case study of how an arrangement impacts the successful subsuming of pre-existing non-dramatic music into a theatrical storytelling context. Drawing on my personal experience of working on the South African production (between 2012 and 2014), as well as information drawn from my interview with Ron Melrose, I limit the following discussion to a selection of arranging and vocal arranging techniques that Melrose deployed to achieve the vision of director Des McAnuff. In the following quotes taken from two other separate sources, Melrose introduces this vision and his own ideas for the treatment of The Four Seasons' material:

> The script basically had song titles where somebody had typed in everything they heard on the record. But we didn't want to do whole songs. We wanted to keep the ball in the air. Des said very early, 'Let's do Act 1 as a toboggan ride and Act 2 as a different toboggan ride. It doesn't want to be song/scene, song/scene, song. It wants to be this big, incredible, two-hour joyride'. So we were concerned about transitions and songs turning into other songs and orchestrating underscoring scenes (Cote, 2007: 48).

> Des gave me a huge amount of room to evoke The Four Seasons' records without recreating them. The pace of life has increased dramatically since their songs were released over 40 years ago so the tempos are faster. But ultimately storytelling was my most important job. The arrangements had to echo the emotional and narrative design of the play as it moves through each scene. As a vocal arranger and musical director, I was dealing with recordings all of which had their own arrangements. So I had to be very specific about generating the right sound. But my arrangements aren't identical to the originals. For example: 'Rag Doll' is sung at the end of the show – when The Four Seasons are inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame. That particular moment is about all four of the guys. But on the original recording, Frankie Valli sings the lead while the other three 'oooo' and 'aaaa' behind him. Since I don't want the song to be just about Frankie, I gave it a more balanced four-part harmony ('Jersey Boys', 2011).

McAnuff's deliberate metaphoric use of the term "toboggan ride" suggests an experience of fun and speed. Melrose serves this vision in a number of ways: first, to enhance the narrative and storytelling design as it moves through each scene, the

[34] The Four Seasons rose to success during the 60s in much the same period as The Beatles and The Beach Boys, selling over 100 million records.

device of a succession of movements from one incomplete song into another song, connected by underscoring and transitions, maintains the forward motion of the musical and propels the attention and interest of the audience, averting any expected aural resolution until such time as the story demands. Second, since the score is made up of radio-driven songs whose lyrics have no bearing on the narrative, the songs are used primarily to identify personal life markers and career milestones in the trajectory of the individual and collective lives of the four men who were The Four Seasons. This is not to say that the songs are necessarily used in chronological sequence of their original release date. While no storytelling information is explicit in the songs themselves, there are some songs, for example 'My Eyes Adored You', 'Beggin' and 'Fallen Angel', which are artfully positioned to reflect the emotional state of the character of Frankie Valli at given moments in the story. Third, the tempi of all the songs are faster than they were originally, a decision that not only supports McAnuff's vision but is also justified by Melrose's observation that the pace of life has increased from what it was forty years ago; and it is this pace of life to which an audience of today is accustomed and with which they can identify. For instance, the original recordings of the first three major chart hits of The Four Seasons – 'Sherry', 'Big Girls Don't Cry' and 'Walk Like a Man' – run at metronome markings of approximately 118bpm, 130bpm and 118bpm respectively. In the context of *Jersey Boys*, all of these songs – affectionately called 'The Big Three' by the creative and production personnel – are designed to run at a steady tempo marking of 132bpm in the musical.

In the dramatic structure of *Jersey Boys* the story of The Four Seasons is told from each of their points of view over four decades tracing their individual histories through the evolution and dissolution of the group. In the first forty-five minutes of the musical, the audience does not hear a single Four Seasons song. Instead, Melrose has selected twelve songs, some of which were written by Bob Gaudio – the Four Seasons songwriter – and some which were sung by Frankie Valli prior to the formation of The Four Seasons. Melrose had the following to say about his selection of songs for *Jersey Boys*:

> I researched the other singles of the era that knocked [the Seasons] off the top 10. I figured that would be important information to know. And when they wrote their songs it would tell me which one of their songs had worked best

> for the public, which of their songs are almost culturally shared property. Everybody knows this song; a few people know that song; a lot of people know this song but they don't connect it with the Seasons; a lot of people know a song in its original form and the Seasons covered it. I wanted the widest palette I could possibly have to evoke theatrical and storytelling things that weren't necessarily in the, let's say, huge but still only 25 song canon of the Seasons' hits. Now instead of only having 25 songs, I had 125 songs that tickled America's fancy in that era. And there might be a device that wasn't necessarily a Seasons device but that was so much a device of that era that all you have to do is perfume your arrangement with it and people know where they are (2012).

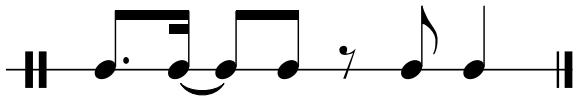
Melrose arranged these twelve songs in voicings and harmonies that are muddy and unsatisfying to the ear to provide a musical framework that evokes a constant feeling of searching without finding. The eleventh song in the score is 'Cry For Me', the moment in which the character of Bob Gaudio sings and auditions to become the fourth member of a band that has yet to find its sonic identity or its name. In 'Cry For Me', Melrose hints at the Four Seasons' sound for the first time making the audience aware that the search is almost over. The dramaturgical information conveyed here is that, after ten songs that are musically incongruous and vocally unfulfilling, it becomes apparent that the right four voices have finally come together but the wrong guy is singing lead. Eventually, at song number 13 the resplendent Four Seasons vocal harmony, with the unmistakable falsetto lead voice of Frankie Valli, is revealed in all its glory with 'Sherry', a moment that signifies an arrival both musically and dramatically. The arrangements here are more transparent, less muddy and more satisfying to the ear – in contrast to the early ones.

In theatricalising the original Four Seasons' songs, Melrose created what he describes as *his* versions of the Four Seasons' sound: "I used the bass of the chord differently. I didn't just transcribe their thing but I used their tricks. Here our voices are close together; here our voices are far apart; here we are where all four are singing something together; here we are where Frankie is singing something and the other three are singing something; I didn't use their solutions, I used my solutions but I was solving the same problems plus trying to tell a theatre story" (2012). One of those problems was how to emulate the recorded sound of The Four Seasons in a live theatre setting. During the audition process for *Jersey Boys* in South Africa Melrose once said to me informally: "the sound of four people singing is not four people, it's eight people". He was referring to how The Four Seasons sound was

created in the studio by doubling and multi-tracking the voices. Since *Jersey Boys* is performed entirely live with no pre-recorded vocals at Melrose's insistence, he solved the problem by utilising other available voices off-stage within the cast and band to double the vocal harmony parts sung by the actors playing The Four Seasons to produce a richer and fuller four-part harmony sound.

In 1975, Frankie Valli and The Four Seasons released one of their most successful and important hits '(December '63) Oh What a Night'. The primary hook of this song features a sexually driven groove whose roots are to be found in West African Ghanaian music, which found its way to the West via Latin American clave music and was frequently employed by rhythm and blues musician Bo Diddley throughout the 40s such that the groove became known simply as The Bo Diddley rhythm.

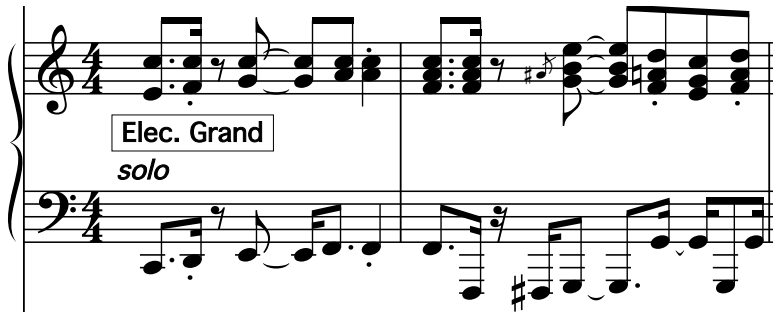
Example 2: The generic Bo Diddley rhythm.



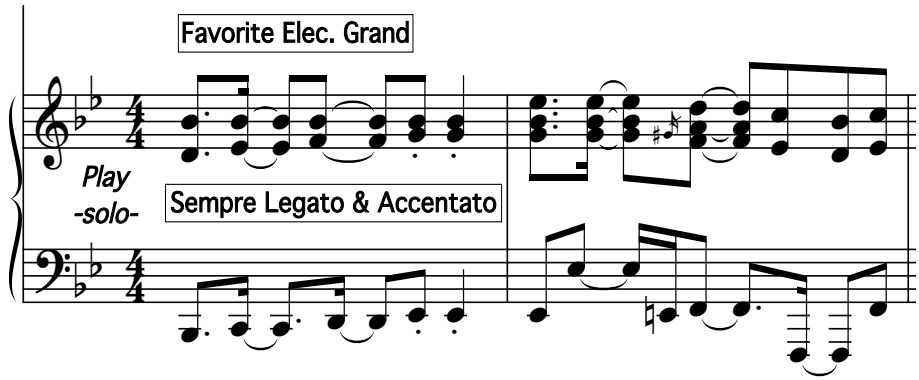
'Oh What a Night' is an AABA form tune in which composer Bob Gaudio utilised the Bo Diddley rhythm in the piano part for the A section of the tune.[35] Given the popularity of the song and the infectiousness of the groove, Melrose makes use of this Bo Diddley piano rhythm as a recurring motivic pattern that makes four separate appearances throughout the score in three different keys: C, B flat and G flat, each recurrence containing subtle embellishing differences and emotional resonances. In the examples below, Example 3 features the very opening measures of Act I in C major setting a tone for dramatic development and positivity. In Example 4, B flat is the original key of 'Oh What a Night' as sung by the Four Seasons in 1975. The first measures of Act II are shown in Example 5 in which the Bo Diddley rhythm is in G flat, a tri-tone apart from the C major beginning of Act I, a dissonant interval away suggesting a tone of cessation and negativity.

[35] Other well-known pop songs that are rooted in the Bo Diddley groove include 'Willie and the Hand Jive' (1958) by Johnny Otis, 'Faith' (1987) by George Michael, and 'Desire' (1988) by U2.

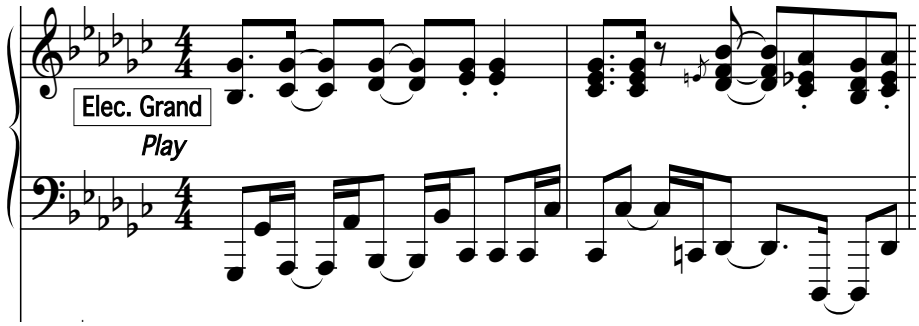
Example 3: ‘No. 1 – Ces Soiree-La’, *Jersey Boys* piano-vocal score, mm. 1-2.



Example 4: ‘No. 16 – Oh What a Night’, *Jersey Boys* piano-vocal score, mm. 1-2.



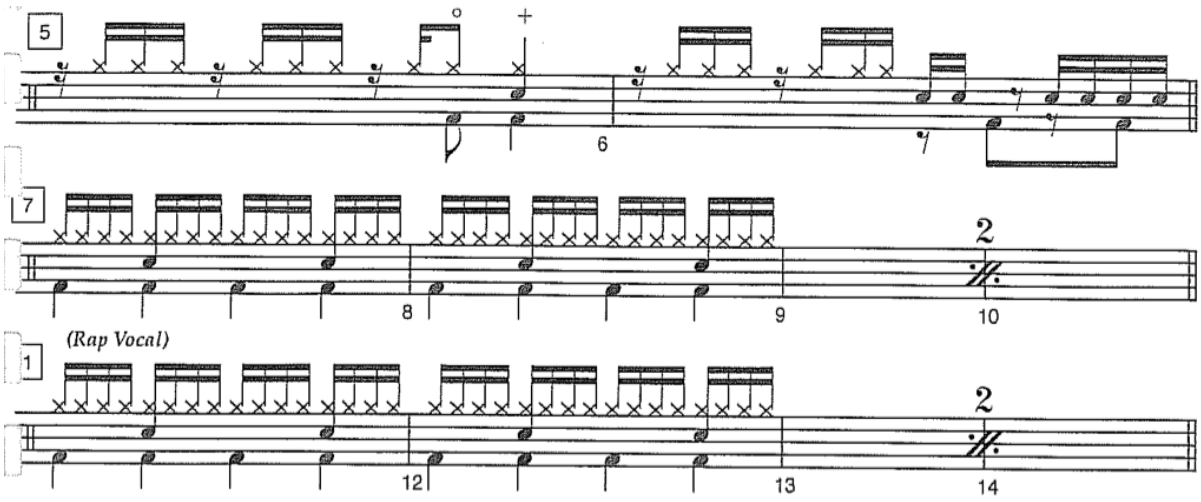
Example 5: ‘No. 20 – Big Man In Town’, *Jersey Boys* piano-vocal score, mm. 1-2.



The very top of the score begins in C major with the solo piano version of the groove that is instantly familiar to an audience. However, the hip-hop drum groove that enters at m. 7 diverts the attention of the audience to ‘Ces Soiree-La’ (2000), the hit for French rapper Yannick that contains original material while interpolating parts of

‘Oh What a Night’ including the Bo Diddley piano hook. Example 6 below shows the shift from the Bo Diddley drum groove at mm. 5 and 6 to the hip-hop groove in m. 7.

Example 6: ‘No. 1 – Ces Soiree-La’, *Jersey Boys* drum part, mm. 5-13.



This hip-hop groove is anachronistic to the rest of the musical but it serves to place the audience in a present day sonic environment before it segues into ‘Silhouettes’, a comfortable, easy, finger-clickable 12/8 groove typical of 1950s medium tempo ‘doo-wop’.[36] The effect of this segue creates a sonic perspective of time rewinding back roughly forty years. Song number 2, ‘Silhouettes’, introduces the audience to the antagonist of the musical, Tommy De Vito, and the story unfolds from his perspective.

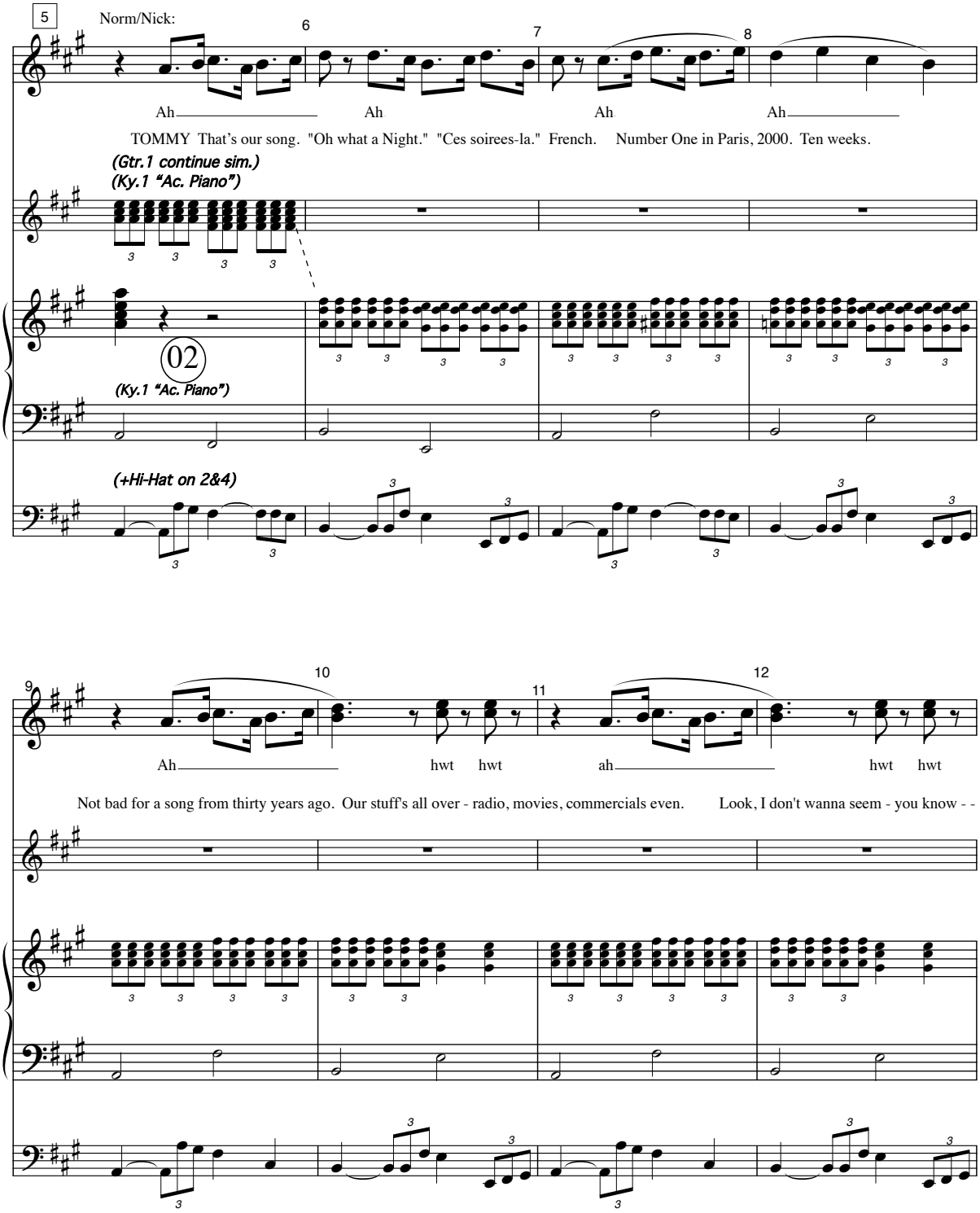
Melrose begins by underscoring Tommy De Vito’s opening dialogue with the tune of ‘Silhouettes’ in the key of A major. He creates an open-ended vamp measure which is exited on a dialogue cue to the next vocal section which remains in the key of A and is now sung by the character of Tommy. After sixteen measures of singing, Melrose shifts directly into F sharp major – the tonic major of the relative minor — for the next bit of underscoring that is similar in form to the first underscore, only this time the exit from the open-ended vamp measure modulates to B flat major for eight

[36] Doo-wop was a style of music that emerged in the 1950s and 1960s and was derived from early Rhythm and Blues. It typically featured vocal harmony groups who often performed on street corners and under streetlamps in major urban American centres. Musical characteristics include layered harmony parts and strong emphasis on beats 2 and 4.

measures of vocals before modulating to E major. The choice of this awkward tritone modulation is dramatically motivated by the introduction of the lead character and falsetto voice of Frankie Valli. After four measures, Melrose modulates again, this time to D flat major for four measures of underscoring that segues into Song number 3, ‘Apple of My Eye’. Melrose explained that his use of D flat major here was merely to ensure that all twelve tones make an appearance at least once in the score. The continual modulation of keys and avoidance of any cadential resolution is just one example of how Melrose arranges McAnuff’s intention to keep the action moving without stopping and to “keep the ball in the air”. While the lyric of ‘Silhouettes’ has no bearing on the storytelling, by introducing the audience to the character of Tommy De Vito through this song, Melrose establishes the melody of the song as a motif that later transmits dramaturgical information about the actions of Tommy, or the effect of his actions every time the motif recurs. The two most notable occasions of this recurrence are discussed below.

Example 7 shows eight measures of the ‘Silhouettes’ underscoring in its first appearance during the previously described song. The two-measure chord sequence is a straightforward I – VImin7 – IImin7 – V7 progression. There is, however, a curious variation in the second round of the chord sequence at m. 7. As opposed to VImin7, Melrose has used dominant chord VI7 as a ‘high’ secondary dominant that too remains unresolved and sustains tension. Here, the character of Tommy is delivering dialogue while the other two (Nick and Norm) who are with him on stage are stating the melody as a background *‘ah’*. The dialogue is not spoken in any fixed rhythm that relates to the tempo of the music or the melody of the underscoring. It is written into the score as a guide for the music director.

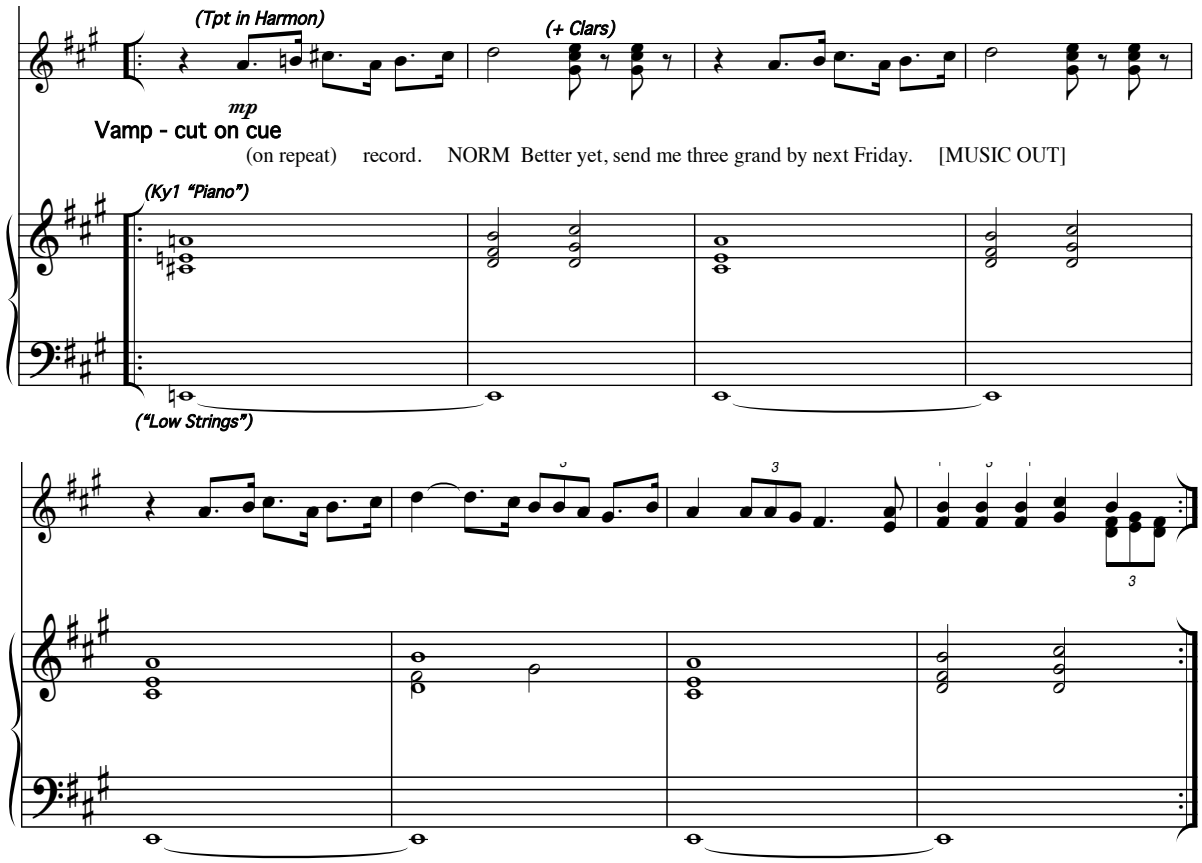
Example 7: ‘No. 2 – Silhouettes’. *Jersey Boys* piano-vocal score, mm. 5-12.



Shortly before the revelation of ‘Sherry’, The Four Seasons’ first major hit, Tommy meets with the loan shark Norm Waxman to get more money to fund the band’s recordings and the ‘Silhouettes’ motif recurs in its home key of A major. The melody

is played by a solo muted trumpet and the chord sequence is now varied. The progression in Example 8 starts on chord I but does not pass through VI and moves directly to IImin7 – V13 with a pedal bass on the E (forming an 11th chord on II and a 13th chord on V with a superimposed chord IIImin). The entire eight-measure sequence is underpinned by a pedal tone E that creates a second inversion on chord I and an implied suspension on chord II. The tension created by this progression heightens the drama of Tommy's mounting debt and his lies that inevitably spiral out of control as the story advances. A pedal tone implies musical non-resolution and in this situation it mirrors the unsettled debt as a point of dramatic non-resolution.

Example 8: 'No. 12a – Cry/Silhouettes Underscore', *Jersey Boys* piano-vocal score, mm. 21-28.

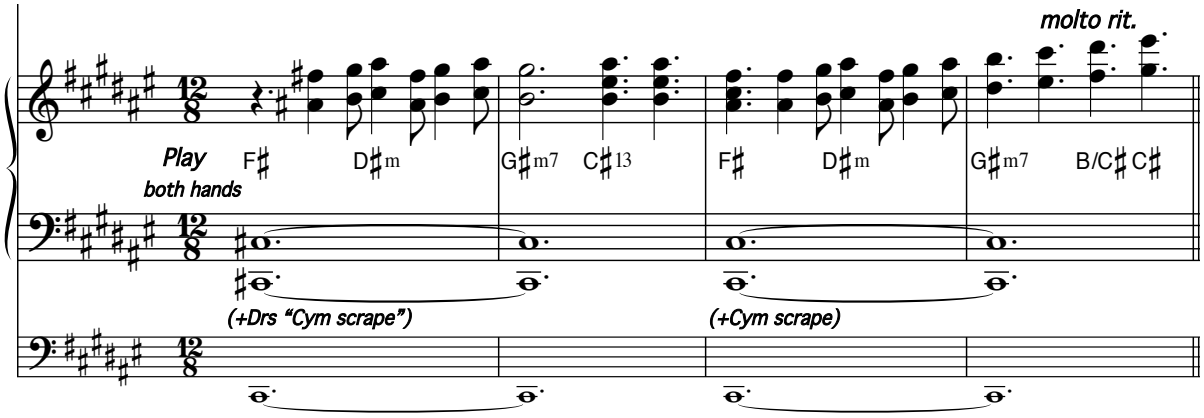


At the beginning of Act 2, it is clear from the story that The Four Seasons as a group are beginning to fracture. As much as Tommy De Vito was the force behind creating the group, he was ironically the cause of its demise. Apart from getting the band into

heavy debt, Tommy's image as the villain of the story properly manifests when he crosses the line by making advances on a girl Frankie is dating. Despite Frankie's anger towards Tommy over this issue, he understands the bigger picture of what is at stake if the group disbands and so he goes to the Mafioso Gyp De Carlo to cash in a favour to help Tommy. The Examples 9,10 and 11 below, demonstrate Melrose's use of the 'Silhouettes' theme, in varied arrangements that move systematically through a series of descending modulations – first, mirroring the literal physical action of descending to Gyp's basement and gutter level; and second, signifying Tommy's unravelling.

Example 9 begins with only a four-measure phrase, rather than the eight measures of the previous version, this time in F sharp major.

Example 9: 'No. 20a – 'Lorraine Underscores', *Jersey Boys* piano-vocal score, mm. 70-73.[37]

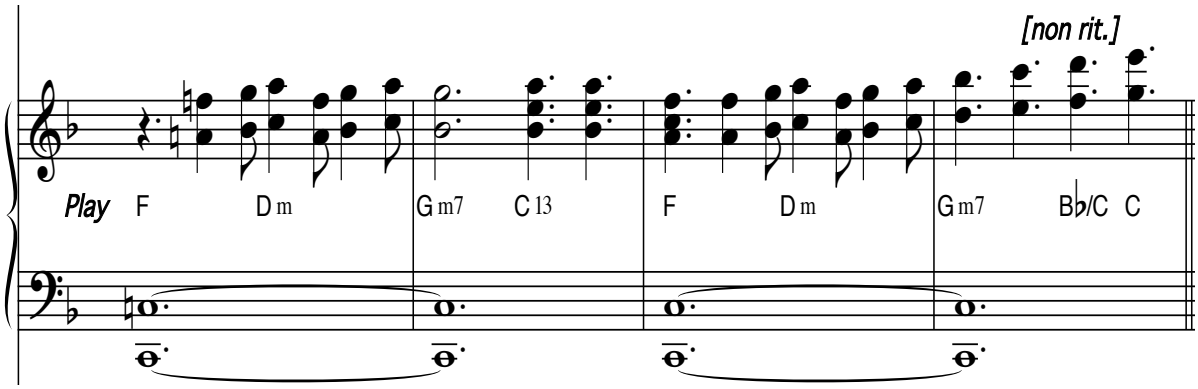


In Example 8, the tonic chord sustains and moves directly to chord IImin without passing through chord VI. In Example 9, with the melody line played in sixths in the piano, chord VI is implied but is masked by the tonality of the tonic chord, especially against the pedal tone of the second version. The sweet sounding, concordant sonority of the piano in sixths juxtaposed against the pedal tone C sharp creates the desired unnerving sense of anticipation. Melrose's intent on maintaining tension

[37] In Examples 9 and 10, The chord symbols are as they are in the score. The D# minor, for example, makes functional sense in the progression of the chord symbols but it is not an accurate reflection of the notation.

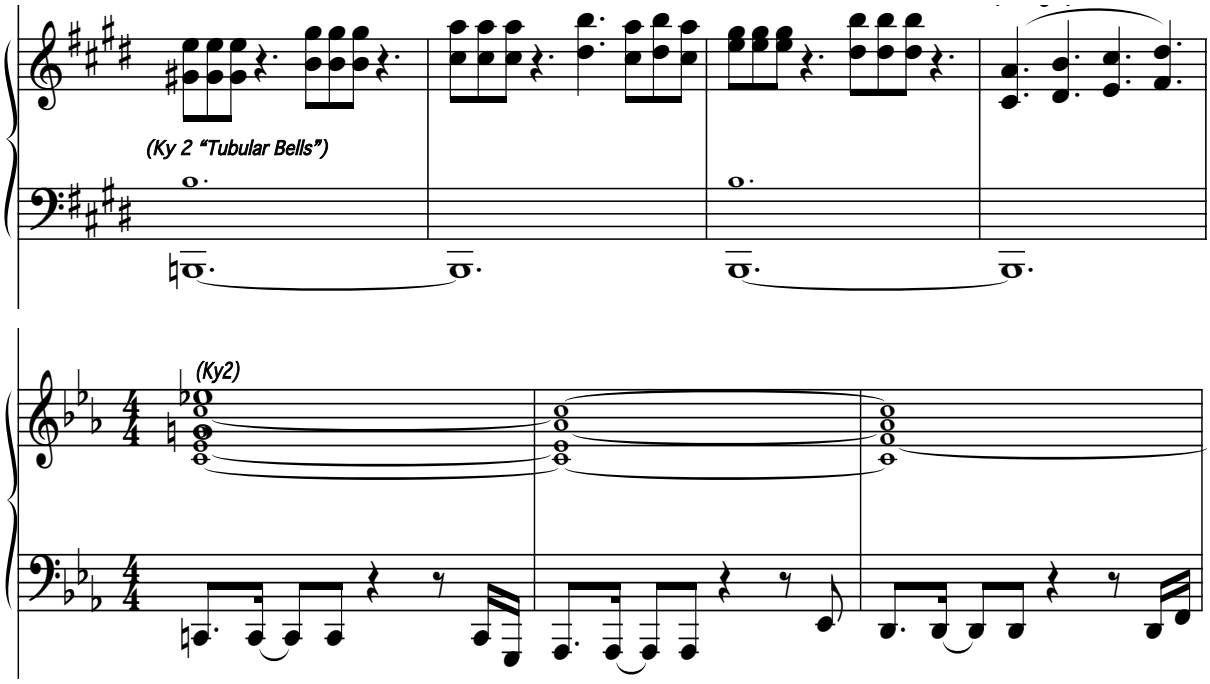
through non-resolution is emphasised in m. 73 with the use of the scalar passage starting on the sub-dominant rising step-wise to the leading note through a *molto rit*. After a very short dialogue scene that is clear of any music, the underscore returns for another four measures – as shown in Example 10, following the same ideas in Example 9 a half step below in F major, followed by a further four measures another half step down in E major, again a symbolic descent.

Example 10: 'No. 20a – Lorraine Underscores', *Jersey Boys* piano-vocal score, mm. 75-78.



The pattern that has been established in Example 9 and 10, suggests that the half step descending modulations might logically continue to E flat major. Instead, in Example 11 below, Melrose resolves to the relative minor of E flat major, snapping instantly from a tempo of 90bpm to a tempo of 134bpm; introducing the rhythm and chord progression of the next song, 'Beggin'. The first two beats of each measure of 'Beggin' recall the Bo Diddley rhythm. This musical transition is one of the most aurally satisfying moments in the entire score.

Example 11: ‘No. 20a – Lorraine Underscores’, *Jersey Boys* piano-vocal score, mm. 79-82.



With the unexpected resolution into C minor, Melrose maintains dramatic tension while setting up the urgent pulse of ‘Beggin’. The four-chord progression here is I – flat VI – II min7 flat 5 – V7. It is also the first appearance in the score of a Four Seasons song originally written in a minor key. The dark tonality and deliberate positioning at this point in the story foreshadow the impending dissolution of the original Four Seasons.

The above analysis makes clear how music not originally intended for theatrical consumption can be manipulated into providing important dramaturgical information when appropriately arranged within a dramatic context. While I am of the opinion that the arrangement (and orchestration) of the entire score of *Jersey Boys* is worthy of immersive analytical study that extends beyond the scope of this dissertation, I feel that my argument for the dramaturgical efficacy of arranging is sufficiently supported by the analysis I have presented. To maximise the argument for arranging, in my analysis of Melrose’s *Jersey Boys* material I have made a calculated decision not to discuss instrumentation that relates more to orchestration. In contrast, I now

examine orchestration as a tool of dramaturgy using a selection of examples from *American Idiot*.

Punk rock group Green Day's 2004 concept album *American Idiot* is a brutally honest and bitingly satirical study of wasted youth in post-9/11 America that is vividly communicated by the anger and rebellion that the idiom of punk rock so powerfully conveys. Book writer and director of the Broadway musical Michael Mayer explains: the concept album "contains one narrative, the story of the Jesus of Suburbia who goes to the city, meets St. Jimmy and a girl called Whatsername, and finds himself caught in a struggle between authenticity and fabrication, between emotional connection and the numbing effects of drugs" (2010). In adapting the album for the stage Mayer expands the story beyond the boundaries of the album and changes the name of the character of Jesus of Suburbia to Johnny, giving him two friends Will and Tunny. The plot of the musical focuses on these three disillusioned coming-of-age young men who yearn for a life beyond the monotony of suburbia and parental control. When Will discovers his girlfriend is pregnant he stays home and remains in an alcohol and drug-induced depression. Johnny and Tunny chase the promise of life in the big city: Tunny soon gives up on the city, enlists in the military, goes to war in Iraq, loses his leg and falls in love with his nurse; Johnny remains in the city, confronts his demons and experiences the pain of lost love. Since the concept album contains only a single narrative, to accommodate the two additional intertwining narratives the score of the musical makes use of all the concept album songs in their original sequence, and also incorporates two songs that were released as B-side singles in Europe plus four tracks from the follow-up album *21st Century Breakdown*, as well as one previously unrecorded song.

Mayer explains that "in terms of the way we plan to tell our story in *American Idiot*, the closest thing would be opera. In opera you are telling your story through the physical actions and character behavior that accompanies the singing" ('Broadway Idiot', 2013). Punk rock may seem far removed from opera, yet both worlds are similar in their implementation of emotional attitudes. While I discussed the uneasy relationship that rock and musical theatre have experienced in Scene 2, in Ken McLeod's essay on operatic influences on rock music, he suggests that the worlds of

rock and opera are more aligned than one might think:

> Similarities of expression rest largely on a sense of transgression either of the bondage of social norms and conventions in the case of rock singers, or of the bondage of unrequited love or other dramatic tragedy in the case of the opera singer. In both cases it is the transgressive voice which is able to transcend bodily or emotional constraints. Both opera and rock share a common emphasis on extravagant excess, decadent display and spectacle (2001: 189).

This notion could indicate why Green Day front man and composer Billie Joe Armstrong was open to exploring the possibility of how a theatrical envisioning of his creative property could materialise. He acknowledged that "Michael Mayer saw something in what I do that no one has ever really been able to make sense of… not in the rock world. And so I just trusted him" ('Broadway Idiot', 2013).

For music supervisor, arranger and orchestrator Tom Kitt, it was important to not only honour Green Day as a band with a unique sound, but to also tell the story: "When I came on board, the question was how do we take this iconic album that is primarily sung by one person and create characters and stories for a number of different people" (ibid.). The instrumentation of Green Day comprises guitars, electric bass and drums. The concept album of *American Idiot* features the supplementation of session musicians on saxophone and piano and *21st Century Breakdown* has the addition of piano and strings arranged by Tom Kitt. The instrumentation of *American Idiot* the musical comprises two guitars, bass, drums, keyboard (played by the music director), violin, viola and cello – a combination that is inclusive and reflective of both source albums. By comparing the two Green Day albums and the original Broadway cast recording, it is evident that Kitt has successfully maintained the integrity of the Green Day sound in the musical by being meticulous in his replication of almost every identifying groove, riff, guitar effect and instrumental tone quality. While this replication assures the preservation of the Green Day sonic identity, it precludes vital storytelling information. Therefore, in the expansion of the story from one solo character to multiple characters, Kitt has made certain orchestration alterations and his vocal arrangements deviate significantly from the source material to clarify this narrative information. He also uses the keyboard and strings as conduits of emotional manipulation and dramatic undertone. In the analysis of *Jersey Boys*, I

addressed Ron Melrose's approach to vocal arranging predicated on the same argument as musical arranging. Here I presuppose that since the voice is an instrument (see Frith, 1996: ch. 9) and vocal arranging can be considered the orchestration of voices, vocal arranging can, in addition to instrumental orchestration, be evaluated within the argument for orchestration as a dramaturgical device. To this end I dispense with any in-depth analysis of orchestration that directly mirrors the concept album except where its explanation is relevant to my argument, and rather address the orchestration elements that were created specifically for the musical.

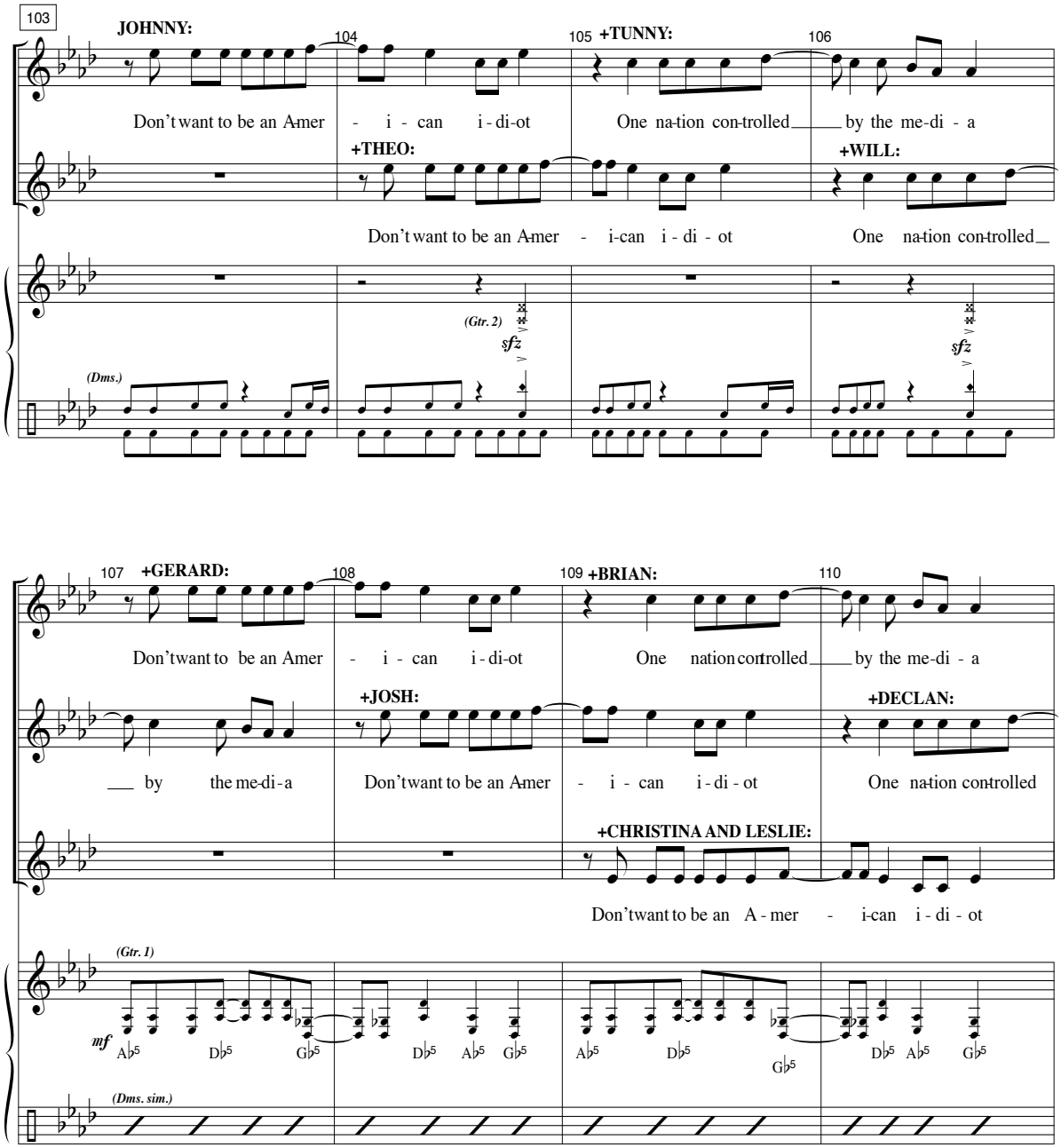
'American Idiot', the opening number of the musical, is also the title and opening track of the concept album. The snarling distortion of the guitar riffs and thundering tom breaks create an unsettling and raw atmosphere of rage and frustration on the verge of being unleashed. Kitt has not tampered with this, allowing the Green Day sound to fully announce itself. He deviates from the concept album, however, in his vocal arrangement which aids in identifying the three central characters. In the first verse, the lyrics are sung by these three characters as individual solo lines. In the second verse the vocal lines are assigned to other ensemble characters who populate the suburban environment and Kitt remains restrained in his occasional use of two-part harmony to emphasise certain melodic lines and lyrics. Following the guitar solo instrumental section, Kitt has extended the central melodic and lyric hook by eight measures to create a three-part canon.

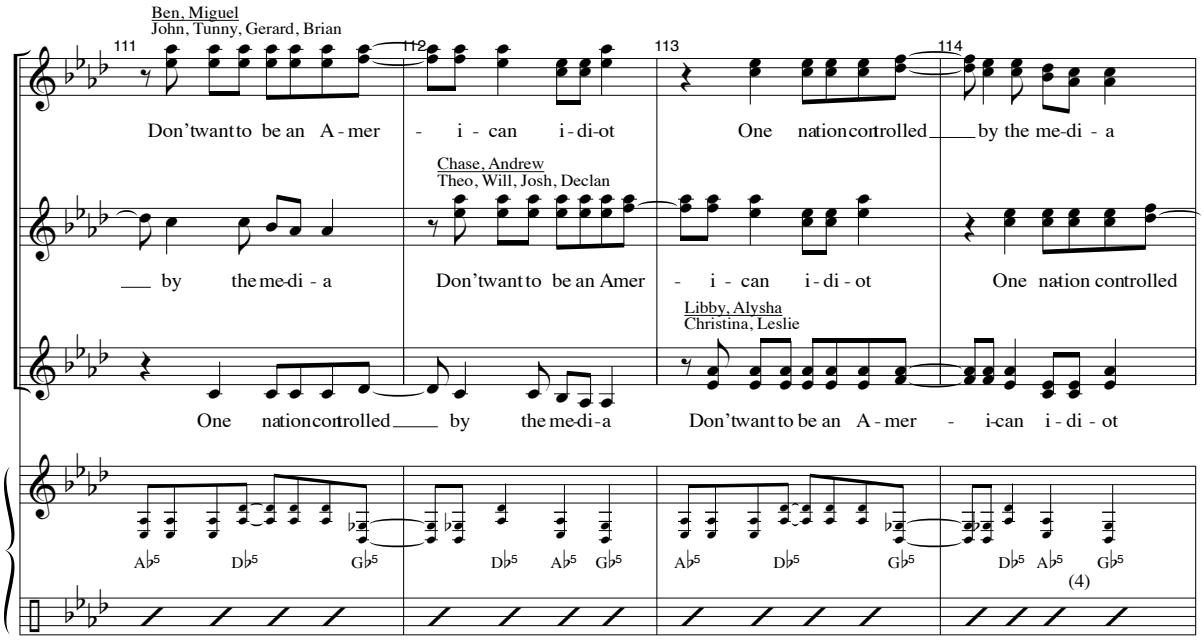
With reference to the extract of the score in Example 12 below, the original form of the song on the concept album contains the top line melody from mm. 103 to 106 going directly to m. 115. The extract shows Kitt's extended eight measures with the vocal canon (at the unison/octave) accompanied only by drums and guitar, and without the bass. It is sung by the full cast beginning with Johnny, building in layers, developing into a two-part harmony within each part of the canon, intensifying with each additional voice. The effect is a churning aggression and a claustrophobic feeling of running around in circles without going anywhere, fuelling the characters' need to escape from their suburban confines. At its climax at m. 116, the canon stops hard on the fourth beat of the eighth measure of the extension and the attention is drawn back to the three lead characters in unison before the full cast

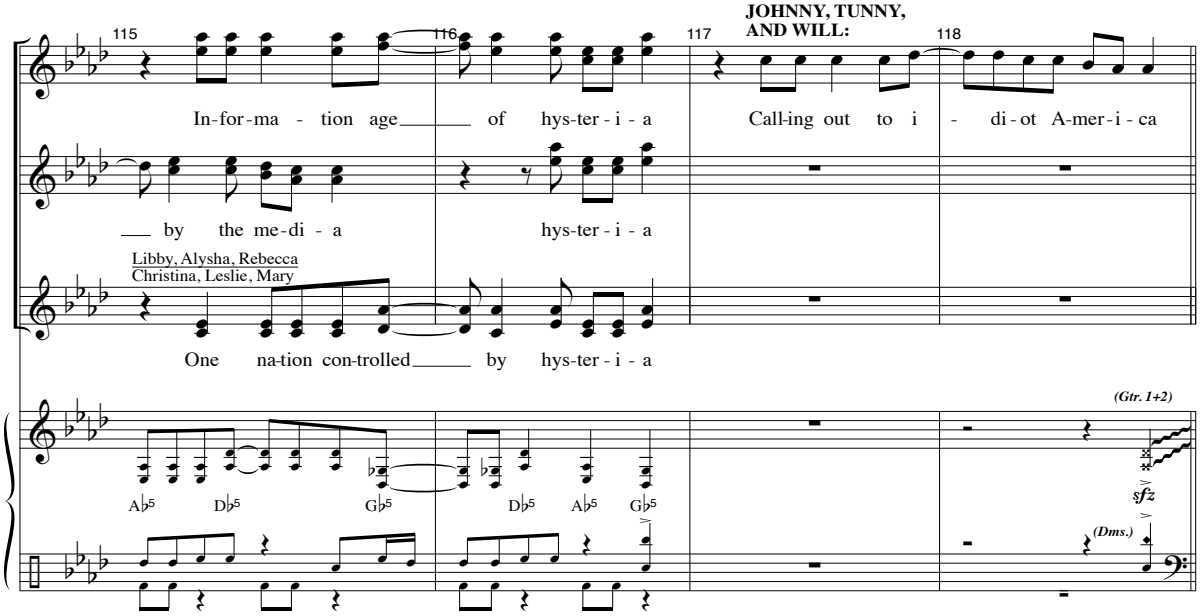
explodes into forceful triadic block harmony for the next fourteen measures as the number builds to its climactic finish setting the tone for the entire musical.

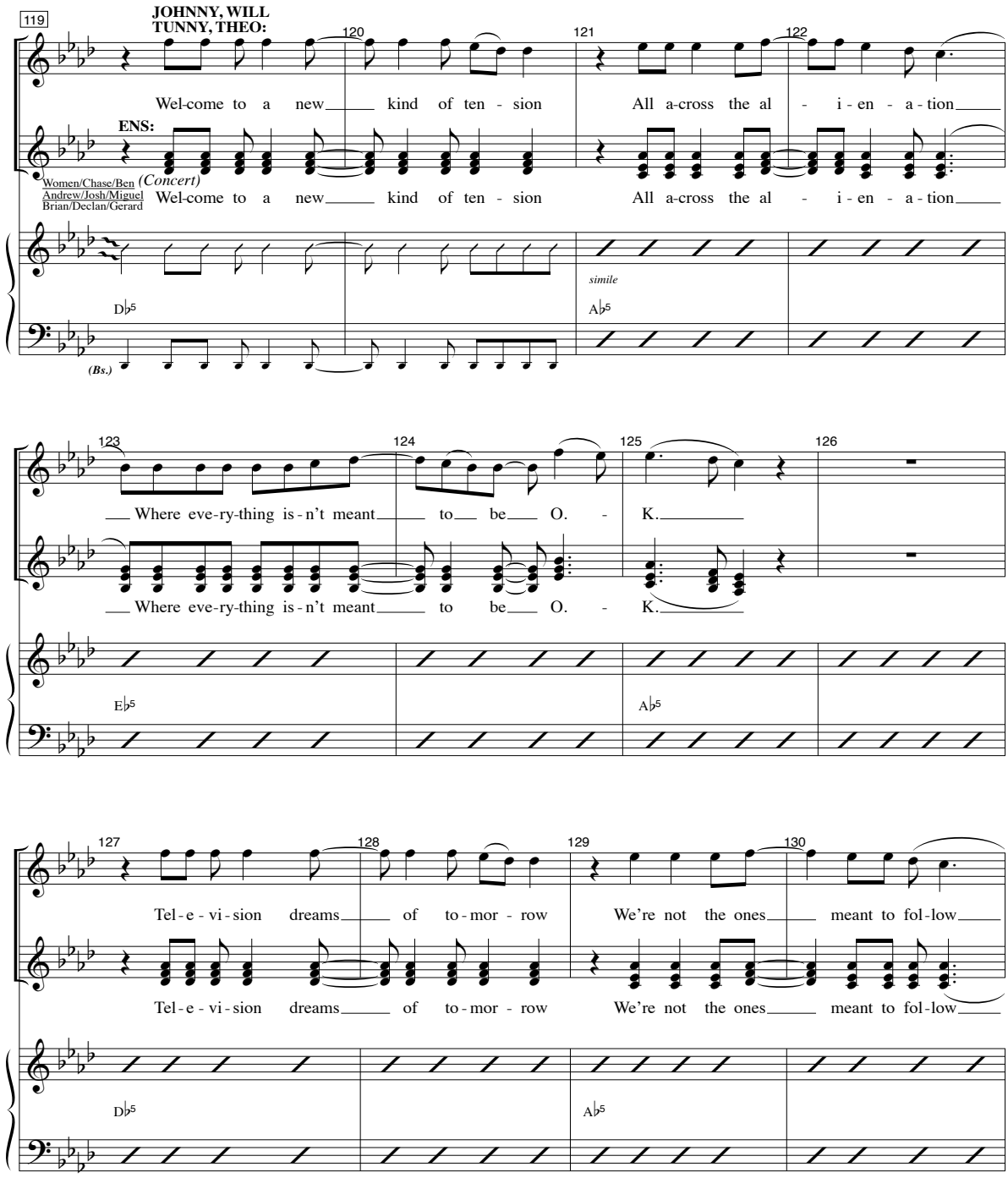
It is worth noting that Kitt has been specific about notating the names of characters singing each harmony part by placing the names in rows corresponding to the vocal arrangement. (Ron Melrose has applied a similar convention in the *Jersey Boys* vocal score.) This practice of assigning individual names to individual vocal lines began during the 90s with musicals like *The Secret Garden* (1991) and *The Who's Tommy* (1993). The practice is used in many current musical theatre scores leaving no doubt as to the intention of the arranger or orchestrator when the musical is recreated. I discuss recreative aspects more fully in Act II.

Example 12: ‘American Idiot’, *American Idiot* piano-vocal score, mm. 103-130.




Ben, Miguel
John, Tunny, Gerard, Brian
111
112
113
114
Don't want to be an A - mer - i - can i - di - ot
One nation controlled by the me - di - a
by the me - di - a
Chase, Andrew
Theo, Will, Josh, Declan
Don't want to be an Amer - i - can i - di - ot
One nation controlled
One nation controlled by the me - di - a
Libby, Alysha
Christina, Leslie
Don't want to be an A - mer - i - can i - di - ot
A♭5 D♭5 G♭5
D♭5 A♭5 G♭5
A♭5 D♭5 G♭5
D♭5 A♭5 G♭5
(4)


115
116
117
118
JOHNNY, TUNNY,
AND WILL:
In - for - ma - tion age of hys - ter - i - a
Call - ing out to i - di - ot A - mer - i - ca
by the me - di - a
hys - ter - i - a
Libby, Alysha, Rebecca
Christina, Leslie, Mary
One na - tion con - trolled by hys - ter - i - a
(Gtr. 1+2)
A♭5 D♭5 G♭5
D♭5 A♭5 G♭5
sfz
(Dms.)



In discussing his approaches to orchestrating the score of *American Idiot* Tom Kitt shares an example of another song and how he designed a vocal harmony arrangement specifically to comment on a particular moment in the story.

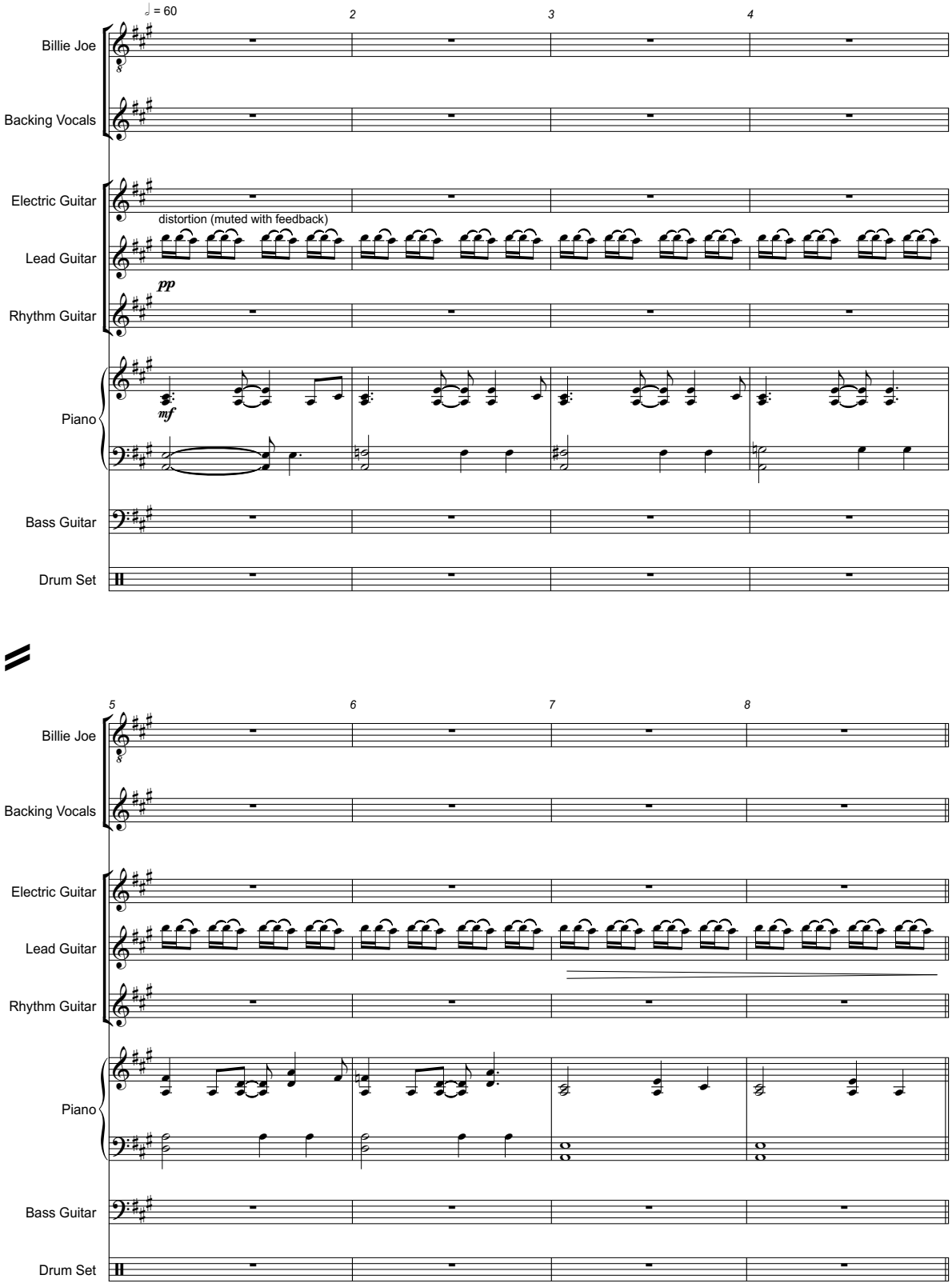
> 'Last Night on Earth' is this moment when Johnny and Whatsername are shooting up on drugs in a very romantic way. So already that image of romantically getting high was in my head. And I thought how can we make this a trippy love ballad? How about a wall-of-sound vocal arrangement in the

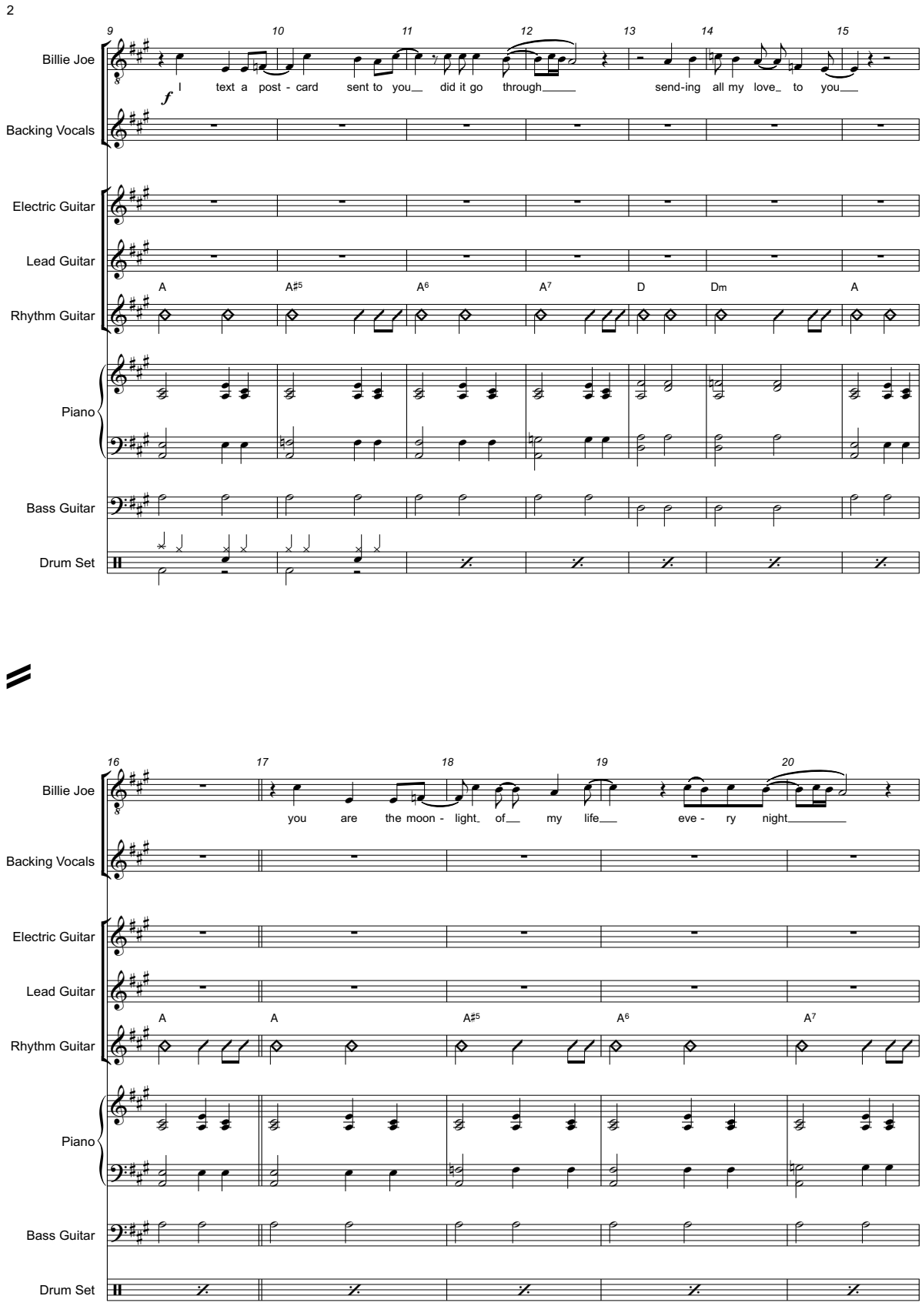
> style of the Beach Boys, with these beautiful falsetto harmonies just raining down on them? ('Broadway Idiot', 2013).

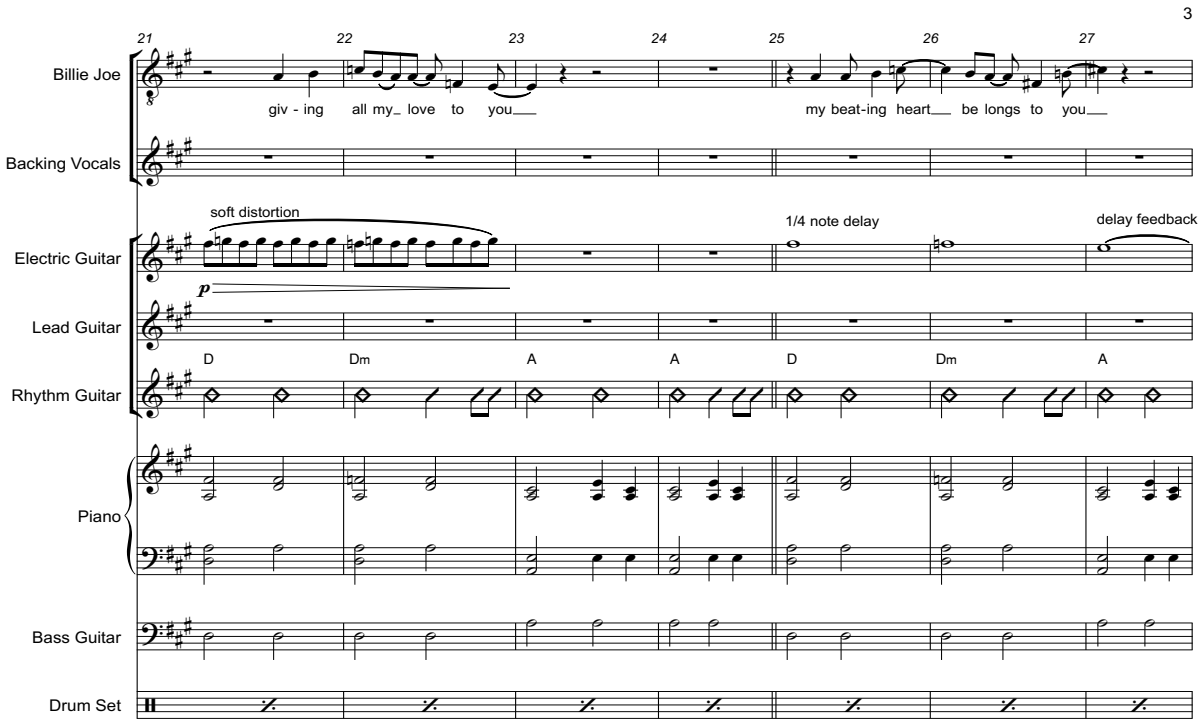
To illustrate how Kitt achieved this, I provide my own transcription and analysis of the original Green Day recording of 'Last Night on Earth' followed by Kitt's piano-vocal score version of the same song and my analysis thereof (see Examples 13 and 14). An important distinction between the two scores presented below is in the layout. The transcription is notated as a full score (or partitur) and Kitt's orchestration as a piano-vocal reduction score. Since full partiturs are hardly ever used in the execution of a musical, and rarely readily available, this analysis is based on the piano-vocal reduction score which is marked with cues, as well as allusions to the original Broadway cast album as an aural reference.[38]

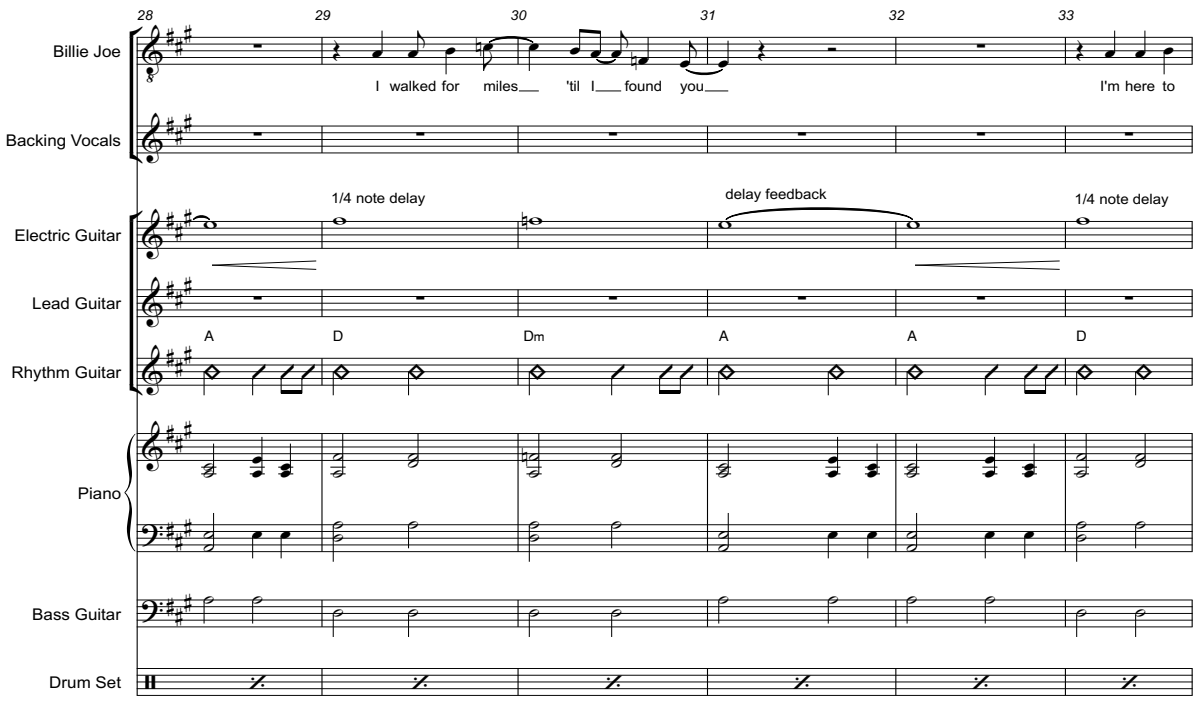
[38] "The orchestrator's full score is seldom a performance document: its primary and often only use is for part copying after which it reverts, more or less by default, to the orchestrator from the copying agency, generally without them retaining an archive copy. No full score of a Broadway musical has yet been published" (Banfield, 1993: 78).

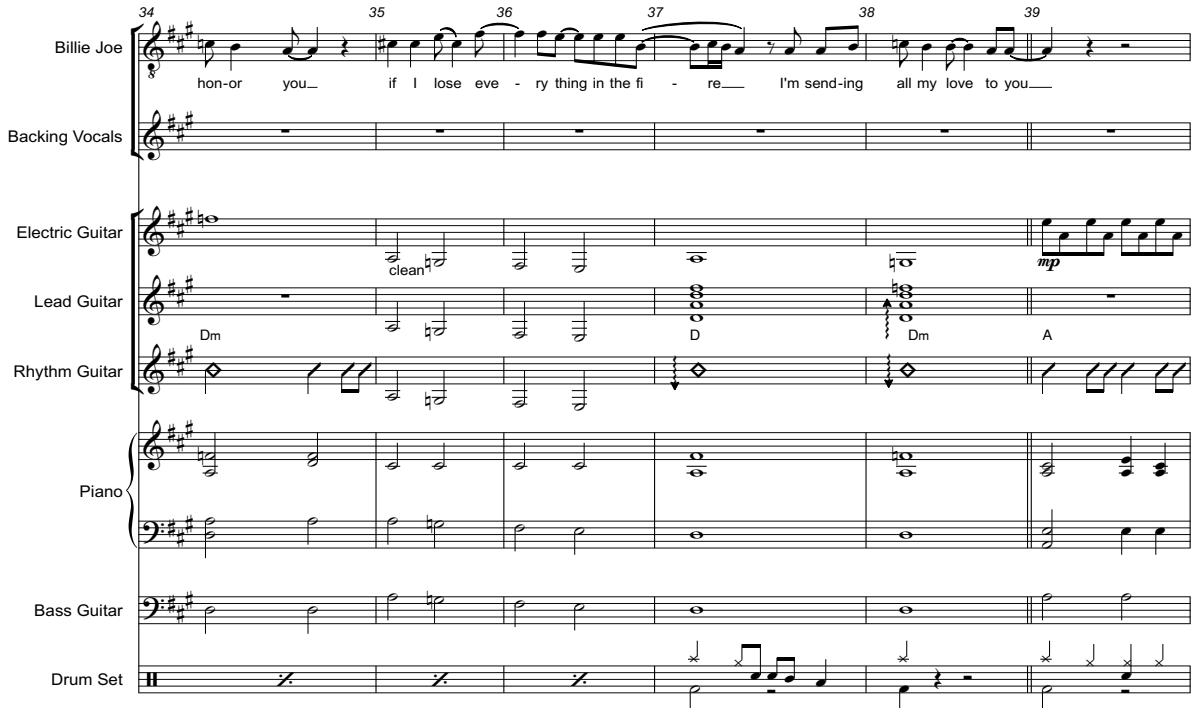
Example 13: ‘Last Night On Earth’, author’s transcription of recording (Green Day, 2007).

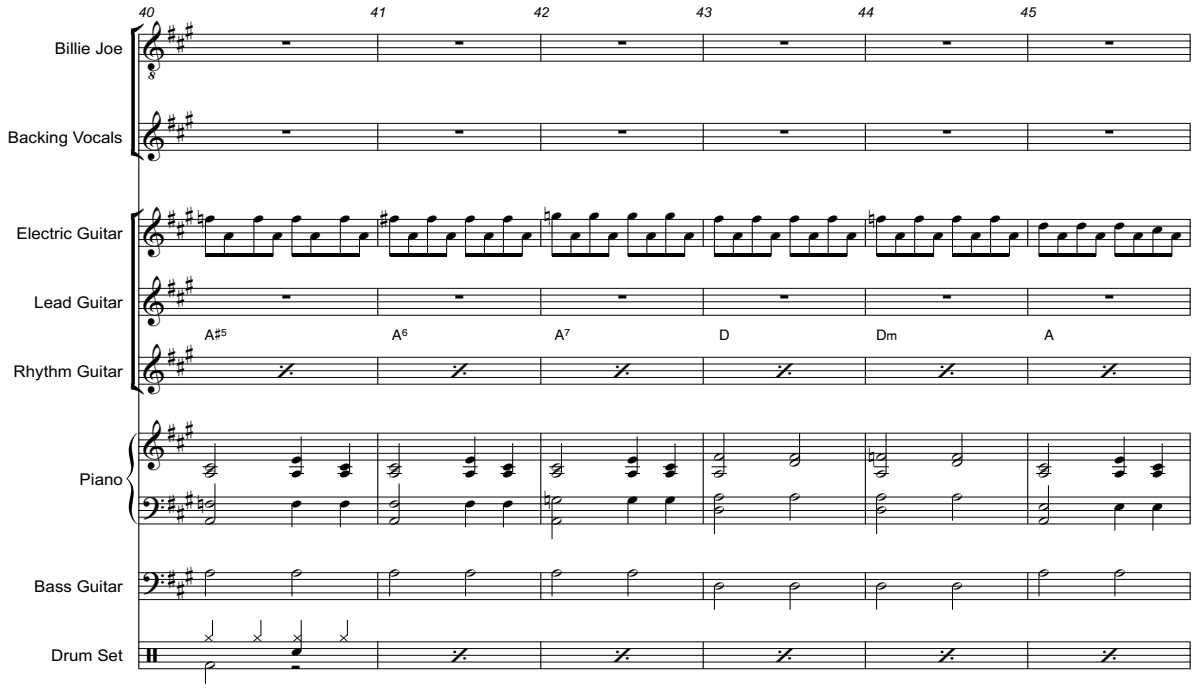


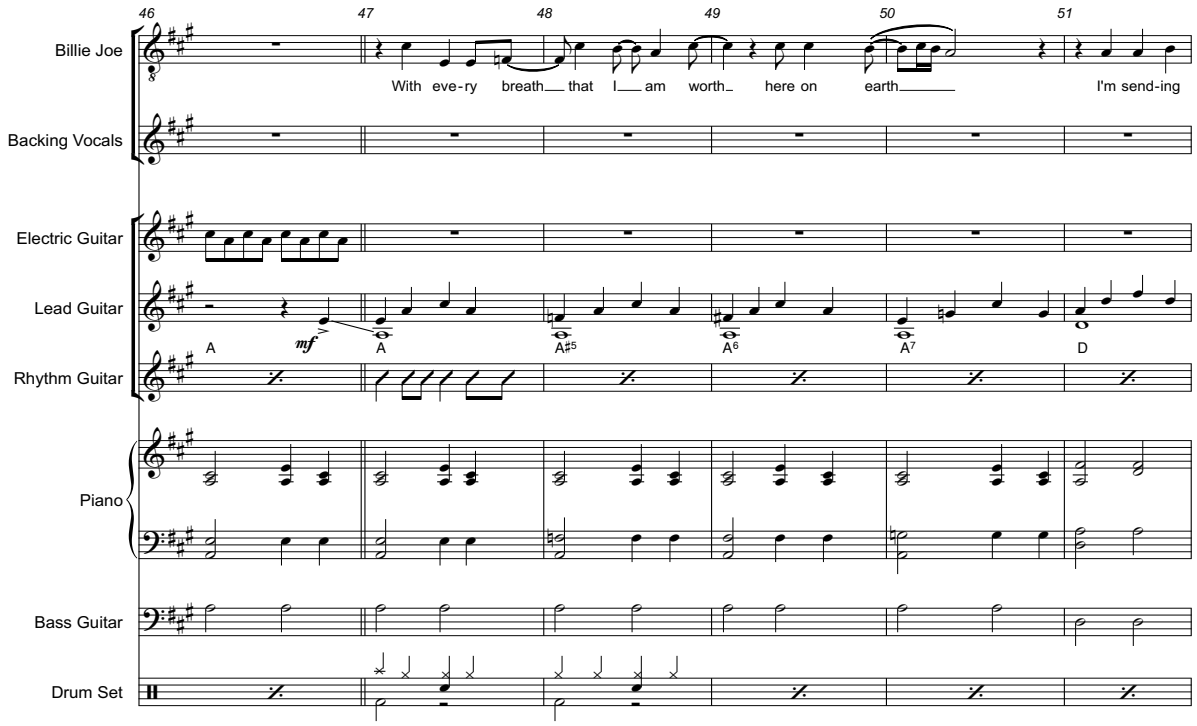

2
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
Billie Joe
I text a post - card sent to you did it go through send-ing all my love to you
Backing Vocals
Electric Guitar
Lead Guitar
A
A♯5
A6
A7
D
Dm
A
Rhythm Guitar
Piano
Bass Guitar
Drum Set
16
17
18
19
20
Billie Joe
you are the moon - light of my life eve - ry night
Backing Vocals
Electric Guitar
Lead Guitar
A
A
A♯5
A6
A7
Rhythm Guitar
Piano
Bass Guitar
Drum Set

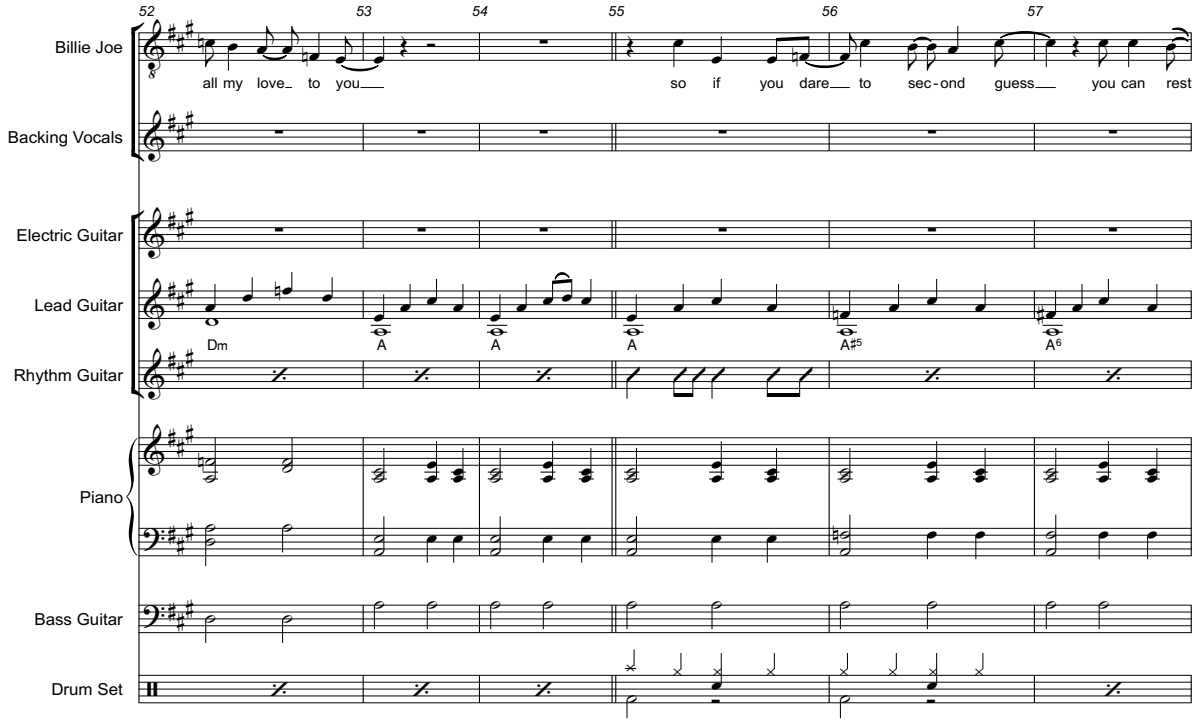

21
22
23
24
25
26
27
Billie Joe
giv - ing all my_ love to you
my beat-ing heart be longs to you
Backing Vocals
soft distortion
1/4 note delay
delay feedback
Electric Guitar
p
Lead Guitar
D
Dm
A
A
D
Dm
A
Rhythm Guitar
Piano
Bass Guitar
Drum Set

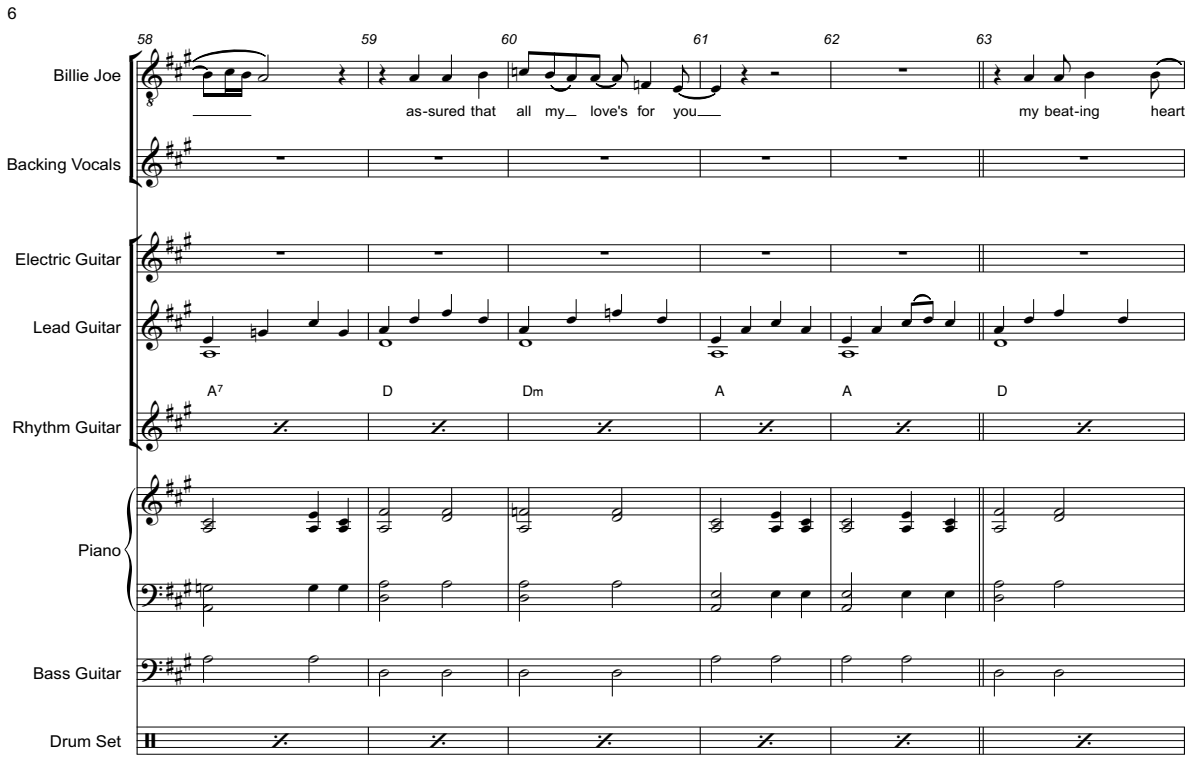

28
29
30
31
32
33
Billie Joe
I walked for miles 'til I found you
I'm here to
Backing Vocals
1/4 note delay
delay feedback
1/4 note delay
Electric Guitar
Lead Guitar
A
D
Dm
A
A
D
Rhythm Guitar
Piano
Bass Guitar
Drum Set

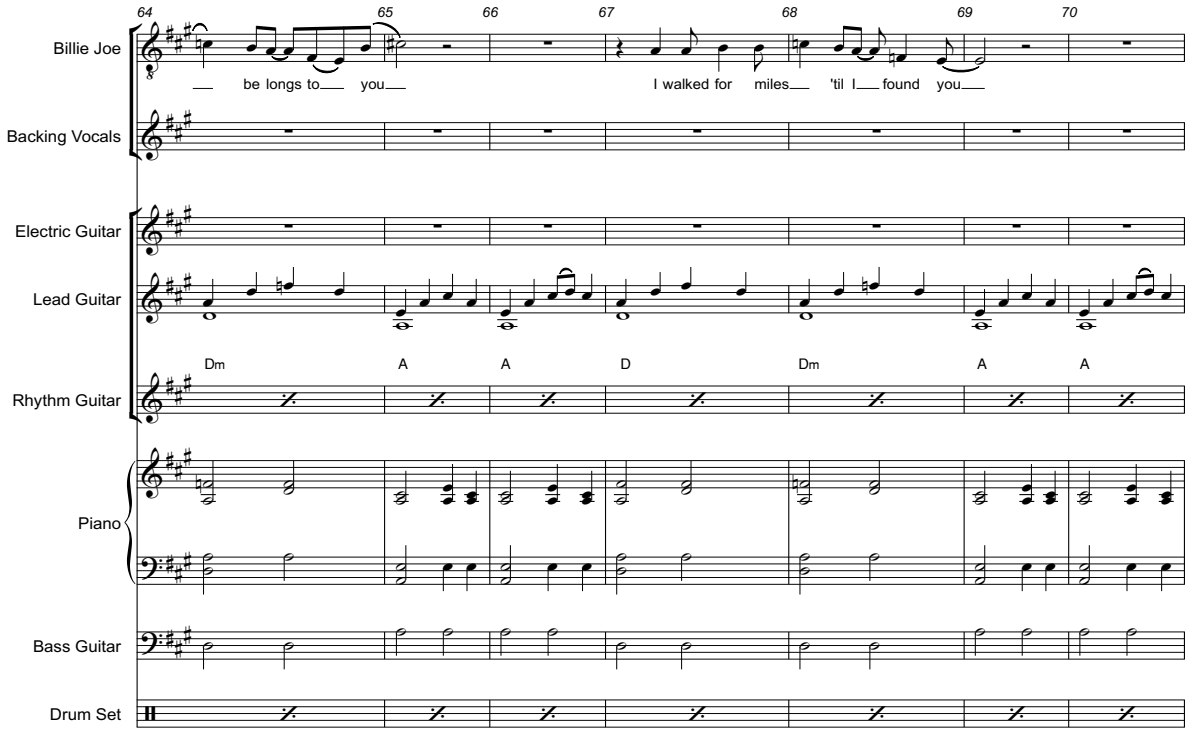

34
35
36
37
38
39
Billie Joe
hon-or you if I lose eve - ry thing in the fi - re I'm send-ing all my love to you
Backing Vocals
Electric Guitar
clean
mp
Lead Guitar
Dm
D
Dm
A
Rhythm Guitar
Piano
Bass Guitar
Drum Set

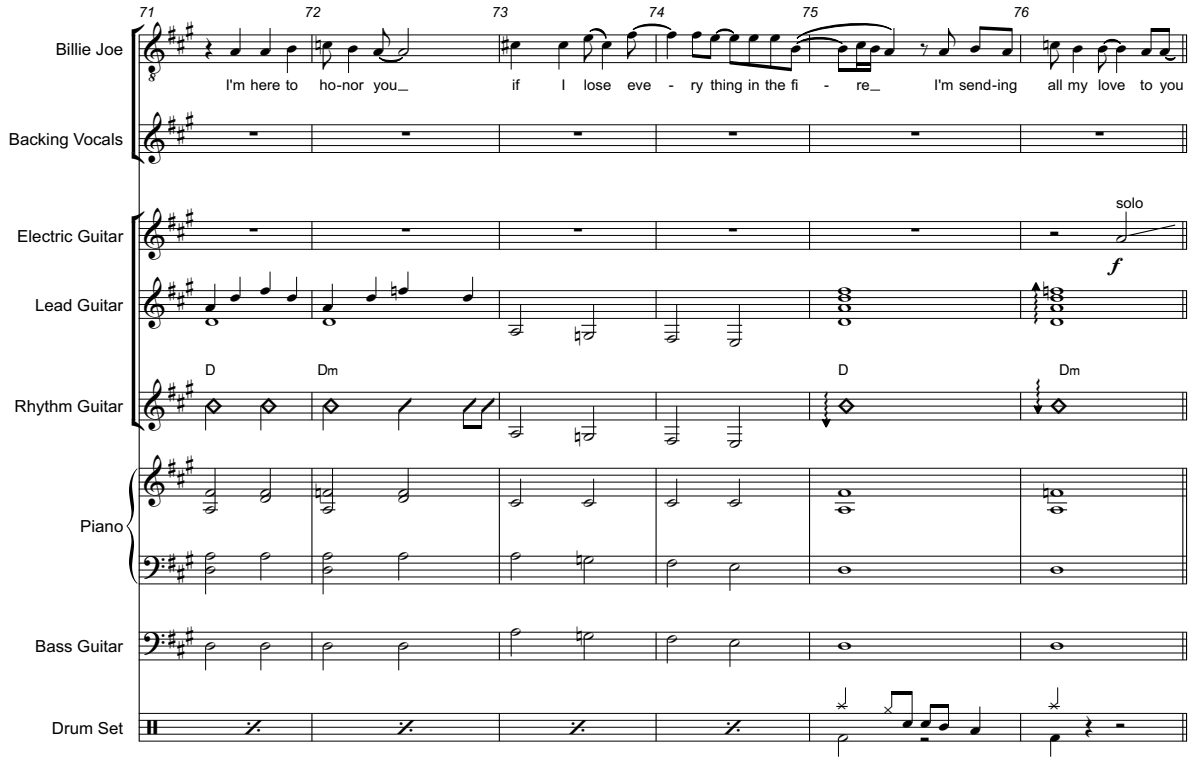

40
41
42
43
44
45
Billie Joe
Backing Vocals
Electric Guitar
Lead Guitar
A♯5
A6
A7
D
Dm
A
Rhythm Guitar
Piano
Bass Guitar
Drum Set

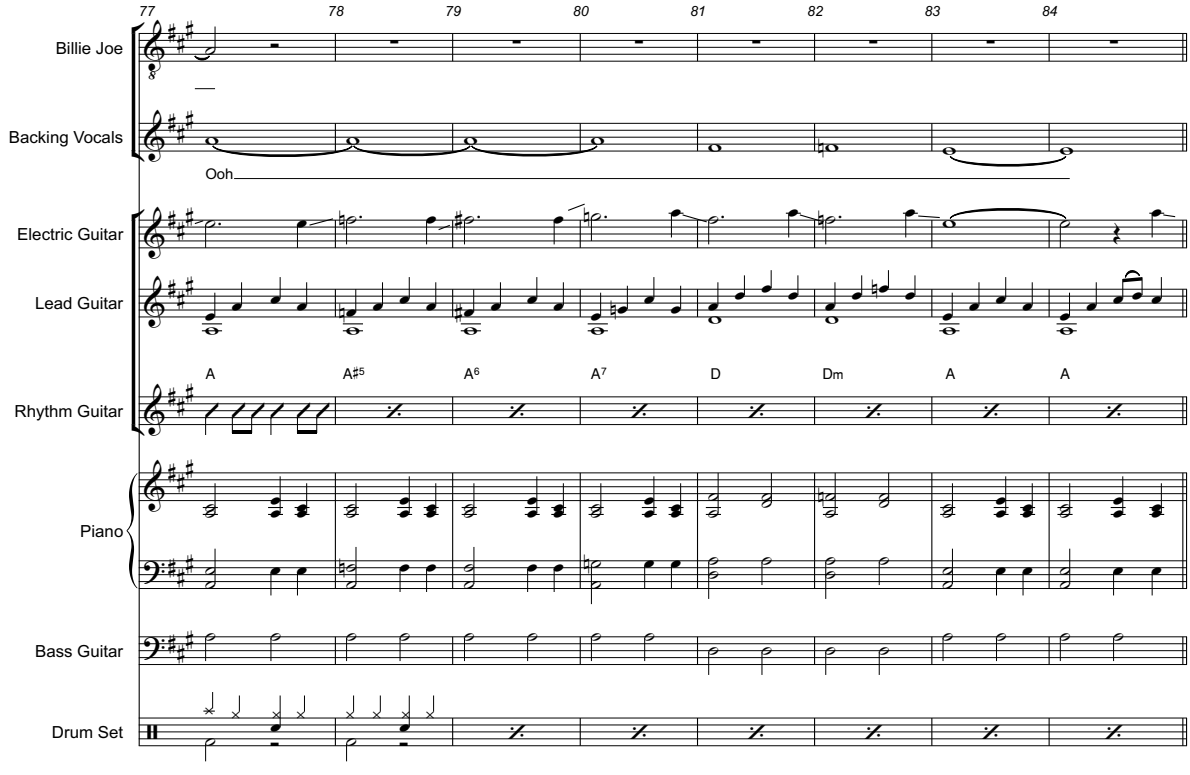

46
47
48
49
50
51
Billie Joe
With eve-ry breath that I am worth here on earth
I'm send-ing
Backing Vocals
Electric Guitar
Lead Guitar
mf
A
A
A♯5
A6
A7
D
Rhythm Guitar
Piano
Bass Guitar
Drum Set

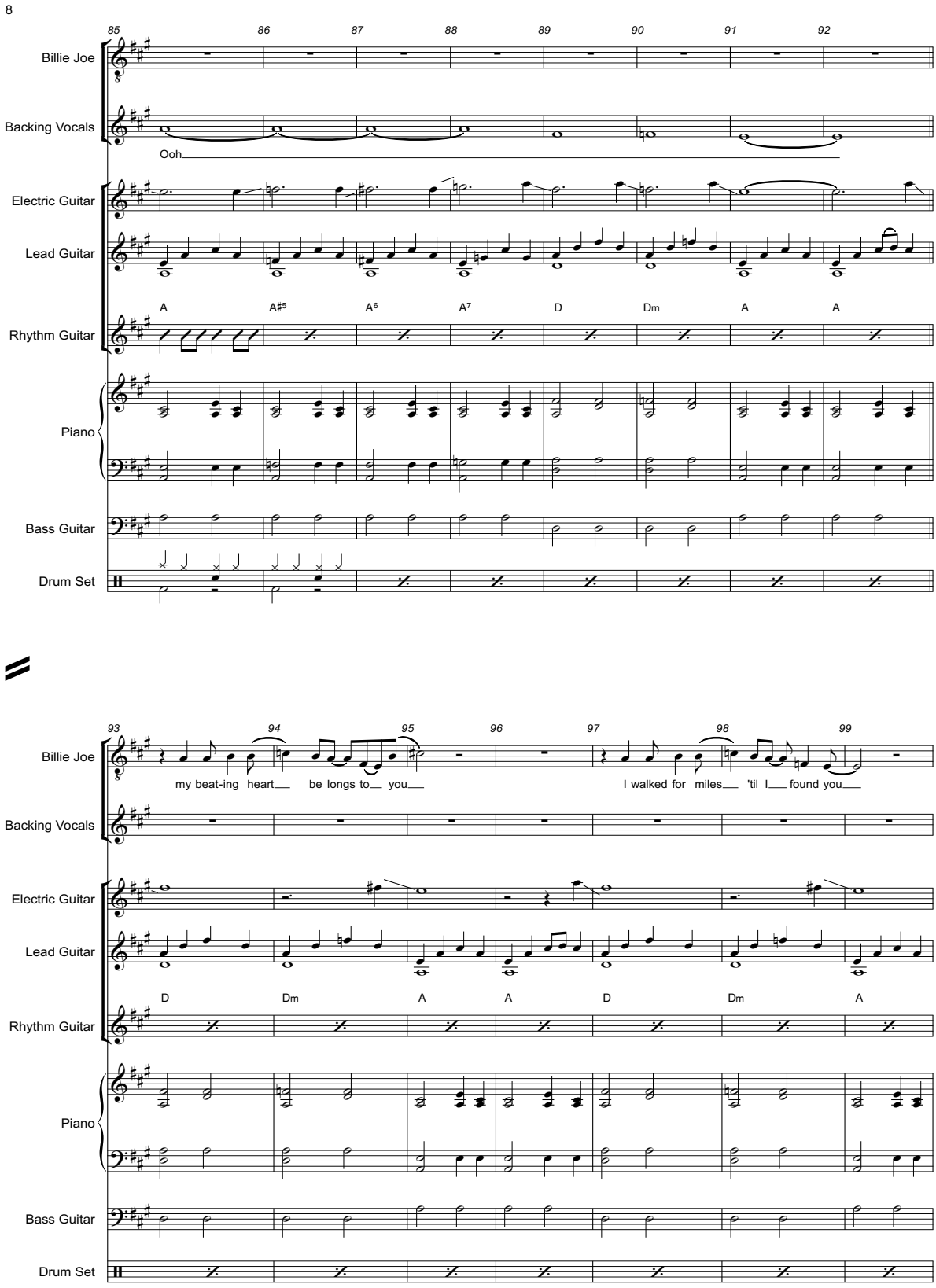

52
53
54
55
56
57
Billie Joe
all my love to you
so if you dare to sec-ond guess you can rest
Backing Vocals
Electric Guitar
Lead Guitar
Dm
A
A
A
A♯5
A6
Rhythm Guitar
Piano
Bass Guitar
Drum Set

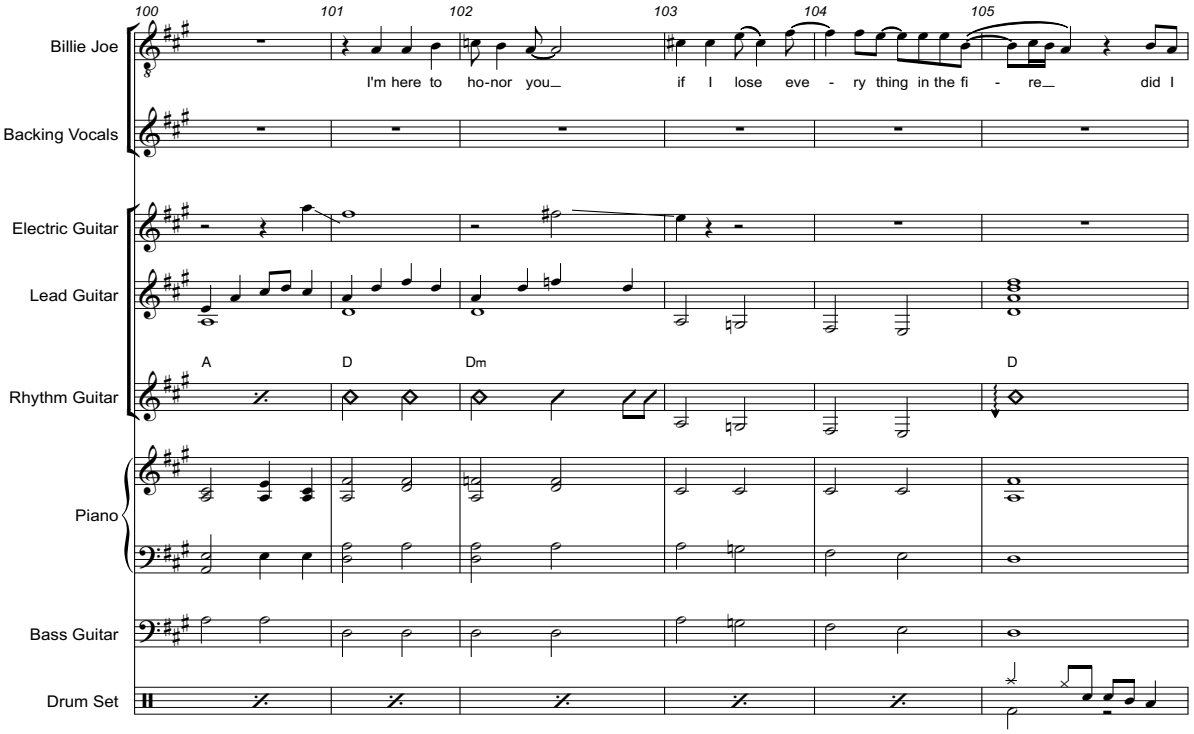

6
58
59
60
61
62
63
Billie Joe
as-sured that all my love's for you
my beat-ing heart
Backing Vocals
Electric Guitar
Lead Guitar
A7
D
Dm
A
A
D
Rhythm Guitar
Piano
Bass Guitar
Drum Set

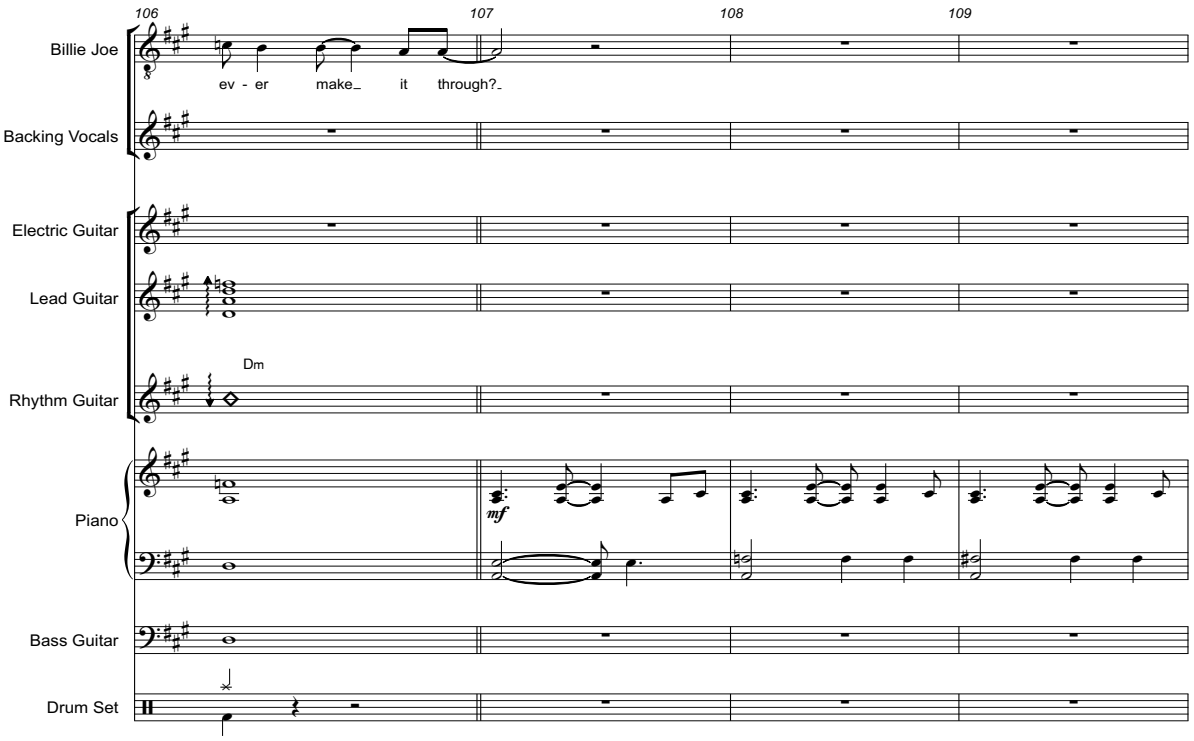

64
65
66
67
68
69
70
Billie Joe
be longs to you
I walked for miles 'til I found you
Backing Vocals
Electric Guitar
Lead Guitar
Dm
A
A
D
Dm
A
A
Rhythm Guitar
Piano
Bass Guitar
Drum Set

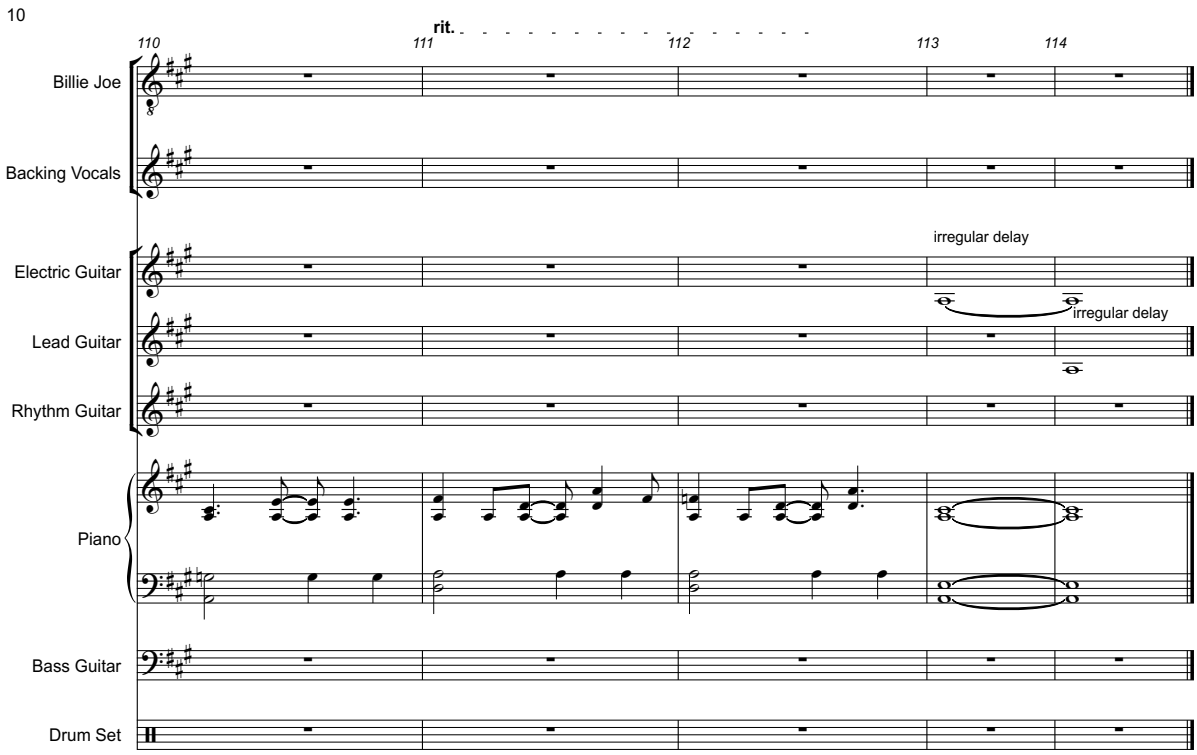

71
72
73
74
75
76
Billie Joe
I'm here to ho-nor you_ if I lose eve - ry thing in the fi - re_ I'm send-ing all my love to you
Backing Vocals
Electric Guitar
solo
f
Lead Guitar
Rhythm Guitar
D
Dm
D
Dm
Piano
Bass Guitar
Drum Set


77
78
79
80
81
82
83
84
Billie Joe
Backing Vocals
Ooh
Electric Guitar
Lead Guitar
Rhythm Guitar
A
A♯5
A6
A7
D
Dm
A
A
Piano
Bass Guitar
Drum Set


8
85
86
87
88
89
90
91
92
Billie Joe
Backing Vocals
Ooh
Electric Guitar
Lead Guitar
A
A♯5
A6
A7
D
Dm
A
A
Rhythm Guitar
Piano
Bass Guitar
Drum Set
93
94
95
96
97
98
99
my beat-ing heart be longs to you
I walked for miles 'til I found you
Billie Joe
Backing Vocals
Electric Guitar
Lead Guitar
D
Dm
A
A
D
Dm
A
Rhythm Guitar
Piano
Bass Guitar
Drum Set


100
101
102
103
104
105
Billie Joe
I'm here to ho-nor you_ if I lose eve - ry thing in the fi - re_ did I
Backing Vocals
Electric Guitar
Lead Guitar
Rhythm Guitar
A
D
Dm
D
Piano
Bass Guitar
Drum Set


106
107
108
109
Billie Joe
ev - er make_ it through?_
Backing Vocals
Electric Guitar
Lead Guitar
Rhythm Guitar
Dm
Piano
mf
Bass Guitar
Drum Set



The original Green Day ‘Last Night on Earth’ is in the key of A major and has an A – A – B – B – C form in which A is eight measures long, B four measures and C six measures. The introduction is built on the A-section chord progression and is led by the piano for eight measures. From m. 9, with one chord change per measure, the piece begins with four chords built on the tonic that rise to the augmented fifth, the sixth and the dominant seventh progressing to chord IV – IV minor and back to the tonic. The space of the eight-measure introduction is also filled by a distant electric guitar pedal figure that oscillates between the root note of A and the second degree scale note of B creating the tension of a ninth through the A triad and a sixth through the D and D minor triads. The bass and drums enter at m. 9 together with Armstrong’s vocal and a strong back-beat groove is established for the remainder of the song. At m. 21 a subtle two-note background figure appears in the distance followed by sustained notes effected with delay and guitar feedback.

The C-section of the first cycle, beginning at m. 33, sounds like it should complete a cycle of eight measures. However the turnaround, that might typically appear in the

seventh and eighth measures of the cycle (m. 39), is pre-empted by the recapitulation of the A-section. The full eight measures of the introduction are repeated as a transition into the second cycle of the form, only this time it is driven by a two-note rotating eighth-note feature where the upper note follows the progression of the chords while the lower note is a consistent pedal of the tonic. The second cycle (m. 47) features a quarter-note arpeggiated guitar line providing a feeling of gentle motion within the orchestration.

At the end of the second cycle (m. 76), without a transition this time, the third cycle begins – this time with an instrumental version. Both A-sections feature a lead guitar, background guitar and a subtle background vocal on the vowel *'ooh'*; the lead guitar has a chorus-type effect and it plays a simple melodic line with a constant rhythm of dotted half-note to quarter-note. The contour of the melody follows the ascending line of the first four chords in the progression and then imitates the pattern in reverse for the remaining four chords of the section. Meanwhile the background guitar plays the same clean sounding quarter-note arpeggiated figure as in the second cycle. The vocal returns for the B- and C-sections of the form after which the bass and drums fall away (m. 107) and the piano is once again the primary instrument. The outro echoes the introduction, creating what I, as an arranger and orchestrator, call the 'bookend effect', that is, the intro and outro are the same.

There are several departures from the original song in Kitt's adaptation thereof for the stage (reproduced in Example 14 below), all of which are motivated by character development and storytelling. St. Jimmy, the charismatic rebellious drug dealer, watches as Johnny and Whatsername shoot up heroin, solidify their romantic connection, and have passionate drug-induced sex. Juxtaposed to this, Will's girlfriend Heather has now given birth and broken up with Will in an attempt to protect the child from a father who wallows in his suburban misery and a permanent alcoholic stupour. Unlike its source, the introduction of the piece is completely different beginning in the mellower key of F major, a major third down from the original. The strings hang over from a transition that precedes this piece and the acoustic guitar plays four measures of finger-picked notes around the first and fifth

notes of the F major scale more typical of pop or folk but effective in maintaining the tension of what is about to occur between Johnny and Whatsername.[39]

Kitt's choice of the acoustic guitar speaks to two aspects of his verbal prescription about style: 'trippy and sweet' and 'Beach Boys/Rufus Wainright meets the Beatles'.[40] With the exception of Rufus Wainright – who is named here purely as a solo vocal styling reference – all other references allude to the 1960s and psychedelia. The acoustic guitar was the trademark of many folk singers of the time, many of whom experimented with mind-altering, "trippy", substances. As the solo accompanying instrument in this cycle of the form the strummed guitar evokes feelings of contemplativeness and aloneness which perfectly enhance the characters at that moment. The Beach Boys' wide falsetto-blended sound inspired the vocal harmony as Kitt has stated. The chord structure of this piece evokes Beatles' songs like 'Lucy in the Sky with Diamonds', a song which caused controversy over its alleged celebration of the hallucinatory effects of LSD (see Moore, 1997: 32-34).

The first A-section begins at m. 5 sung by St. Jimmy as he observes the unfolding action between Johnny and Whatersname. Whatsername picks up the vocal at the B-section and both she and St. Jimmy sing in unison at the C-section. Unlike the original recording where the back-beat rhythm accompanies the first cycle of the form, here it is a gentle strumming on the acoustic guitar as an accompaniment with the occasional appearance of subtle half-note electric guitar swells. At m. 35 the transition that follows the first cycle echoes the intro with its use of an eighth-note oscillating figure playing the first and fifth scale notes. Only this time the figure is in the piano. Kitt introduces the strings playing quarter-note Fs on beat 1 and 3 for the first two measures of the transition and then eighth-note figures playing notes of the tonic major triad in mm. 37 and 38 building anticipation of an impending musical shift, as the rest of the band plays four even quarter notes per measure setting up the arrival of the back-beat rhythm at m. 39.

[39] The piano-vocal score does not indicate that it is an acoustic guitar but the original Broadway cast recording and various unauthorised YouTube clips confirm that it is.

[40] Rufus Wainright is an American-Canadian singer and songwriter who possesses a distinctive vocal timbre and style that has made him popular in the adult alternative pop/rock genre.

The musical shift from m. 38 to m. 39 is both musically and dramatically important. Two things happen: the Beach Boys-style wall of vocal harmony is introduced here on an open *'aah'* vowel to comment on the heroin-induced romantic connection that Johnny and Whatsername are experiencing; and the key modulates up a major third to its original source key of A major. The first chord of the choral vocals is a pick-up note voiced in the tonic of F major on beat 3 of m. 38 which resolves to the tonic of A major on beat 1 of m. 39 with a downward movement of each harmony part, creating really unorthodox voice-leading! In setting up this contrapuntal movement between tonic roots modulating up (F to A) while harmonic movement falls, Kitt achieves two things: he creates the sensation of floating and flying that describes the state of mind of Johnny and Whatsername; and he uses the modulation to draw attention to the juxtaposed story of Heather who has taken her baby and left Will. Along with the bass and drums, the piano is the anchor instrument here with electric guitar playing the quarter-note arpeggiated figure replicated from the original version. Kitt has created a vehicle of expression for the two stories to play out simultaneously yet independently of each other. It is worth noting that in modulating to A major – the key of the original album recording – the female rock voice of Heather has to sing the melody an octave up from where Armstrong sang it on the album recording. She therefore has to sing in a 'full-throated' rock quality well into this singer's *passaggio*, which produces a rich and expressive sound that fully supports her emotional state of mind at this moment. After Heather takes the vocal lead at the top of this second cycle of the form, she is joined by St. Jimmy and Whatsername from the second B-section (m. 59) to the end of the cycle (m. 68).

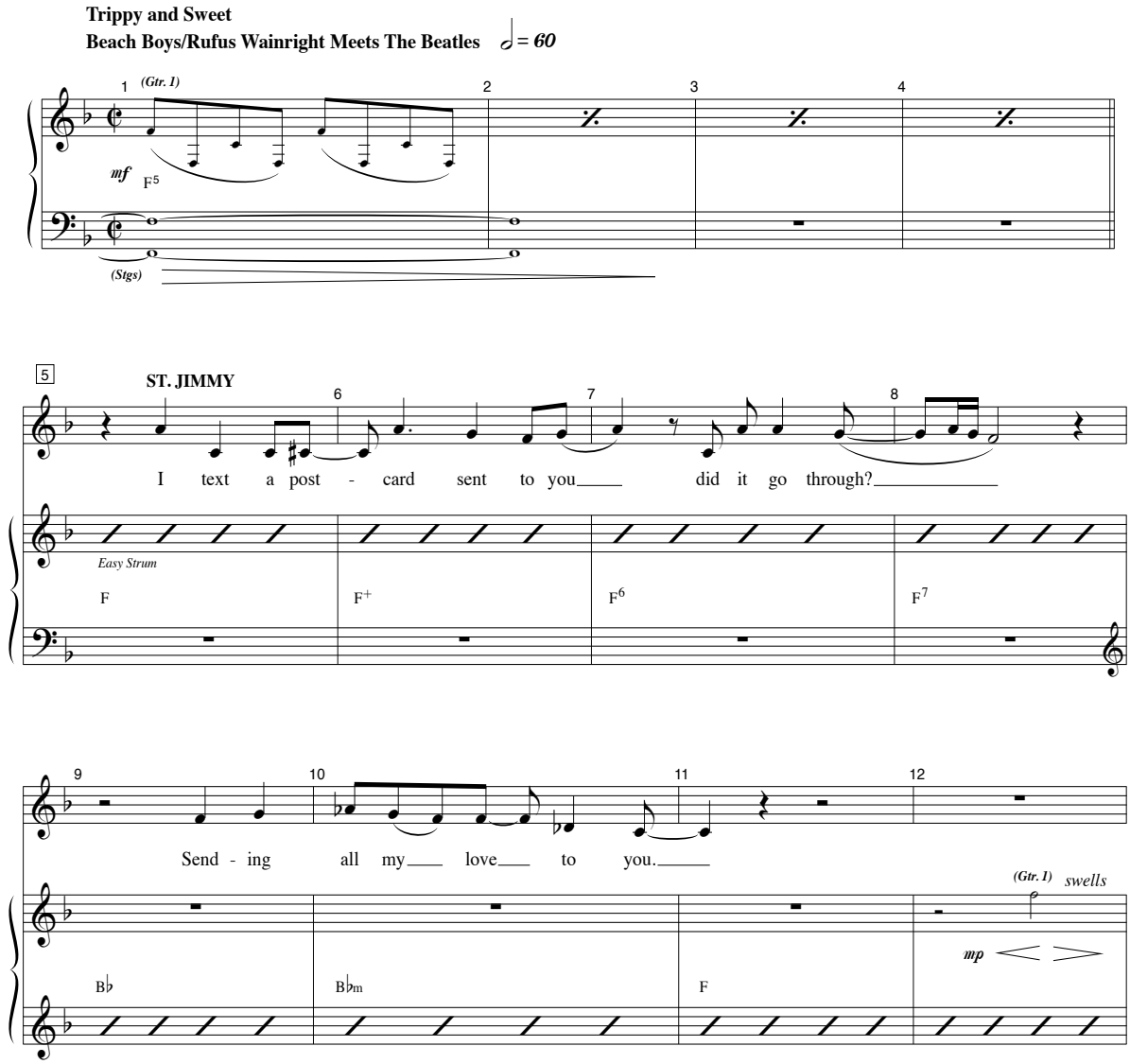
Unlike the electric guitar solo that leads the third cycle in the original Green Day recording (Ex. 13, m. 77), the third cycle of Kitt's version (Ex. 14, m. 69) is a ravishing display of vocal harmony that is designed to pull visual focus towards Johnny and Whatsername as they reach ecstatic heights. As the heroin high increases it is reflected in the growing intricacy of the vocal arrangement that features a series of sustained and slow moving *aah*'s and *ooh'*s riding over a series of off-beat vocalisms (*'dip'*) on beats 2 and 4. (mm. 69-78). The strings converge into unison with the vocal harmony at certain points for emphasis; for example from mm. 69-71 they rhythmically support the low *'dip'* vocalism before diverting away to create their own timbral layer contributing to the contrapuntal interest and the spiralling wall-

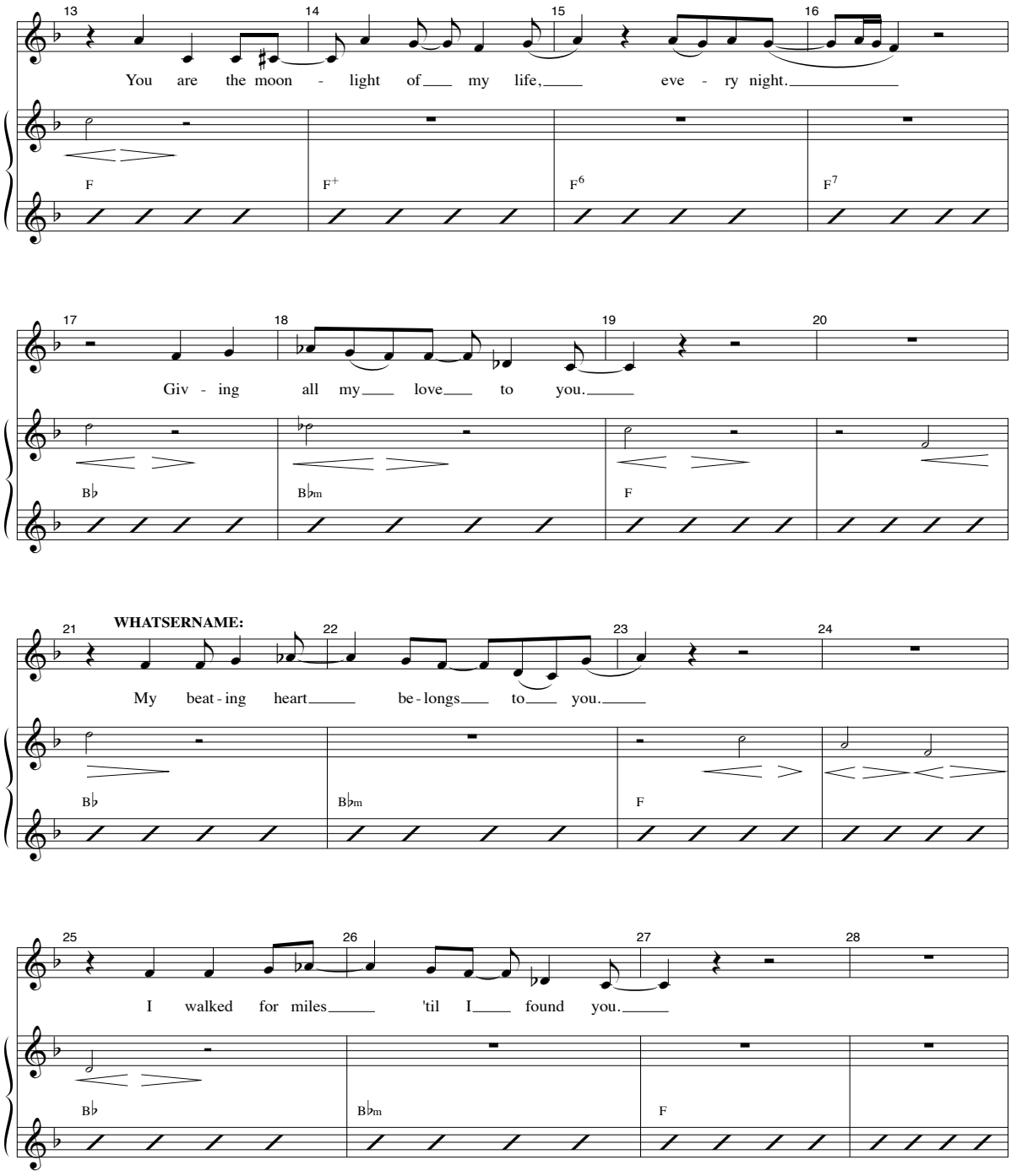
of-sound atmosphere, as well as adding characteristic emotional weight. There is a variation in the form that is choreographically motivated.[41] The A-section does not repeat; instead, there is an extension of two measures at mm. 73 and 74, one of which is a 3/4 bar on chord IV minor (d minor) and repeating the progression of chord IV – IV minor (D major to d minor) before resolving to I.

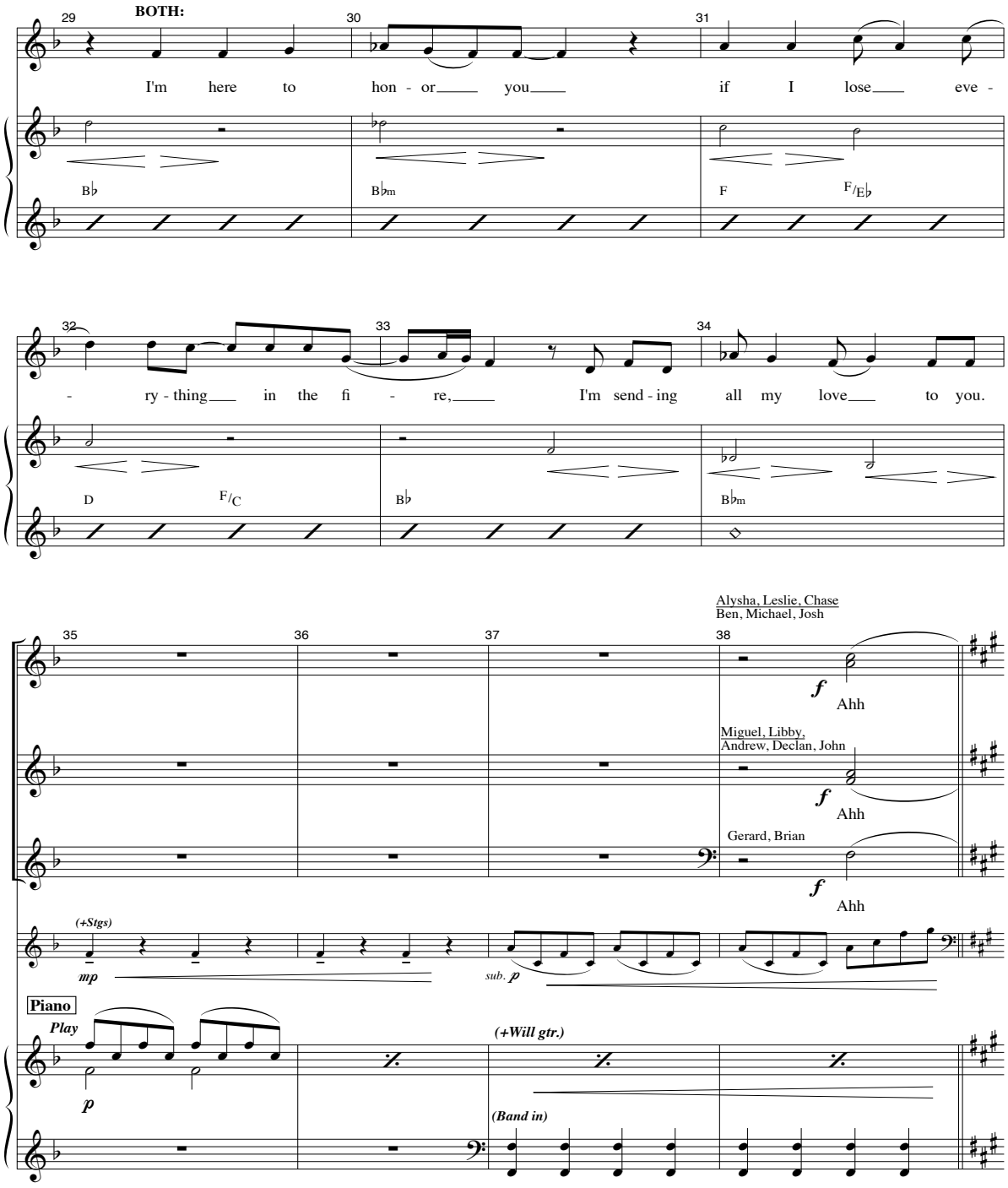
At m. 79 the choral vocals, guitars, bass and drums drop out. This effect of dense orchestral texturing quickly dissipating and leaving one instrument playing, namely the piano in this instance, is an emotionally manipulative orchestration device that I am extremely fond of. Kitt uses it here to maximum effect to highlight Heather's separation from Will at the B section (m. 79) when she sings again accompanied by only the piano for two measures followed by quarter-note echoes in the choral vocals. When St. Jimmy sings at m. 83, Kitt employs a classic orchestration technique of arpeggiated piano accompaniment with an aching violin solo that follows the contour of the vocal line two octaves higher. The use of the violin as emphasis of the flattened third degree of the tonic scale, which becomes the minor seventh of chord IV minor, creates a moment of poignancy; it also informs the audience of deeper dimensions to St. Jimmy's character. At m. 86, a descending eighth-note pattern in the piano sets up the return of the full band for six measures and both characters climactically complete the form and the cycle. The guitars, bass and drums are *tacet* in the outro (m. 93 in Ex. 14) and Kitt recalls the piano part from the outro of the album version (m. 107 in Ex. 13). The strings here replicate the lead guitar line of the instrumental cycle of the album version (m. 77 in Ex. 13) and the vocal harmony gently calms down bringing the song to its end.

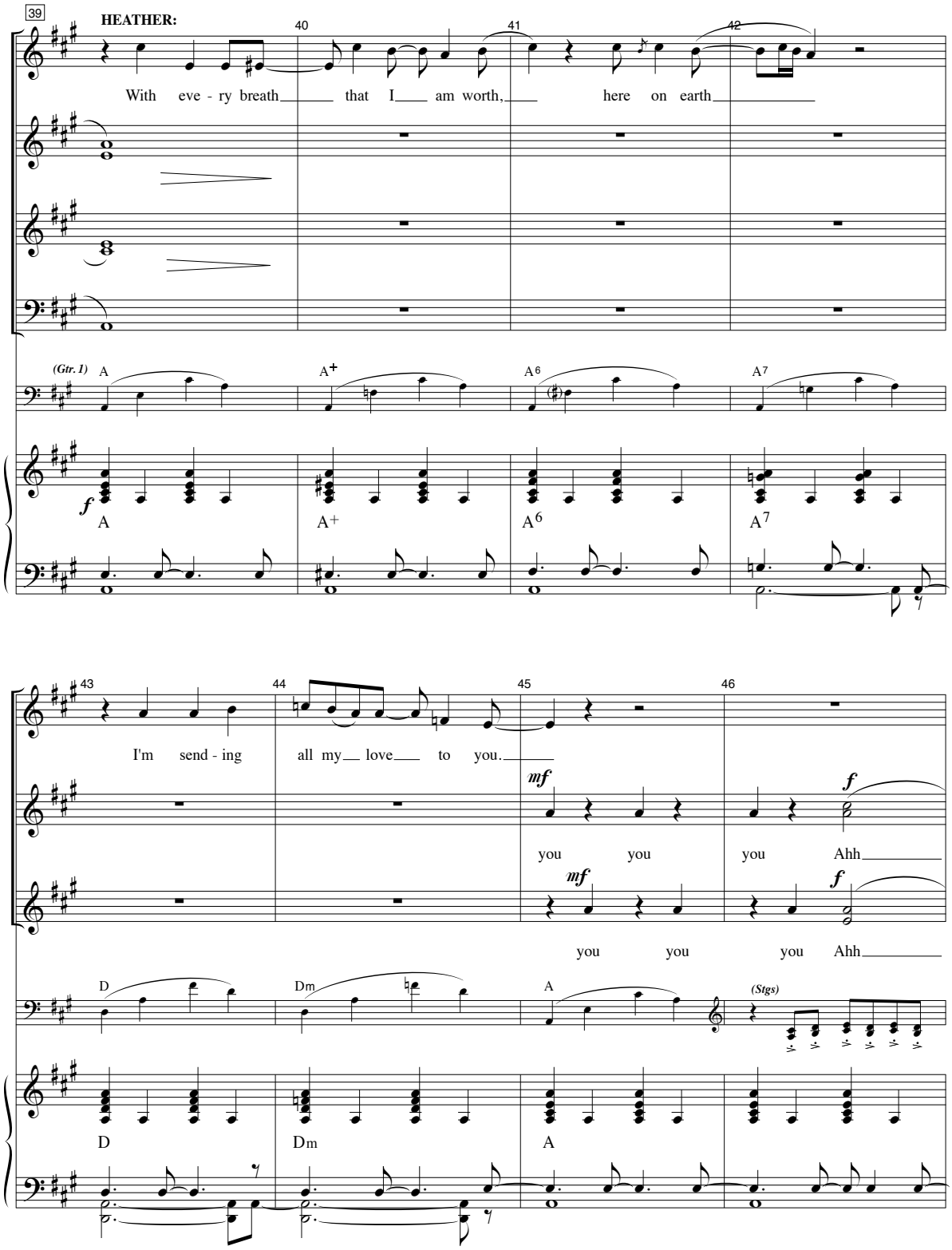
[41] Having seen the Broadway production I can attest to this choreographic motivation. Johnny and Whatsername use the rubber band, that is usually tied around the arm in preparation for needle insertion, as a choreographic prop.

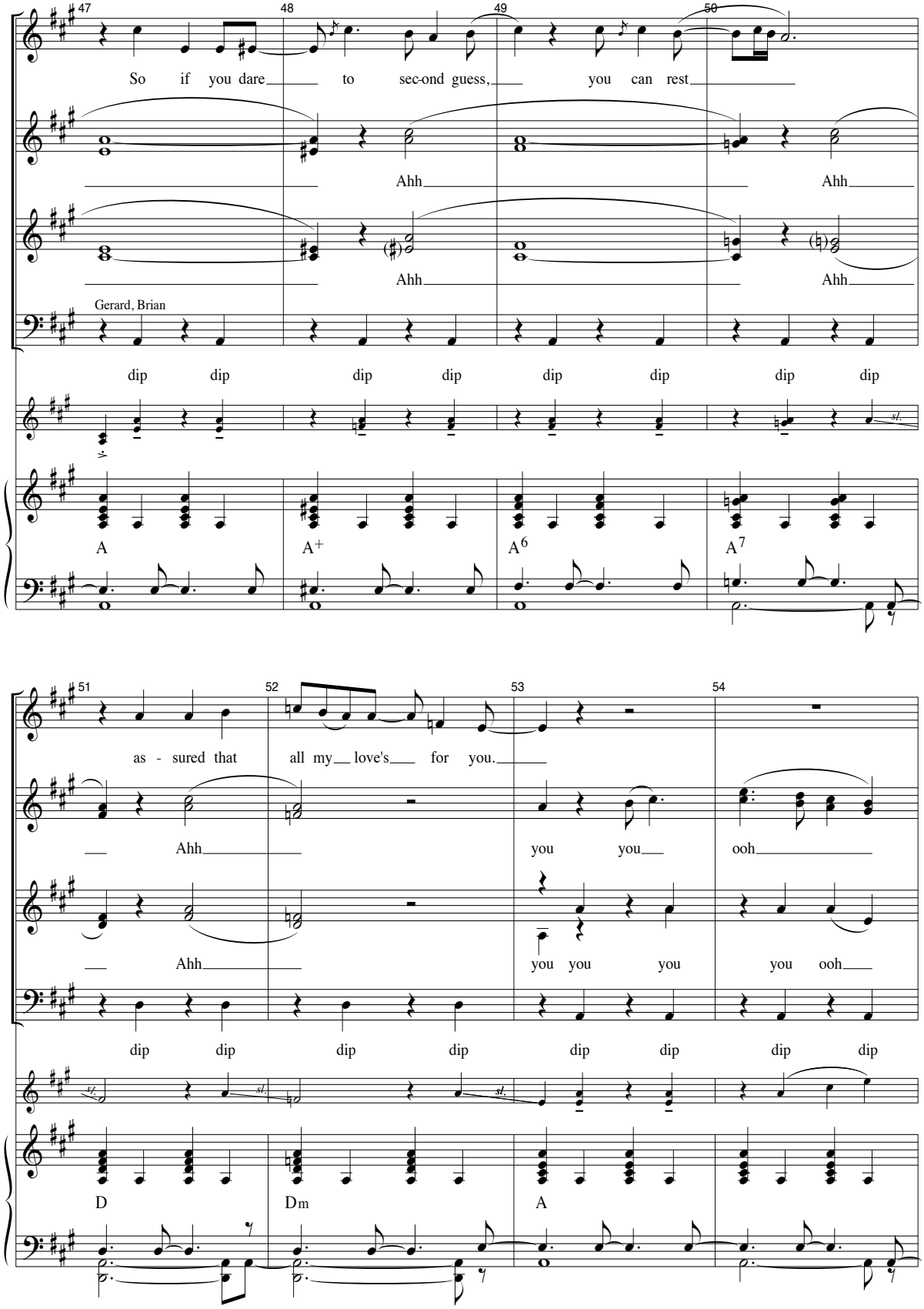
Example 14: ‘Last Night On Earth’, *American Idiot* piano-vocal score, mm 1-99.

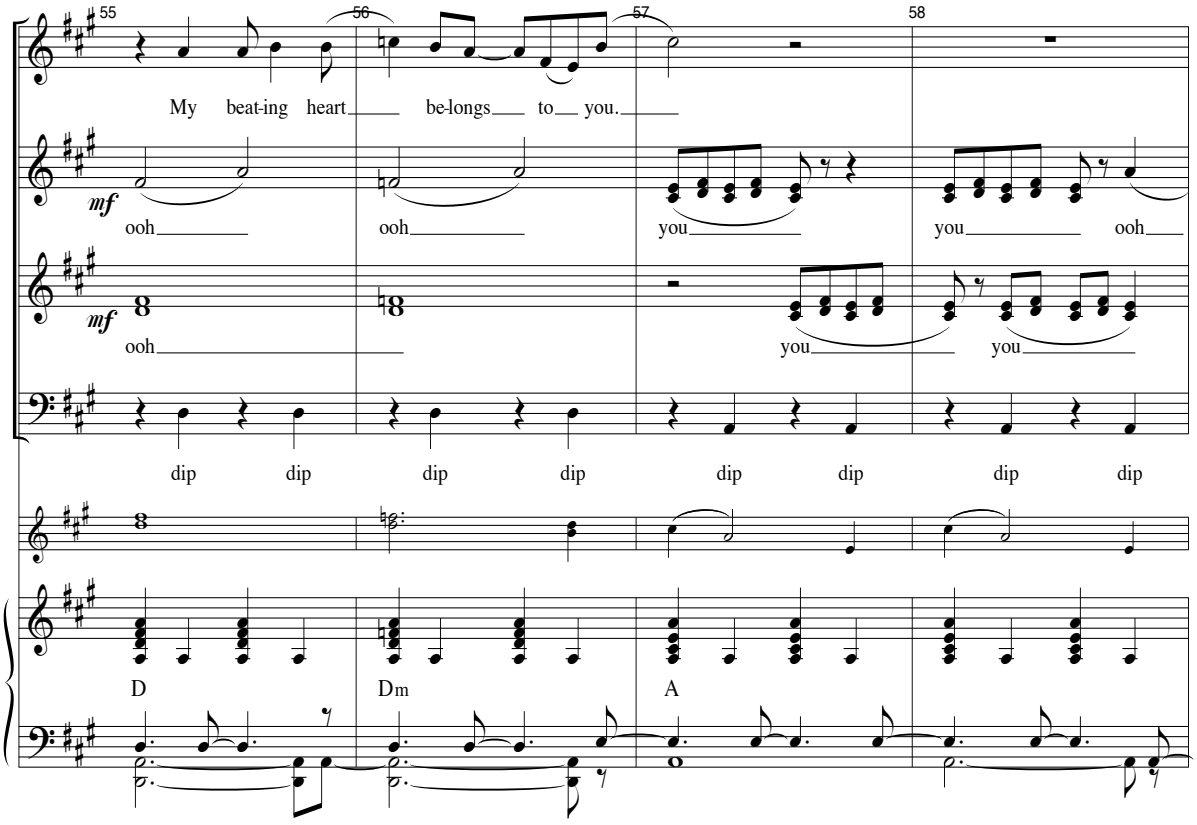



13
14
15
16
You are the moon - light of my life, eve - ry night.
F
F+
F6
F7
17
18
19
20
Giv - ing all my love to you.
B♭
B♭m
F
21
WHATSERNAME:
22
23
24
My beat - ing heart be - longs to you.
B♭
B♭m
F
25
26
27
28
I walked for miles 'til I found you.
B♭
B♭m
F

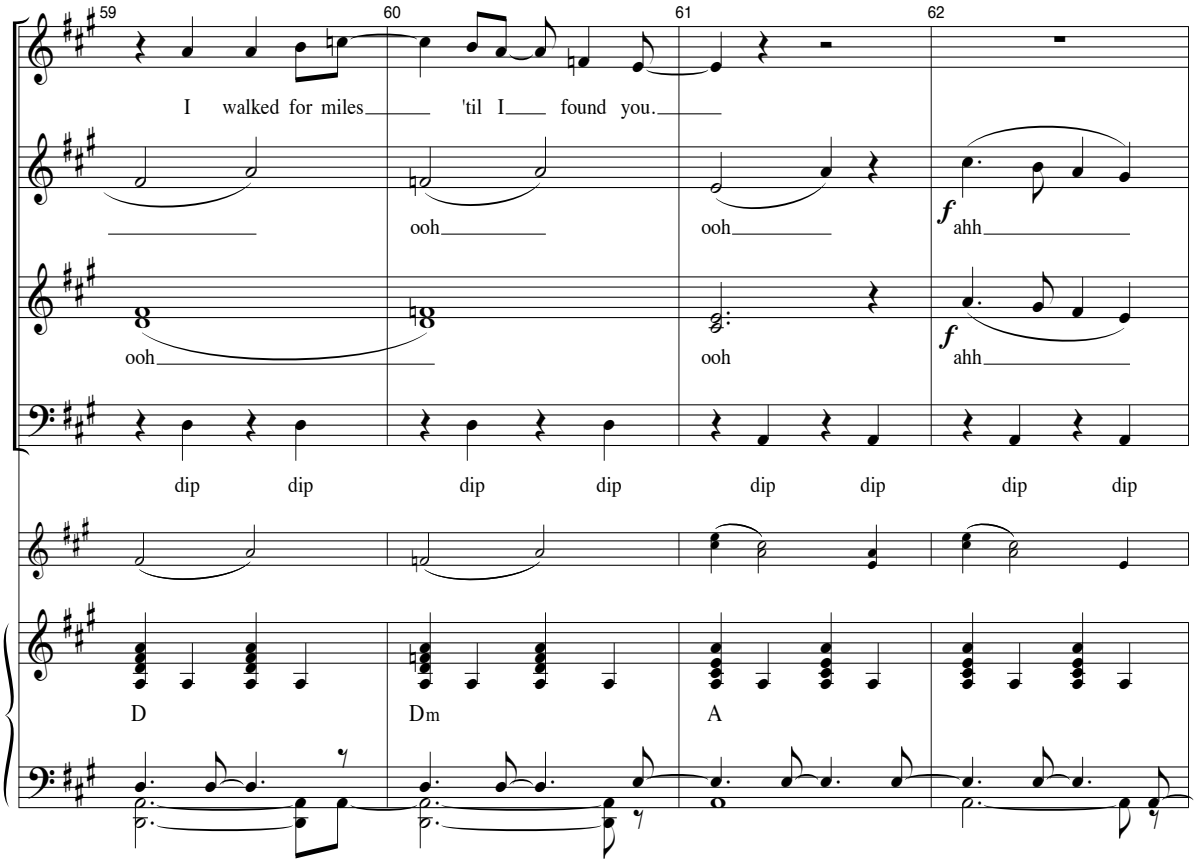

29
BOTH:
30
31
I'm here to hon - or you if I lose eve -
B♭
B♭m
F
F/E♭
32
33
34
- ry - thing in the fi - re, I'm send - ing all my love to you.
D
F/C
B♭
B♭m
35
36
37
38
Alysha, Leslie, Chase
Ben, Michael, Josh
f
Ahh
Miguel, Libby,
Andrew, Declan, John
f
Ahh
Gerard, Brian
f
Ahh
(+Stgs)
mp
sub. p
Piano
Play
p
(+Will gtr.)
(Band in)

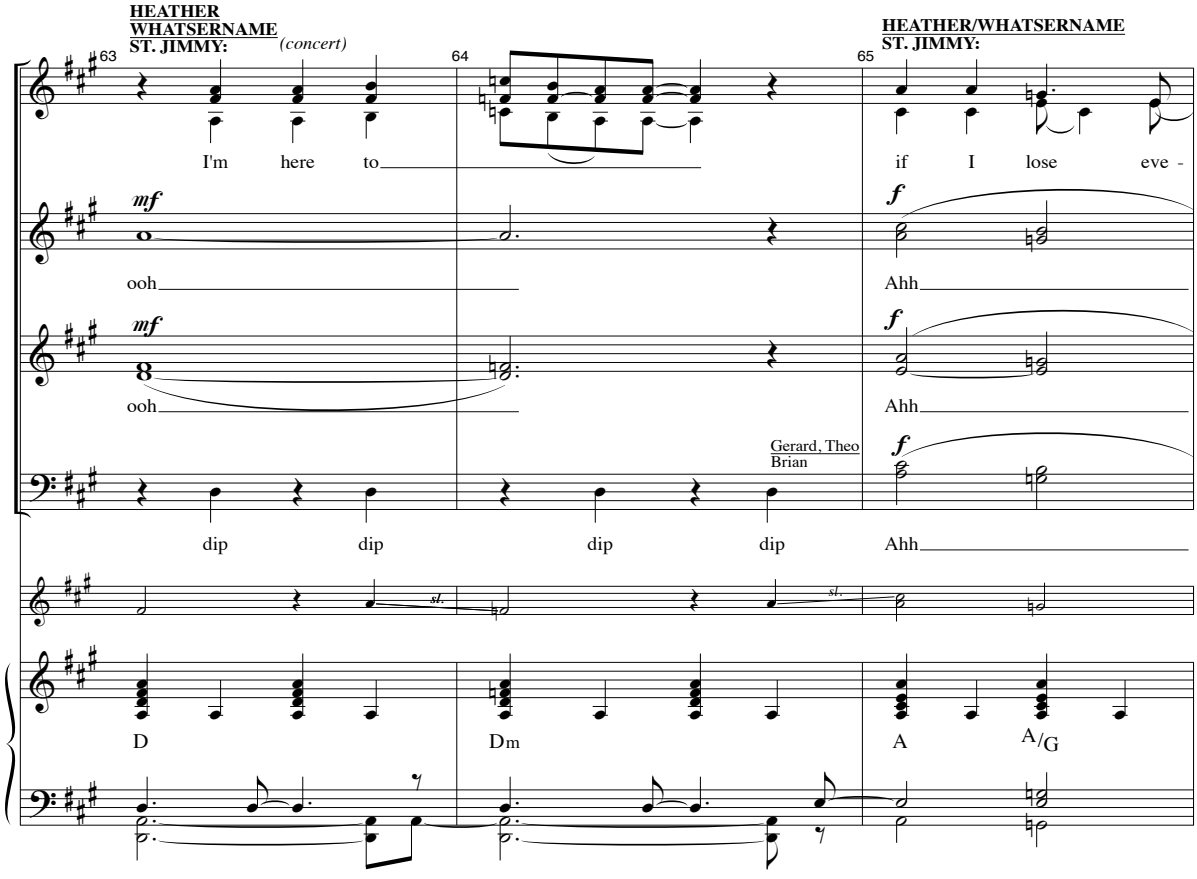

39
HEATHER:
40
41
42
With eve - ry breath that I am worth, here on earth
(Gtr. 1)
A
A+
A6
A7
f
A
A+
A6
A7
43
44
45
46
I'm send - ing all my love to you.
mf
you you you Ahh
f
mf
you you you Ahh
f
D
Dm
A
(Stgs)
D
Dm
A

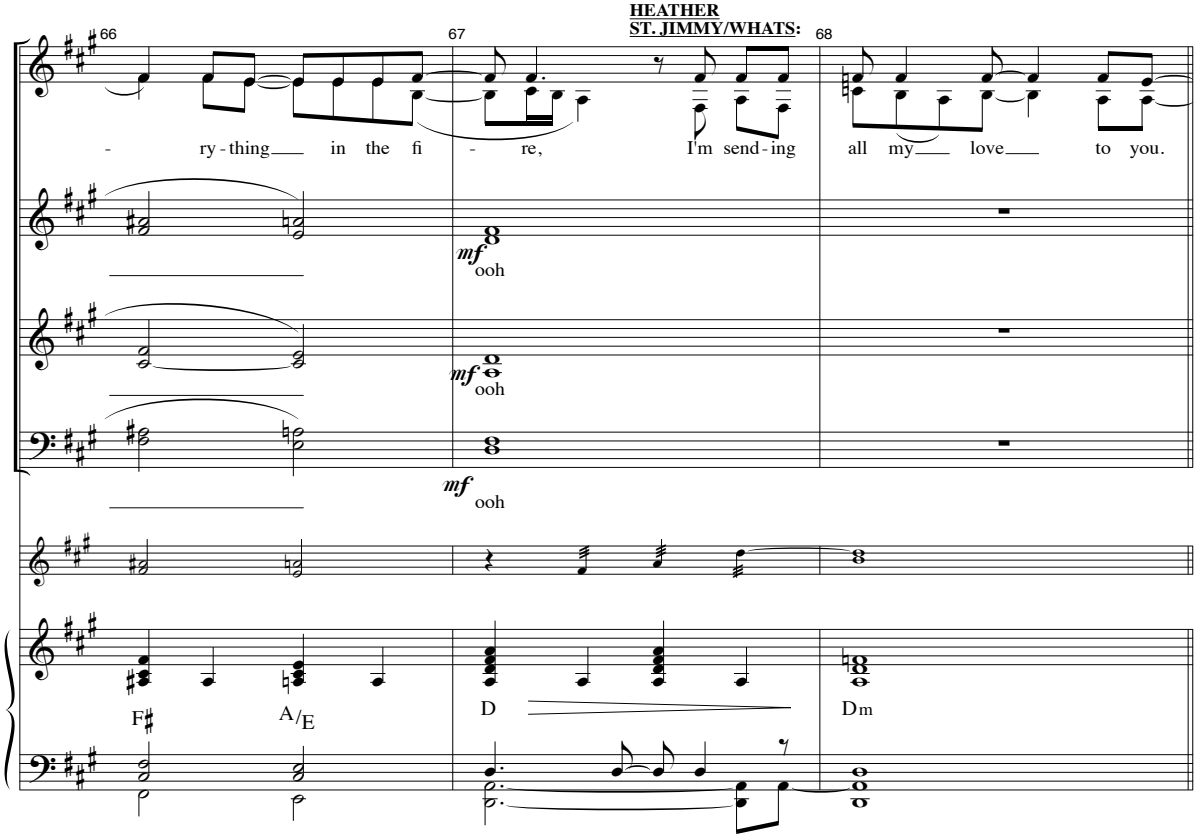

47
48
49
50
So if you dare to sec-ond guess, you can rest
Ahh
Ahh
Ahh
Ahh
Gerard, Brian
dip dip dip dip dip dip dip dip
A
A+
A6
A7
51
52
53
54
as - sured that all my love's for you.
Ahh
you you ooh
Ahh
you you you you ooh
dip dip dip dip dip dip dip dip
D
Dm
A

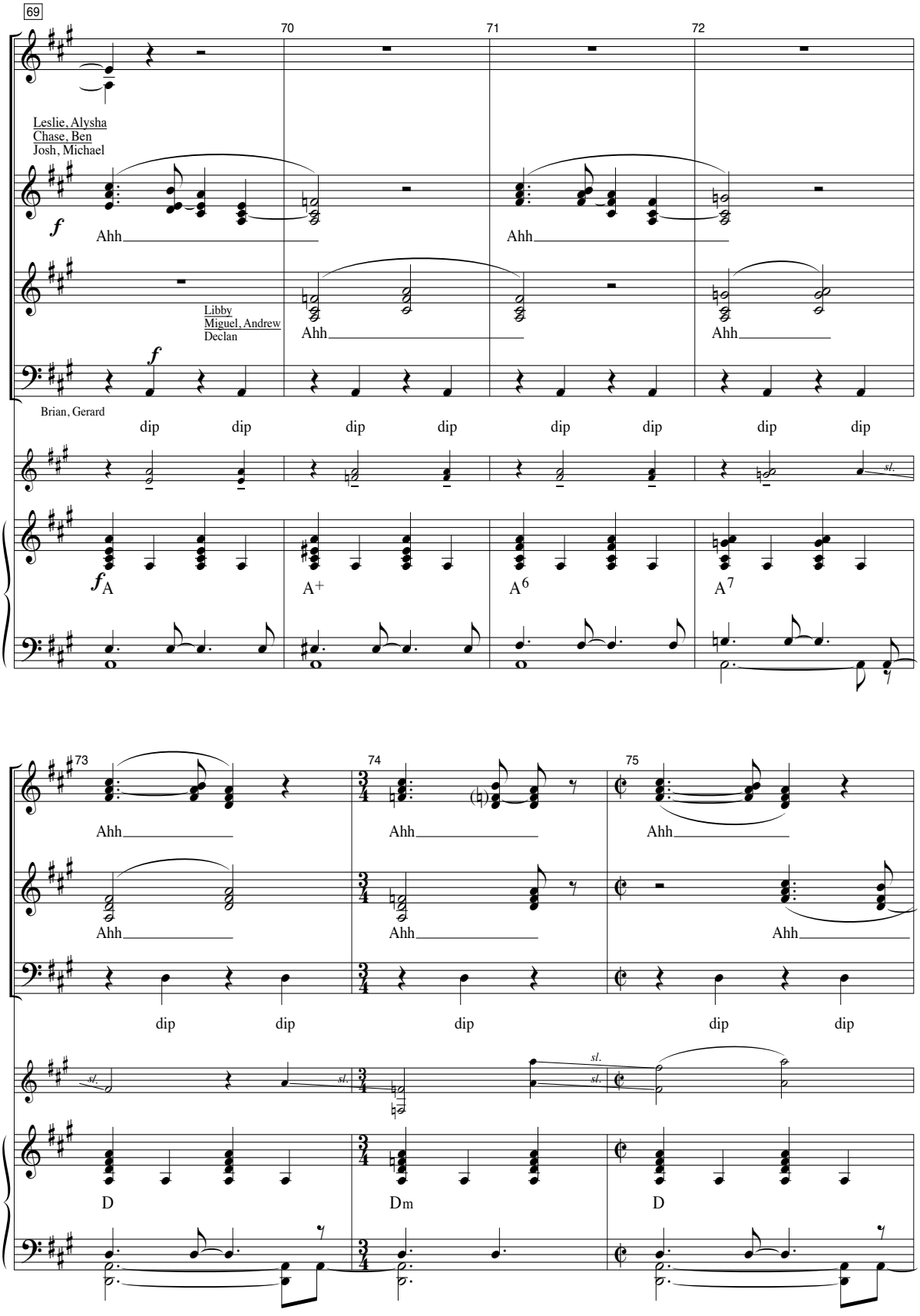


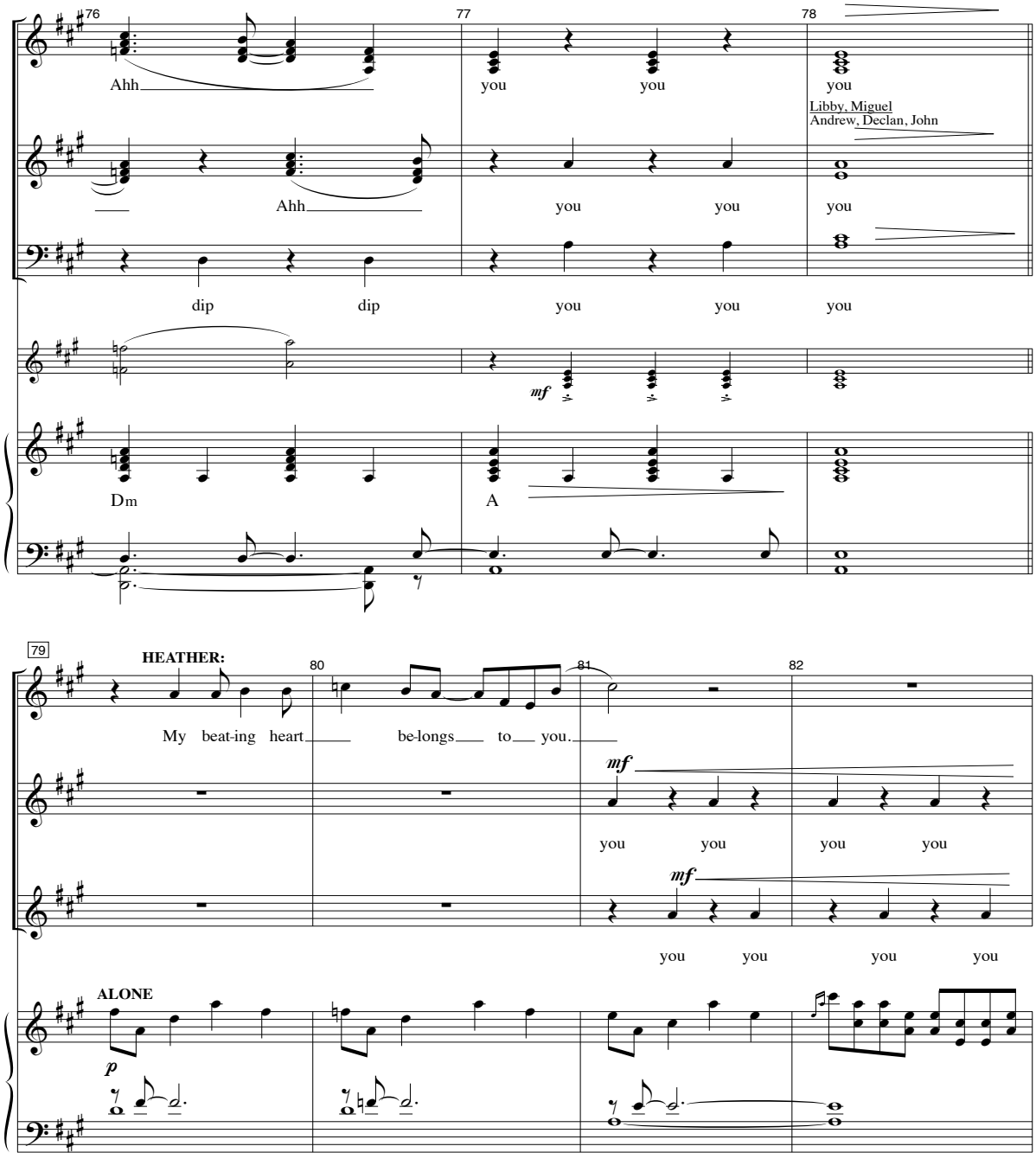
WHATSERNAME AND ST. JIMMY:

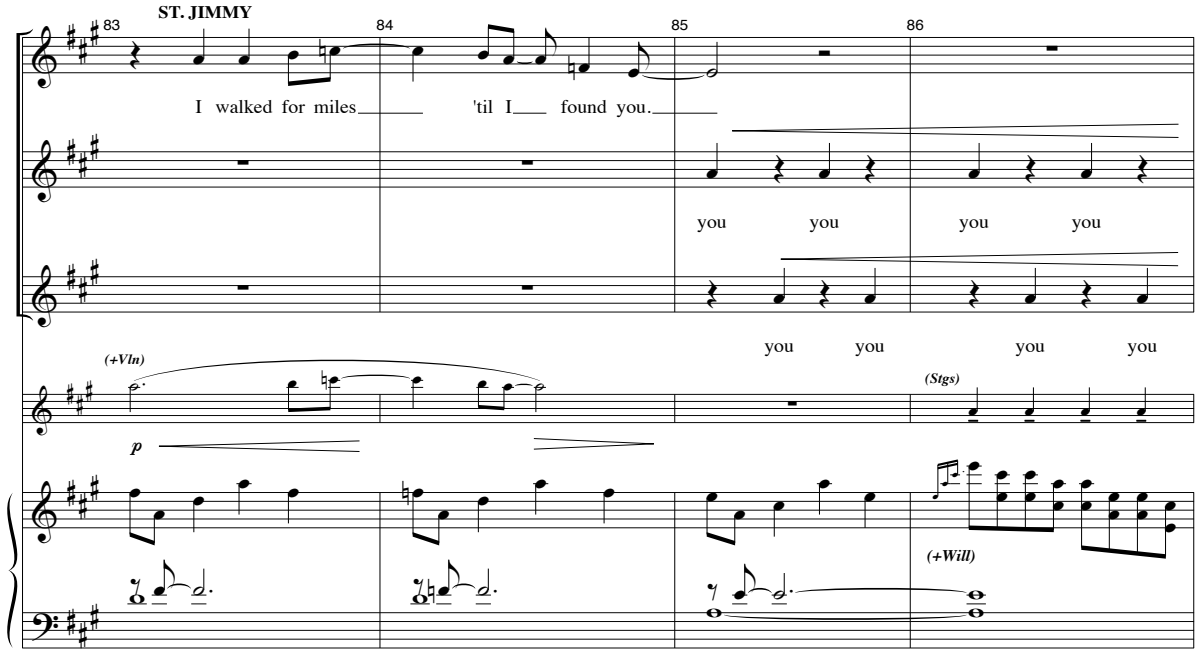


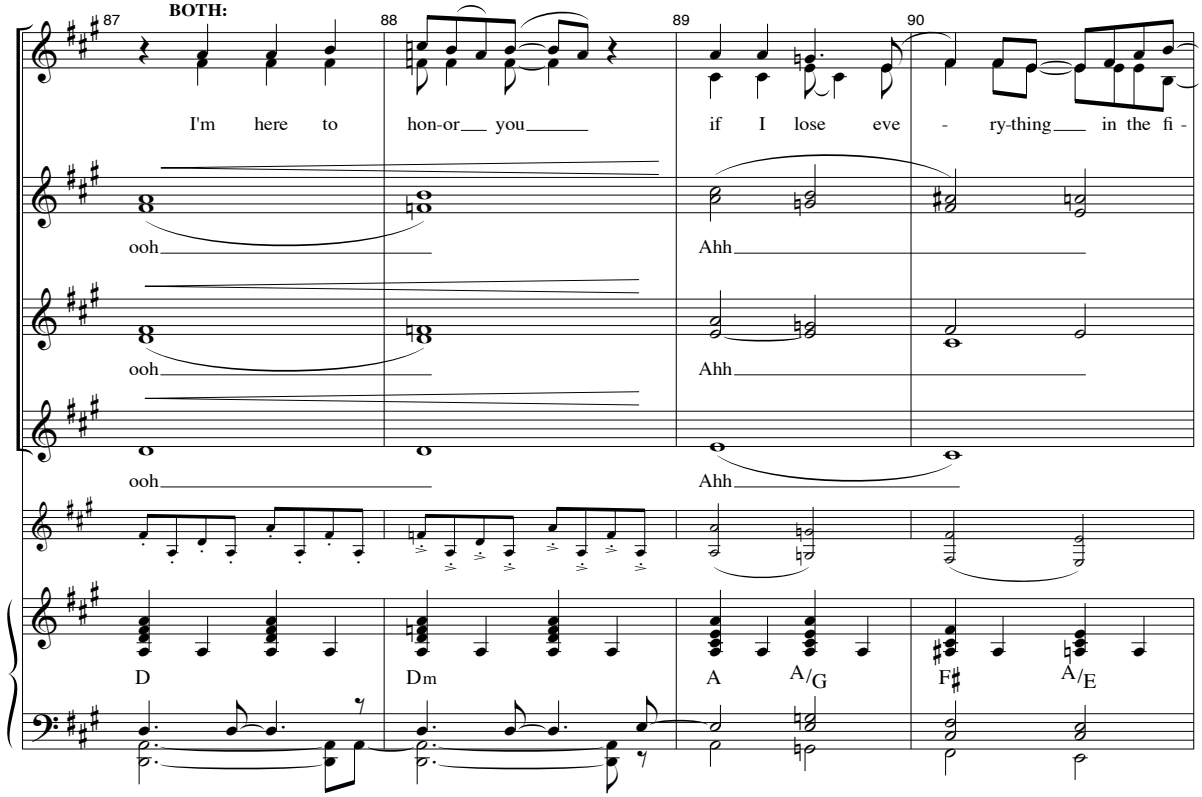

HEATHER
WHATSERNAME
ST. JIMMY:
(concert)
63
64
65
HEATHER/WHATSERNAME
ST. JIMMY:
I'm here to
if I lose eve -
mf
ooh
f
Ahh
Gerard, Theo
Brian
dip dip dip dip
sl.
D
Dm
A
A/G

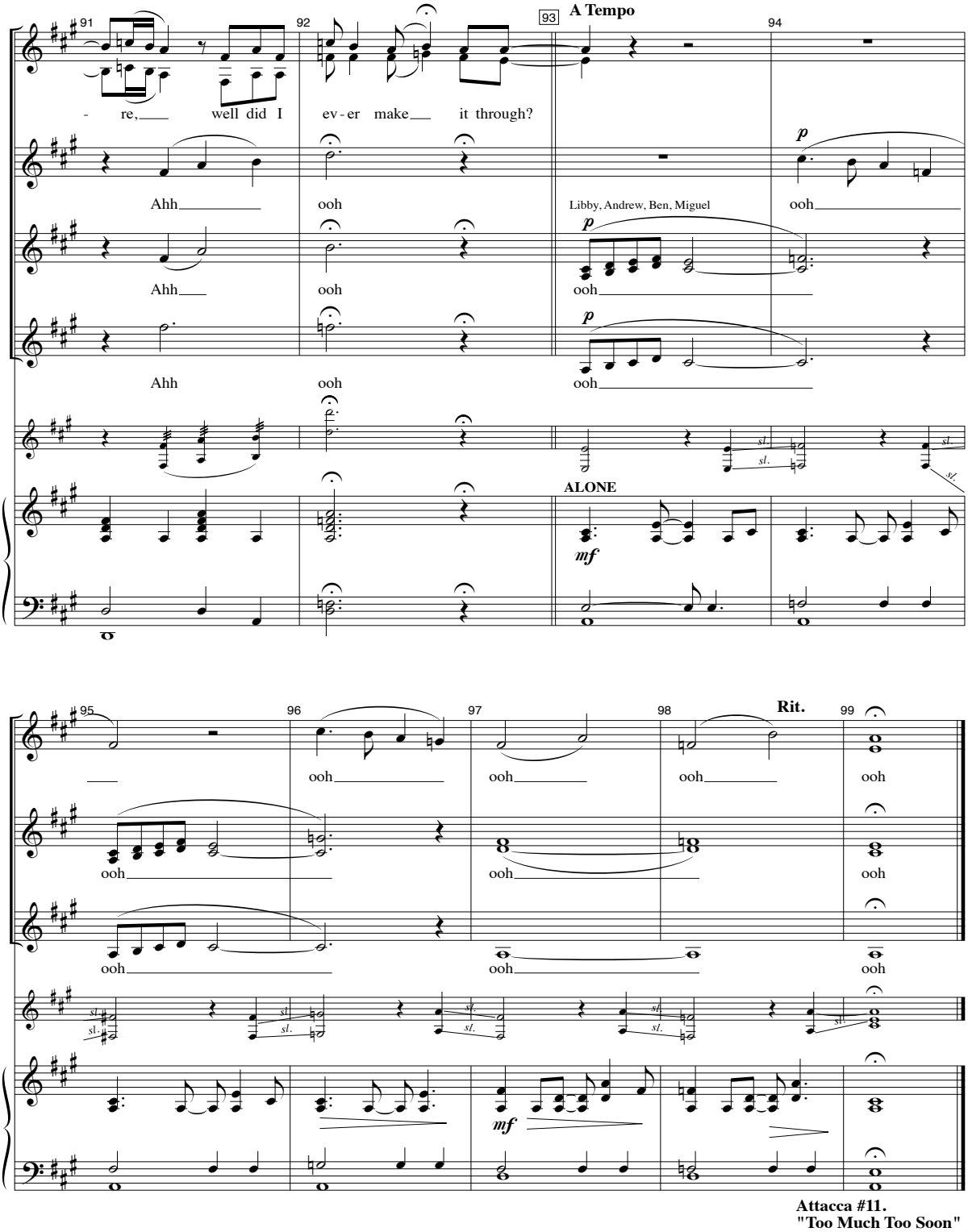

66
67
68
HEATHER
ST. JIMMY/WHATS:
- ry - thing in the fi - re,
I'm send - ing all my love to you.
mf
ooh
F♯
A/E
D
Dm


69
70
71
72
Leslie, Alysha
Chase, Ben
Josh, Michael
f
Ahh
Libby
Miguel, Andrew
Declan
Brian, Gerard
dip
A
A+
A6
A7
sl.
73
74
75
D
Dm


76
77
78
Ahh
you
you
you
Libby, Miguel
Andrew, Declan, John
Ahh
you
you
you
dip
dip
you
you
you
mf
Dm
A
79
HEATHER:
80
81
82
My beat-ing heart
be-longs
to
you.
mf
you
you
you
you
mf
you
you
you
you
ALONE
p


ST. JIMMY
83
84
85
86
I walked for miles
'til I
found you.
you you you you
you you you you
(+Vln)
(Stgs)
p
(+Will)


BOTH:
87
88
89
90
I'm here to hon-or you
if I lose eve - ry-thing in the fi -
ooh
Ahh
ooh
Ahh
ooh
Ahh
D
Dm
A
A/G
F♯
A/E



In comparing the two versions of ‘Last Night on Earth’, it is apparent that Kitt’s orchestration transforms the song into a fully integrated contextualised piece of musical drama. Despite the historically tempestuous relationship between rock and musical theatre, and the dismissive attitudes of many of rock’s cognoscenti towards

musical theatre, for punk rocker Billie Joe Armstrong, the experience of working in an environment in which his creative work was approached with such a theatrical sensibility was surprisingly affirming. He reflects: “Some of these versions are better than the ones we recorded. I felt validated as a songwriter. My melodies felt validated. People don’t talk about things like that in the rock world so much as it’s either a good song or a bad song. Does it rock? Is there a riff? Where’s the hook? When Tom Kitt put his spin on it we ended up having a dialogue that I had been waiting to have my entire life” (‘Broadway Idiot’, 2013).

The analyses I have presented here evidence how the palette of tonal timbres and instrumental colours of the acoustic age gave orchestrators powerful and expressive means to communicate. The correct and appropriate use of a particular instrument or musical texture, for example, can instantly convey dramaturgical information about milieu, time, period, character, emotional conflict, socio-political climate, and the signalling of future events. On the other hand, the more limited instrumental contingents of the synthesised age, are not as prismatic and their ability to communicate dramaturgical information is, therefore, less perspicuous. This is largely due to the fact that the instrumentation drives the groove and is less likely to be descriptive of or commentate on aspects of storytelling. These analyses reveal how the parameters of musical arranging – tempo, texture, key, modulation, form, transitions, voicings, underscoring, reprises and so on – are indispensable in communicating dramaturgical information. I further conclude that vocal arranging, whether applied from an arranger’s or orchestrator’s perspective, must be considered inextricably valuable as a contributing dramaturgical factor.

ACT I

SCENE FIVE

"Every minor detail is a major decision" (Sondheim)

The preceding four scenes set up an historical and analytical context within which to situate my own creative work, which is a mandatory component of this dissertation. To this end, I introduce *Streets of Gold*, an original one-act South African pop/rock musical which I arranged, orchestrated and music directed in 2011. The annotated score is presented in Volume Two of the dissertation. In addition to the score, audio material on a CD, as well as a DVD containing an audio and visual record of a performance of the musical, are supplied as supplementary and supporting materials.

The art form of the Broadway musical began to emerge in South Africa as early as 1942 with musicals like *Chu Chin Chow* that had premiered on Broadway in 1917 (Tucker, 1997: 19). Since then South African composers and writers, influenced by the art form, have aspired to create original works that imitate and/or emulate the American model in a non-geographically contextualised style; and even re-invent the model by drawing on indigenous African musical materials, dialects, and languages in an attempt to bring a unique sonic identity to a Western art form. Most notable is *King Kong* which was billed as an 'all-African jazz opera'; it opened in 1959 at the Wits University Great Hall and effectively launched the international career of Miriam Makeba. In addition *Ipi Tombi* (1977), *Sarafina!* (1987) and *Kat and the Kings* (1999) are original South African musicals that have been produced on Broadway.

The American paradigm of development and construction that I addressed in Scene Three – readings, workshops, revisions and collaboration – has never been properly established in the evolution of original musicals in South Africa, primarily because financial risk and the likelihood of a limited run prohibit the luxury of such development, and therefore quality and artistic standards are often compromised. While a handful of South African musicals have enjoyed artistic and financial success, most new South African musicals suffer the fate of mediocrity due to the

lack of thorough development; thus not realising their full potential. *Streets of Gold* unfortunately fits into the latter category. Nonetheless, it presented me with an opportunity for creative involvement in an original work.

What became *Streets of Gold* was originally intended as an expansion of a marketing initiative for the mining house Anglo-Gold Ashanti, promoting their winning designs in a gold jewellery competition. Instead of the conventional fashion show at which the new designs would be modelled, the corporation considered the concept of a full-scale original musical in which the winning design would be a key storytelling plot-point along the lines of Alfred Hitchcock's 'McGuffin' such as the *Maltese Falcon*, and the other pieces would be worn by the various characters.[42] A promotional booklet developed by an advertising agency had already been published, in which various designs were linked to a series of characters presented in the style of a graphic novel. Alan Swerdlow, an established writer and director in the theatre profession in South Africa, was asked to weave the characters together to create a stage version of a *film noir* thriller, indicating song points which were to be in a contemporary style but evocative of 1940s jazz standards.

In the classic tradition of 'a camel being a horse designed by a committee', interference came from many quarters, and particularly from the corporate marketing arm of the gold company who jettisoned the *film noir* idea. Retaining the graphic novel characters, they imposed a futuristic concept involving a post-apocalyptic dystopia and a socio-political struggle as the basis for the musical. Additionally, they selected a partially inexperienced creative team: the director of the show had established credentials as a choreographer but had minimal experience directing. Jon Savage and Jane Breetzke, who were engaged to compose the music and lyrics, were members of a fairly well established South African rock band called Cassette, but neither of them had ever written music for the theatre.

With the shift in focus to the futuristic concept, Swerdlow fashioned the script and gave the characters larger-than-life cartoon-style personalities. And with Savage and Breetzke's compositional style being evocative of early 1980s British synth-pop

[42] Hitchcock's 'McGuffin' is a term referring to a storytelling device around which the action revolves but is, of itself, unimportant and has no consequence.

groups like Duran Duran and The Human League, there was potential for a 'spoof' musical in the vein of *The Rocky Horror Show* or *Bye, Bye Birdie*, namely a parody or lampoon idea translated into theatrical terms. Two key problems prevented this potential from being realised: corporate minds making uninformed creative decisions, and the fact that all the members of the creative team worked in isolation, with no group consultation, collaboration, argument and agreement, as would be the case in an original American musical. A viewing of the performance on the attached DVD reveals investment in large-scale design elements that include a gigantic LED screen; and yet the absence of a unified creative vision is blatant in other areas. Nonetheless, a performance of the musical was filmed without an audience for record purposes.

I live in Johannesburg and Savage and Breetzke in Cape Town, a two-hour flight away. All communication regarding the score was done through e-mail exchange and Skype briefings. The script, lyrics, songs and arrangements were e-mailed back and forth daily between the various members of the creative team. Opinions were voiced and revisions were made; agreements and disagreements ensued. However, as opposed to the entire creative team meeting regularly to collaborate and debate creative issues constructively, with a corporate mind managing the developmental process, the creation took on the dynamic of business exchanges, rather than creative interaction; and according to book writer Alan Swerdlow "it was a recipe for disaster" (personal comm.).

Apart from the abovementioned obstacles in the creative process, I had the added challenge of guiding Savage and Breetzke on how to write for the theatre rather than writing stand-alone pop songs for the commercial market; a challenge made more onerous by our geographic separation. Book writer, Swerdlow, sent them a detailed document explaining the function of a song in a musical suggesting ideas like psychological underpinnings, emotional state of mind, ironic commentary on the proceedings and the narrative. Since Savage and Breetzke both compose and arrange for their rock band Cassette, they supplied me with mostly fully orchestrated demo recordings that characterised their particular sound. On the attached CD are original references and demo versions that I received from Savage and Breetzke as well as the corresponding songs that I arranged and orchestrated as they were

performed in the production. Rather than offering a complete sequential ordering of the composers' versions followed by a separate sequence of the performance of my arranged musical theatre versions, the tracks on the CD alternate between reference versions and performance versions of each song to best illustrate and compare my arrangements and orchestrations of the songs to the original demos. For example, track 2 is the reference version of "Fight For Gold and Liberty" and track 3 is the performance version of the same song. I consider this method of alternating tracks as the most suitable for this chapter's analytical purposes; though it results in an unavoidable interruption in the continuity of the first three songs especially, which run as one continuous piece in the musical. Where available I have supplied more than one audio reference version for a particular song. In instances in which I created incidental music that was derived from Savage and Breetzke's thematic material, only the performance version is provided.[43]

The fully annotated score provided in Volume Two is the one that I prepared for the rehearsal process. There are discrepancies between the written score and the performance versions due to the added improvisations and interpretations that occurred during the rehearsal process, specifically in the rhythm section.[44] I considered the rehearsal process with the band as an extremely contracted and concentrated idea of a workshop period. In the American paradigm, the rhythm players would have entered the creative process long before formal rehearsals began, and the sort of improvisations that emanated from that process would have been transcribed into the orchestrator's score by the time performances began. Due to time and financial constraints, these revisions were never fully transcribed into the *Streets of Gold* score.

[43] The CD contains only musical material and is not a complete record of an entire performance whereas the DVD is. Since the performance material on the CD was recorded directly from the mixing desk in the theatre during various performances, the audio balance within the band, the balance within the vocal ensemble and the overall sound mix are not an accurate reflection of the aural experience in the theatre. The recordings, nonetheless, suffice for the purpose of analysis and to substantiate my arguments.

[44] The instrumentation comprised a seven-piece rock band consisting of drums, electric bass, two electric guitars, with one player doubling acoustic guitar when required, two keyboards (including myself as conductor on Keyboard 1) and one saxophone player doubling soprano, alto and tenor instruments.

For the purposes of a representative analysis of my arranging and orchestration strategies in *Streets of Gold*, I am providing examples that align themselves with various parameters: these include key selection and modulation, tempo and rhythmic choices, development of underscoring, transitional and incidental music, and vocal arrangements. An essential function of an arranger in serving dramatic intent is in knowing how to 'sign-post' the moments that call for applause and also how to avert them (and in this it functions similar to the way a film soundtrack guides an audience towards what to feel). In *Jersey Boys* Ron Melrose averted applause, and maintained the continuity of the narrative and the action, by persistent musical non-resolution, until such time as the drama called for resolution and applause. In my analysis below I demonstrate similar techniques through my own examples. The orchestration parameters applied involve well thought-out decisions regarding specific instrumentation and its strategic usage, vertical and linear spacing of notes and chords, texture and dynamics. All my creative choices within these parameters were designed to effect maximum dramaturgical impact while maintaining the integrity of Savage and Breetzke's quasi-80s pop/rock style as far as possible. I have always exploited arranging and orchestration techniques for emotionally and psychologically manipulative intent and I believe that this modus operandi has informed my understanding of and impact on the dramaturgical function of these creative practices.

I apply the abovementioned parametric analyses to the opening ten continuous minutes of the musical. Rather than a detailed or exhaustive song-by-song analysis, I discuss techniques that reflect a holistic view and insight into my approaches to, and work on, the entire score; additionally, the annotations throughout the entire enclosed score comment only on my creative work in so far as they substantiate my arguments and analyses introduced here.

As an introduction to the analyses, a brief synopsis of *Streets of Gold* follows:

The time is the far future. The majority of the world is now comprised of a Global Union of Nations (GUN), under the rule of Flora von Higgins and her Fascist-style henchman, Moro. Their corruption and greed have led to the demise of the Digital Dollar; all currency has disappeared and the world is reduced to a Dark Ages trading

economy. Technology platforms and infrastructure are severely compromised and the world regresses by decades, technologically speaking. Cellular phones are not always within reach of a working cellular tower and the Internet has collapsed. People barter for food and goods. Society is left with a broken infrastructure. The time has come for G-Day, the day when the Gold Vault that houses all the world's gold is finally opened, a day that Flora knows is inevitable. She holds the key – known as the Molecular Truth Bracelet (the equivalent of Hitchcock's 'McGuffin') – to the vault. Resisting the GUN is the Gold Liberation Front (GLF), led by a few strong, principled leaders, Viddy and Ngudu9. Their mission is to overthrow the GUN, unlock the Gold Vault and return the gold to the people, thereby restoring peace and equilibrium to the world. Everyone has an independent agenda and a different attitude towards G-Day and nobody knows whom s/he can trust. When Flora places the bracelet on the scanner that opens the vault, everything goes terribly wrong…

At the very beginning of the musical, on the giant LED screen the audience is introduced to the character of Jabulani Bond, the former head of security for the GUN who sets up the scene. Following his recorded monologue in which he reveals that his allegiances are conflicted, an overture accompanies an animation on the screen. The animation reveals images of anarchy and destruction; iconic militaristic images of tanks moving menacingly through city streets juxtaposed with shadows of rebel resistance. The image pans across an urban and industrial environment before entering a mineshaft, increasing in speed as it goes down the shaft, swirling and spiralling like an underground rollercoaster until it reaches its destination at the Gold Vault. The picture holds for a few seconds and then the image swoops all the way back up the shaft to the streets, and the focus shifts to the stage and the rebel forces of the GLF.

I did not arrange and orchestrate this animation prior to working with the band as I wanted the music to evolve out of improvisation in the rehearsal, guided by my verbal instruction when I saw the animation. Given that the enclosed score is a record of my work at the start of the rehearsal period, the music that accompanies the animation was not notated. I was inspired, at the time, by rock band Muse and their album entitled *The Resistance* (2009). The eponymous title track of that album begins with otherworldly synthesiser sounds and effects and a digitised choir; it then

launches into a driving sixteenth-note groove on the toms. This felt like the right kind of musical idea to support the anarchic and militant atmosphere of the animation. In rehearsal, I played the Muse track for the band and then allowed them to improvise based on what they heard. Savage and Breetzke had composed an aggressive hard-rock transitional theme that forms part of Song 4 – 'Bracelet Snatch' (track 7, 0:05-0.12) and Song 7 – 'SWAT Team' (track 12, 0:47-1:09). This theme has a four-chord progression that features a falling bass line that passes through Imin – V/3 – Vmin/3 – IV/3. Recognising that this progression could serve as a motif for aggression and chaos in the score I adopted it as the basis for Song 1 – the animation music, and then methodically worked in reverse from Song 2 backwards to choose the related key for Song 1. Since the climactic image of the animation is the Gold Vault, I wanted the music to land on a chord that not only punctuated the image, but also felt ambiguous and non-cadential, and so I chose an open fifth chord which is tonally ambiguous without the presence of a third. It had been decided by the creative team that the animation would segue-as-one into Song 2 which is in D minor. I wanted this important open fifth chord to function as a non-cadential subdominant in Song 1 and as a tonic in Song 2. Therefore Song 1, the animation music, defaulted to the key of A minor.

In the animation (beginning at 1:43 on the DVD) I identified certain hit points at which the orchestration and tempo needed to change. Thus sound effects, drones and sweeps from the keyboards accompany the images of the war-torn urban landscape with the addition of intermittent rolls on the toms to enforce the atmosphere. A sixteenth-note tom groove kicks in as the image of the rebels is revealed; the electric bass joins, accompanied by a sixteenth-note repetitive-note groove played with distortion on Guitar 2; Guitar 1 adds the next layer with an oscillating *ostinato* lick, cycling through the abovementioned chord progression (2:15-2:45 on the DVD). When the animation moves to the top of the mineshaft, the alto saxophone enters, playing a rhythmically contrasting figure to the guitar while still remaining within the tonality of A minor (2:47-3:00). As the speed of the image accelerates and twists and winds down the mineshaft, drum fills of thirty-second and sixty-fourth notes propel the band into accelerated improvised chaos before climactically settling on the open D5 power chord cued when the visual image stops at the Gold Vault (3:25). The tempo accelerando, the spiralling guitar motif that rises in pitch with the increased

tempo, conflicting rhythms and filmic underscoring are parameters that reinforce the impact of the animation.

Previously functioning as chord IV5 in A minor in Song 1, the D5 chord now functions as the tonic of D minor in Song 2 – 'Fight For Gold and Liberty'. My intention here was to communicate, musically, the truculent defiance of the GLF rebels and emphasise the volcanic undercurrent boiling between the GLF and the GUN. Savage and Breetzke's reference version features a chorus that I refer to as the A-section of the form in my score (mm. 18-26, 39-47, 84-93), and a verse that I call the B-section (mm. 68-83). To arrange the song I considered the key of the reference recording which is D minor and retained it for the following reasons: the song is performed by the rebel ensemble, with featured solos from the hero Viddy, and his sidekick Ngudu9. I wanted the ensemble to sing mostly in unison in a comfortable but strong range for both male and female voices which is provided for by this key choice; I also wanted to reinforce Viddy's status as the leader of the rebels and the hero of the story by scoring his voice above the others. Knowing the vocal abilities of Shaun V, the actor/singer who played Viddy, in advance of writing the vocal arrangements, by composing a solo counter-melody line that exploits his high 'Steven Tyler-esque' rock-tenor, I was able to provide a musically dramatic means of elevating his voice above the crowd serving the climax of the song (mm 83-93).

The form of the arrangement for Song 2 as I envisioned it, and as it is in the score: intro – A1 – underscore – A2 – underscore – B – A3. My intro would serve as transitional material from the animation; and the underscore music after A1 would play under the dialogue first between Viddy and Ngudu9, and then after A2 between Flora and Moro, effectively establishing them as the heroes and villains of the musical at this exposition stage. For the orchestration of the intro and underscore sections, I extracted a two-note guitar riff from the middle of the verse (B-section) of Savage and Breetzke's original reference recording (track 2: 0:59) and used it as a motif to represent a sense of foreboding within my own linear and textural ideas.

At the beginning of the intro of my arrangement of Song 2, the open fifth interval between Keyboard 2, guitars, bass and saxophone, dissipates as, according to my arranging directions, the guitar players produce distortion and feedback, and similar

noise effects by playing their instruments right up against the cones of their amps. The desired effect is a threatening and unsettling atmosphere that pervades over the drone of the low D on Keyboard 2, a drone that sustains an undercurrent of tension until the vocals enter at m. 18. The bass also holds the low D and decays naturally. I arranged the drum figure that begins in m. 2 for toms and kick-drum only and it is designed to accentuate the rabble-rousing, defiant energy of the rebels, which was further supported sonically by the drummer's use of two floor-toms. To underpin the tautness and incendiary mood I created an *ostinato* figure in the piano, using notes of the natural minor scale, that persists throughout the song intentionally creating the anticipation of a 'ticking time-bomb'. I find linear layering of recurrent tonal effects to be a highly manipulative orchestration technique for tension building and there are moments in my writing where I employ linear and contrapuntal phraseology to achieve harmonic sonorities without necessarily resorting to vertical chord voicing. I demonstrate this in mm. 10-17. The drums intensify at m.10 with the addition of sixteenth-notes on beats 1 and 3, followed by the two-note riff that I extracted from the chorus of the reference recording, that plays in the bass and guitars. At m. 14 I raised the piano up an octave to make space for the call-and-response phrases that occur between the guitars/bass and the vocal exclamations at mm. 14-16. This also brightens the sound in keeping with the heightening of the drama.

The use of an accented vertical harmony juxtaposed with multi-layered linear texturing is one of my favourite techniques of creating contrast and emphasis. Song 1, even in its improvisation, relies on linear development which continues into Song 2. The D5 chord – common to the end of Song 1 and the beginning of Song 2 – is the first appearance of any vertical harmony in the score, starkly contrasted against the linear chaos that has preceded it; the chord adds weight to the image by jarring the horizontal flow into verticality, reinforcing the narrative and visual importance of the Gold Vault. In Song 2, the linear build up from m. 10-17 is preparation for the revelation of the ensemble voices that are first heard in vertical harmony accents.

The two sections of underscore that I created (mm. 27-38 and 48-57) are an example of how I use orchestration for emotional and psychological manipulation. The second underscore section is more protracted than the first to accommodate more dialogue; I analyse the first underscore section here but the principles I used

apply to both. The underscore sections follow the A1 and A2 sections, which are vocally and instrumentally dense, loud and aggressive. At the end of the A1 and A2 sections, the dynamic level drops and the instrumentation thins out substantially so that the dialogue can take precedence, providing crucial narrative and plot information. The simmering tension is maintained. At m. 27, the guitars and bass decay and the *ostinato* piano recurs accompanied by hi-hat quarter-notes, reiterating the 'ticking time-bomb' effect. Keyboard 2, on a string patch, plays a high sustained tonic pedal-tone; a familiar technique used in enhancing suspenseful situations in film soundtracks. After six measures (m. 35) the tension rises in anticipation of the return to the repeat of the A-section in the following ways: the addition of the kick-drum and the reiteration of the two-note guitar riff; at m. 33 I raised the string line a tone to the super-tonic which creates a suspension of a second in the tonic chord. (The use of the suspended second and/or added ninth interval is a trademark of my arranging technique in this score which I discuss later.) Then, at m. 35, with the entrance of the bass, the piano once again shifts an octave as it did in the intro, and the string line drops two octaves in order to ascend through a series of half-notes to return climactically to the A-section.

Song 2 – 'Fight For Gold and Liberty' briefly introduces the audience to the heroes and the villains. Song 3 – 'Who Do You Trust?', introduces all eight principal characters and reveals crucial information about their identities and individual agendas. 'Who Do You Trust?' is the only song in the score that was previously written for independent commercial consumption and was a hit for Cassette. Savage and Breetzke had to be open-minded to adapting their song to the narrative of the story – a tough call for songwriters unaccustomed to writing music for the theatre. In Scene One I quoted composer Jason Robert Brown's observation about the extent to which arrangers and orchestrators carry the responsibility for the sound of Broadway musicals today, particularly when collaborating with composers who are unschooled; or songwriters who don't typically write for the theatre, and therefore "lack the vocabulary to build a cohesive musical universe on stage" (Brown, 2012). This observation aptly describes the dynamic of my relationship with Savage and Breetzke. This song presented me with the challenge of retaining the radio familiarity yet reshaping it with dramaturgical intent. Track 4 on the CD is the original radio version by Cassette and track 5 the demo of the composers' revisions after

protracted discussions were held to map out the trajectory of the narrative of this song.

I laid out the form of the song which is indicated in the score for reference purposes as follows: intro 1 – A1 – B1 – A2 – B2 – intro 2 – C – A3 – B3 – intro 3 – B4 – intro 4 – outro. Tracks 4 and 5 highlight contrasts in the reference material from which I worked; the original version was fully orchestrated and the their revision was a bare-bones guitar accompaniment. The song begins in the same key, D minor, as the original reference recording. For the majority of the song, I honoured the source material by transcribing a number of the original orchestration ideas into my score, for example, the guitar line in the intro (mm. 3-10), which is an essential thematic 'hook' in pop terms (listen to CD track 4: 0:09-0:22).

Each of the A-sections – the verse and pre-chorus of the song – introduces two characters at a time. First, Cassandra and Viddy; second, Ngudu9 and Lily; third, Sheba and Bond. The B-section is the chorus of the song. To maintain the impetus and energy that is established in Song 1 and Song 2, I assigned the vocal responsibilities of the B-section to the ensemble on all repeats. With each repetition, the vocal intensity increases as each principal character is added. The C-section is ostensibly the bridge of the song and it mirrors the reference recording in the use of the vocal 'ooh' and 'ah' phrases (CD: track 4, 2:46). Dramatically it was important for Flora and Moro to reveal information crucial to the development of the plot through dialogue. For this reason the creative team elected to insert lines of dialogue between the gaps in the vocal phrases. By positioning these lines of dialogue in the gaps, the phrases became musically dramatic commentary on the dialogue.

My one significant departure from the original reference recording occurs at m. 45, in the A2 section, with the entrance of Ngudu9. Being a radio song originally, it has the structural and form limitations of a pop or rock song; the groove and the orchestration are repetitive. To situate the song in this dramatic context, I modulated the key from D minor up a tone to E minor, a brighter key, and changed the rock groove to a fusion of hip-hop and quasi-'dub-step', which aided in communicating information about Ngudu9 and how he comes from a very different background to most of the other characters. Added to this I introduced the gritty open-fifth riffs in the

guitars and the improvised saxophone licks, which are designed to evoke images of the danger in the streets in which Ngudu9 survives.

Between the B3 and B4 choruses, in intro 3 I reprised the 'Fight for Gold…' theme. Sung by the rebel ensemble, I suggested that the reiteration of this theme would make an effective dramatic counterpoint to the agendas laid out by principal characters. The climax of this song brings ten continuous minutes of music to the first applause moment in the production. I stated earlier that one of the essential requirements of a musical theatre arranger is knowing how to steer an audience towards an applause moment and knowing how to avert it. At the end of Song 1, I organised that the D5 chord functions as the sub-dominant – and is thus non-cadential – and avoids resolution thereby averting applause; the D5 chord at the end of Song 2 is the tonic of both Song 2 and Song 3 and therefore lends the sense of continuity to the drama. The end of Song 3 calls for a momentary breath in the action since the exposition has been stated and the characters have been introduced. At this point I changed the meter to 3/4 to increase urgency by contraction and spread the vocal harmony to triads within the principal and male ensemble parts, applying the dynamic effect of a *sforzando-piano* with a *crescendo* to the 'button' on '4-and' at the end of the measure (see mm. 150-153). My vocal harmony arrangement here is worth noting in terms of my interview with Stephen Oremus, whose vocal arranging style inspires me. I share the opinion of Broadway music director Adam Ben-David that "Stephen Oremus is far and away the best vocal arranger on Broadway. Hands down. No one alive comes close to him" (2012). In this particular instance, I wrote a triad in the male ensemble, with the top note of the chord in the tenor range, and an interval of a third apart in the female ensemble with the top note in the middle of the *passaggio*. The result is rich and forceful punctuating the dramatic climax of the exposition. I wrote these arrangements prior to my interview with Oremus who spoke about his vocal arrangement style in *Wicked*: "the guys are in giant triads singing really high and then the girls are in one or two parts and it creates this very muscular, huge sound" (2012).

In Scene 2 of this dissertation I quoted Scott Miller's observation that pop/rock musicals share "a disdain for authority and the taste for rebellion to which only the language of rock and roll could give full voice" (2007: 116). There are a number of

rock singers I admire who are vocal exponents of the 'language' of which Miller speaks. For example: Robert Plant, Jon Bon Jovi, Steven Tyler, Freddie Mercury and Steve Perry; and female vocalists Pat Benatar, Debbie Harry, Janis Joplin and Stevie Nicks. Their voices display a thrilling timbral brilliance that resonates in the higher extremes of the *passaggio* and an expressive force that emanates from a place of raw honesty. When I consider artists such as these, the theatricality of their vocal performances convinces me that although the worlds of rock music and musical theatre have clashed historically, they are not necessarily antithetical. Recalling the first time that I heard *Jesus Christ Superstar*, I was moved and inspired by the drama, the 'razor-edge' rasp, and the gut-wrenching emotional power of Ian Gillan's voice and vocal delivery. That spark has inspired and informed many of the dramatic and musical choices that I make in my own vocal arrangements. Earlier I described the example of the solo that I wrote for Shaun V/Viddy at the end of Song 2. I provide other examples below.

In the story it is revealed that Viddy and Cassandra have a romantic history; they were circumstantially separated yet their feelings for each other have endured through the conflict between the GUN and GLF. To complicate matters, Lily, who is the daughter of Flora (the villain and leader of the GUN), is in love with Viddy and is willing to betray her mother in the name of love. Savage and Breetzke had composed a love ballad called 'We Can Work It Out' (CD: track 10) that was intended as a duet for Viddy and Cassandra, a song about resolving issues both personal and global. I suggested to the composers that, by adapting the song into a trio, it would illuminate the love triangle between Cassandra, Viddy and Lily. In the original composition, there is a solo electric guitar line and I proposed converting this line into a vocal line for Lily, developing it into a musical and dramatic counterpoint to the duet between Viddy and Cassandra. In Example 15 below I demonstrate how I achieved this. (Listen to CD: track 11).

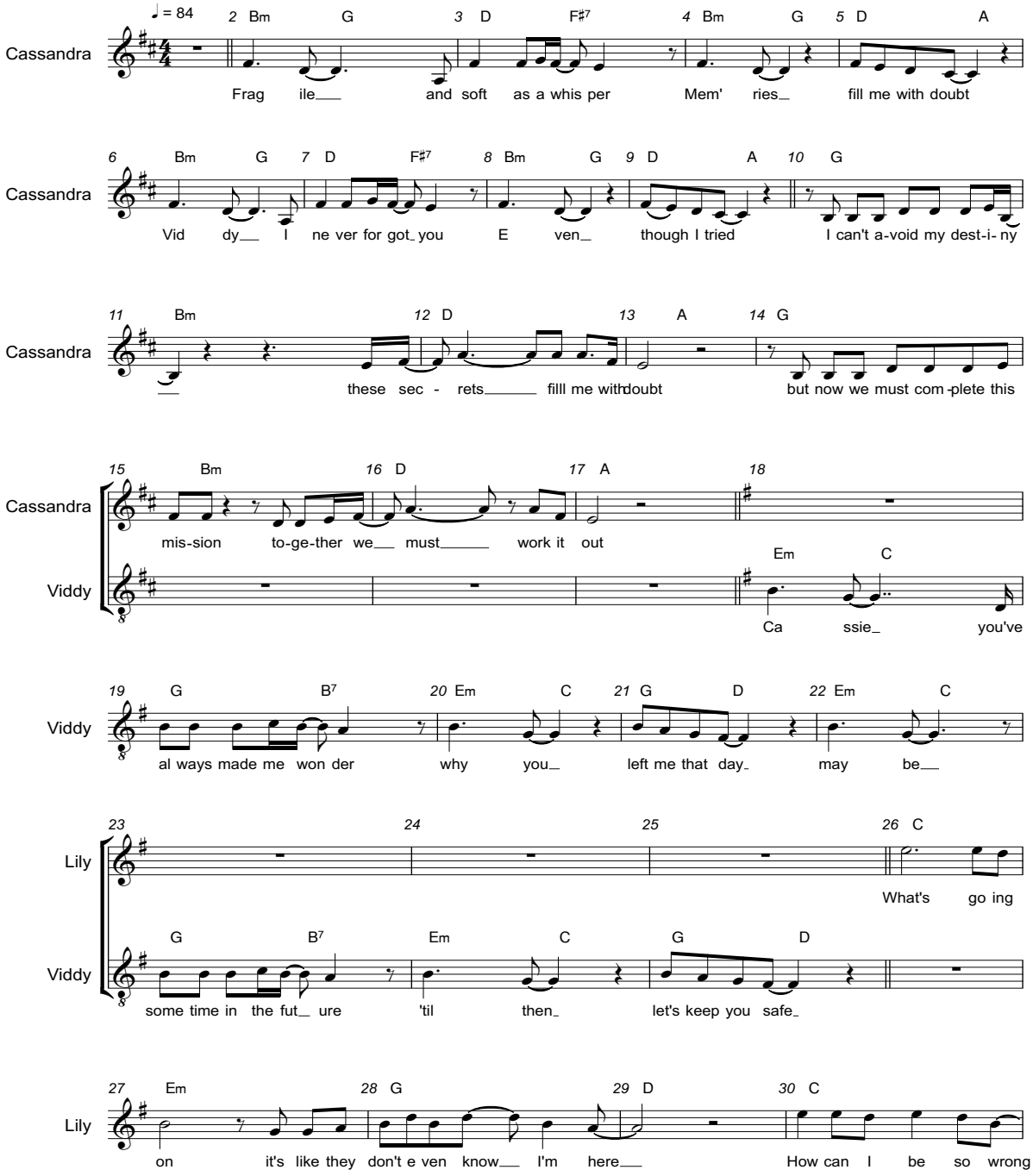
The arrangement begins in B minor with Cassandra singing solo followed by Viddy singing solo at m.18 in the original reference key of E minor. B minor not only sets the solo vocal line in a comfortable female range for Cassandra, the key has a dominant albeit minor cadential relationship to the destination key of E minor. Cassandra's B minor verse from mm. 2-17 follows an A – A – B – B form in which

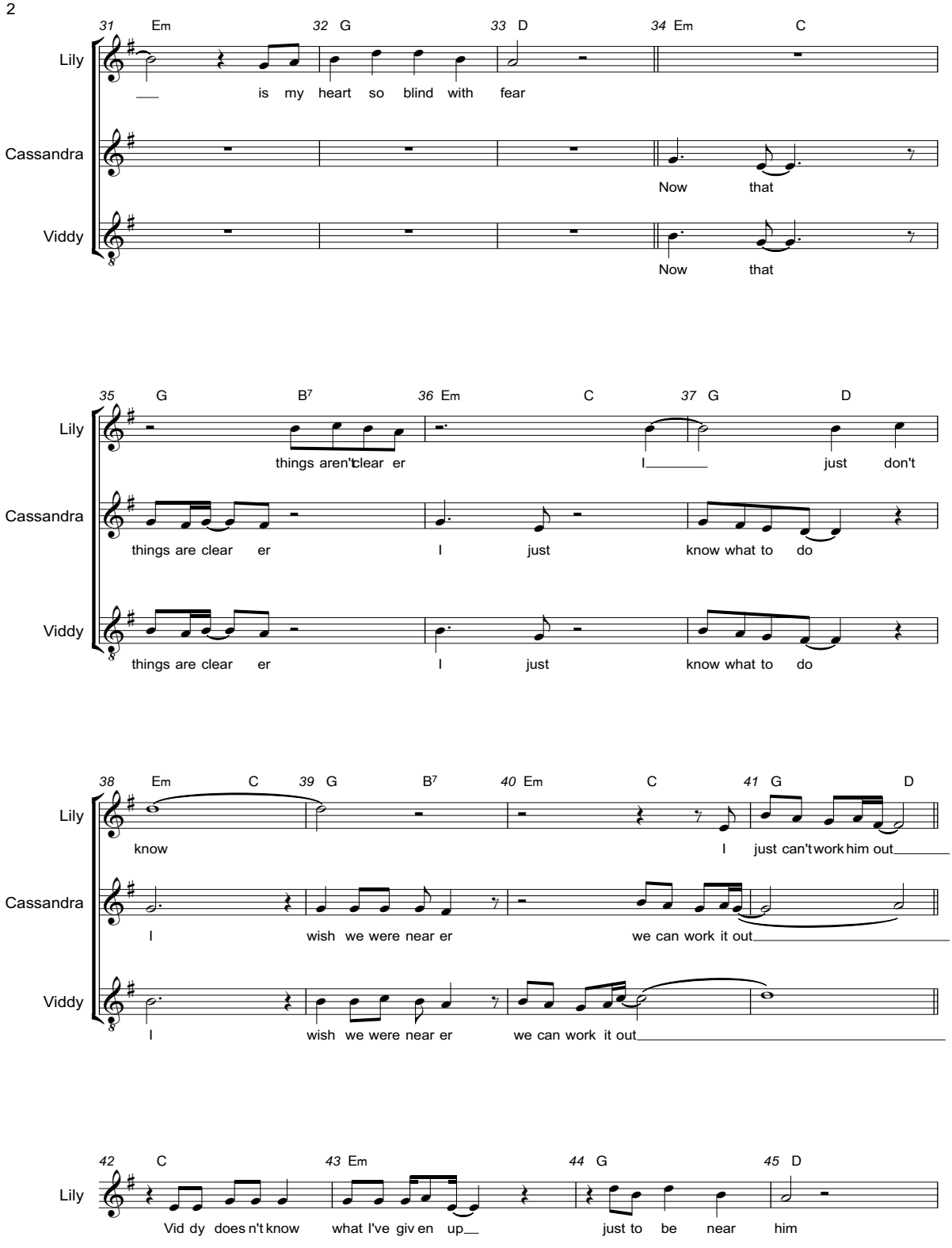
the chord progression of the A-section is Imin – VI – III – V7 – Imin – VI – III – flatVII and the B-section is VI – I – III – flatVII. (The flatVII at m. 17 is also the dominant of the relative D major – which is also the flatVII of the destination key.) Despite the dominant relationship between the keys themselves, the modulation from flatVII in B minor to the tonic in E minor creates the illusion of a IV – I resolution because of its fourth relationship.

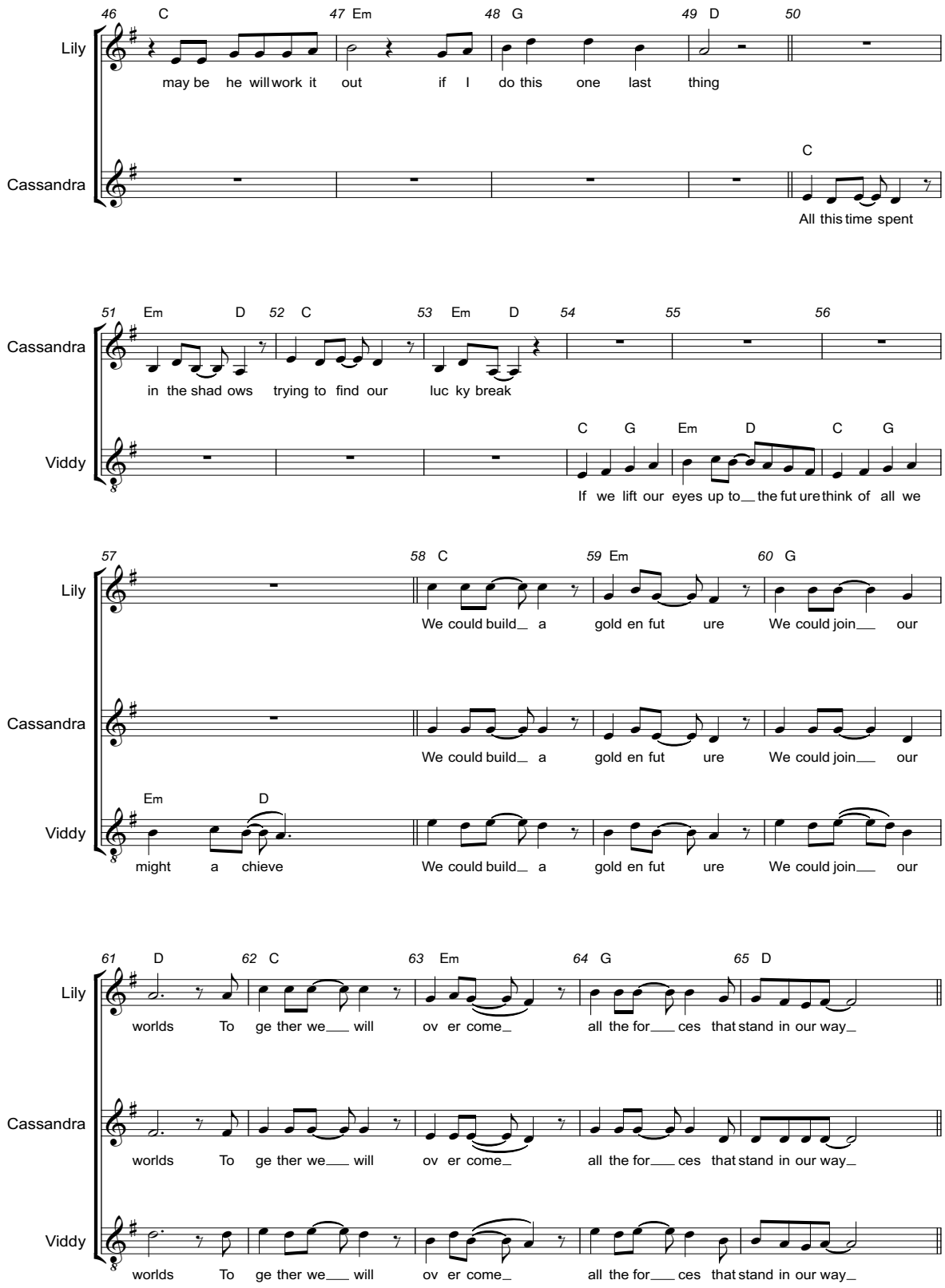
Lily enters at m. 26 beginning on an E at the top of the stave, high in the *passaggio*. Aware of the talent of Carmen Pretorius who played Lily, I exploited the aching and yearning quality of her voice in this register to make her more emotionally sympathetic. Lily's feeling of isolation is highlighted by the counterpoint and displacement in register between her solo and Viddy and Cassandra's duet from mm. 35-41. From mm. 42-57, which is effectively the bridge of the song, I assigned solo lines to each one in anticipation of the chorus of the song which begins at m. 58. The lyric of the chorus is an important statement of how these characters see themselves both personally and globally: "we will build a golden future, we could join our worlds…"[45] This lyric is musically supported by the fact that the key modulates from E minor to the relative G major beginning of chord IV, thus creating an optimistic and positive mood. For only the first eight measures of the chorus (mm. 58-65) I arranged all three voices in close triadic voicing to musically suggest the hope and unified resolution explicit in the lyric and implicit in the modulation from minor to major. Thereafter I split the voices into three contrapuntal parts to reinforce their prevailing discordant and disjunct situations. The discord is further emphasised in the final harmony chord at m. 85 where I placed all three voices in a cluster of root, suspended second and third of the chord.

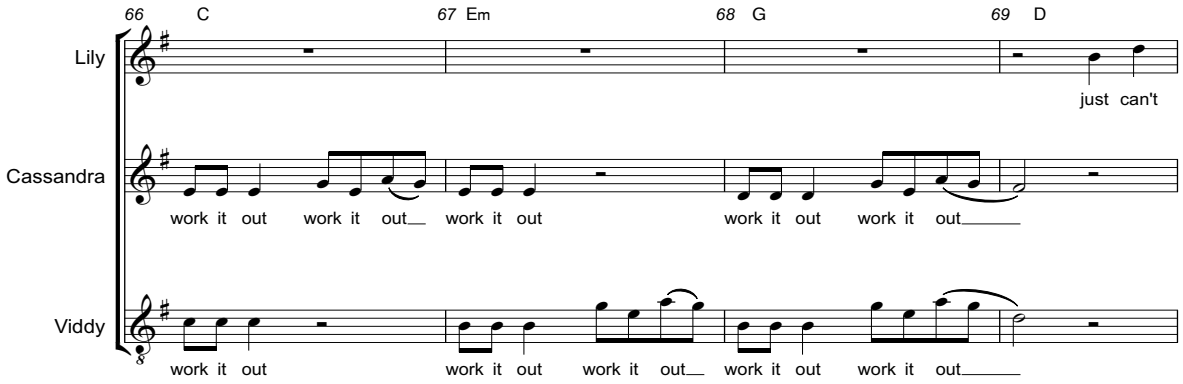
[45] In musical theatre construction, this song would be regarded as the 'I want' song in which the principal characters reveal inner emotions and visions for themselves.

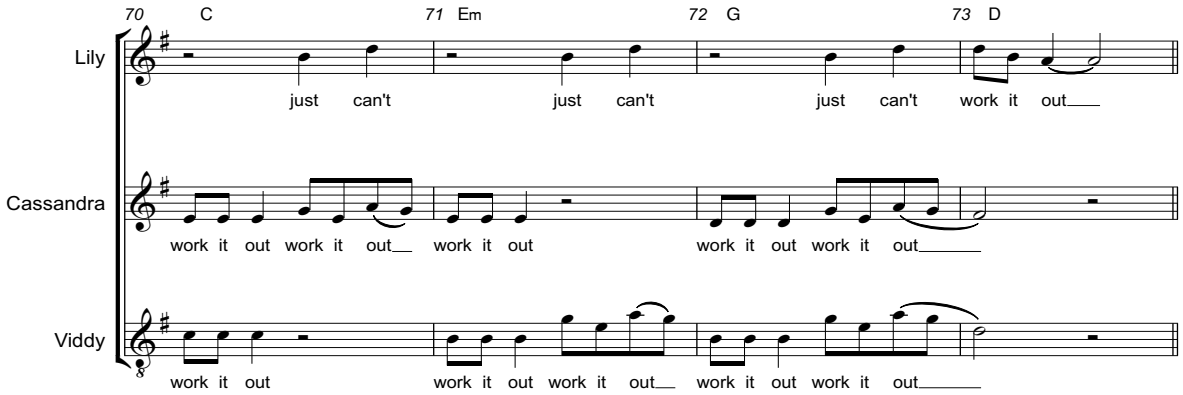
Example 15: ‘We Can Work It Out’, *Streets of Gold* score, mm. 1-87.

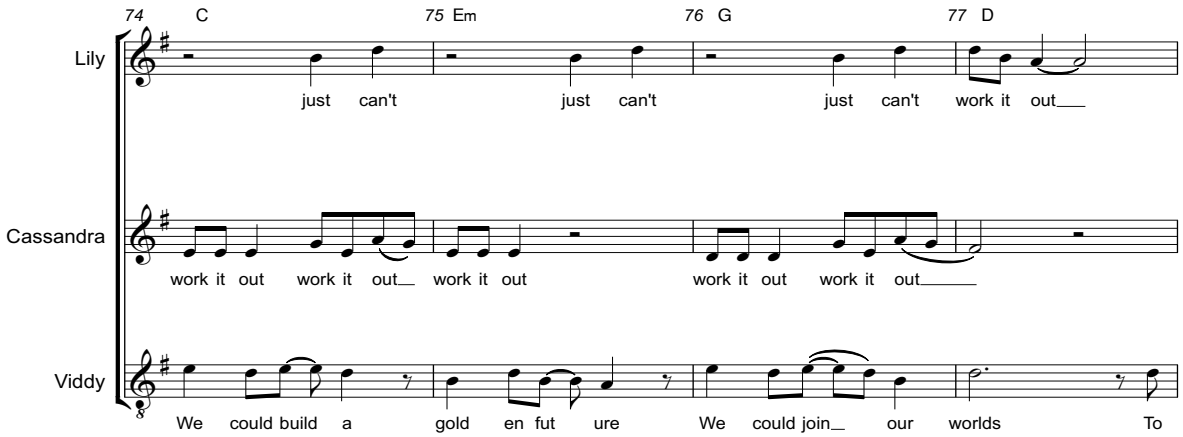


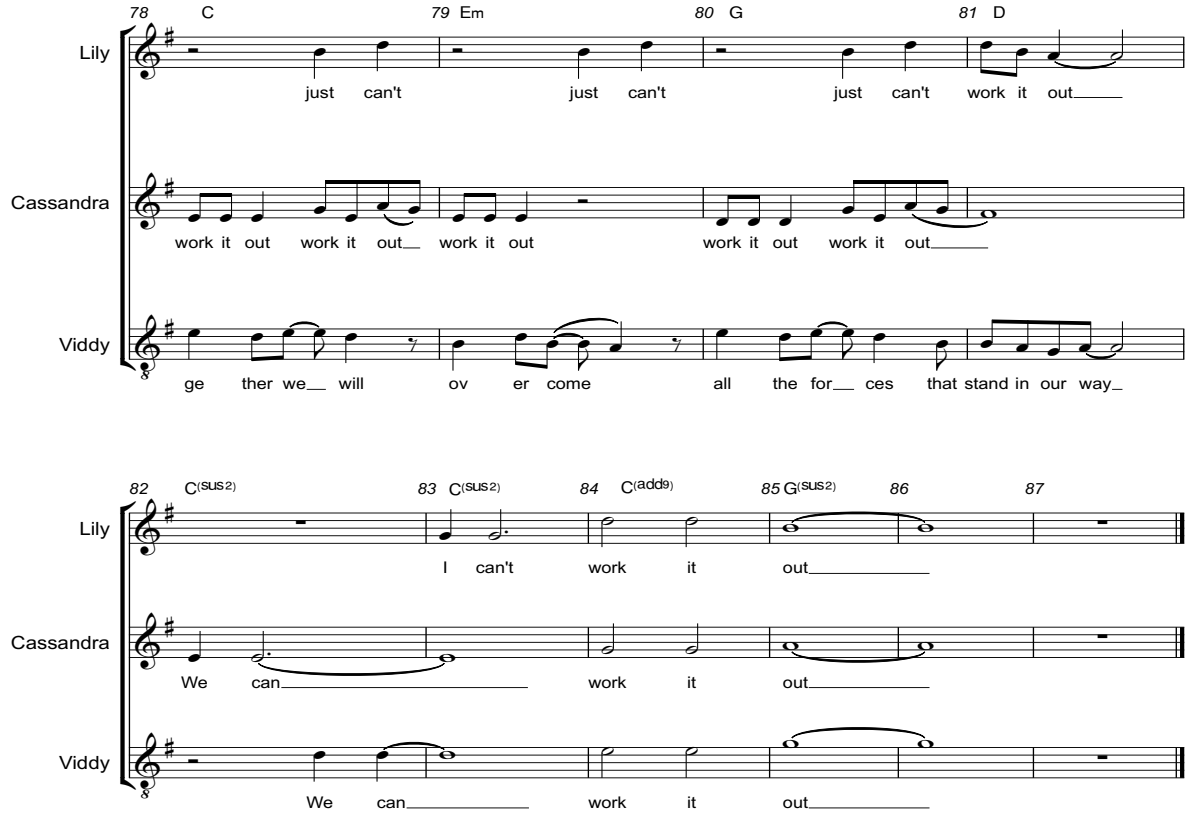

31 Em
32 G
33 D
34 Em
C
Lily
is my heart so blind with fear
Cassandra
Now that
Viddy
Now that
35 G
B7
36 Em
C
37 G
D
Lily
things aren't clear er
I just don't
Cassandra
things are clear er
I just know what to do
Viddy
things are clear er
I just know what to do
38 Em
C
39 G
B7
40 Em
C
41 G
D
Lily
know
I just can't work him out
Cassandra
I wish we were near er
we can work it out
Viddy
I wish we were near er
we can work it out
42 C
43 Em
44 G
45 D
Lily
Vid dy does n't know
what I've giv en up
just to be near him


46 C
47 Em
48 G
49 D
50
Lily
may be he will work it out if I do this one last thing
Cassandra
C
All this time spent
51 Em D
52 C
53 Em D
54
55
56
Cassandra
in the shad ows trying to find our luc ky break
Viddy
C G Em D C G
If we lift our eyes up to the fut ure think of all we
57
58 C
59 Em
60 G
Lily
We could build a gold en fut ure We could join our
Cassandra
We could build a gold en fut ure We could join our
Viddy
Em D
might a chieve
We could build a gold en fut ure We could join our
61 D
62 C
63 Em
64 G
65 D
Lily
worlds To ge ther we will ov er come all the for ces that stand in our way
Cassandra
worlds To ge ther we will ov er come all the for ces that stand in our way
Viddy
worlds To ge ther we will ov er come all the for ces that stand in our way


66 C
67 Em
68 G
69 D
Lily
just can't
Cassandra
work it out work it out work it out work it out work it out work it out
Viddy
work it out work it out work it out work it out work it out work it out


70 C
71 Em
72 G
73 D
Lily
just can't just can't just can't work it out
Cassandra
work it out work it out work it out work it out work it out work it out
Viddy
work it out work it out work it out work it out work it out work it out


74 C
75 Em
76 G
77 D
Lily
just can't just can't just can't work it out
Cassandra
work it out work it out work it out work it out work it out work it out
Viddy
We could build a gold en fut ure We could join our worlds To

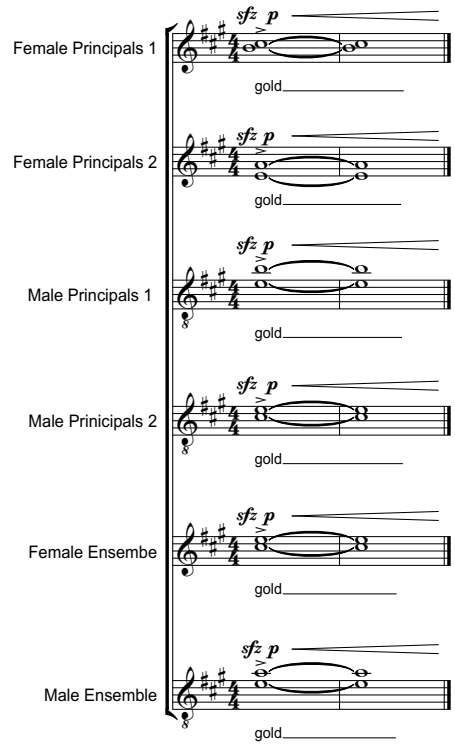


The musical and dramatic payoff of the lyric and the G major theme (m.58) discussed above occurs in the *dénouement* of the story when the vault is finally opened. I achieved this payoff by reprising this theme played in thirds, inspired by the guitar styling of Brian May, lead guitarist of rock group Queen (see Score: Song 12; CD: track 22; DVD: 1:15: 05). One of May's signature sounds is playing lead electric guitar melodic lines in thirds.

The final cadence of Example 15 is IV – I. In the vocal harmony of both chords, I used a suspended second at mm. 82-83, building a pyramid in the vocal parts, highlighting Cassandra and Viddy's lyric, 'we can' against Lily's lyric, 'I can't'; I remain in the harmony of chord IV with an added major ninth at m. 84 and a suspended second in the resolution at m. 85. The IV – I plagal cadence suggests a feeling of less finality than a perfect cadence; in this case suggesting the lack of emotional finality. By placing the three voices a tone apart, in a cluster rather than a unison or a harmonious triad, I further underpin their emotional state in relation to each other – clashing and unresolved. The major ninth added to a triad or open fifth,

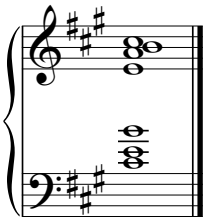
or a triad with a suspended second is a signature of my work in this score. I introduce it for the first time in Song 2 at the end of the first statement of the A-section at m. 26 in the piano and string line in Keyboard 2. In Song 2, the open fifth on the tonic, with the added ninth above, written as four *tenuto* quarter notes in the piano, is intended to resonate like bells of doom. Recurring throughout the score, I also use this signature in the final chord of the entire score featuring all eight principal actors as well as the ensemble. Example 16 is from the score Finale, Song 13 – 'Golden Future' and Example 17 is a two-stave reduction of the same voicing.

Example 16: 'Golden Future', *Streets of Gold* score, mm.106-107.



Note the close cluster-type vertical arrangement in the higher register.

Example 17: Reduction of voice parts shown in Example 16.



These two examples demonstrate three pertinent aspects of my vocal arranging style and how this voicing works dramaturgically: first, the cluster and close harmony voicing with the added ninth tension; second, placing the top of the voicing of the vocal parts in the richest part of the *passaggio* to maximise brilliance of tone; third, the avoidance of baritone or bass voicing that tends to ground the vocal harmony. All three of these aspects produce a sound that is soaring, affirming and thrilling, communicating information that is in stark contrast to the dark, brooding animosity at the beginning of the musical.

At the beginning of this Act I stated that during the acoustic age – specifically the era known as the Golden Age – Broadway musicals had an instantly recognisable sonic identity that had been shaped by the arrangers and the orchestrators. The composers were primarily melodists whose songs were characterised by well-constructed melodic and thematic content. The art form had established its own uniqueness in the first half of the twentieth century during which time Broadway produced the 'hit' songs of the day. With the advent of pop and rock music, stand-alone songs characterised by hooks and grooves in preference to melody, became 'hit' music. Some Broadway creators remained steadfast to the art form's tradition while others sought to redefine its boundaries by harnessing and adapting the multiplicity of popular musics and advances in electronic instrumentation and amplification; the synthesised age has evolved over the last sixty years.

In at least the last three decades, the emergence of the sub-genre of 'juke-box' musicals has seen the dramatisation and theatricalising of numerous catalogues of popular music that were never originally intended for stage presentation. I have argued that arranging and orchestration are irrefutable tools of dramaturgy. The analysis of Green Day's 'Last Night On Earth' is an instructive exercise on the

extrapolation of the dramaturgical development of a song by comparing the original stand-alone source with its musical theatre counterpart. I reiterate *West Side Story* composer Leonard Bernstein's description of Broadway orchestrators as "subcomposers who turn a series of songs into a unified score, who make it all sound like a 'work'" (quoted in Stempel, 2010: 246). His description holds just as true for musicals of the synthesised age as it did for acoustic age musicals, and in particular 'juke-box' musicals; in fact, probably more so because: first, the original songs would generally have been composed by non-theatrical composers who historically might not even have had the know-how to notate their songs; and second, the creative techniques of the arranger and orchestrator, and their knowledge of how a song functions in a dramaturgical context, that inform dramatic transformation. The presentation and analysis of *Streets of Gold* evidences my own practical application of the statements and arguments I have presented in this Act.

ACT TWO:

THE RECREATIVE

ACT II

ENTR'ACTE

"The spark of creation is blazing in my blood" (Schwartz)

In the Overture I stated that the data collected revealed two distinct phases by which I frame my findings: the creative and the recreative. *The Oxford English Dictionary* defines creativity as "the use of imagination or original ideas to create something"; and it defines the verb recreate as "to create again, to reproduce or re-enact". In Act I I considered the creative aspects of music direction, as well as those of arranging and orchestration, in the development of a pop/rock musical theatre score; in Act II I consider the recreative aspects in the execution and performance of a musical. The music director is uniquely the only member of the creative team who is part of both the development – the creative phase – and the day to day running of a production. I call the latter the recreative phase. In terms of this research, I apply the concept of recreation in two ways: first, in reference to a 'first class' production where every creative aspect is reproduced and recreated;[46] second, in reference to the music director's act of performance repetition, reproduction, and daily maintenance of the musical and vocal aspects of a production – irrespective of whether the production itself is a recreation or not. In *The Tony Award Book*, Morrow summarises these two separate functions of the music director, the one being creative as arranger, and the other being recreative as conductor: "the musical director teaches the music to the principal and chorus singers and often helps the composer and orchestrator arrange the music for those voices. A production's conductor actually leads the singers and orchestra night after night. The conductor is responsible for pacing the show – fighting the indifference that can plague any long run – and leading each performance" (1987: 134).

[46] A production is defined as 'first class' when it utilises all the original Broadway (or West End) production elements that include direction, staging, choreography, set, lighting and costume design, musical arrangements and orchestrations.

The recreative phase incorporates the processes of auditions and rehearsals, but primarily encompasses the act of performance. From the perspective of music philosophy, Nelson Goodman proposes that a "score uniquely identifies a work of music, so that any performance that exactly follows the score, and obeys all the instructions in it, is a performance of the work" (quoted in Scruton, 1997: 111). A more nuanced account of the work-score-performance relationship is provided by philosopher Stephen Davies who argues that "the score of a work underdetermines the performance" (Davies, 2005: 56). Just as in Western art music, this is true for pop/rock musicals as shown in my analysis of *Streets of Gold*, in which the performance of the musical was by no means determined only by the score. Davies goes on to suggest that the performance of a score is in itself an inherently creative act of participation:

> It is *because* the score of a work underdetermines the sound of a performance of that work that the performance is essentially (and not merely incidentally) *creative*. The creative element in performance is not something added on to the performance after accuracy has been achieved; rather, the artist's creativity is integral to the faithful realization of the work of the performance. The act of transforming notes-as-written into the notes-as-sound involves the performer's bringing more work than is (or could be) recorded in the score; so the faithful presentation of the score in performance involves the *creative* participation of the performer (2005: 56).

According to Maestro Max Rudolf, "'performance practice' referred to rules and habits that in the eighteenth century served to bridge the gap between notation and execution" (1995: 368). In Davies' formulation, "works for performances are communicated via instructions addressed to their potential executants. The given instructions are mostly work determinative, but may also include recommendations concerning aspects of the work's interpretation" (2001: 152). Similarly, Peter Kivy describes a musical performance as 'interpretation', and suggests that "a performance of a work must be motivated by and encapsulate a particular understanding of a work" (1990: 122). In applying this notion of interpretation to popular music, it is incumbent on the musician to have an innate grasp of the genre and its attendant style in which s/he is performing. "The pop musician as interpreter is more likely to be understood in biographical terms than the pop musician as composer, and when musicians are both, it is the performing rather than the composing voice that is taken to be the key to character" (Frith, 1996: 185). In

musicals actors and/or musicians, as the ‘executants’, interpret the ‘instructions’ specified in the musical theatre score; the transformation of ‘notes-as-written into the notes-as-sound’ is governed by the music director, who is the conduit to the instrumental and vocal performance of the work as a whole, and who ensures the ‘faithful presentation of the score in performance’. In Davies’ hypothesis, this constitutes the creative act of *performance*. What this philosophical literature is quiet on is when performance is not creative, that is, when it is what I call recreative.

In Act I Scene Three I briefly alluded to the music director as the conductor, the person responsible for the musical execution (the creative performance) and maintenance (recreation) of a production. Maintaining a production night after night without imposing any new creative input is one of the most challenging non-musical acts of recreativity required of a music director. The creativity that actors and musicians bring to a musical production is developed in the rehearsal process working towards a point where it can then be recreated night after night. Maintenance requires a constant monitoring that the actors and musicians don’t lapse into complacency and boredom because of incessant repetition, and also so that they don’t start improvising on a melody, or alter how a line is phrased or sing a new harmony, and so on.

> There are some music directors that never do that because they are not with a show for longer than say four weeks. You see their resumés and they have sixty shows but they have never had to maintain a show. There are some conductors that have done three shows in their whole career and their job was totally different. Their job has been maintaining a show. The question a music director has to ask him/herself is ‘what kind of music director do you want to be?’. Do you want to be someone who is creating or recreating? (Ben-David, 2012).

In my experience, pop and rock musicians find the disciplined repetition of musical theatre performance immensely challenging. When they perform material repeatedly in the context of rock concerts or non-theatrical music events, it is likely

that they have freedom to be creative within boundaries of, let's say, form and tempo. Performance of a musical, however, demands the discipline of consistency.

Despite the dearth of literature on theatre music direction, the importance of the music director in the daily running of a musical cannot be overstated. Paul Gemignani who conducted several original Broadway productions of Stephen Sondheim's musicals, states that "the musical director does far more than conduct the orchestra" (quoted in Zadan, 1989: 96). He goes on to say: "you must develop a fairly close relationship with the people on stage because you are the one who's in charge once the curtain goes up" (ibid.). Leading South African music director Charl-Johan Lingenfelder agrees: "conducting is actually a very small part of our job". Stephen Oremus adds that "there are only two people that are crucial for a show to go on – the stage manager and the music director" (2012). The misconception that the music director is solely in charge can be attributed to the fact that s/he is almost always visible to the audience conducting the band or orchestra – sometimes with a baton; sometimes without; sometimes seated at a keyboard. The audience may see a head popping out of the top of an orchestra pit, a figure on stage leading a band, or an image that catches their eye on a strategically placed screen; whereas the audience is usually unaware of the stage manager as s/he is never visible. Despite the invisibility it is an unwritten rule in theatre that the stage manager is 'god'. I would add the sound operator to the list of crucial individuals because contemporary pop/rock musicals are almost entirely reliant on the functioning of electronic instrumentation, audio and video technology and complex sound design.

I conducted eleven in-depth interviews that produced over twenty-one hours of recorded interview data. This, together with my own participation as a music director, and observation of the theatre world, I have analysed thematically for insights into the varied identity and role of the recreative music director. In the following scenes I address the themes of education, experience, instinct and mentorship; communication and collaboration; the dynamics of the music supervisor/music director relationship and performance maintenance; and the impact of sound and technology on the execution of a musical. Because the recreative aspects of music direction in general are so under-documented, I

consider it valuable to discuss these themes in terms of musicals in general to provide a context in which to address specific points relating to pop/rock musicals.

Ron Melrose provides a perspicacious overview of the multi-faceted job of the music director, both creative and recreative:

> You have to please a composer, a director, a choreographer, while not running roughshod over an orchestrator, a band of talented musicians, or a cast of talented actors, and coordinate with the sound designer. You have to be able to deal with those above you, those below you and those beside you. You have to be able to work brilliantly with all of them when everyone is at various levels of stress and when everybody doesn't always speak the same language (2012).

I have always viewed my position as a music director as the point of confluence between the score and the script, the music and the drama, the musicians and the actors, the creative team and the technical team, the action and the audience; points of confluence that are located within a recreative framework.

ACT II

SCENE ONE

"In art as in love, instinct is enough" (France)

By the mid-twentieth century, Johannesburg, South Africa had a thriving network of theatres at the centre of which I fondly recall three magnificent art deco buildings, The Empire, The Colosseum and His Majesty's, which lit up the mid-town artery of Commissioner Street, and which sadly no longer exist. These glorious theatres played host to many productions of Broadway musicals staged between the 1940s and the late 1980s.[47] Although these were original South African productions of Broadway musicals, and not recreations of original Broadway productions, licence to produce them was not without controversy. In protest against the laws of apartheid, which decreed that theatre audiences had to be racially segregated, a number of American and British authors and creators of musicals refused licences to have their works produced. In 1969 the Johannesburg Operatic and Dramatic Society (JODS) took Music Theatre International (licence holders of several American musicals) to the Supreme Court appealing against the refusal of licences to produce *West Side Story*, *Fiddler on the Roof* and *Man of La Mancha*; Mr Justice Galgut ruled in favour of the plaintiff and the productions went ahead under the racial laws of the country ('Note', 1970). In 1974, *Godspell* became the first musical in apartheid South Africa to succeed in performing with a multi-racial cast.[48] The original South African musicals like *Sarafina!* and *Ipi-Tombi*, mentioned in Act I Scene Five, featured all-black casts.

[47] During this period productions included: *Oklahoma!*, *South Pacific*, *Guys and Dolls, The Most Happy Fella*, *West Side Story, Fiddler on the Roof*, *Cabaret*, *Man of La Mancha*, *Godspell*, *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat*, *Grease, I Love My Wife, Annie, Gypsy, Applause, The Sound of Music, The Best Little Whorehouse in Texas, Pippin, Hello, Dolly!* and *Mame.*

[48] When Stephen Schwartz's *Godspell* was first staged in South Africa in 1974, it was immediately banned, ostensibly on the grounds of blasphemy. This ban was actually racially motivated due to the inter-racial casting of the production which directly challenged the prevailing apartheid laws. The ban was ultimately overturned by the South African Supreme Court and the production was given permission to proceed at Wits University's Great Hall. Professional productions were revived in 1985 and 1994 (see Tucker, 1997: 303-304).

Due to the unparalleled commercial success of *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat* which opened in South Africa in November 1974, 'first-class' rights were granted to mount a recreation of Harold Prince's original Broadway production of *Evita,* two years after its 1979 opening in New York; this was followed by a recreation of Joe Layton's original Broadway production of *Barnum* which opened in Johannesburg in 1983. These two 'first class' productions were an unprecedented coup for South Africa as they were not only direct recreations of the originals, but they also ran concurrently with those both on Broadway and London's West End. They would be the only ones of their kind staged in apartheid South Africa. While the court's decision of 1969 had effectively precluded the withdrawal of licences to produce local South African productions, mounting international opposition to the apartheid regime and the cultural boycott against the country in the late 80s and early 90s prohibited local producers from obtaining the 'first class' rights to recreate original Broadway productions during this period. Despite these restrictions, the South African musical theatre industry boomed with original productions that included *The Pirates of Penzance, Sweeney Todd, Sweet Charity, Candide, Ain't Misbehavin', Falsettos, Singin' in the Rain, My Fair Lady, Jesus Christ Superstar, Once On This Island, The Rocky Horror Show* and *Hair*.

With the rapidly changing political climate in South Africa in the late 80s and early 90s, restrictions were gradually lifted, paving the way for 'first class' productions to be recreated on South African stages once again with titles that included *Little Shop of Horrors, Me and My Girl* and *A Chorus Line*. After the democratic elections in 1994, full access to recreating Broadway productions was granted to local producers and the industry has subsequently flourished with 'first class' productions of *Crazy For You, West Side Story, Cats, The Phantom of the Opera, Chicago, Rent, Hairspray, The Lion King, Mamma Mia, Dreamgirls, Beauty and the Beast* and *Jersey Boys*.[49] While my research is focused on the American art form of the Broadway musical, as a practitioner of the art form in South Africa, the historical background sketched above provides a personal context within which to reflect on

[49] After years of restriction, 'first class' productions are not only performed in South Africa with local casts and musicians, but it has now become commonplace for these South African productions to tour internationally. The most recent example of this is *Jersey Boys* which toured to Singapore, Turkey, South Korea and Malaysia.

the recreative practice of music direction. In addition to my American informants I interviewed three professional South African music directors who represent a varied group of generations, musical backgrounds, education, experience, and points of view: Graham Scott, Charl-Johan Lingenfelder and Rowan Grant Bakker.

I did not grow up in a musical or theatrical family yet I attended classical piano lessons from age six to eighteen and completed the Trinity College Grade VIII practical exam. 70s pop band *Abba* was the soundtrack of my teenhood. Throughout these formative years my exposure to musical theatre was limited to cast recordings on vinyl, cassette tapes and eventually CDs, and attending performances of the various productions that played in Johannesburg – mesmerised by the synergy of drama and music. I would listen to cast recordings repeatedly, trying to figure out the story through the music, inquisitive as to what it was that gave me goose bumps, eager to grasp the inner mechanics of what I was listening to. While watching a performance of a musical, my attention would always be drawn towards the conductor waving his arms in front of the orchestra, and (wanting to be that guy) always curious to know how he achieved that synergy. It would take years for me to fully understand how this was attained and that there was far more to being a music director than just being a conductor – a core premise of this thesis.

My tertiary musical education included jazz piano performance, jazz harmony, counterpoint, orchestration, improvisation, aural training, arranging and conducting, all fundamental components of a skill set for someone intent on entering the music profession. However, these were only preparatory tools for music direction in musical theatre. While still studying I was offered an opportunity to be the rehearsal pianist on a fully professional production of Gilbert and Sullivan's *The Pirates of Penzance*.[50] For the duration of six weeks of working under the leadership of music director Bill Fairley, I received my first lessons in music direction. I was introduced to a variety of non-musical attributes essential for successful music direction. These include leadership skills, administration and people management, fundamentals of drama and stagecraft, repetitive performance maintenance, differing vocabularies necessary for effective communication with creative departments such as lighting,

[50] Although this production of *The Pirates of Penzance* was not a 'first class' production, it was nonetheless patterned after Joseph Papp's New York Shakespeare Festival Production.

set design, wardrobe, stage management, choreography and sound design. I observed closely how Fairley worked with the orchestra and how we worked with the cast, noting the differences in his approach in achieving results from both entities; and more importantly, how he melded the two entities together towards one artistic vision. (I explore these ideas in more detail in the following scenes.)

Despite my natural affinity toward music direction in musicals, I have always been perplexed by the absence of documentation on a practice that carries so many multiple-layered responsibilities. Stephen Oremus exclaims: "People don't realize what's actually involved. They think that there is just someone up there waving their arms and it just magically happens" (2012). While certain university degree courses in music in South Africa have offered conducting as a major, specialisation in theatre music direction has never, to my knowledge, existed. Literature on the art and methods of conducting from orchestras to choral groups abound, as well as the academic study thereof. The more extensive literature on conducting in various contexts provides limited usefulness to theatre music direction since conducting is only one component of the practice.[51] On the other hand, Colin Durrant's description of how a choral conductor works with singers provides a more lucid view into the music director's role in working with actors:

> What is it that happens between conductors and singers? Why is it that some conductors are able to establish a kind of dynamic interaction? Many conductors are easily able to engage their singers, to persuade them of the intrinsic value of the music being performed; they are able to give their singers, and through them their audiences, insight into the expressive character of the music, and to provide the aesthetic response. Some conductors *connect*. This dynamic interaction, this *connection* is the stuff of the phenomenon of conducting (2003: 58; my emphasis).

The key word here is *connection.* More than just a conductor, the music director is the connector, and in my case, these varied functions of the music director as connector were discovered through hands-on opportunity, experience and mentorship.

[51] Literature on the practices of conducting includes *The Modern Conductor* (Green, 1981), *Elements of Conducting* (Kahn, 1975), *The Grammar of Conducting* (Rudolf, 1995).

Aware of how limited my own music education had been in terms of the area in which I wanted to specialise, I asked my informants, both American and South African, how their general music education had informed their expertise as music directors. Since specialist degree courses in music directing were not in existence when (or where) they had studied, as they are today in the United States, not all of them entered tertiary education with a clear intention of becoming a music director. Stephen Oremus who is one of the most important music directors on Broadway today with three productions running simultaneously, majored in film scoring at Berklee College of Music. He says that although he was goal-orientated and driven, it was never his intention to become a Broadway conductor. He thought that film scoring would be the closest thing to fulfilling his interest in drama and music: “I had done a bunch of theatre in high school and grade school and so I thought this sounds really neat. I get to make music. I get to also be theatrical. I get to emotionally set scenes and all that stuff. I get to write my own stuff and arrange it for the screen and conduct it. It had all these great elements that I love so much” (2012). Sam Davis had a background that was firmly entrenched in the classical world, yet he had a lifelong passion for Broadway, so he chose the more well-rounded education of Michigan University over a conservatory because, as he explained to me, “it doesn’t have rigid boundaries and you are not put in a box. You can go there and they encourage you to be in the jazz band but also be in the orchestra, do musicals but also do cello sonatas. It was interdisciplinary” (2012). Born into a highly educated musical family Adam-Ben David studied classical piano, composition and conducting at the Juilliard School of Music. He was inspired to become a music director after seeing Broadway performances of *A Chorus Line*, *Falsettos* (1992), *Jelly’s Last Jam* (1993) *Kiss of the Spiderwoman* (1993) and sitting in the orchestra pit as an observer on *Miss Saigon* (1991).

In South Africa, holding a Bachelor of Music degree, with a major in conducting, Graham Scott has a predilection for opera and ballet and admits that he was drawn to working in musical theatre purely through opportunity. Charl-Johan Lingenfelder started out as an actor but went on to study classical music which he found frustrating in its limitations. Before becoming a music director of major professional productions, he found that by combining his acting talents and his musical knowledge, he could create his own unique musical dramatic works. Rowan Grant

Bakker studied drama and has a background in classical piano performance. When I asked Bakker when he knew he wanted to become a music director, he spoke candidly about the first time he saw me onstage conducting:

> When I saw *A Touch of Webber – A Taste of Rice* in 1992, I was eight years old and I saw you up there.[52] I had been taking piano lessons and wasn't that interested or keen on it. I didn't know anything about what a music director did or what it entailed, but I knew when I saw you that that was what I wanted to do. Only years later, I found out what it meant and what it entailed. In '*Webber and Rice'* you were playing onstage and conducting the band and you were part of the show. It looked like an awesome thing to do and it made playing piano look awesome and fun, unlike anything else I'd seen as a kid. Unlike classical music, you made it look fun (2013).

While the educational backgrounds of musical theatre directors vary both in South Africa and the United States, the common point of intersection between my informants and myself is the propensity for both drama and music and the desire towards fusing both worlds, a propensity that is reiterated by a number of Broadway luminaries in *The Art of the American Musical: Conversations With the Creators*. Influenced greatly by the composition and performing styles of pop/rock artists like Billy Joel and Elton John, Jason Robert Brown reflects that he started composing for musical theatre because he had a desire to be a rock star and an actor. "[I] could invest myself dramatically in a piece of material, and at the same time it was musical and I could invest myself musically in creating a piece of material" (quoted in Bryer, 2005: 24).

I asked Ron Melrose whether an inclination for one of either drama or music has more influence than the other in shaping a music director:

> I think a superb classical concert musician who didn't get to read as a kid, who doesn't read, who doesn't like fiction, who doesn't understand that the moment when the lovers meet is an elevated moment by necessity, will do musically correct but ultimately a non-dramatic job of music directing. And a 'drama queen' who has never given a piano lesson to somebody else, but

[52] During the apartheid era, when access to recreations of Broadway productions was denied, producers created compilation-style revue-type productions that utilised material from various sources. *A Touch of Webber – A Taste of Rice* was one such compilation. It was comprised of the work of Andrew Lloyd Webber and Tim Rice, featuring material written together and independently of each other, weaving a loosely biographical thread throughout the show. I was the music director and arranger, and I conducted from the piano with an onstage band who were very much part of the action. It opened in September 1991 and ran for a year, which is considered a long run in South Africa.

> who knows that a moment has to throb with passion, is actually going to be better equipped than somebody who can, say, put a first inversion chord right there. And great music directors have both (Melrose, 2012).

I have always considered myself a man of the theatre whose speciality is music, rather than a musician who happens to work in theatre; and therefore in my own music direction, my musical and vocal decisions are always governed by the drama and the storytelling. Scott concurs adding "it's not just about music. It's everything else *as well as* the music. It's like becoming a specialist in a field of medicine but you are still a doctor. So one becomes a specialist in the field of music but one is still a theatre person first and foremost, because if you're not that then you can't do it… well you can't do it *well* " (2012).

Melrose indicates that "nothing that I ever learned in training, has not come into play in the years I have been working in the theatre":

> Literally, seventeenth-century part writing has come into play, harmonic study, composition study, orchestration study, every keyboard I ever learned, French Horn, cello, having had my hands on at least one member of each family of instruments for a number of years, experience with the song canon, the lieder. Nothing was wasted. Every skill I would have used as a classical pianist or conductor I have tapped into at one point or another (2012).

In contrast, despite having studied musicology and drama at Stellenbosch University in South Africa, Lingenfelder bemoans the absence of formal training for music direction:

> With regards to musical directing, there is literally no training whatsoever [in South Africa]. It was literally being thrown in the deep end and sink or swim. I sort of knew what I wanted to hear. It became about how do I get people to do what it is that I hear in my head. That led to a lot of trial and error. You start realising what works for one person versus another person. So as opposed to having a textbook telling me what to do, that's what basically happened to me (2012).

Lingenfelder speaks about knowing what he wanted to hear. The issue, I suggest, is not whether what he wanted to hear is right or wrong; rather it is the intuitive knowing what it *is* that he wanted to hear, and moreover, possessing the knowledge and multiple skills to get out of people what it is he heard in his head. That *knowing* exists as something that is often intangible and unquantifiable, and was conceived by my

informants as *instinct*. Indeed, every one of my informants spoke about instinct, and its significance in their practice of music direction cannot be overstated. “I trained to be a conductor but I didn’t train to be a music director. One fell into it and one learned as one went along. And that’s where the instincts are so important because those instincts are going to guide you the right way if the instincts are strong enough” (Scott, 2012). Reflecting on my analysis of *Streets of Gold*, education provided me with the know-how to notate musical ideas into arrangements and orchestrations; but the ability to successfully execute those ideas – both notated and non-notated – fuelling pop and rock music with dramatic intention, I can only attribute to instinct.

In addition to acknowledging how every aspect of his music education has factored into his work as a field practitioner, Melrose, who defines instinct as “experience plus thinking on your feet”, reflects on instinct as follows: “the years or months or decades of study that you put into the situation you’re in, every show you’ve done, every choir you’ve ever conducted, every time you have sat behind the piano and played for a singer adds to your capability for instinct” (2012). Melrose shared an anecdote about Michelangelo who was asked: ‘How do you start with a block of marble and come up with David?’ He responded flippantly: ‘That’s easy, just chip away everything that doesn’t look like David’. I observed Melrose coaching an actress named Genna through preparation of an audition piece, and he reflected on how, in this scenario, the metaphor of David speaks to instinct:

> Genna came in and we were trying to bend her song toward a certain eerie effect: ‘I want you; I can’t have you; you’re not here; you are here; you’re out of my grasp’. She had a great song. There were three things that she was doing that didn’t ‘look like David’: her hands, a stupid riff and a triple ending that didn’t belong there. We made them go away and the song got a lot more powerful. But that was the instinct of recognizing in all the various things she was doing – physically, vocally, facially, on the page – where it looked like David (2012).

Music direction is a multi-layered practice that requires several diverse skills; and the music director, being so central to the recreative phase, has to rely on instinct when situations demand adaptability and fluidity. The ability to lead and have a voice of one’s own is fundamental to developing other capabilities. The constantly shifting worlds of the musical demand of its participants that they adapt accordingly, and this is often where instinct plays a significant part. Drawing on experience, in

addition to all the skills at the music director's disposal, to arrive at a solution in a constantly shifting scenario are elements of what author David Brooks describes as *metis*. His description of *metis*, while drawn from a non-musical reference, helpfully describes the recreative practice of music direction:

> *Metis* is practical knowledge, cunning, or having a knack for something… This trait cannot be taught or memorized. It can only be imparted and acquired… Metis is acquired as a series of random acquisitions that only gradually form a whole picture. People sharing metis do not lecture; they converse. They work side by side. To acquire metis, a person must not only see but see with comprehension. He or she must observe minutely to absorb the practical consequences of things. He or she must develop a feel for the process, for the interrelationships of things. The person who acquires metis must learn by doing, not be reasoning or dreaming... Metis exists only when it is in use… It is an awareness of the flow of things, knowing which things can go together and which can never go together, which way to react when the unexpected happens… The CEO [of a company] is no longer a chess grand master, an imposing aloof figure moving pieces around the board. Now he or she is likely to be portrayed, or portray himself or herself, as an inspirer, a motivator, or an orchestra leader. Today's CEO's boast about trying to inspire the creativity of others (Brooks, 2000: 131-132).

Brooks talks about "trying to inspire the creativity of others", and being a "motivator". Aware of Rowan Bakker's desire to be a music director I felt a responsibility to nurture and mentor him and guide his aspirations, just as Bill Fairley had mentored me some twenty years earlier. I took Bakker under my wing and provided him with opportunities to grow from his own experiences. He was my assistant music director on the Queen-inspired 'jukebox' musical *We Will Rock You* when it opened in Johannesburg in 2006, eventually taking over as music director on the international tour under my music supervision. I realised the value and importance of mentoring and sharing *metis* when Bakker went on to successfully music direct the South African production of *Mamma Mia* (a recreation of the Broadway production) in 2010, without my guidance or assistance.

Aside from Bakker, every one of my informants who are music directors described situations in which they were mentored. "Most fields have mentoring scenarios but in music direction you are more dependent than in other fields because there is no set path" (Davis, 2012). With regard to the absence of training in music direction, Lingenfelder used the phrase "thrown in the deep end and sink or swim". Graham Scott uttered the same phrase in advocating the value of mentoring prospective

music directors: “At some stage they have to be thrown into the deep end; sink or swim. They will swim a lot better if they are mentored because a lot of the pitfalls gained through experience will be pointed out before they actually happen” (2012). I am especially fond of Melrose’s description of how he was mentored because, not only does he emphasise the importance of having one’s own voice, he also offers advice on a method of mentoring:

> I studied at the side of the greats. I was assistant to almost every musical director working in the 70s and 80s. I watched. I learned. Maybe it’s a degree of arrogance to say: ‘that’s a good idea; that’s a good idea; that’s a sucky idea; I would do it better; that’s a terrible way to get something out of somebody. I know how I would do it if I was ever in this position’. And I don’t think I looked at my mentors as necessarily having every answer to every situation but meantime I was soaking up knowledge. It wasn’t soaking up a bag of tricks that I followed by rote because I didn’t have a soul or an intention of my own. It was: ‘this is useful; this is useful; that’s totally not useful; that’s useful; that’s a terrible idea’. You have to have your own discernment. If I were to mentor the way you are [with Rowan Bakker], probably at the end of every day, or certainly at the end of every week, I would say to my assistant: ‘tell me ten things that I did that you would not do and why; ten things that you would do differently and why; the choices I made where you would make a different one and justify your answer. I don’t want you to become me. I want you to become you’ (2012).

Melrose’s suggestion is one of any number of methods of mentoring. (A study of the variety of mentoring methods in the theatre would make for interesting research that goes beyond the scope of this dissertation).

I introduced this scene by providing a personal context within which to discuss the practice of music direction. Because South Africa was culturally alienated by the international musical theatre community during the apartheid era, we were not permitted to do recreations of original Broadway productions. We could only put on our own productions and with a limited knowledge base I had no choice but to hone my skills as a music director by trusting my instincts and learning through trial and error, taking risks, being willing to sink or swim; and by gleaning as much information as I could from cast albums and attendance of live performances. Bill Fairley was the first of a series of mentors that would guide me in the field; Graham Scott was another. With the advent of democracy the path was clear for South Africa to produce ‘first class’ productions, a number of which I have participated in

as a recreative music director, guided by *metis*-rich mentors from the Unites States and Britain.

ACT II

SCENE TWO

"Make them hear you" ('Ragtime')

Music education, experience and mentorship are merely foundations to successful music direction. Given his professional background in opera and ballet as well as musical theatre I asked Graham Scott what differentiates these art forms from the perspective of the conductor. His response – what he referred to as "the teamwork" (2012) – reinforces the collaborative nature of musical theatre that continues from the creative phase into the recreative phase:

> In opera, the conductor is the boss because, for very good reason, opera is primarily a musical art form. People often ask me what the difference is between an opera and a musical and my answer is the dramatic emotion, which in opera, is portrayed musically first and foremost. In other words, you can do a concert performance of an opera without losing the drama. Musical theatre is a very much more collaborative form of lots of artistic forms: script, lyrics, music, dance, serious acting as opposed to operatic acting, but you could not call an opera singer an actor. There are exceptions of course. In opera, the drama relies almost entirely on the music. The rest contributes but it is not formative. In musical theatre all those things are equal partners if you like. And ballet is completely different as well. Ballet dancers don't really care about the music as long as the tempo is right. In ballet, the choreography is first and foremost, although people remember ballets for the music rather than anything else; as a conductor you are very much second to the choreographer. In ballet you will adjust that music within technical realms of dance without wrecking the music. In opera there is no compromise from the conductor. The conductor is the boss over the director. In musical theatre, you're talking about a team of equals and that's the biggest difference that I can see (ibid.).

Whether a production is an original production or a recreation of a 'first class' production, the end result cannot be achieved without effective communication between all members of the team – creative, production and technical. Every department has its own set of vocabularies; for example, choreographers tend to speak in counts of eight rather than in measures of music and they will identify a section in choreographic terminology when addressing dancers; the director will identify the same section by a page number in the script, a lyric, or a line of dialogue when addressing actors; the music director identifies the section by a measure

number when addressing musicians; and the stage manager may identify the section by a fly cue or a lighting cue when addressing technicians. While each department here is referring to the same section, it is incumbent upon the music director to communicate with each department in its own discourse and terminology since, apart from the stage manager, the music director is likely to have the most communication with the departments – s/he is the *connector* – and a great deal of what is communicated often has nothing to do with music; my years of experience have shown me that the music director also has to be an administrator, a psychologist, a politician and a problem solver. Stephen Oremus insists that "if I get to say nothing else about music directors or music supervisors, it's all about communication. We work in theatre. We work with some crazy people. We work with people who are out of their minds on so many levels; some who are genius and some who are not so genius. For whatever reason we are all in this crazy boat together and it's about communication" (2012). The ability to communicate effectively may be instinctive, but can also be developed through experience and mentoring. I asked Ron Melrose how communication skills can be honed and his response supports the 'trial and error' idea: "music direct enough shows and have enough moments that don't work, have enough communication that doesn't get you what you want and you begin to learn how to do it better. Like any artist practising... like 'Zen In the Art of Archery' – if I do that then it tends to not work so I think I won't do that" (2012).

In addition to communicating and thereby connecting with the various departments, the recreative music director has to communicate on artistic matters with actors/singers and musicians. From the outset of a production's development there is a director, a choreographer, a music supervisor and/or music director and the combination of talents that forms a cast of a production is invariably a product of negotiation between members of the creative team who all want the strongest talent in their own respective departments. Every musical requires a specific set of skills that sets it apart from every other musical whether it be an actor's musical with singing and dancing, or a dancer's musical with singing and acting, or a singer's musical with acting and dancing. Some musicals call for singers with classical training and/or operatic technique, others call for singers who have technique and stylistic inclinations for pop and rock. The end result may be a cast of varied vocal

capabilities: operatically trained or 'legit' singers who may feel insecure about singing in a pop or rock style because they don't know how to make the technical and/or stylistic adjustment to sound convincing as a pop or rock singer; excellent actors who are not good singers but can hold a tune; dancers who are afraid to sing because it wasn't necessary until they were cast in a musical. As a music director, education, experience and instinct continue to inform one's ability to recognise what performers need, and the kind of communication necessary to achieve the best out of them. Melrose explains that he needs to "meet people where they are and communicate with them where they are":

> Take a singer whose focus for fifteen years has been on *bel canto* training and is exquisitely aware at all times of their consonant placement, roundness of their vowels, vibrato and breath support. If I am meeting an artist who lives in that technical world, I have to speak to them with a technical way of getting to where they need to go. If I am speaking with someone who has no idea, but thank God they sing in tune, they are just trying to make the moment work, then I have to meet them there. You have to be able to talk to both kinds of performers and everything on the sliding continuum between them and go 'this is what I hear you doing, this is where I think we want to move it toward, here are some tricks for how you might do that'. When I start listing tricks it's going to be a whole different ball game for a trained singer versus an actor (2012).

The multifarious styles and genres that comprise pop/rock musicals place an increasing burden on music directors to be voice coaches and be more informed about vocal technique, which was not necessarily a requirement in the acoustic age. Then there were dedicated voice teachers and coaches. Today, the music director should have a basic understanding of the physiology of the voice and, more than just communicating with actors/singers on how a score should be sung, the music director should be able to find possible solutions to any technical difficulty that the actor/singer may encounter. Charl-Johan Lingenfelder's view is that "the health of the voice is critical and you [the music director] need to know how the instrument works and be informed about it. You need to be on the forefront of what is going on. Talk to singing coaches and also refer people to other people. It's dangerous to pretend you know what you're talking about when you don't know because the one thing that we forget is how people hang on to every word we say. We forget that" (2012).

Ben Cohn advises “it can really mess people up psychologically if they’re worrying about singing a certain thing that they are battling with” (2012). I have seen actors/singers obsess about one phrase, or even one high note, which can create tension in the body or even a mental block for an entire performance. Cohn goes on to say that, “our responsibility as musical directors is to understand it so that we can do a bit of hand-holding at times, but in a way that we also understand what is going on physically. Try this technique; or let’s maybe move this breath somewhere else until you feel comfortable. I don’t think we need to go into a full-scale vocal pedagogy. That can get even worse because you just get in their head about it, but if we can try to understand what is going on at a particular moment, it’s helpful” (ibid.).

Sam Davis weighs in with his observation on the spectrum of challenges that musical theatre presents when working with singers and actors of varying capabilities:

> Part of the challenge and part of what’s great about musical theatre is that it’s a hybrid of so many styles. You have *Rent* and you have *Showboat* and they are totally different styles. *Dreamgirls* calls for r ‘n b, blues and gospel singers and *A Little Night Music* calls for classical. There are some actors who are very well musically trained and who sight read and that’s great. But the challenge is to loosen them up and not make them so stiff and to get them away from the note values into really feeling and acting the words. You could be working on a show like *Once* where the cast plays the instruments, or where it’s pop and that score comes from an indie pop world. Your job is to bring everyone together and be on the same page. You have to take what somebody naturally has to offer and coax it out of them in a way that they feel safe and comfortable and make them feel grounded. It comes down to personality. When you see someone, and as you get to know them you can tell that they have a good voice but they are insecure with harmony and that they don’t read harmonies very well, they don’t have a great ear to hold a pitch… if they are in your show then you have to try to help them. You have to assess what their strengths are, what their weaknesses are, and how to best to help them overcome their fears. That can be challenging but also fun (2012).

From my experience of music directing, actors in musical theatre often possess emotional and psychological insecurities about their talents and capabilities in varying degrees, and their confidence levels can slide along a slippery continuum from helplessness to unbridled self-assurance. A good music director understands that ultimately the job is to get the best out of the actor/singer, and instilling any kind of fear that heightens those insecurities is counter-productive. Pursuing Melrose’s and Davis’s statements further, when an artist allows you to meet them where they

are, or feels vulnerable and uncertain but allows you to make them feel safe, comfortable and grounded, then trust has entered the artistic relationship between music director and actor/singer. Every one of my informants spoke about the importance of *trust* to a music director; sometimes uttering the words more than once within a single interview. “When you can build up a relationship with someone and they trust you implicitly and they know that you have a vision for what the result is going to be, they go the extra mile to get that vision” (Lingenfelder, 2012). Trust is a two-way relationship: the actor may be taking vocal and emotional risks to achieve the ideal performance; this requires trust in themselves as well as trust that the music director is going to guide them safely to where they need to get; conversely the music director’s trust in the actor/singer is the ability to stand back enough to allow her/him to go where s/he needs to go.

My own experience working with the cast of *Streets of Gold* bears out Melrose’s and Davis’ idea of “meeting people where they are”. Shaun V was vocally perfect for Viddy: a naturally gifted rock singer with an intuition for phrasing and the innate ability to channel emotion through a stratospheric vocal range to produce stirring sounds; he was a gift for my department but not a natural actor and therefore a challenge for the director. In contrast to this, Fiona Ramsay who played Flora, is an extremely smart actress who fully understood the ‘spoof’ concept, and who knew how to balance larger-than-life cartoonish mannerisms with a sense of realism; she is however not a singer at all and is actually quite afraid of singing. My challenge was to make her feel comfortable enough to harness her acting skills to inform her singing choices rather than destroy her confidence by forcing her to sing; I met her on her on her terms. To get the best out of both artists, a number of factors were in play: first, effective communication that had been shaped by instinct, second, experience born out of dealing with artists with different competencies; third, trust that I would not only serve them as artists, but that I would serve the production in the way I music directed them. Trial-and-error had provided me with a bag of ‘tricks’ (as Melrose says) to, let’s say, push Shaun to the extremities of his range, or to steer Fiona away from her mental block about singing so that her performance was able to succeed on her acting strengths rather than be underpinned by fear of her vocal inadequacies. None of the above would have been possible without mutual trust.

The issue of trust extends to the music director and musician relationship. As a mentor, one of the greatest lessons Graham Scott taught me about working with musicians is trust. I recall him saying “no musician with any sense of pride, ego and awareness of themselves and their capabilities is going to deliver anything less than their best” (personal comm.). The way in which I absorbed that advice into my own working methods is specific to techniques of rehearsing the band or orchestra. As far as possible, I direct the musicians to play the entire score from beginning to end regardless of errors and faults. The aim is to provide the players with a holistic overview of the entire work, and the style and feel of the score, and for them to identify any obvious problem areas at the outset. The trust to which Scott refers is demonstrated by my guiding the players to a solution through self-discovery. I have found that empowering musicians in this way, not only achieves the goal of a well-executed score, it also encourages inclusivity and enthusiasm. Broadway drummer Sean McDaniel admits that he favours music directors who “know what I am there to do and they let me do my thing. The ones that I don’t have a good time with are the ones who dictate every bar to me. I like it when they just trust me. It’s nice for them to give me input, but when they know I am going to get the job done, and they don’t have to worry about that and I just do my thing, that is when I am happiest” (2012). Adam Ben-David states that trust is what he looks for most in a music director. He has worked as associate conductor to Stephen Oremus and explains why he trusts Oremus, particularly in a crisis situation: “Most conductors tighten up and they take it out on the players. Stephen just says ‘screw it’. He doesn’t try and control the situation. He just lets the situation work itself out. I have never seen him lose it on the podium” (2012). Ben-David’s remark highlights an important point about trust, which is that the music director is seen to be calm and in control of a situation even when it is out of his control. With a musical being a conglomeration of so many creative and technical components, and collaborative elements, the risk of the status quo being upset is always high.

As varied as the music director’s communication is between actors and singers, more diverse is the communication between actors/singers and musicians. In the previous scene I described my observation of Bill Fairley and his merging of the cast and the orchestra into one cohesive whole. I view actors/singers and musicians as two distinct bodies of artists with unlike mind-sets, who speak different languages

and approach the work from divergent angles. Therefore, clear, yet different forms of communication from the music director are paramount to the successful integration of cast and musicians. Ben Cohn, who has conducted *Wicked* on Broadway, offers an incisive analysis of the differences in communication required for the two bodies; an analysis that aligns itself closely with my own experience:

> It's a very different way of learning. When you're working with musicians generally, except for certain rhythm section players, there is an expectation that there is the notation on the page. When you're working with them you can sit down with the score and you can rehearse it and then you can discuss it. There is an expectation that that when you walk in the room first day of rehearsal with a group, you can rely on the notation on the page and you can get a result and then go from there. Actors, it's almost the opposite. You almost have to spend an entire day just feeding them the notes until they get it, you have to be a little more hand holding as far as that part of it goes. But there's also more diversity. There are some actors who read really well and there are those who don't. Let's say you have a new piece, some of them will know exactly what they are doing right away and some will have no clue. So you're starting with two totally different groups. It's like having an advanced class and a 101 class in the same room. For the actors the music is like a third of what they are doing. For musicians it's a hundred-percent of what they are doing (2012).

A cast typically rehearses a musical for six to seven weeks, whereas an orchestra or band rehearses the score of the same musical for a week.

> So then you have to explain to the musicians that you have to have some flexibility. You have to go with me. You have to listen to the actors, which is something they are not used to doing. But then you have to explain to the actors that there is a certain amount of rigidity that the musicians have. So I think it's that extra level that the actors have to deal with whether it's acting, or movement, or choreography or staging or dialogue or telling the story that the musicians need to understand but don't need to do. Often musicians don't even know what is going on onstage and it is important that they do. They have to know why last night we took this section super fast and tonight we have to pull it back and they have to be in tune with the conductor. It wouldn't hurt if they listened to what the actors are saying. 'He [the actor] is not even close to finishing that line so he can't come in singing'. It's those kinds of things. That's one of the major challenges, listening to each other. Understanding where the limits are. As an actor you can't just zoom ahead because there are twenty-three people who also have to keep up with you and support you. As a musical director, we have to understand both groups equally because we are the liaison between the two. And I think that there are some musical directors who are more in tune with the actors, there are some who are more in tune with the musicians and I think that is where a lot of problems occur. You have to be right down the middle. You have to understand exactly what is happening musically and dramatically (ibid.).

Cohn raises the issue of the musicians' expectations of working from a fully notated score, with the exception of certain rhythm section players. Since the rhythm section is the foundation of a pop/rock musical, it is essential for a rhythm player to have a command of style of the popular music idioms in which he/she is performing. While knowledge of notation is often not required for the pop/rock musician, it is beneficial when playing a musical theatre score due to the structured and repetitive nature of the art form. As most popular musics do not emerge from the written page, and many of pop's features, such as stylistic nuances, electric guitar effects, programmed synthesiser sounds and electronic drum effects, are not typically accommodated in standard scoring, verbal instructions to the pop/rock player in a musical are an important feature of music director-musician communication. For example, an electric guitar part may only contain chord symbols and slashes with added verbal instructions like 'with overdrive' or 'muted with delay'. The *Streets of Gold* score contains many such examples. The part is merely a guide that demands of the player to bring interpretive choices that are both stylistically appropriate to the genre and idiomatically correct. Whereas my communication with an orchestral player who reads conventional staff notation is likely be in technical terms, communicating with pop and rock musicians, who may not be readers, has to be in accessible terms that they are more likely to relate to and grasp. For example, to a rock guitarist I might say something like, 'I'm looking for an Eddie Van Halen *tapping* effect here'; or to a drummer, 'play the hi-hat slightly open like Roger Taylor to give it that slightly messy, rock drummer sizzle'. This is the sort of music direction that a pop or rock musician would know how to work with.

Echoing Cohn, it is my responsibility to communicate with the player about what is going on onstage and explain how his/her musical choices may or may not affect the action of the story. Scott explains that in the realm of musical theatre, the limitations of staff notation are not confined to the representation of pop and rock music exclusively:

> Even in something like *Pacific Overtures*, there is the use of the *shukahachi*, which is almost impossible to notate.[53] We don't have the means. So you have

[53] *Pacific Overtures* (1976), composed by Stephen Sondheim, is set during the westernisation of Japan in 1853. The original production was presented in Kabuki style and the orchestration by Jonathan Tunick utilised traditional Japanese wind instruments including the *shukahachi.*

> to describe it in words. It might be a '*note inegales*' as in Bach's times. It's a stylistic thing that was never written down because it was assumed that the players would know exactly how to play it. Exactly the same thing happens in jazz. You don't write all those things down because you assume that people know the style. In a rock situation, you're inevitably dealing with players who come from a rock background who don't necessarily even read that well. Of course, the very good ones do. But they will go much more on a band feel of playing with each other in a much less technical way. It's much more improvisational. The players are interpreting what is a short hand. When you are writing a full orchestration for an orchestra you are writing long hand so-called. With rock stuff, even as the arranger, you are writing shorthand. A lot of your communication as the arranger or the music director is going to be verbal as opposed to technical. Your job as the music director is to make sure that they [the players] are not being too creative about what they do so that it all hangs together" (2012).

Lingenfelder considers it a blessing that the notation system is a failed one: "It opens the door for interpretation. If the notation was so locked then our job literally becomes colour by numbers. I have never thought about the fact that our notation system doesn't allow for all those things. The moment you see the guide, you get a sense of what the guide wants to become" (2002). Lingenfelder's observation speaks to Edward Lisk who considers that "the paper or notes have neither depth nor dimension. Perhaps multi-dimensional notation would convey more meaning. Until this happens, we, as conductors or performers, have only our imagination to discover what lies on the other side of this flat surface of notation. The elements that make notation multi-dimensional are interpretation, musical decisions and risk determined by knowledge, skill and experience" (1996).

The set designer needs music to cover a piece of scenery that is traveling downstage on an automated track in the deck; the lighting designer wants to know the tempo of a song so that he can set the speed of the 'chaser' on the 'intels' as the 'parcans' fade; the sound designer needs to boost the 1K frequency, adjust the EQ in the room and roll off the tops to make the band sound right in the room; the singer needs advice making a vocal adjustment and is not sure whether dropping the larynx, flattening the tongue or lifting the soft palate is the solution; the drummer is asking whether I prefer a deep snare or a piccolo snare, and the sax player has a simple question about articulation and dynamic. In all of theses scenarios, different departments and artist types are talking to me; and my ability to communicate effectively with all of them in their vocabulary, and to identify what their needs are

and serve them musically, is a critically important collaborative facet of music direction in the recreative phase.

ACT II

SCENE THREE

"All they ever want is repetition" (Sondheim)

In Act I Scene Three I elaborated on the processes that occur in the creation of a Broadway production and noted that with the advent of the music supervisor the music director came to occupy a subordinate position. *The Phantom of the Opera* has been running on Broadway for over twenty-five years and is the only remnant of the British invasion of the 1980s; the era that established the music supervisor as a permanently entrenched position. I like to think of the music supervisor as a 'recreative inspector' whose function, once the creative phase is complete, is to ensure brand management and quality control, i.e. that the music director, musicians and cast that are performing a production on Broadway, or anywhere else for that matter, are performing it to the standards and specifications set by the original creative team. In the case of *The Phantom of the Opera,* in order to run for a quarter of a century, and still maintain the original artistic standard and creative intent, the position of the music supervisor has been irrefutably justified. The recreative music director, who is conducting the production on a day-to-day basis, faces the challenges of performance recreation and repetition maintenance and the laboriousness of ensuring the consistency of all participants. Before I discuss the dynamics of my own relationships with music supervisors by whom I have been mentored and guided, I share an anecdote of Ron Melrose that introduces one of the ways in which the supervisor functions.

The Rink opened on Broadway in 1984. It was followed two years later by a production on London's West End that was *not* a recreation of the original Broadway production. Melrose, who was then associate conductor of the Broadway production, was sent to London by composer John Kander to supervise the West End production. The instructions he was given expose the role of the supervisor in the recreative phase and how Melrose effectively became composer John Kander's eyes and ears in London:

> You are not allowed to talk to the band or the singers. Hands off. You sit. You take your notes. You meet once a day with the music director saying, 'John would be pleased with this and this and this; John would be upset about that and that and that; please reconsider your choices here, it is not really true to the essence of the piece the way he understands'. John's message to me was 'use your judgment'. If they are not coming up with something that we did, but something that is *Rink*-like and tells the story or that works, fine (2012).

In the recreation of Broadway (and certain West End) musicals in South Africa, an international creative team – that includes a director, a choreographer and a music supervisor – is sent to South Africa to hold auditions for a local cast and meet with the local production team that has been assembled by the producer. If the members of this team were not part of the original Broadway creative team, they have the requisite knowledge of the physical production, and have been authorised by the original Broadway producers and rights holders to recreate the production, and to teach the local production team and cast. They typically rehearse the production and depart after opening night leaving a local team to maintain the production exactly as the supervising team has set it. Whereas I am typically hired directly by the local producer based on professional reputation, there were two occasions in which the brand management was so stringent that I had to audition or interview for the job of music director in order for the music supervisor to be certain that I had the right skill set and experience for the productions in question, namely *Chicago* and *The Lion King*. (I was offered the job on *The Lion King* but rejected the contract in favour of music directing *Rent*.)

On the productions on which I have worked, at the beginning of a rehearsal period the supervisor generally teaches the score to the cast. My job, as the local music director, is to observe and note everything that the supervisor says and does in order to maintain the production once he or she departs. The seven-week rehearsal process becomes as much a learning phase for me as it does for the cast and I consider this an essential mentoring phase. Typically, the supervisor prefers to teach the score because s/he is more familiar with it than I am and will therefore teach it more expediently; besides being familiar with the notes on the page and how to assign harmony parts to cast members, the supervisor is able to teach the score with the requisite dramatic and stylistic intent. It is not that the local music director is necessarily unaware of this, it is rather that the supervisor is closer to the source of

the original creation of the musical and has a clearer grasp of the ethos of the creators, the needs and complexities of the score, and is therefore able to convey unfiltered information.

The relinquishing of control from supervisor to music director has varied in each situation in which I have worked. Some supervisors have preferred to retain control until the production is properly 'on-its-feet', only then retreating to give me the authority to take command. Others have empowered me a lot sooner. For example, when the West End production of the Queen-catalogue musical *We Will Rock You* was recreated in South Africa, British music supervisor Mike Dixon taught the vocal score in the first week of rehearsal and then returned to London for four weeks leaving me to run rehearsals.[54] He came back to South Africa to rehearse the band in the sixth week of rehearsal and to ensure that the quintessential sound of Queen was being correctly played and executed. Stephen Oremus has a similar approach to Dixon: "I have been very fortunate to have some fantastically talented MDs around the world and they have all been very receptive. I don't get in their way. When I show up, I usually teach it quickly because I know it so I can do it faster. I'll teach it and then go away and then come back and tweak. I am there for the broad strokes and for the little details at the same time" (2012).

I interviewed Melrose in January 2012 when the American creative team held auditions for the South African production of *Jersey Boys*. When I asked him what he anticipated the dynamic between himself as supervisor and me as music director during the rehearsal period to be, he had the following to say:

> It's not up to me to tell you how you get there, just where you should get to. And I think I will make the distinction to the cast that I will be very hands-on for the first couple of weeks and then back gradually off as you come gradually forward. But that in general, although you and I are working on the same team toward the same end, by the end of the preparation period, you will be their music director. They will come to you. You're in charge of tempos, in charge of feels, in charge of angry trombone players. You're in charge. You're here to protect your company from the Americans. My interest is the global property called *Jersey Boys*. Will the South Africans honor it? Yours is "Will you please stop talking to my trumpet player you are making him crazy". The right thing for you to say in week five is "Ron, get out of my face". The right thing for me to

[54] Dixon had written the arrangements for the original London production and was authorised by original band members Brian May and Roger Taylor to supervise recreations in other territories.

> say is “I still don’t feel like ‘Walk Like A Man’ culminates the three songs and I think it has something to do with the tempo and feel of your band”. Then I have to walk away and let you deal with that note (2012).

Melrose’s approach as supervisor is one of guiding – cast, band, and music director – towards a common result without insisting on a specific method of achieving that result; though he clearly delineates the responsibilities and sets a timeframe for the shift of authority from supervisor to music director.

When the creative team departs, the focus of the music director shifts to conducting and maintenance. With the parameters of a ‘first class’ production in place, there is very little room for the music director to impose his own interpretation. The objective, rather, is to uphold the creative vision and recreate it eight times a week. For example, on *Wicked* “it’s so specific; it’s like wall to wall carpeting of underscoring. You’re at the mercy of the actors and you have got points to hit and you have to stretch in some places and go faster in others and it’s left up to your musicality to take the original vision and make it come through” (Oremus, 2012). Maintaining a production night after night without imposing any new creative input is one of the most challenging non-musical acts of recreativity required of a music director and not everyone embraces this challenge willingly. Sam Davis resists: “what I don’t like is the day to day eight-show week grind. I don’t like the thanklessness of it. It’s tedious. With writing you work, and you work really hard, and then it’s done and you move on to something else. With music directing, you’re always working and working and working and working” (2012).

With the creative team‘s work complete at some point during the rehearsal phase, the mantle rests firmly on the shoulders of the music director to monitor that the actors and musicians don’t lapse into complacency and boredom because of incessant repetition; that they don’t improvise on a melody, or alter how a line is phrased or sing a new harmony. Human factors and conditions that include mood, fatigue and health, for example, contribute to varying levels of energy and concentration, which in turn affects the consistency of a performance that is recreated on a daily basis, sometimes twice a day. Musicians with firm classical and orchestral backgrounds, are traditionally unlikely to stray from the notation on the page yet the quality of their playing could vary between pedestrian – going through

the motions – and total commitment. I have found that pop and rock musicians, who may enjoy the freedom of embellishment that occurs in a workshop or developmental process, or when playing material repeatedly in a band or a live concert setting for instance, find the discipline of the eight-show week routine immensely arduous. While the scores of pop/rock musicals typically offer latitude for genre-specific and idiomatic elaboration, the environment is still firmly structured. Adam Ben-David posed the following question when I interviewed him: "you ask a painter to paint the same painting everyday for five years, what happens to the painting and the creativity?":

> The inherent problem with being a music director on a long running show is that it goes against every instinct of our nature to recreate the same thing over and over again; and more than that, to not be allowed to find new subtleties is a very unnatural thing. There are some music directors that never do that because they are not with a show for longer than say four weeks. You see their resumes and they have sixty shows but they have never had to maintain a show. There are some conductors that have done three shows in their whole career and their job was totally different. Their job has been maintaining a show. The question a music director has to ask him/herself is 'what kind of music director do you want to be?'. Do you want to be someone who is creating or recreating? (2012).

When I conduct a musical on a nightly basis I like to use the metaphor of a fleet of racing cars in which I am steering the leading car along a fixed route. The drivers in the fleet trust that I will guide them safely to the finish line. From the downbeat I have no choice but to guide the cars all the way to their destination steering them through dips, bends and turns. I need to be four or five steps ahead of everybody else anticipating any unplanned or unexpected events that may occur coming around a corner. I would check my mirrors and be vigilant of the surroundings, or as Graham Scott puts it, "you're clocking the stage; you're gauging the performers; you're gauging the audience. The complexity of that is what people are unaware of" (2012). The satisfaction for me is arriving at the destination having not encountered any obstacles and having avoided any collisions.

The route and the fleet of cars are the constant; the traffic along the way and the weather are variables. Similarly, in recreating a performance night after night, the script, score, direction, choreography, lighting, costumes, scenery are the constant; the cast, band and crew are also a constant unless there are understudies or

replacement musicians in the pit ('subs'). The audience is always a variable. No two audiences are identical and the response and energy that an audience gives and receives is also infinitely variable. The individual and collective emotional states, moods, levels of physical energy of a cast, orchestra/band and crew add further variables to the journey. One of the most critical factors affected by these variables, in attempting to retain consistency in recreating a performance on a nightly basis, is tempo. I have found that I have had to sometimes use psychology to motivate a company who are battling through the seventh performance of the week knowing that they still have the eighth one on the same day. "When you hit your 'double-double' on a weekend, a huge part of our job is also keeping that thing going. I have found at times that I have had to apply Psychology 101 to enthuse a company to want to do two shows on a Saturday and a Sunday. And tempo has a lot to do with that. The actors might feel the show is slower on a certain performance but they have no idea that they are performing to exactly the same tempo at every single performance" (Lingenfelder, 2012).

The implementation of a click track as a means of securing a consistent tempo for every performance – thereby diminishing the impact of the variable – is a topic of contention and debate. Broadway drummer Sean McDaniel argues that "the lighting is the same every night; the scene changes are the same; they are going for such a consistency. Why not take one variable out and make the tempos the same every night? I think that's the goal of Broadway – to be consistent. But there are people who think that things need to breathe" (2012). Every participant in a musical is reliant on cues being fed from one person to another and one department to another. Lights change on a music cue, which is dependent on an actor standing in the correct spot, which is dependent on whether he made his costume change in time, and so on. The variables that occur within any one performance are infinite and require that the participants adapt accordingly. For example, if an actor/singer is vocally fatigued the music director should intuitively adjust the tempo or perhaps move the end of a piece quicker, rather than employ a *rit.,* to provide as much assistance as possible to the actor/singer. If a piece of scenery, that is timed to move with music, is stuck and unable to move into the correct position, the music director has to instantly make a decision to repeat music or slow the tempo until the scenery is in place. Ben-David argues that it goes against our every instinct to

recreate the same thing over and over, adding that “the best conductors know that they don’t have a built-in metronome in their heads. You may have perfect pitch but there is no such thing as perfect rhythm. You may be able to keep time once time has started but your bio-rhythm can be all over the place” (2012). In pop/rock musicals that are driven by a rhythm section, a click track is a useful if not necessary device because, regardless of any external factors and variables such as those mentioned above, the tempo remains constant. This can have benefits. McDaniel, for example, feels that, “as a drummer, I think if you have that click going, it frees you up to play the groove how you want. You can play behind the click if you want, and you can take more chances and not have to think about the tempo and just make things feel good” (2012).

Rather than functioning purely as a maintenance tool, Charl-Johan Lingenfelder considers that using a click track in pop/rock musicals is “useful for electronic and synthetic elements that can’t be played live and that have to be programmed and then layering it over with live instruments. It gives you such an incredible canvas to work with. But the approach to that is exactly that. It’s semi-live versus a pre-recorded environment” (2012).

I have conducted musicals with and without a click track and my tempos have shifted from night to night no matter how much I *think* they are the same. Perception is the factor here. If I have a strong cup of coffee or do a gym workout just before conducting a performance, my heart-rate is going to be higher than its normal resting rate, therefore I am likely to conduct faster than the prescribed tempo and yet it will feel correct. Conversely, if I am tired or sluggish, I will likely conduct at a slower tempo and perceive it as correct. I am particularly aware of the shift in perception after performing eight shows in a week and then having a day off. The first performance after the day off often feels slow. My personal preference is to use a combination of some parts clicked and other parts free to breathe. That way, regardless of external factors, the click provides tempo consistency and I can determine the non-clicked parts in relation to the consistency rather than in relationship to my body clock.

The recreative phase of music direction can be both immensely rewarding and mind-numbingly tedious at the same time. “I love conducting. When you’re conducting, you’re really making music and you’re functioning as a musician. There are so many other parts to the job that are non-musical that involve being an administrator” (Davis 2012). For me the reward is in steering the racing car to its finish line eight times a week unhindered, ensuring that the audience who differs night after night, goes away moved and affected by what they have experienced. The tedium is in giving notes to the cast, notes to the band/orchestra and notes to the sound engineer to ensure that the original creative vision, in all its components, is recreated to the highest possible standards for however long a production runs… which could be twenty-five years. This can feel like an on going recreative act in itself. “You need to find something interesting about giving a note to an actor you have already given them twenty-five times” (Ben-David, 2012).

ACT II

SCENE FOUR

"Come follow the band wherever it's at" ('Barnum')

For the greater part of the acoustic age, prior to the evolution and advancement of sound design and video technology, musical theatre tradition followed the operatic convention of positioning the orchestra in its time-honoured place in the pit between the stage and the front row of the audience, where the conductor faced the stage with his back to the audience. Just as an opera conductor would do, the music director balanced the orchestra internally and acoustically, and controlled the level over which the singers could be heard to the back wall of the auditorium. The synthesised age introduced electric and electronic instrumentation, amplification and audio technology, hallmarks of pop and rock music, not only changing how musicals were aurally received, but also how they were musically directed and executed. Acoustic age musicals did not demand that music director/conductors were piano players; for example, illustrious conductor Paul Gemignani "doesn't play the piano" (Davis, 2012). Piano playing was left to the rehearsal pianist or pit pianist and the music director conducted the orchestra in a traditional manner with a baton. In the synthesised age there is far more demand on the music director to be technologically savvy, to have a fundamental knowledge of sound design and to play keyboards. The Broadway musicals of today have such a diverse array of subject matter and are written in so many styles that there will always be room for the traditional baton conductor, but musicals requiring such a conductor are increasingly limited. More and more musicals are being conducted from the keyboard whether they are legitimate pop/rock musicals or not. Despite its Golden Age style and sensibility, *The Book of Mormon* is not conducted by a stand-up conductor with a baton. It, too, is conducted from the keyboard.

In a chapter on sound design in *The Rise and Fall of the Broadway Musical*, Mark N. Grant argues that the spread of amplification has fundamentally altered the sonic experience for performers and listeners in the theatre (2004: 188-210). Grant explains that the debut of microphones and loudspeakers in the theatre is hard to

pinpoint but notes that musical theatre historians Lehman Engel, Miles Kreuger and Gerald Bordman favour 1939-40 as the start of the use of microphones in musical theatre (191). The first sound-mixing console appeared in the back of a theatre in the late 1950s, and by the 1980s the equipment was standard. The result of the increasing importance of sound technologies in the theatre is that while the "music director in the old days was the master link in the chain of the self-sound-balancing of musicals; he was the sound operator to all intents and purposes. Today the music director is a cog in a larger machine" (200). Mark Malherbe, who has been a theatre sound designer in South Africa for thirty-five years, recalls a conversation he had with veteran Broadway sound designer Abe Jacob:[55]

> What started the revolution in theatre sound was the introduction of the 'Walkman' in the early 80s. [Abe] called it 'intravenous sound'. He said that up and until then people were used to their TVs or their hi-fi sound and that's what they accepted. So when they came to the theatre they listened. All of sudden, with the 'Walkman', for really very little money, they could get exceptionally high quality audio, and I'm still talking a cassette tape, and they were getting music directly into their ears and that's the sound that people wanted to hear when they came to a live performance. So you saw this exponential swing in technology in the theatre happening around the launch of the 'Walkman'. He said the other major influence was the introduction of the remote control because that's when people suddenly started to lose the ability to listen; they could just up the volume without leaving their seat. So those two turning points were major influences in what has become my industry. To me it just summed exactly where we were going and what we had to try and achieve (2014).

Grant notes that, at the time of his writing, every singer on the stage wore a wireless microphone, every musician in the pit was miked, loudspeakers surrounded the theatre, and "the sound operator who sat in the rear of the theater at the mixing console was arguably more important than either the stage manager or the conductor in running the show" (2004: 199). I am inclined to agree with Grant, as does Charl-Johan Lingenfelder who points out that the factors of trust, communication and collaboration extend to the music director's relationship with the sound engineer:

> As far as I am concerned, the sound engineer is the most important person on the show because everything that we do in rehearsals gets handed over to them. They can make or break it every step of the way. When a sound engineer steps behind the desk I step away because I have to trust their ears. I

[55] Abe Jacob was the sound designer for the original Broadway productions of *A Chorus Line* and *Evita* and was twice honoured by The United States Institute for Theatre Technology.

> cannot expect anybody to hear something through my ears. I can give them the A to Z, the whole paint-by-numbers of how the show goes but they have to hear it for themselves. When you have problematic situations with sound, you have to empower a sound engineer because they get shouted at by everybody. The last thing they need is for you to be coming down on them. I like to make them understand that I trust them whether I like them or not, unless I can get them fired. But that is the bottom line. Sound engineering is based on your ears no matter how many buttons and faders are in front of you. I don't get into the power struggles. That's the importance of pre-production. Discussions on where things need to be subtle and where they need to be really loud and working out whether the rig is big enough to handle those dynamics, that's all for pre-production. So that when you get to the running of the show, when you deal with the power struggle between you and an engineer boils down to taste. You may need to explain to an engineer what your reasons for a certain choice are. The engineer has so much power to manipulate an audience by adjustments in volume. (2012).

It was an ineluctable reality that the music director would have to relinquish control of balancing the vocal and musical elements of a musical to sound designers and sound engineers, whether the production had squealing guitars on the stage as in *American Idiot,* or lush symphonic strings in the pit as in *The Phantom of the Opera*. Gemignani says he brings in the sound designer as soon as possible: "first production meeting he is there. I want him to understand the show as much as I do. I invite him to every single run that I can get away with before he even designs anything. We speak about what the show is going to sound like. I usually collaborate with the orchestrator in choosing the sound designer ('Arrangers and Musical Directors', 2009). I have always thought it prudent to communicate as much as possible to the sound designer and the sound engineer because they have the power to enhance or destroy my musical choices such as dynamics and internal orchestration subtleties. Seasoned Broadway music director Eric Stern exclaims, "sometimes you have to go back and say to the sound designer, 'you know, I rehearsed a diminuendo there. Don't dig them out,' because the guy who's mixing the show is undoing everything you told him" (quoted in Grant, 2007: 201). Stephen Oremus has a less divisive attitude:

> I work very closely with my sound departments. I feel like I have a really good rapport with my sound departments. It is part of my job to note them as well as the orchestra and the cast. It is interesting that we are called music supervisors 'cos what we are really doing is helping to produce the sound for the theatre. On *Memphis* Chris Jankes had a music producer credit and we talked about it. I totally get it. It is pretty accurate. As if it were a record, we are producing the live sound of the musical. We are in charge of how it sounds. (2012)

The dynamic between the sound designer and the engineer has its own set of challenges that impact greatly on the work of the music director. In the day-to-day running of a production, the engineer is often placed in the invidious position of not knowing which master to serve – the sound designer or the music director. Malherbe elaborates:

> Very few people will sit in a theatre and say 'oh the lighting was nice' or the 'colours were great'. Everybody has got an opinion about sound. Everybody has an opinion on what the sound should be. Half the time, we have to play the role of a politician because on any musical, I have the musical director's opinion, the director's opinion, the producer's opinion, I've got my local producer's opinion, and the bulk of the audience who believe they are sound experts. It becomes a bit like Goldilocks and the three bears… one will say it's too loud, one will say it's too soft and the other will say it's just right. We serve too many masters. And it's picking who is the correct master to follow. On the musical needs I serve you as the musical director (2014).

I asked Malherbe how he serves a score and/or the needs of a music director while being creative with his sound design.

> It's not my job to interfere with what you do in terms of the internal balance of the orchestra or the band. That's you. I can get involved in saying that certain things don't necessarily work in a particular auditorium and then give you an informed perspective. I can say, for example, that in this auditorium, in terms of your instrumentation I would like to pull out an element in that number because it's masking my voice line and in this auditorium it's ringing a bit. But I would do it in a manner that doesn't interfere with the overall picture. Where I will get involved in terms of the design is, for example with a keyboard part because quite often that mid-band sits exactly where my voices would sit and I will need to pull it or I will need you to transpose to free up the voice. I don't want to have to sit there lifting the voice louder and louder and louder. What I want is for the voice to sit naturally in the balance but I can't do it if I am fighting you. The arrangement and the orchestration might be lovely but the moment I put a voice in there I can't work with it. So we look at how we work together to solve that problem, what elements I can apply reverb to just subtly, what elements I can pull into a surround system to give some depth. Where do I place the orchestra in my picture? Do I place it upstage? Do I place it OP side, prompt side, or do I bring them into the FOH PA. And all that is all artistic design before the mechanical design (ibid.).

The advent of amplification and sound design technology has brought about significant changes to the physical and acoustic spaces between music director, cast and musicians; these advances have led to a shift in performance locations, an expansion in creative possibilities and a need for new approaches on how to achieve

these fundamentals. It was inevitable that a greater knowledge and awareness of sound and sound design would become as integral to the required know-how of the theatre music director as reading a score. Charl-Johan Lingenfelder reveals that "a music director needs to have at least a basic knowledge of how sound works, how a desk works in terms of EQ, effects etc." (2012). Grant makes clear his disdain for this technological encroachment, quoting leading Broadway arranger and conductor Eric Stern decrying the challenges that occurred while working on *Parade* (1998), challenges which have become commonplace in musical theatre productions:

> Set designers and directors apportion the pit without even consulting a conductor. I had a drummer in the pit but a percussionist in an entirely different room all hooked up by video and audio. My bass clarinet/bassoonist was playing behind me on my right, positioned so he has no shot of me at all, playing off a monitor. He was sitting next to a man who *could* see me but *he* couldn't see me. Sound designers are basically miking each instrument separately and then creating a blend out in the house. Same with the vocals; every singer in the ensemble is wearing a wireless and as a result, what you're getting here is you work for eight weeks for choral blend, and then for the first two weeks of rehearsal in the theatre you're hearing nothing but individual voices with absolutely no blend and absolutely no choral presence, no choral field. The same thing happens with the orchestral mix. It takes ages to get to the point where the saxes sound like a choir, where the strings sound like a choir. And you're on the podium and you can't hear the whole show from the back and say 'No, this isn't mixed right' (ibid.).

During the rehearsals for *Jersey Boys* in Johannesburg in October 2012, I closely observed as Associate Music Supervisor Jonathan 'Smitti' Smith taught the vocal parts to the cast. During dense and lushly orchestrated sections, the voices would soar and everyone in the room felt the moments when the vocal harmonies sounded the way they need to sound in the theatre. Then Smitti would caution the cast saying: "enjoy the sound of yourselves as a group in this space because you won't hear it like this again when you're onstage". The difference between Stern and Smith is that one has resisted the imposition of sound technology and one has embraced it. It also highlights the generation gap in the industry and the overlap of two very important musical paradigms at work, namely the pre-technological era and the post-technological era. Reluctantly or willingly, music directors have had to acquiesce to changing environments as technology makes possible the pushing of creative boundaries in many directions.

Writing in *The Wall Street Journal* in March 2012, Joanne Kaufman observed the number of current productions in which the musicians are no longer in the pit, but because of technological advances, are located either on stage, or displaced and fractured between pit, stage and even other floors in the building. Curiously, it is not just new musicals that are adopting this convention. Even revivals of Golden Age classics, that once could only use the conventional pit configuration, have adapted to the rapidly advancing sound design technology. In so doing the directors are broadening the scope of their creative re-imaginings by removing the orchestra from its time-honoured place in the pit and positioning it in places that were previously unimaginable. The arguments for and against the placement and displacement of musicians remain heated.

> In most instances, however, it's less about necessity than about artistic vision. Thus, the dispersal of musicians among the trees in the 2004 revival of *Fiddler on the Roof.* 'The director wanted the pit covered and used as part of the stage so the audience would be closer to the action', said the show's conductor, Kevin Stites. Similar thinking put the orchestra far upstage, separated from the cast by a scrim, in the 2002 revival of *Oklahoma!*. The musicians who were part of the 2010 revival of *La Cage Aux Folles* were positioned in boxes on either side of the stage, where they both played the score and served as the house band of the louche club that's a key setting in the show. Certainly, putting the orchestra on stage for a rock or jukebox musical is in keeping with the show's sensibility, which tends to be more Hammerstein Ballroom than Rodgers and Hammerstein. But too often, 'it seems like a stunt', said one director who requested anonymity. 'I think there are some shows where the orchestra should not be part of the visual landscape. I don't know why you'd put musicians on the stage for a production of *Fiddler* or *Wonderful Town'* he added, referring in the latter case to a revival of the Bernstein, Comden and Green show that had the musicians above the cast on a catwalk meant to suggest the Brooklyn Bridge (Kaufman, 2012).

Broadway music director Rob Berman offers this opinion that indicates his preference for the more conventional; yet acknowledges and surrenders to the advent of change:

> The musicians and actors get to know each other better, and the musicians feel more a part of the show and take more pride in it. I love being on stage. It provides the opportunity for a kind of showmanship. But from the point of view of music-making and me doing my job, I prefer to conduct from the pit. For a lot of us, there's a particular way we like to think of Broadway. There's something so iconic about having the orchestra in the pit. But the times are changing (quoted in Kaufman, 2012).

In 1996 I conducted the South African production of *La Cage Aux Folles* with the twenty-three-piece orchestra in its traditional space in the pit. Apart from one electronic keyboard, the instrumentation was typically orchestral in nature and, despite the presence of amplification, the configuration still allowed me to balance the orchestra acoustically and internally. The customary pit placement also meant that the musicians and the cast took cues and tempi from the baton that was directly in front of them. The introduction of video cameras and screens paved the way for actors and musicians to follow the conductor without being in direct eye contact. Such was the case in 2005 and 2008 when I conducted the South African production of *Chicago*, a recreation of the Broadway revival which features a fourteen-piece, 1920s-style jazz ensemble seated upstage in a representation of a sloped jury box facing the audience with the actors' playing space in front of them and around them.[56] This meant that the orchestra and I were behind the actors who were now taking cues from me off the video monitors that were positioned on the front face of the balcony or mezzanine level of the theatre. As much as audiences of today have become accustomed to (if not insistent on) amplified sound as a norm in the theatre, they have also come to accept the ubiquitous conductor video monitors. The instrumentation for *Chicago* has no electronic elements and, by its nature, can still be acoustically balanced internally by the music director. This onstage positioning, however, presents a different set of acoustic balancing challenges for both the music director and the sound department when, for example, actors on stage find themselves competing against five brass players who are on the stage rather than in the pit where the blare of the trumpets is more easily containable.

In the pop/rock musicals that I have conducted I have been further removed from the acoustic-era set up whether the band has been onstage or in the conventional pit space. The result has been a heavier reliance on, and trust in, the sound department. For *Streets of Gold* the band was in the pit; and for *Rent* and *We Will Rock You* the band was onstage and, in certain scenes, even concealed from both the cast and the audience. In both instances, while each band member had their own personal monitor mixer the entire band was nevertheless seated in close proximity

[56] The original Broadway and South African productions of *Chicago* in the 1970s utilised the traditional orchestra pit set up.

allowing for direct eye contact between all players and the inevitable chemistry that ignites when a rock band plays together.

Conducting *Dreamgirls* I was confronted with a different challenge: a rhythm section that was spatially separated from the orchestra. While the orchestra was in the pit, the storytelling requirements of the production called for the rhythm section to be onstage, often concealed but occasionally visible to the audience and the cast. I conducted from the conventional pit position giving me a direct eye-line to the cast and orchestra, but also conducted into a camera for the rhythm section, which was out of my direct eye-line. Each member of the rhythm section could view my cues on a mini video monitor attached to their music stands. It was a new experience communicating and transmitting body language and energy via camera to spatially removed musicians. Nonetheless, this experience of detachment prepared me for *Jersey Boys* in which much of the artistic vision for the production necessitates the complete displacement of music director, musicians and cast.

In *Jersey Boys*, communication from the conductor to musicians and cast is done via camera to mini video screens, and larger video screens placed strategically offstage for the cast, in addition to the usual ones on the front of the balcony in the auditorium. The music director sits at his/her keyboard station (which is labelled Keyboard 3 in the orchestration) in an isolated recording studio-styled environment. The two guitarists, the Keyboard 1 player – always played by a female as required by the storytelling demands of the production – and the bassist, play in the same room but could just as well be elsewhere scattered around the building because they follow the conductor on their personal monitor screens – despite being in the same room. The provision of in-ear phones or headphones attached to the 'Aviom' personal audio monitor mixers at each musician's station allow each player to create a mix of exactly what they need to hear and reference in order to play their parts. The three-part brass and reed section is sequestered in a soundproof room of their own, separate from the music director and the other players, with similar visual and audio monitoring systems in place. Secluded from the rest of the band, the Keyboard 2 player is positioned in the wings off to the right of the stage for most of the time; the all-important drummer is permanently on stage, at times visible and at times concealed as required by the production, switching between two drum kits that move

around the stage on automated platforms. The drummer follows the music director by means of mini video monitors that are placed unobtrusively between the toms on both drum kits and are concealed from audience view.

Very few musicals can lay claim to the level of complexity of the integration of musicians and actors with sound and video technology of which *Jersey Boys* makes use. It represents a highly creative, innovative and exploratory use of current sound and broadcast technology integrated into the art form of musical theatre. Effectively, an insulated studio environment now exists within the context of a live theatre experience resulting even in seemingly counter-intuitive approaches to the way musicians play the score. For example, the attention to dynamic markings required to achieve balance and good ensemble in an acoustic situation no longer applies. In *Jersey Boys* I would find myself playing *fortissimo* in sections that I would intuitively have played *piano* simply because the sound department has taken over the mixing and balancing of the performance as they would in a studio situation and I have no choice but to trust them.

Grant notes that there is precedent as early as 1939 for the fracturing of cast and orchestra when composer and conductor Oscar Levant (1906–1972) conducted a small band of musicians in a studio six floors above the stage; in the performance of *The American Way* music was piped into the theatre and cued by means of a series of red, white or blue flashing lights (2004: 192). With sound and amplification already present in cinema by this time, it was likely that a single microphone was placed over the orchestra and transmitted a mono signal to speakers that were strategically placed onstage and in the auditorium (Malherbe, 2014). Without the luxury of video cameras, Levant conducted a show that he was never able to see! The cast was unable to see him conduct either but followed the music as they heard it. Sophisticated technology now provides for contact between music director and musicians, as well as music director and actors, yet removes all direct eye contact. It echoes all too well a world in which people communicate via phone, tablet or other electronic communication device, through social media, Skype and FaceTime, always able to connect, but less and less face to face.

I offer a scenario of conducting musicals in the future: working on the assumption that time delays inherent in current video and audio streaming can be overcome, it is entirely conceivable that the band or orchestra for a musical could be displaced by not just spaces within the same building, but by cities and even countries, and the music director could be conducting from another continent in the comfort of his own home. It would seem that the technology to support such displacement is fast becoming a reality. On 2 March 2014 the Academy Awards were presented and broadcast from the Dolby Theatre on the corner of Hollywood Boulevard and Highland Avenue in Los Angeles. The music director and the orchestra were located in a studio in the Capitol Records Building – nine city blocks away. Consider the possibility of an advance in technology that has one virtual music director conducting more than one production of the same musical simultaneously. All connected…yet completely disconnected.

FINALE

“Where is my storybook ending?” (‘The Scarlet Pimpernel’)

Musical theatre composers over the last century have been both schooled and unschooled. In rare instances, the composers have written their own orchestrations; the notion of composers arranging, vocal arranging, dance arranging and/or conducting their own work is practically unheard of. The arranger, orchestrator and music director might be three different people or be one and the same person. Delineations and designations are as varied as musicals themselves. In spite of these statements, the score of a musical still affords the composer the most exposure, credit and recognition. The rationale behind this research was to contribute to the body of musical theatre literature by exploring the fundamental constitutive musical practices that transform a composer’s work into a performance; I examined the results of my research in the context of two overarching phases: the Creative and the Recreative – in the light of practices that are far less visible and unrecognised, and hitherto have been largely under-documented.

In my conclusion to Act I, the Creative phase, I addressed the research topic in terms of the practices of arranging and orchestration, evaluating my own creative work in this regard; calling attention to the music director as a creative force. The term pop/rock satisfies the description of all musicals where the idiom is American popular music in which rhythmic constructs and grooves – played by instrumentation of electric guitars, electronic keyboards, electric bass, drums – and amplification, are the constant and predominant forces. In pop/rock scores, despite its limitations, staff notation provides a representation of arrangements and orchestrations, and becomes an instructive roadmap for interpretation, execution and performance by the participants – actors/singers and musicians. In pop/rock scores the notation on the page is likely to be less detail specific and lean more towards stylistic and idiomatic instruction.

Philosopher Stephen Davies points out that “the act of transforming of the notes-as-written into the notes-as-sound involves the performer’s bringing more to the work than is (or could be) recorded in the score; so the faithful presentation of the score in performance involves the *creative* participation of the performer” (2005: 56). The facilitation of this creative act of participation in a musical is guided by the music director as conductor.

In Act II, the Recreative phase, I examined the music director as a recreative force by exposing particular strata that form the bedrock of this multi-layered practice. Recreativity in this setting refers to the acts of recreating a creative vision in its entirety, reproducing that vision in the routine of nightly performance, and ensuring that the standard and quality of every performance aspires to that vision. Through this research my intention has been to demystify this largely misunderstood and under-estimated practice and shed light on it by emphasising aspects of the practice that extend beyond the visible act of conducting.

I draw a final conclusion that between the composer’s work and the eventual performance of the work, lies a nexus of forces that determines the creative vision for the realisation of that work in performance. Collaboration, revision, creativity, recreativity, communication, education, experience, instinct and mentorship are among the many contributing factors to that nexus. But the overriding engine that propels the nexus remains… storytelling.

“Today we need music to tell our most important stories because words quite often lie in our culture, and the more skilful the lies become, the harder it is to recognize them. But music can’t lie; you always know what it’s saying, even without words” (Miller, 2007: 238).

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The reference and research material for this dissertation comprises a bibliography, personal interviews, select discography and filmography, and scores.

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