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A discussion into the careers of James Houlik and Andy Scott with regards to identifying the vital steps needed to establish a performance career as a specialist classical tenor saxophonist

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Honours Dissertation

A discussion into the careers of James Houlik and Andy Scott with regards to identifying the vital steps needed to establish a performance career as a specialist classical tenor saxophonist.

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Abstract

This paper will discuss the careers of two iconic saxophonists - James Houlik (USA) and Andy Scott (UK) - and how they have established performance careers in the classical tenor saxophone arena. Both of these saxophonists appeared to have contributed immensely to the classical tenor saxophone repertoire and pedagogy - possibly more than any other in their field - as well as enhancing its profile as a specialist instrument.

Due to the relatively small number of virtuosic classical performers on the tenor saxophone¹, I felt it was important to gain an insight into the important steps that both Houlik and Scott have taken in establishing their performing careers.

Following the responses to a series of interviews with Houlik and Scott, coupled with the writer's own experiences and observations, it is the aim of this paper to identify potential career paths available to modern day classical tenor saxophonists.

It is further hoped that this research will motivate and assist in the removal of obstacles that may arise for the modern day classical tenor saxophonist when trying to establish their own career.

Using the information provided by Houlik and Scott, this dissertation aims to:

- suggest the idea that the classical tenor saxophonist is able to establish a specialised career path,
- identify vital steps to establishing a career as a specialist tenor saxophonists, and
- encourage future performers, composers and pedagogues to accept and contribute to the future development of the classical tenor saxophone.

¹ Wally Horwood, *Adolphe Sax 1814 - 1894 His Life and Legacy* (Bramley: Bramley Books, 1979), 167.

Declaration

I certify that this thesis does not, to the best of my knowledge and belief:

- (i) Incorporate without acknowledgement any material previously submitted for a degree or diploma in any institution of higher education;
- (ii) Contain any material previously published or written by another person except where due reference is made in the text; or
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First of all I would like to thank both James Houlik and Andy Scott for being so encouraging and enthusiastic about my honours dissertation. Without their support this project would not have been possible. I am truly inspired by both of these brilliant musicians and I look forward to embarking on my own specialised career as a tenor saxophonist.

I would also like to thank my supervisor and mentor Dr. Matthew Styles who has gone above and beyond the expected. I can whole-heartedly say I would not be where I am today without your support and encouragement over the past four years. Thanks again and I look forward to seeing you on the other side of professional life.

Lastly I would like to thank my family Marilyn, Emma, Matthew, Justin and boyfriend Alex who have been very supportive of my studies over the past four years. They have been particularly encouraging over the past six months and I am very lucky to have such a supportive family.

My dissertation is further dedicated to my late father Wayne Royer who was a truly inspirational individual.

Table of Contents

Abstract	i
Declaration	ii
Acknowledgements	iii
Chapter 1	
Introduction	1
<i>Need for Study</i>	2
<i>Background</i>	3
Chapter 2	
James Houlik	6
<i>Early Musical Life</i>	6
<i>Developing Extra-musical Skills</i>	7
<i>Career Development</i>	9
<i>Vital Steps in Houlik’s Performing Career</i>	11
Chapter 3	
Andy Scott	12
<i>Early Musical Life</i>	13
<i>Developing Extra-Musical Skills</i>	13
<i>Career Development</i>	16
<i>Vital Steps in Scott’s Performing Career</i>	19
Chapter 4	
Key points to establishing a performing career as seen through the careers of Houlik and Scott	20
James Houlik	20
<i>Mastery of Instrument</i>	20
<i>Commissioning and Collaborating</i>	20
<i>Being Unique</i>	21
<i>Recordings, Reviews and Marketing</i>	22
<i>Being Open Minded</i>	23
Andy Scott	24
<i>Collaborating and Commissioning of Composers</i>	24
<i>Performing in Ensemble Situations</i>	25
<i>Participating in Music Competitions</i>	26
<i>Passion</i>	26
<i>Recording and Marketing</i>	26

<i>Versatility</i>	27
<i>Creativity</i>	28
Chapter 5	
Conclusion	30
<i>Career Establishment</i>	30
<i>Similarities</i>	31
<i>Commissioning and Collaborating</i>	31
<i>Being Unique, Creative and Versatile</i>	32
<i>Marketing Mentality, Promotional Material and a Pro-active Attitude</i>	32
<i>Final Remarks</i>	33
Appendix A	
Transcribed Interview Between James Houlik and the Author	34
Appendix B	
Transcribed Interview Between Andy Scott and the Author	48
Bibliography	68

Chapter 1: Introduction

Successful classical tenor saxophone specialists are somewhat of a rarity in the established saxophone scene.²

In the journal article entitled *The Emergence of the Tenor Saxophone* (1973), James Houlik notes that the use of the tenor saxophone in entertainment music has played a large role in creating a negative image for the tenor saxophone.³ He further comments that,

No musical instrument has acquired a more unfortunate image than that of the tenor saxophone in terms of classical music.⁴

With the context of jazz, the tenor saxophone has gained unprecedented popularity. Numerous performers have achieved widespread fame through their stylized performances on the instrument. [However,] those who brought about the popularity of the tenor were responsible for a sort of typecasting that has thwarted the instruments progress toward a significant role in art music.⁵

Additionally Houlik observes that jazz musicians saw the musical, expressive and technical potential of the tenor much in advance of those who held more "...serious musical hopes for the saxophone family".⁶

One of the first of those holding such 'serious' hopes was French alto saxophonist Marcel Mule (1901 – 2001).⁷

Mule was one of the first and arguably one of the most significant figures in the development of the classical saxophone repertoire, pedagogy and in helping the saxophone become a recognised specialist instrument in the twentieth century.⁸ As will be further discussed in later chapters, even though

² Unknown, "Classical Saxophonists - James Houlik," Saxquest Inc., <http://www.saxquest.com/linksList.asp?LinkCatUID=7>, (accessed May 3, 2011).

³ James Houlik, "The Emergence of the Tenor Saxophone," *The School Musician Director and Teacher* (1973): 16.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ David J. Gibson, "Marcel Mule." *Saxophone Journal* 26, no. 5 (2002): 9.

⁸ In 1942 Mule was appointed the Professor of Saxophone at the Paris Conservatoire, which was seventy-two years after the previous professor, Adolphe Sax (the inventor of the saxophone), whose position was discontinued because of financial constraints. Mule influenced a great deal of classical saxophonists in the twentieth century through his various method books, teaching philosophies, arrangements and complex études. Such was his impact on other performers and composers, that hundreds of compositions for saxophone were dedicated to him. So great were Mule's achievements in advancing the knowledge in all areas of performing, teaching and composing for classical saxophone, that he was made a *Knight of the Legion of Honour* in 1958, the highest distinction that can be awarded to a French citizen (sourced from Michael Segell's *The Devil's Horn* p 251, see bibliography for further details). For greater insight into Mule's career see *The Cambridge Companion to the Saxophone* ed. Richard Ingham.

Mule championed the saxophone, he was, however, disapproving of the idea of having a specialised career path on the tenor saxophone in classical music.

Need for Study

Due to the unfortunate history of the classical tenor saxophone as a result of its apparent neglect in Western art music, there seems to be a need for this study to rectify this apparent bias by giving insight into the careers of two musicians, James Houlik (USA) and Andy Scott (UK), who have been successful specialising on the instrument. Alongside this, to the best of the writer's knowledge, there is no existing thesis of its kind. Further, it seems as if there has been little detailed published discussions focusing on the career of Scott, and only one dissertation written about Houlik's career, *James Houlik: Life of a Tenor Saxophone Specialist* by Scott Sandberg (2010), which appears to mainly focus on Houlik's commissioned repertoire and teaching methods.

Houlik himself has written articles in *The Saxophone Journal* with regards to the tenor saxophone, but they are generally not specific to his career. With such a limited amount of material available on Houlik's performing career, this dissertation aims to help bridge that gap; and bring to light how Houlik established his career as a tenor saxophone specialist through interviews conducted by the Author.

With respect to Scott's career, the majority of the existing information is found predominantly on various web pages that contain brief biographical overviews of his professional life, but which don't focus specifically on his career as a tenor saxophonist. One such published interview, which featured in the *Clarinet and Saxophone Magazine* in 2007,⁹ discusses Scott's introduction to music and his education that progressed into learning the saxophone. The interview then goes on to mention the *Apollo Saxophone Quartet*, with the focus being on the commissioning of works and compositions that Scott has contributed.

⁹ John Robert Brown, "Andy Scott." *Clarinet and Saxophone Magazine*, <http://www.john-robert-brown.com/andy-scott.htm> (accessed May 6, 2011).

Houlik and Scott not only provide two examples of successful performing tenor saxophonists, but also a contrast in approaches. One is primarily a soloist (Houlik) and the other a composer and ensemble player, but both have done an immeasurable amount for the instrument.

Background

The tenor saxophone was once on equal terms with the other saxophones when it was first developed by Adolphe Sax (1814 – 1894) in 1846.¹⁰ However, the saxophone as an instrument seemed somewhat forgotten by Western classical music on many occasions and really only started to gain a modicum of notoriety sixty years after its development.¹¹ It is not surprising that there was a lack of appreciation for the saxophone during its first sixty years, given that players of a sufficient standard were not readily available.¹²

This led to an impasse: composers no longer wrote parts for saxophone because they were not certain to get their works played on the instrument of their choice; players, on the other hand, stopped learning the saxophone because there were no longer any parts to play.¹³

Alongside the shortage in players, Sax struggled to create a good reputation with the other manufacturers.¹⁴ Due to this negativity, Sax spent much of his life defending himself and the saxophone, when time might have been better used in the promotion and production of his inventions.¹⁵

In the 1920's, the saxophone began to gain suitable recognition through the careers of Marcel Mule and German born Sigurd Rascher (1907 – 2001).¹⁶ Rascher, like Mule, became a world-renowned performer on the alto saxophone.¹⁷ Together they led the way to beginning a new era in the history of the saxophone, having hundreds of works dedicated and commissioned for

¹⁰ Samuel Wilson Fagaly, "A Pedagogical, Descriptive Catalog of Recommended Literature at the College Level for the Tenor Saxophone" (PhD diss., University of Northern Colorado, 1998), 2.

¹¹ Stephen Trier, "The Saxophone in the Orchestra," in *The Cambridge Companion to the Saxophone*, ed. Richard Ingham. (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 102 – 103.

¹² *Ibid.*, 102.

¹³ *Ibid.*

¹⁴ Due to the competitive nature of the industry, those who were present in the field became extremely jealous and protective in guarding their products as their wares had now become outdated by Sax's new invention.

¹⁵ Trier, "The Saxophone in the Orchestra" in *The Cambridge Companion*, 102.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 102-104.

¹⁷ Due to the limitations of this paper, for Further information in regards to Sigurd Rascher's career please refer to Richard Ingham's *The Cambridge Companion to the Saxophone*.

them, and heralding technical advancements for the alto saxophone. With this rise in popularity, the other members of the saxophone family were almost forgotten. The ever increasing gap between the number of works written for alto saxophone and the other saxophones, meant that if one were to pursue a career on one of the other saxophone voices, (prior to 1970 in the case of the tenor saxophone),¹⁸ they might have to spend half of their journey sourcing music to perform.¹⁹

As time went on, composers began to give only important roles to the soprano or alto saxophone as they were seen as the 'superior' voices. Lee Patrick makes the point in a journal article entitled *Musically Acceptable Saxophonists* (1994) taken from *The Saxophone Journal*, that symphonic wind band composers would not deliberately score an important solo passage for the tenor saxophone,²⁰ "...because the tenor saxophonist is the least capable player in the saxophone section along with the baritone saxophonist".²¹ Taking this idea further, it is therefore feasible to reason that a tenor saxophonist may be seen as someone lacking in technical facility and musical prowess, which might predetermine their failure in developing the musical poise they need to become an effective soloist and chamber musician.²²

Perhaps as a consequence of these negative opinions of the tenor saxophone, few musicians seemed to have attempted a specialised career on the instrument. Whether the reasons for this were because of the size of repertoire or perhaps because there was no one to aspire to, we are thankful for James Houlik and Andy Scott who have done an immeasurable amount for the instruments' repertoire, pedagogy and raising its profile as a specialist instrument.

¹⁸ From the complete list of works mentioned in *James Houlik: Life of a Tenor Saxophone Specialist* by Scott Sandberg, there was forty-one works commissioned by James Houlik between 1965 and 1980. Out of these forty-one works twelve were commissioned in the nineteen sixties and twenty-nine were commissioned in the nineteen seventies. As Houlik is one of the first to actively commission works for the instrument it could be concluded that those who may have under took a specialised career on the tenor saxophone prior to these works being written, may have struggled with sourcing repertoire to perform.

¹⁹ With particular reference to the small number of tenor saxophone works, In Houlik's opinion, one of the most common reasons given for exclusion of the tenor saxophone in Western art music is the lack of an adequate repertoire for the instrument. In an article entitled *James Houlik, Career Management - Managing a Performing Career* (2000), Greg Banaszak comments that there is, however, a basic flaw in the logic of this argument. As mentioned previously, the saxophone was dismissed because of the lack of adequately proficient musicians and thus composers were not in the habit of creating music that would not be performed. Consequently, given the lack of active performers on the tenor saxophone, there was little hope for repertoire development.

²⁰ Lee Patrick, "Musically Acceptable Saxophonists," *Saxophone Journal* 18, no. 4 (1994): 43.

²¹ *Ibid.*

²² *Ibid.*, 44.

Although there are other saxophonists who have performed and recorded classical tenor saxophone repertoire, these performers may not be regarded as tenor saxophone specialists. An example of this can be found in Steve Mauk (b. 1949) - better known as a soprano saxophone specialist²³ who recorded *Tenor Excursions* (1995), a set of recordings dedicated to the tenor saxophone repertoire.²⁴

Niels Bijl (b. 1971), who seems best known for his performances on alto saxophone in the prestigious saxophone ensemble, *The Aurelia Saxophone Quartet*,²⁵ provides another such example in his set of recordings entitled *Chant du Saxophone Tenor* (2006).

Whilst Mauk and Bijl are respected musicians and are skilful tenor saxophonists, they have established their careers with the assistance of the other saxophone voices. Therefore, by concentrating on Houlik's and Scott's careers I anticipate a more focused and valuable insight into establishing a career as a tenor saxophone specialist.

²³ Steve Mauk, "Dr. Steven Mauk - Resume." Ithaca College, <http://www.ithaca.edu/faculty/mauk/bio.html> (accessed Jun. 5, 2011).

²⁴ Steve Mauk has held the position as professor of saxophone at Ithaca College since 1975 and is the soprano saxophonist and founding member of the Empire Saxophone Quartet. <http://faculty.ithaca.edu/mauk/> (accessed June 7, 2011).

²⁵ Unknown, "Aurelia Saxophone Quartet - Members." Aurelia Saxophone Quartet, <http://www.aureliasaxophonequartet.com/index.php?hl=1> (accessed Jun 6, 2011).

Chapter 2: James Houlik

American tenor saxophonist James Houlik is considered the 'father of classical tenor saxophone'.²⁶ Houlik's career has helped change the perception of the tenor saxophone; from being an instrument suited only for jazz,²⁷ to becoming one befitting the rigours of Western classical music.

His pioneering efforts on behalf of the tenor saxophone have resulted in the composition of more than eighty new concert works for the instrument, and important performances around the world.²⁸

Not since the legendary contributions of Sigurd Rascher and Marcel Mule has one individual had such an impact on the saxophone repertoire.²⁹

Early Musical Life

Houlik (b. 1942) was born in Bay Shore, New York and began his musical journey at the Islip School in New York. He began studies on the clarinet in the fifth grade - not his first choice of instrument – and it was not until grade seven that he was finally granted permission to begin playing the tenor saxophone.³⁰

His choice to play the tenor saxophone was partly influenced by his uncle, Fred Zegel, with whom Houlik later had regular lessons, and even on occasion joined in performance.³¹ With the change from clarinet to tenor saxophone Houlik recalls,

...There was a great deal of progress...The tenor sax was the voice I heard, not the alto but the tenor and I never looked back.³²

Fortunately for Houlik, his band director at the time, Harvey Egan, saw the potential in his drive and ability and wasn't disheartened by the limited

²⁶ Greg Banaszak and James Houlik, "Career Management - Managing a Performing Career." *Saxophone Journal* vol. 24, no. 6 (2000): 28.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ James Houlik, "Biography - James Houlik." James Houlik, http://www.jameshoulik.net/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=2&Itemid=2 (accessed May 6, 2011).

²⁹ James Houlik, *Observations, Insights & Suggestions - James Houlik Masterclass* (Massachusetts: Dorn Publications Inc., 1998).

³⁰ Houlik started learning on a Selmer *Balanced Action* tenor saxophone, for which he had proudly saved.

³¹ Scott David Sandberg, "James Houlik: Life of a Tenor Saxophone Specialist" (PhD essay, Graduate College - The University of Iowa, 2010), 5.

³² James Houlik, Interview by author, 24 August 2011, (Perth, Western Australia), Digital recording.

repertoire for the instrument. Egan was very encouraging and helped Houlik arrange pieces originally written for other instruments to enable him to enter solo and ensemble competitions,³³ and as a result, throughout his schooling at Islip, was never discouraged because of his instrument choice. Houlik mentions that he was "...sort of innocent...", and that "...he didn't know that he was already swimming in the wrong direction".³⁴ By this Houlik meant that he wasn't aware of some of the difficulties that were ahead of him, in terms of repertoire, appreciation of the instrument and ultimately finding a permanent job.

Developing Extra-musical Skills

Prior to college, Houlik had developed some of the necessary skills required to manage a performing career. When he was about sixteen year old he began his own dance band, *Jimmy Houlik and the Nomads*, which opened up many performance opportunities.³⁵ Through this ensemble Houlik learnt various marketing skills, as he would spend much of his time advertising for the group and securing jobs by mailing his own personalised flyers to various members of the community.³⁶ This proactive approach has stayed with Houlik to this day and has been an important part of his successful performing career. A further discussion into Houlik's use of marketing will be covered in chapter four.

As a result of Houlik's early performing exposure, he developed a love for performing music, which made it an easy choice when deciding what to study at college. He was accepted at The University of New York in Fredonia in 1960, where he undertook a music education degree with the "...aspiration of becoming a high school band director".³⁷ The acceptance into college took Houlik by surprise as he comments that "...it was amazing for me because in fact any other schools wouldn't even look at me because I played the tenor".³⁸ Houlik's first opinion of college was that perhaps he "...might have wandered

³³ James Houlik, Interview by author.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Sandberg, "James Houlik: Life of a Tenor Saxophone Specialist," 5.

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Ibid., 7.

³⁸ James Houlik, Interview by author.

off the path a little bit...” as he was stuck in a “...sea of alto’s [with] no music to play”.^{39 40}

Houlik further recalls that his first college teacher, who was a clarinettist and alto saxophonist, was very welcoming and already had a student who was majoring on tenor saxophone, which meant for a promising start to Houlik’s college years.

A change in teacher in his second year to William Willett (1920 – 2011) lead towards one of the more significant events for Houlik, as Willett was friends with saxophone extraordinaire Sigurd Rascher.⁴¹

The first time Houlik met Rascher, Willett encouraged Rascher to hear Houlik perform. So without any hesitations Houlik performed for Rascher and recalls, “...he was perfectly approving of the choice of the tenor [saxophone]...” and told him not to change anything and to “...just stick with it”.⁴² These words were very encouraging for Houlik and convinced him to persevere with the tenor saxophone.⁴³

When Houlik was considering graduate school, he wrote to Marcel Mule hoping to study at the Paris Conservatoire.⁴⁴ Mule replied stating he would only accommodate Houlik if he played the alto saxophone.⁴⁵ For this reason, Houlik did not go to Paris, but instead went to the University of Illinois where interestingly, he played the alto saxophone. Even though he couldn’t find a graduate school that would allow him to play tenor saxophone,⁴⁶ Houlik commented that this “...was a good thing, even though I was forced [to play the alto saxophone]”.⁴⁷ This meant that Houlik learnt much of the serious alto literature in a condensed period of time and noted:

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ As will be discussed in later chapters, as a result of having ‘no music to play’, the importance of Houlik commissioning new music is highlighted.

⁴¹ Sandberg, "James Houlik: Life of a Tenor Saxophone Specialist," 9.

⁴² James Houlik, Interview by author.

⁴³ Along with being very encouraging of Houlik’s choice of instrument, Rascher also had a great impact on his musicality. During the summer of Houlik’s college years he maintained regular lessons with Rascher. Through these lessons Houlik “learnt the importance of viewing a piece as a whole, putting the music into words, and making intentional choices throughout the piece.” “Rascher was an intellectual, sophisticated individual who believed that music was a thoughtful activity and who put his focus on the music, not just the technique.” Scott Sandberg, *James Houlik: Life of a Tenor Saxophone Specialist*, 13–14.

⁴⁴ James Houlik, Interview by author.

⁴⁵ Banaszak and Houlik, "Career Management - Managing a Performing Career," 29.

⁴⁶ James Houlik, Interview by author.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

It was good for me because for a terrible while I [found] myself teaching the alto [saxophone] and I at least had a handle on the literature and I had the horn in my mouth and I understood how it behaved somewhat differently to the tenor [saxophone].⁴⁸

As will be further discussed in chapter four, this versatility is somewhat essential in opening up opportunities for job possibilities and although Houlik seems to have not performed on the alto saxophone since his college days, he is still very encouraging of young performers being versatile to avoid limiting any possible opportunities.

Career Development

Following his graduation from the University of Illinois in 1965, Houlik began studying a Doctorate of Musical Arts degree with Cecil Leeson (1902 – 1989) at Ball State University. Houlik was disappointed with his experience after one year, however, and decided to leave the university to begin looking for employment.⁴⁹

Houlik's first position was teaching saxophone at East Carolina University in 1966, where he was the first full time saxophone teacher.⁵⁰ Houlik commented that this was,

...a minor miracle because in most cases were I to have walked in with a tenor [saxophone], I would have been told, you need to audition on alto [saxophone].⁵¹

Houlik was very thankful for receiving this job as he remarks, "...I ought to [have] looked back on this day and spent a day being grateful for this event".⁵² When Houlik commenced his tutoring at East Carolina he immediately put together promotional materials and began to sell recitals. This enabled him to simultaneously embark on establishing teaching and performance careers.

⁴⁸ James Houlik, Interview by author.

⁴⁹ Sandberg, "James Houlik: Life of a Tenor Saxophone Specialist," 13.

⁵⁰ Ibid., 16.

⁵¹ James Houlik, Interview by author.

⁵² Ibid.

I have always judged myself first as a musician...and that's how I want my students to see me and how I want what ever public there is for me to see me, that I am a living musician.⁵³

I can remember as if it was yesterday when I would sit up late into the night because without email and all the wonderful things we have today, I had to send out one letter after the next, and then follow up on the phone and so forth, but I began to find that I could be successful and indeed the greater world did not miss why I was playing the tenor [saxophone], they really wanted to know if I was going to offer an interesting recital...I always accepted things as if it was supposed to be, I didn't question the fact that folks were not worried about the tenor [saxophone]...⁵⁴

Those who were 'worried about the tenor' were Houlik's colleagues; it was his fellow saxophonists and other musicians who saw the tenor saxophone as an unworthy specialist instrument.

I'm talking here about search committees where there's a saxophone job open and the chairmen of winds found it difficult to imagine that a tenor saxophonist would know anything about music, or know anything about teaching the other saxophone voices.⁵⁵

Despite the negative views of Houlik's choice of instrument, he has been a very successful teacher and performer. Since holding a position at East Carolina University, he has taught at The North Carolina School of the Arts, Boston University, Duke University and Wake Forest University.⁵⁶ To further demonstrate his success, Houlik is currently teaching at Duquesne University where he has been the Professor of Saxophone and Chair of Woodwinds since 1996.⁵⁷

Whilst teaching at North Carolina, Houlik began organising a class in career development, and has continued teaching this lecture at Duquesne University.⁵⁸ This career development course gives a great insight into why Houlik has been so successful in his field and covers many of the vital steps that helped Houlik establish his own performance career.

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ James Houlik, Interview by author.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ Sandberg, "James Houlik: Life of a Tenor Saxophone Specialist," 17-18.

⁵⁷ Ibid., 24.

⁵⁸ James Houlik, Interview by author.

Vital Steps in Houlik's Performing Career

Taken from the interview with the author and other sources, the following steps helped solidify Houlik's successful performance career. These points will be further elaborated in chapter four discussing the importance of each step.

- Mastering his instrument through maintaining a constant practice regime,
- collaborating with composers and commissioning new works,
- always thinking of ways to be unique,
- being pro-active with marketing and self promotion through materials such as recordings and newspaper reviews, and
- being open minded.

Houlik has always been an active promoter for the tenor saxophone and by taking the above steps he has established a very fulfilling performance career.

Chapter 3: Andy Scott

Recently, English tenor saxophonist and composer Andy Scott has dedicated his career to furthering the body of repertoire available to the tenor saxophone.⁵⁹

In 2003, Scott formed the World Tenor Saxophone Consortium; an association whose main purpose was to commission new works for the tenor saxophone. At the completion of a new work, all members of the consortium would give simultaneous performances of the new piece around the world.⁶⁰

Along with the consortium, since 2006, Scott has dedicated himself to commissioning and documenting new music for the tenor saxophone.⁶¹ In the same year Scott released the CD *'My Mountain Top'*, (named after one of Scott's popular compositions). This was the first recorded result of Scott's tenor saxophone dedicational journey.⁶² Scott has written more than eight compositions specifically for tenor saxophone including such works as, *My Mountain Top (2001)*, *Zebra Crossing (2003)*, *MHP (2008)* and *Deep Blue (2011)*. Scott's specialist tenor saxophone journey started in 1985⁶³ with the formation of the internationally renowned⁶⁴ *Apollo Saxophone Quartet (ASQ)*.⁶⁵ The ASQ have dedicated their time to commissioning, performing and recording new music for the saxophone, having contributed over one hundred new compositions to the saxophone repertoire, many of which have become standard repertoire for the genre.⁶⁶

As a result of Scott playing tenor saxophone in the ASQ he has been aware of the shortage of new music for the instrument (in a contemporary classical context).⁶⁷

⁵⁹ Unknown, "Andy Scott." Andy Scott, <http://www.andyscott.org.uk/performer.htm> (accessed November 1, 2011).

⁶⁰ Unknown, "International Saxophone Committee - Andy Scott." International Saxophone Committee, <http://www.saxophonecommittee.com/members/andy-scott> (accessed May 6, 2011).

⁶¹ Andy Scott, "Full Biography - Andy Scott." Andy Scott, <http://www.andyscott.org.uk/presspack.htm> (accessed May 6, 2011).

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ Many critics have given the Apollo Saxophone Quartet great reviews. For example the *Sunday Express* mentions in regards to a performance given by the ASQ, "Glorious music...superbly performed by the Apollo Saxophone Quartet"

⁶⁵ Unknown, "Full Biography - Andy Scott."

⁶⁶ Unknown, "Andy Scott - Saxophone Course Tutor." Creative Vacances, <http://www.creativevacances.com/Tutor-Andy.asp> (accessed May 27, 2011).

⁶⁷ Unknown, "Full Biography - Andy Scott."

Early Musical Life

Andy Scott (b. 1966) was born in Bournemouth, United Kingdom and came from a very musical family.⁶⁸ In 1971, Scott attended Canford Heath Primary School in Poole, and when he was around eight years old he began to learn the cello and piano. Scott notes that, "...It just happened to be that my parents sorted out that I learnt those instruments to start off with".⁶⁹ When Scott began secondary school at Poole Grammar in 1977 he recalls, "...I had a change of [cello] teacher...and that seemed a natural point to move to a different instrument".⁷⁰ This time round Scott's parents gave him permission to choose his next instrument and so he chose the saxophone.⁷¹

In an interview with John Brown published in the *Clarinet and Saxophone Magazine* (June 2007) Scott mentions his school Poole Grammar had a very strong jazz music program. He further commented that the head of music Bob Hayden-Gilbert (b. 1946) was a "...real big-band fan..." so the main focus was on big band playing, as opposed to orchestral or wind band playing.⁷² Scott's saxophone teacher at Poole Grammar was Bill Brown,⁷³ who was a baritone saxophonist.⁷⁴ Scott remarks that he was very fortunate to have Brown and Hayden-Gilbert as teachers for he was exposed to a lot of big band playing.⁷⁵

Developing Extra-Musical Skills

He was encouraged greatly by Brown who on occasion would take him along to his gigs, and on one instance got Scott on stage to play a few numbers on his alto saxophone.⁷⁶ Brown's interest in Scott's playing inspired Scott to start groups of his own, and in turn led to him arranging and transcribing music for the ensembles to play.

⁶⁸ Both Scott's parents had an extensive knowledge of music.

⁶⁹ Andy Scott, Interview by author, 9 September 2011, (Perth, Western Australia), Digital recording.

⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷¹ Brown, "Andy Scott."

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ The birth date of Bill Brown is unknown.

⁷⁴ Brown, "Andy Scott."

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ Ibid.

I would transcribe pieces that I liked, so I was sort of creating things at this age with it just happening, and not really thinking about it too much...⁷⁷

From an early age (around fifteen and sixteen years old) Scott was organising bands together and finding work for the different groups, he reflects that "...this mentality has stayed with me".⁷⁸ Being pro-active with his performing and composing from such an early age gave Scott a solid grounding for establishing a successful career in music.

Scott began playing the tenor saxophone when he was studying at The Royal Northern College of Music (RNCM) primarily due to his assigned ensemble (now the ASQ) needing a tenor saxophonist.⁷⁹ Prior to college he mainly played alto and soprano saxophones, but he also studied the bassoon⁸⁰ with the principle bassoonist from the *Bournemouth Symphony*, Eric Butt.⁸¹ When Scott auditioned for the RNCM in 1985 he played both the saxophone and the bassoon and he mentioned, "... I think that was what helped to secure [me] a place".⁸²

Saxophone had only recently become a first study instrument when Scott began college, which seemed to also be the case throughout the UK.⁸³ "It was[n't until the] early 1980's where you could go to music college and study saxophone first study".⁸⁴ As a result of this, Scott faced little discrimination because of his instrument choice since an awareness of the instrument had already begun to be established.⁸⁵ Fortunately for Scott, 1985 was also the first year to ever have four saxophonists studying at the RNCM. Two were clarinet players who were also very good saxophone players. Scott recalls, "...they shoved us in a room on Friday afternoon, starting from our first week, and that became *The Apollo Saxophone Quartet (ASQ)*".⁸⁶ It is through this

⁷⁷ Andy Scott, Interview by author.

⁷⁸ Brown, "Andy Scott."

⁷⁹ In an interview with the author Scott recalls "it was just luck, we naturally went to the instruments at the beginning of that rehearsal...I'd never played tenor before, but I played tenor and we stuck on those instruments ever since."

⁸⁰ Scott began playing the bassoon after he had discontinued with both the cello and piano as his parent's thought it would be good for him "...to take up another instrument besides the saxophone". Very quickly Scott received his grade eight for bassoon after only eighteen months of tuition. Brown, "Andy Scott."

⁸¹ Brown, "Andy Scott."

⁸² Ibid.

⁸³ Andy Scott, Interview by author.

⁸⁴ Ibid.

⁸⁵ In an interview with the author Scott accounts "there was less discrimination because...in the early eighties with the saxophone being introduced to music colleges as a first study instrument, that probably helped enormously."

⁸⁶ Andy Scott, Interview by author.

ensemble that Scott's successful career as a tenor saxophonist has been solidified.

The original members of the ASQ were Tim Redpath (soprano saxophone), Rob Buckland (alto saxophone), Andy Scott (tenor saxophone) and Jon Rebbeck (baritone saxophone).⁸⁷ For their duration at the RNCM (1985 – 1989) all four members learnt from Neville Duckworth, who was mainly a clarinettist, but was also a proficient saxophonist, and a member of *The English Saxophone Quartet*, who were "...one of the few quartets at the time".⁸⁸

Duckworth was the first to introduce saxophone teaching into the RNCM and Scott speaks very highly of his drive for the instrument. Scott however, does recall "...he was mainly a clarinet player..." and was "...very busy with all his clarinet playing...". This meant that the ASQ were largely self-directed, with somewhat of a 'collective' mentality; each helping out the other and becoming a powerful influence in Scott's career.

Learning from the other guys in the quartet...if you can't do something that you want to be able to do musically or on the sax technically, you just compare notes and always [help] each other out.⁸⁹

When Scott was in his third year at the RNCM, the college agreed to pay for all four members of the ASQ to begin having additional lessons with renowned saxophonist John Harle (b. 1956).⁹⁰

John was fantastic, because at that point in time he was sort of leading the way in the UK with the classical saxophone and he had really strong and clear concise thoughts about how to play the saxophone in terms of the breathing and embouchure and everything...this gave us loads to think about both individually and as an ensemble [ASQ].⁹¹

Harle was Scott's main influence for wanting to pursue a performing career, however, he further commented that,

⁸⁷ Brown, "Andy Scott."

⁸⁸ Andy Scott, Interview by author.

⁸⁹ Ibid.

⁹⁰ "John Harle is one of the world's leading saxophonists, and the most significant performer of the saxophone in the concert hall today. With over half a million record sales within the classical genre, he has popularised the classical saxophone, bringing it to the forefront of the public's imagination, whilst inspiring a wealth of new works for the instrument from composers of international recognition."

<http://www.johnharle.com/saxbiography.php> (accessed November 10, 2011).

⁹¹ Andy Scott, Interview by author.

John was the main influence, but everything generated from the *Apollo Quartet*, you know meeting composers who were influences, meeting other players who were influences, a lot of it developed via the *Apollo*.⁹²

Career Development

A big break for Scott's career came via the ASQ in 1989 when they won the *Tokyo International Music Competition*. Scott mentions that the first year they performed in the competition they were,

knocked out, but we sussed out what the deal was, and what it was like, and what the judges were looking for, especially in terms of repertoire.⁹³

The following year the ASQ won their division, which awarded them an agent in Japan, leading to a tour there every eighteen months, which occurred eight times.⁹⁴ Along with the agent in Japan, (which helped obtain international stature) the ASQ have been very active with the commissioning of new works which, as will be further discussed in chapter four, were foundational for the establishment of their performing career.

Throughout Scott's time at the RNCM he was always encouraged to be versatile, to "...think beyond college..." and to "...think about being a freelance musician...always keep[ing] your options open".⁹⁵ This meant that Scott didn't only play the tenor saxophone - although it was his main instrument from college onwards - he still maintained his alto playing and even picked up a bit of baritone experience along the way.⁹⁶ This enabled Scott to "...pick up gigs on different instruments..." and although Scott never learnt the clarinet or the flute (an accepted practice for jazz and commercial musicians known as 'doubling') he spoke very fondly of having the skills to play these instruments along with the saxophone.⁹⁷ Along with being versatile in his choice of saxophone voice, Scott was also stylistically versatile. The RNCM not only specialised in classical saxophone training, but also offered

⁹² Andy Scott, Interview by author.

⁹³ Ibid.

⁹⁴ Ibid.

⁹⁵ Ibid.

⁹⁶ In an interview with the author Scott mentioned he played the baritone saxophone in the college big band for a couple of years and loved it.

⁹⁷ Andy Scott, Interview by author.

various improvisation classes and opportunities to play in big bands, which enabled Scott to undertake a stylistically varied career.

During his time at the RNCM Scott was also beginning to compose and arrange music to perform which opened another career possibility. As will be discussed further in chapter four this versatility can be seen as a vital step towards Scott's established career.

At the completion of Scott's Graduate of The Royal Northern College of Music degree (1989), he received special recognition through the ASQ, being awarded a Performance Platform of the RNCM, the first of such distinction awarded to an ensemble.⁹⁸

After graduation Scott was quick to take up performance and composition opportunities.⁹⁹

I was always interested in composing...when I left college I had a jazz quintet [*Purple Circle*] that I wrote all the charts for, and gradually other musicians started contacting me and saying "I would really like it if you could write some pieces for our group," and so people started commissioning [me]...¹⁰⁰

Currently Scott is finding great success with his composing,¹⁰¹ as he mentions "...the writing commissions are operating maybe a year or two years ahead, which gives me some kind of financial security".¹⁰² This has enabled Scott to have a career focused on performance, rather than taking on any full time teaching positions.

It is further important to note that Scott's successful performing career was centred around ensemble situations as opposed to solo performing.

⁹⁸ Andy Scott, Interview by author.

⁹⁹ Scott further mentioned, "John Harle made an extra year of study possible with him at the Guildhall School of Music [as a] postgraduate study". However, Scott elaborated that "there was no piece of paper [degree] at the end of it", as they missed all academic lessons and just showed up for lessons with Harle. Scott along with the other members of the ASQ secured funding for this education from places such as *The Countess of Munster Musical Trust*.

¹⁰⁰ Andy Scott, Interview by author.

¹⁰¹ Andy Scott pushes the boundaries for his saxophone compositions and is always seeking new ways of doing things, and takes a more contemporary approach to his music. Andy Scott uses extended techniques and various contemporary techniques throughout his music, and cleverly intertwines them into the music, showing the versatility of the instrument but in a very accessible way. Notable of Scott's saxophone compositions is his double saxophone concerto, *Dark Rain*, which received a British Composer Award in 2006. All of Scott's compositions are published by Astute Music Ltd and are available from www.astute-music.com.

¹⁰² Andy Scott, Interview by author.

I've never really wanted to be a soloist, I much prefer working with other musicians in an ensemble situation, and also the way it panned out, we were so busy from eighteen years old with the *Apollo*...for twenty years it was full on with that quartet and it was absolutely brilliant, so I had no sort of inclination, I don't think I'm the right personality any way to be a soloist...it's not something I've ever really pushed.¹⁰³

Among Scott's accomplishments with the *ASQ*,¹⁰⁴ he has successfully performed with other ensembles including, *Purple Circle*, a five piece jazz group, *SaxAssault*, a twelve-item saxophone ensemble, *DB5 + Laura*, a five piece ensemble with a vocalist, and a duo with percussionist Dave Hassell entitled *The Dave Hassell-Andy Scott Duo*, all of which Scott has founded and established.

It can be seen, therefore, that Scott has achieved the bulk of his performance success within an ensemble setting, a pathway that stands in contrast to the career of James Houlik, which is a point that will be mentioned further in the final chapter.

¹⁰³ Andy Scott, Interview by author.

¹⁰⁴ Such accomplishments include, winning several competitions such as the *Royal Overseas League*, *The Tunnell Trust*, *Erasmus Concours*, and the previously mentioned *Tokyo International Chamber Music Competition*. Further the *ASQ* successfully auditioned for *Live Music Now! (LMN)*, an educational music association, which provided the ensemble with many educational concerts, workshops and performances. As the age limit for *LMN* was 27, Scott commented "we had a lot of work from them [*LMN*], often in conjunction with a Festival or music club concert."

Vital Steps in Scott's Performing Career

Taken from the interview with the author and other sources, the following steps helped solidify Scott's successful performance career.

- Collaborating with composers and commissioning new works via the ASQ,
- performing in ensemble situations,
- participating in music competitions,
- being passionate about his field as a performer and a composer,
- being pro-active with marketing and self promotion through materials such as recordings,
- being stylistically versatile, and
- being creative.

These points will be further elaborated in chapter four discussing the importance of each section.

Chapter 4: Key points to establishing a performing career as seen through the careers of Houlik and Scott

The following chapter discusses the vital steps taken by both Houlik and Scott to ensure their continued successes, giving insight to their views on the aforementioned points.

James Houlik

Mastery of Instrument

Houlik decided that the most important step in furthering his career was to first obtain a complete mastery of his chosen instrument. In order to achieve this goal he was always "...practicing around the clock".¹⁰⁵ Even to the present day Houlik is always practising to maintain solid technique and proficiency.

Later on this morning when I am done talking to you, I will stop and I will practise the saxophone, so I don't stop playing...it's a necessary for importance.¹⁰⁶

...I work at it every day. I am not just referring to practising and maintaining my abilities as a saxophonist, but contacting composers, artists, directors, and music festivals.¹⁰⁷

Commissioning and Collaborating

The next crucial step (and perhaps the most important) for Houlik's career was collaborating with composers, resulting in the commissioning of over eighty works for the tenor saxophone.

It is such a great experience working with living composers...I encourage every serious musician to meet and work with composers, on both a local and national level.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁵ James Houlik, Interview by author.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid.

¹⁰⁷ Banaszak and Houlik, "Career Management - Managing a Performing Career," 29.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid.

When Houlik commissions new music for the tenor saxophone he is careful to ask only people who really understand the instrument,

The spirit of the composer must be someone who wants to participate in our great adventure. I am interested in all kinds of music, but frankly have leaned toward that which is more conservative than contemporary, and that's because we are trying to bang our way into the market.¹⁰⁹

James Houlik is out to perform and to please his audience; His music choice is very accessible, which has further secured his interest with the general public.

Houlik could be seen as a pioneer in his field, therefore these commissions were essential in enabling him to pursue any kind of solo career, as there was not enough substantial repertoire for him to perform.¹¹⁰ Houlik further mentioned that if he was to perform a recital, and needed to "...get some attention from the press..." he would "...play a world premiere".¹¹¹

...You might be noted in the newspaper and get some recognition...and I will get lots of recognition because I'm doing something new, you just can't be doing old stuff.¹¹²

Being Unique

As the above quote reaffirms, the result of commissioning new works for the instrument was the establishment of an exciting and unique element in Houlik's performances, which helped him maintain a strong audience following. Despite the fact that Houlik had confirmed his uniqueness by being the first tenor saxophonist to specialise in the Western classical music scene, he was also always creating new ways to appeal to wider society and consequently further his own career: "...if we have new ways to use our voice, there will be work".¹¹³ One example of this was Houlik's idea of a themed concert series.

¹⁰⁹ Thomas Erdmann, "James Houlik," *Saxophone Journal* 35, no. 6 (2011): 30.

¹¹⁰ Due to the limitations of this paper I will not be discussing in any great detail the works that have been commissioned by James Houlik, however please refer to Scott Sandberg's paper entitled *James Houlik: Life of a Tenor Saxophone Specialist* for an in depth insight to these works.

¹¹¹ James Houlik, Interview by author.

¹¹² Ibid.

¹¹³ Ibid.

Two years ago I got a crazy idea...I went to *Amazon.com* and bought every book that I could find, that had the word saxophone in it...I took quotes from fiction, from poetry that involved the saxophone and I put a recital on...each piece [began] by me reciting something from serious literature that included a reference to the saxophone...¹¹⁴

By having such ideas for each recital, Houlik was able to sell out his concert series. At these concerts Houlik also had the opportunity to sell recordings and to invite media whom would publish their reviews in many major newspapers.

Recordings, Reviews and Marketing

Houlik found that by continuing to record, these became useful for his career when he was looking for performance opportunities. He comments that,

I find many of the modern conductors will not take the time to study a score, they want to hear the music, they want to determine whether they feel it's safe to offer that to their audiences, and it also gives them the chance to hear my playing...that's been very useful in getting orchestral gigs.¹¹⁵

If you're trying to sell recitals, also a recording helps. First of all it gives you a certain professional cache, it's assumed that if you have these recordings that you must be the real deal, at the same time it allows people to hear your playing and to decide whether or not it's appropriate for their situation.¹¹⁶

Along with recordings, a number of good reviews from some of Houlik's bigger performances such as Carnegie Hall, Washington DC Philips Collection and Brooklyn Museum of Art have proven to be very useful for his career. Such reviews have featured in various newspapers including *The New York Press*, *The Times*, *The Daily News* and *The Village Voice*. These reviews have led to many performance opportunities and have helped Houlik to establish his name around the USA; which further led to international recognition. When reminiscing on a performance, which took place at Lincoln Centre at Alice Tully Hall on the 100th anniversary of Adolphe Sax's death, Houlik remarks that,

¹¹⁴ James Houlik, Interview by author.

¹¹⁵ Ibid.

¹¹⁶ Ibid.

I got a big story nation wide as a result of the associated press...but I have learned over these experiences how much it has to do with marketing and we need to divide ourselves sort of into two pieces, one is this commercial side and one is the artistic side and we should try to keep them as separate as possible...¹¹⁷

By making use of the media, Houlik has been able to build an awareness of his performing career, which has led to international recognition. Without positive media coverage, it is difficult to gain the awareness required to succeed as a performer. By having a good reputation you have a better chance of obtaining performance opportunities and to generate the income required sustaining a performance career.

Being Open Minded

Lastly, Houlik has always approached every situation with an open mind, never limiting himself by not trying new things or becoming too specialised with style.

A musician should be very open minded to any style of music...my philosophy is that we have only one type of music that is enduring music, which crosses over all stylistic labels. It is good to be open minded when programming repertoire.¹¹⁸

I played in big bands and I sat next to some very fine players and I was inspired by their tone...by playing with these jazz players I was inspired to seek another voice, another way of seeing classical music...so my goal has been to take this instrument to where it hasn't been, and to play it in a way that would appeal to classical musicians as well as jazz musicians.¹¹⁹

Saxophonists have to think about not getting too narrow...if we become too specialised we're going to pay a price for it.¹²⁰

By making use of these steps, which Houlik identified and utilised, he was able to establish a successful career on the tenor saxophone, which has, as a result, done an endless amount for the instruments profile as a specialist instrument.

¹¹⁷ James Houlik, Interview by author.

¹¹⁸ Banaszak and Houlik, "Career Management - Managing a Performing Career," 28.

¹¹⁹ James Houlik, Interview by author.

¹²⁰ Ibid.

Andy Scott

Like Houlik, Scott has established a successful performing career as a tenor saxophone specialist. It is through the following vital steps that Scott has garnered such international acclaim.

Collaborating and Commissioning of Composers

Akin to Houlik's career, Scott faced the same issue of having little or no repertoire to perform. Scott's case differed, however, in that he found the repertoire lacking for the ensemble context.

There was no repertoire ... for the *Apollo*, there was [some repertoire], but after a couple of years at music college we'd been through loads of the French repertoire, light sort of arrangements and all of that stuff, and then we wanted to do new things.¹²¹

As a result, Scott (along with his fellow ASQ members) has commissioned over one hundred pieces for saxophone quartet.

...having built our own repertoire, and having it played by other quartets around the world...pieces like the Torke and Richard Rodney-Bennett and Nyman, loads of groups play that which is brilliant.¹²²

These commissions were essential for Scott, as not only did they provide the ASQ with music to perform, they also were opportunistic for developing collaborations with the composers.

A lot of these composers we would collaborate with, so they'd come to rehearsals...one example...was Louis Andriessen, a Dutch composer, so to be in a rehearsal situation with him, and he's explaining about his music and your going through the score and you're playing bits and he's explaining what he wants, you know we've done that in rehearsals with people like Michael Nyman, Michael Torke...and what you see first handed, so you get an insight into how they write, how they're thinking musically, so that collaborative process, with other players as well as composers has been fascinating.¹²³

Additionally, Scott's success with his own compositions has greatly enhanced the profile of the tenor saxophone. By being an active composer of saxophone

¹²¹ Andy Scott, Interview by author.

¹²² Ibid.

¹²³ Ibid.

repertoire, Scott has not only furthered the saxophone's repertoire as a whole, he also, as a tenor saxophone specialist, has been aware of the shortage in repertoire for the instrument. Consequently this drove him to focus specifically on furthering the tenor saxophone's repertoire. Furthermore, Scott's success as a composer has drawn attention to the potential of the tenor saxophone and by having tenor saxophone specific projects; Scott has also opened up a window for performance opportunities for him to showcase such repertoire. By creating tenor specific compositions Scott is breaking down the barriers for up and coming tenor saxophonists.

In much the same way that Houlik's commissions have added enormously to his solo career, the creation of new music via Scott personally or through the ASQ has enabled him to fulfil a successful performing career.

Performing in Ensemble Situations

Performing with such ensembles as the ASQ can be seen as a vital step for Scott's career, as it has been a fundamental centre of Scott's performing establishment. Given Scott's aversion to solo performing, without the ASQ, it could be construed that Scott may not have entrenched such a successful performing career.

There was a period where we [ASQ] just did six hours a day rehearsing for a couple of years and so much [of the] time I was playing the tenor [saxophone], but couldn't focus on the solo side...because the quartet was on a roll.¹²⁴

As a result of Scott performing in the ASQ, he has gained an insight into the important steps required to maintain a successful ensemble career. It is these experiences that have enabled Scott to apply such expertise to alternate ensemble situations. Since performing with the ASQ, Scott has formed and established other ensembles, which are currently still performing. Such ensembles include, *SaxAssault*, *DB5 + Laura*, and *The Dave Hassell-Andy Scott Duo*.

By making a career out of performing in these ensembles, Scott has followed an alternative career path to Houlik, which demonstrates another possible career path to future tenor saxophonists.

¹²⁴ Andy Scott, Interview by author.

Participating in Music Competitions

Whilst performing in the ASQ Scott participated in various music competitions. As mentioned earlier, the ASQ won an overseas music competition, which resulted in an agent for eight years in Japan. This led to many performance opportunities and guaranteed them an international tour to Japan every eighteen months. By having international recognition, the ASQ became more high profile, which resulted in international acclaim.

Passion

In Scott's opinion, the drive and passion of a musician is paramount for success. It can't be contrived, as being a freelance musician "...is total hard slog all the time..."¹²⁵ If you aren't passionate about performing you won't see the value behind the hard work. By being passionate,

[y]ou work all hours, but you see it's worth because you just have all these incredible experiences meeting all the different people that you meet, the different countries that you go to, experiencing different styles of music, its all worth it, but you just got to be passionate.¹²⁶

You continue like lots of musicians just working really hard, making more contacts, practising and just gradually it slowly snowballs.¹²⁷

For Scott this passion created constant motivation, which allowed him to persevere with, and pursue such a specialised career path.

Recording and Marketing

Scott stresses the importance of recordings in the career of a musician and recognises their importance.

I am realising the importance of recordings, more so now than I did when I was younger...recordings are great in terms of having something available to give to promoters or venues and so on. And I think that's the main purpose for recording...now with the composing what I'm looking at is, well composing and performing, it's just more important to get it recorded to let people know that

¹²⁵ Andy Scott, Interview by author.

¹²⁶ Ibid.

¹²⁷ Ibid.

these pieces and groups exist...especially with the composing...but people are more likely if they hear a piece to think, oh I'd like to buy the music or I'd like to play this, rather than looking at the score or something...so it's just a question now of getting as much stuff on CD but trying to arrange it so that the recordings, it sounds obvious but, so they are as good as possible, the actual recording quality, but more importantly the musicians.¹²⁸

Recordings are a valuable form of advertising, giving promoters and venues a taste of your music style and compositions. Further, it is also an essential support to performances and helps to maintain an audience following which is kept up to date with current works.

I think a lot of the time people need to be educated...if you say to people oh yeah I play classical tenor saxophone, you know 99% of people who you talk to, musicians or non-musicians won't know what that means, they won't be able to hear it in their head or know what that really means so it's sort of making people aware that the tenor saxophone for example can be a classical instrument and these are the pieces that are out there, you know which is why recordings are important...It's making as many people aware of what your doing as possible...¹²⁹

Versatility

One of the ideals Scott sees as important is the need to be versatile. The more instruments that you can play proficiently, the more versatile you are to the wider orchestral community. He himself plays tenor, alto, soprano and baritone saxophones but notes:

[t]here are lots of people I know who do that doubling and tripling, and great, they've got another form of income, playing shows, I mean I've had to put down a lot of orchestral work the last five – six years because I don't play clarinet...the saxophone part is all double clarinet, so it would have been handy, but at this stage with the composing it doesn't really matter.¹³⁰

Along with having versatility in instrument choice, a big contributor to Scott's success was his ability to be stylistically versatile. This resulted in more performance opportunities, so Scott could perform with an orchestra one day and the other with a big band or small jazz combo.

¹²⁸ Andy Scott, Interview by author.

¹²⁹ Ibid.

¹³⁰ Ibid.

Creativity

Whilst referring to the RNCM, Scott notes that,

Student's there become very creative, they take the initiative, they start groups, they sort of make things happen...it's so good to see that happen because it means that when they leave college it's like with me teaching there now, it's a nice balance between getting technique sorted and discussing music, but seeing who are the creative students and who will make things happen, you know the phone isn't going to ring and there will be someone booking you for gigs all the time, you just have to make things happen and there's a good atmosphere at the RNCM in the saxophone department. There is a very creative thing, coupled with a hard working ethic as well, people realise you have to have the technique and just put the hours in.¹³¹

Scott's advice is to "...keep a level of creativity..." and to come up with new ideas, projects and collaborations.

It's keeping promoters...essentially if you're looking to get solo gigs, and you're revisiting promoters and venues every couple of years, it's being able to pester them all the time and send them publicity, send them recordings, but creating...they love it if you've got a name for a project...or if you've got a really good publicity shot that you can use on the front of their festival brochure or something. So I think it's looking ahead maybe every eighteen months - two years and potentially coming up with different themed projects that are all based around the tenor sax, the solo tenor sax idea...it's an unexplored area.¹³²

Scott has recently made the choice to teach only one day a month at the RNCM, which has allowed him space to be creative with his performing and composing. Creativity is paramount in Scott's eyes and further mentions this is the reason why he's never taken on too much teaching, although he is very understanding of those who do undertake teaching, as he comments "...it gives financial security and for some people teaching is their passion and focus of energy".¹³³

¹³¹ Andy Scott, Interview by author.

¹³² Ibid.

¹³³ Ibid.

Similarly to Houlik, by making use of these steps, which Scott recognised and utilised, he was able to maintain and establish a successful career on the tenor saxophone, in an ensemble setting. As a result, Scott has done an immense amount for the classical tenor saxophone repertoire and pedagogy, as well as enhancing its profile as a specialist instrument.

Chapter 5: Conclusion

It is impossible to quantify the contribution that Houlik and Scott have made to the tenor saxophone in Western classical music. Through their varied career paths they have both established successful performing careers, which has resulted in creating a further awareness for the tenor saxophone's specialist career path, which in previous history seemed somewhat unrecognised.

Career Establishment

As Houlik and Scott were, and still remain, pioneers in their chosen fields as tenor saxophone specialists, an insight into their career establishment can be seen as a useful tool to emerging tenor saxophonists.

Throughout the establishment of both Houlik's and Scott's careers, more so Houlik than Scott, a lack of appreciation for the tenor saxophone in Western classical music can be observed. This absence of value can be seen through the seeming condescension from early saxophone performers such as Mule – who viewed the alto saxophone as the 'superior' instrument – and the lack of repertoire for the instrument, which further resulted in the lack of established performers on the instrument. However, it is through the careers of James Houlik and Andy Scott that a greater appreciation for the instrument has developed.

Scott faced less discrimination regarding instrument choice compared to Houlik and further didn't struggle finding professional work. Even though when he started his university degree, the saxophone was relatively new as a 'first-study' instrument; there was an existing awareness for the instrument.

One common struggle that was evident between both careers was the lack of repertoire not only for solo tenor saxophone but also for saxophone quartet, a pathway that solidified Scott's career.

Similarities

There have been common trends between the two careers of Houlik and Scott. Namely they have both stressed the importance of the following elements:

- commissioning and collaborating with composers,
- being unique, creative and versatile, and
- having a marketing mentality, promotional materials such as recordings, and having a pro-active attitude.¹³⁴

Commissioning and Collaborating

Houlik and Scott both have high reputations as saxophonists and a strong driving force behind this reputation is in no small way due to the many compositions they have commissioned, albeit solo or saxophone quartet repertoire. Along with the hundreds of works Scott has commissioned for saxophone via the ASQ, he has also been a great contributor to the tenor saxophone repertoire as an individual composer.

A further conclusion can be stated with regards to the commissioning of new music throughout both Houlik's and Scott's career which is, if they both hadn't commissioned new music for their specialist career paths, they would have had no music to perform in the first place. Houlik has solely commissioned over eighty works for the tenor saxophone and it is through this dedication that the instrument has begun to be recognised as a specialist instrument.

To this day the alto saxophone repertoire is well over double the size of the tenor saxophone's body of music. It would seem, therefore, that there is a clear message from both Houlik and Scott, which is: to commission new music for the instrument, and for more than one reason. Not only do these

¹³⁴ As well as the listed similarities, interestingly a likeness can be seen in the early stages of both Houlik's and Scott's career. When they were both new to the idea of performing they were both encouraged by their teachers to watch them perform and both were brought up on stage to perform with their mentors. A further conclusion from this instance resulted in both Houlik and Scott establishing their own performance groups. By performing with their mentors it seemed to have enticed their desire to perform on stage, and thus began their long and fulfilled music careers.

compositions extend the possible repertoire available for tenor saxophone, (helping it to compete with the substantial size of the alto saxophone's repertoire size), it also serves as a great marketing tool. The idea of presenting new music to an audience seems to capture their interest. The presentation of a world premiere performance seems to enthuse and energise audiences, inspiring larger numbers of concert-goers. Further, by being the commissioner and performer of the project, you are also likely to be sourced to perform it at many venues, opening up further performance opportunities.

Being Unique, Creative and Versatile

Both Houlik and Scott have combined commissioning new music and being unique to be 'one and the same'. The idea of presenting new projects creates a new way to appeal to the wider community, and consequently plays an important part in the establishment of a performance career. This creativity has allowed both Houlik and Scott to expand their audience following by branching out into new markets. Along with being creative and unique, Houlik and Scott have had to be open-minded to other genres of music and other saxophone voices to ensure they didn't limit any possible opportunities. Although Houlik and Scott are best known for their performances on the tenor saxophone, at some point throughout their careers, they have had to utilise the other saxophone voices. Along with being versatile in choice of instrument, Houlik and Scott both mention the importance of being stylistically versatile, for "...if you become too specialised there will be consequences".¹³⁵

Marketing Mentality, Promotional Material and a Pro-active Attitude

A further importance was placed on pro-activeness, marketing and having promotional materials such as recordings. To elaborate, alongside numerous international performances, Houlik and Scott have also established their names internationally through the use of recordings, and various international performances, which have been made possible through the pro-active use of

¹³⁵ James Houlik, Interview by author.

successful marketing skills. When Houlik was establishing his career, communication was limited to letters, phone calls and in person conversation. Emails and social media sites such as *Twitter*, *Facebook* and *YouTube* are new additions to communication since, and have all been utilised by Scott. Having access to these extra communication methods makes creating an audience following easier, and can be exercised to aid in the establishment of international stature.

By amalgamating traditional methods of marketing, such as radio, phone calls and in person interviews, with modern methods, such as the multi-media methods mentioned above, the pathways to attaining international notoriety are easily available. What can be taken away from Scott and Houlik's experiences is that in order to make use of these pathways, passion, persistence, pro-activity and dedication are required. The opportunities are available for those willing to put in the hard work and embrace them.

Final Remarks

By presenting two tenor saxophonists with contrasting careers, it is hoped that this paper will foster a wider appreciation for the versatility of the instrument, as well as creating a broader insight into the possibilities of performance opportunities of the tenor saxophone.

It was very evident throughout the conducted interviews that both Houlik and Scott have achieved such success through complete dedication and hard work; even though they may have felt they were 'paddling against the tide'.

Appendix A

The Following is a transcript from the interview with James Houlik via digital recording, which took place on the 24th August 2011, Perth Western Australia.

Due to a fault in the recording device part of this interview is omitted from the transcript. The questions this affects are the first three of the interview.

Erin Royer: When you were establishing yourself as a tenor saxophone specialist, were there any significant events or people that helped or influenced you?

James Houlik: ...The tenor sax was the voice that I heard, not the alto but the tenor and I never looked back. My band director was a lovely fellow and a good musician and he helped me to arrange pieces because there was very little literature, nearly none. So we would steal music from other instruments for me to be able to go to solo and ensemble competitions, and I always did very well and I have to say that good people who heard me play in those competitions always gave me good grades, and never said anything particularly discouraging about my choice of instrument. So I was sort of innocent, I didn't know that I was already swimming in the wrong direction. And I was quite happy with it, I was just happy as I could be.

When it was time to go to college I then discovered that I might have wandered off the path a little bit, and indeed, I was accepted at a state teachers college in New York at Fredonia and there the teacher, Ray ([who] was a clarinetist who played alto saxophone as well), was very welcoming and he already had someone who was majoring on tenor [saxophone] and I would have to say that it was amazing for me because in fact, any other schools wouldn't even look at me because I played the tenor [saxophone].

And then maybe one of the most important things and this kind of spills into other questions perhaps, but one day I was at college and Sigurd Rascher came wandering down the hall, and my teacher said "well you need to hear this kid play". So I played for him and he said "well you should join me at the Eastman School this summer, we're having a workshop..." and he was perfectly approving of the choice of the tenor [saxophone] and he told me "not

to change anything just stick with it.” [As a result] I went to Eastman and I recall quite plainly playing C.P.E Bach unaccompanied flute sonata and he was so approving that you know, either people were fooling me along the way or something wonderful was happening. But, I was never really discouraged, [though] I would have to say when I was deciding to consider graduate school I contacted Marcel Mule to see if I could go to Paris to study and he said that he would be pleased to have me as long as I played the alto [saxophone]. For this I didn’t go to Paris, and at any rate, I actually went to the University of Illinois where I played the alto [saxophone]. I couldn’t find a graduate school that would allow me to play tenor [saxophone], but that was a good thing.

Even though I was forced, I played rather quickly through most of the serious alto [saxophone] literature of that time and it was good for me because for a terrible while I [found] myself teaching the alto [saxophone] and I at least had a handle on the literature. I had the horn in my mouth and I understood how it behaved, somewhat differently than the tenor [saxophone] all though not profoundly different, as you probably know...

[Due to the recording malfunction this answer is incomplete and is in response to a secondary question of:

Royer: Why do you think many of the works written for tenor saxophone are unpublished?]

Houlik: ...In terms of the tonne of pieces that aren’t published, well funny things happen, a very passionate American composer wrote a bunch of music for me but he died and so there is now a group who is trying to get back into this, and recently it’s been made available by having me as a central repository and so forth. I was contacted recently by a publisher, (in I think Sweden), regarding the music of Richard Layne, I think he wrote three or four pieces for me, a little chamber piece, and he wrote a suite with winds... But at any rate that music was not published and now I think at the time it may be...

Royer: What steps do you consider to have been vital for your performing career? [Further exclusion of text due to malfunction]

Houlik: ...My late wife was pregnant with my third child and she considered it might be time to get to work, and so I began looking for work and I was so fortunate as to get a job at [East] Carolina University where I was the first saxophone teacher they'd ever had. And that was a minor miracle Erin because in most cases, were I to have walked in with a tenor [saxophone], I would have been told; I needed to audition on alto [saxophone]. But I auditioned on tenor [saxophone], by then I'd put some music together, I played an audition, and they hired me. I ought [to have] looked back on that day and spent a day being grateful for that event, but they hired me and I continued...

I have to add something...

In the early stages of my career I practised around the clock, in my undergraduate school I knew the morning janitor and I knew the night janitor who closed the school. I was just always at the building playing, some years later my undergraduate school gave me a distinguished alumni award and when I accepted that award I asked them had anyone taken the trouble to check my grades because I didn't do very well, because I was mostly practising; I decided that was the important activity. But at any rate when I got to East Carolina I immediately put together promotional materials and began to sell recitals. I played a handful the first year, I can remember as if it was yesterday when I would sit up late into the night, because without email and all the wonderful things we have today, I had to send out one letter after the next, and then follow up on the phone and so forth. But I began to find that I could be successful and indeed the greater world did not miss why I was playing the tenor, they really wanted to know if I was going to offer an interesting recital, and so that began to happen and I just went ahead. I always accepted things as if it was supposed to be, I didn't question the fact that folks were not worried about the tenor, and I played a recital at my college and it was at East Carolina and the lady on the faculty said to me, "you know you should really play in Washington DC at the Philips Collection", which is a wonderful museum. So I simply sent the letter and offered myself and lo and behold they hired me for their next season and I played a

Washington debut, I mean I was naïve, I had no idea that it was just as important. I was going to play at a beautiful place, and I got a wonderful review in the Washington newspapers and that was another vital step for me.

Royer: Would you say it is as easy to get performance opportunities today by just sending a letter? Would it be different now?

Houlik: I'm not sure it would be that different, I was able to produce some evidence that I'd been active, I'd sent them a potential program and, actually over the years, I've helped a couple of young people get performances at that gallery. It might be a little tougher in all fairness, it might be a little tough, and I will accept that as maybe even a bit of an anomaly, a bit of a fluke, but I got accepted, it was life changing I'll tell you that, but in the time since I continued to play.

I went to New York and I played very low paying concerts in the New York library system but I had a presence in New York, and many of the New York libraries have nice little recital halls and so I would go play in them and eventually with a chamber group that I called *James Houlik and Friends* we were hired to play at the Brooklyn Museum of Art, which turned out to be a rather important thing, once again I was kind of naïve, I didn't really understand it, so part of what I'm saying too is that I just stayed active not always necessarily having a master plan. That performance was broadcasted on New York radio and we got another good review, and at that point I was embolden and encouraged and I went to New York and played a true New York debut recital at Carnegie Hall. And that was a situation where I began to think a little more clearly because first of all I'm spending a lot of money to rent the hall, and public relations stuff, ads in the *New York Times*, and the *Village Voice*, and all those kinds of things, and so that was a huge experience. So part of what I'm saying is each one of those things that has either happened to me serendipitously or with some planning has kind of lead to the next step. I got great reviews at Carnegie Hall from *The New York Press*, *The Times*, *The Daily News* and all the major papers in New York and once again I was emboldened. And so a few years later I played a concert on the 100th anniversary of the death of Adolphe Sax at Lincoln Centre at Alice

Tully Hall, which is a big hall, and that was bodacious of me to think that I was going to get enough people to make that hall look respectable. But you know I hired a New York PR firm and they put together advertising and so forth. I got a big story nation-wide as a result of the associated press story and ran in several hundred papers a photo of me...standing on the stage and thinking about Adolphe sax in a pensive way and all that stuff.

But I have learned over these experiences how much it has to do with marketing and we need to divide ourselves sort of into two pieces; one is this commercial side and one is the artistic side and we should try to keep them as separate as possible. So those are major events, and every time I met a composer, that was a major event, I convinced Robert Ward to write a piece for me...and that piece was very important, it was the first major concerto that has been written for me. And then I ran head on into Russell Peck who was indeed a fellow faculty member at The North Carolina School of The Arts where I had moved, and I convinced him to write a piece and that certainly had been an important piece. I'm going to play it this year again (it might be the 65th time that I'm playing it but that's a lot of time in front of an orchestra!) and to some extent you have to know that I really never stopped working at this, it was constant.

Royer: Do you find it hard to juggle marketing and your creative ideas?

Houlik: No I've just made it a lifestyle. I got an email this morning from Scotland regarding a performance and so I respond, I got another email regarding a performance at the museum at Alabama next month, and I just try to deal with it as it comes. And every now and then if I think of something that I'd like to do, when you called I was on the phone with someone in North Carolina, I'm producing an event to publicise the release of the new recording of music by Sherwood Shaffer who has written, I suppose, maybe twelve pieces or more for the saxophone and I recently did a CD of a handful of those pieces and we're going to have a CD launch party. I own the record label, they've got like this entire group of commercial labels that don't know what they're doing so I now own that label, and so I guess it's kind of a stream of consciousness. Later on this morning when I'm done talking to you, I will

stop and I will practise the saxophone, so I don't stop playing, it's the reason that I do all these other things, it's a necessary for importance's.

Royer: Have you found recordings to also help with your career?

Houlik: Sure, and I have to say this without being too smug, but I find many of the modern conductors will not take the time to study a score, they want to hear the music, they want to determine whether they feel it's safe to offer that to their audiences, and it also gives them the chance to hear my playing. So certainly that's been very useful in getting orchestral gigs. I also have one or two recordings out with band and band gigs are not as lucrative, but they are certainly an important part of a career, and that's where the saxophones are playing and we can't ignore our wind brethren. And so my wind recordings also helped in that respect, you know recordings are an important part of the whole thing and if you're trying to play and sell recitals, also a recording helps. First of all, it gives you a certain professional cache; it's assumed that if you have these recordings that you must be the real deal. At the same time it allows people to hear your playing and to decide whether or not it's appropriate for their situation.

Royer: Throughout your career have you faced any hardships whilst trying to establish yourself?

Houlik: Starvation was an issue, I was talking maybe with my wife last night, I've worked in [] grease, I worked in an automotive water pump factory, I've done those kinds of things. When I was in undergraduate school I was night manager at a motel. I've always been willing to work, and so I really only joke about starvation, I never did lose any weight because I always managed to find food. The only hardship that sort of is a reality, when I began to try to move around the country and perhaps to move up the food chain in terms of the kind of school that I was teaching at, the tenor [saxophone] was an issue. People wanted to hear me play the [Jacques] Ibert, they wanted to be made comfortable by being sure that they were choosing the appropriate saxophone, and so on occasion it wasn't a question of my musicianship, which is the thing that I've always been most interested in cultivating, but indeed the question of the day was, "was I playing the right voice?". And so

on any numbers of occasions I know that I have been quickly taken out of the running for a position, because I was not playing the right voice.

Royer: Would you say that the negative perceptions of the tenor were mostly from composers, audiences or other saxophonists?

Houlik: It was from my colleges, it's the other saxophonists who had the problem, or other narrow musicians. I'm talking here about search committees where there's a saxophone job open and the chairmen of winds found it difficult to imagine that a tenor saxophonist would know anything about music, or know anything about teaching the other saxophone voices. But I would ask the other question? If you hear (if you'll forgive me) some of the French saxophone quartets, the tenor playing is usually the least convincing in the group, and so the alto player didn't know quite what to do with the tenor [saxophonist]. But I think I've produced some rather respectable, if not outstanding, alto players so, but you know that was a hardship, but other than that the hardships were the same ones that all musicians hate, too little work, too many musicians and all those things, which have been, I think over time exacerbated. We're in the middle of a very difficult time. I teach a course in career development here at Duquesne University and this is not a nice time to be encouraging people to go forth and make music because the opportunities are shrinking not expanding. But on the other hand it will challenge us to become more entrepreneurial, it will challenge us to come up with new solutions, I think that maybe we have gotten complacent, and musicians are kind of standing around waiting for a space at the table. We might have to build the table, and that's what I've done, there was nothing near when I walked into the room, and now I have a significant repertoire, and as I grow older it's more important to me that those works, some of them will survive, and that will survive me as my legacy. If it makes any difference at all, I'm a perfectly practical human being and I don't take any of this terribly seriously, I know that I haven't changed the world, I haven't cured a terrible disease, so I'll just have to accept the fact that this is what I'm doing with my life.

Royer: From reading Sandberg's thesis it seems as though you chose the tenor sax because of its association with jazz. Did you initially want to be a jazz saxophonist and if so when did you change your focus to classical?

Houlik: I've always been very eclectic and democratic, I think first of all that the saxophone can be such an outrageously expressive jazz voice; it's just the testimony to Adolphe Sax and his outrageous invention. I played sort of Jazz, maybe I was fourteen or fifteen, and my uncle began to take me out on the dance jobs that he was playing, and I knew my six or seven tunes, and when my tune would come up I'd get a chance to play. But at the same time I was taking weekly lessons and learning serious music (if that's the right word), classical, serious, concert, whatever word it is, but in the music that would be played upon any, and other instruments, and indeed I just went both ways.

I have a certain problem when students come to me and they say well I'm going to be a jazz player because I think often that means they are going to skip the pedagogy and just go on to play the saxophone as a jazz instrument, but badly. Years ago (not so long ago), there was a tuba player in this country by the name of Howard Johnson and he played in the movies, in movie scores, and thus he made a lot of money. But once in a while he moved around with a jazz group and he would play tuba as the bass in the group, and he was being interviewed by someone on the radio, here in Pittsburgh, and this person said "well who do you listen to Howard?" and he said I don't listen to much jazz because I like intonation, and so...but you know it's the truth and while I listen to John Coltrane for probably what would have been hundreds of hours in terms of his recordings, I never got confused for a minute; I was listening to the genius not to the intonation because when he got above high G he was always sharper and sharper.

And so, I studied pedagogically before I knew that's what I was doing, but my teacher made me play it to him, he made me play [with] good time, he also addressed expressiveness in that wonderful way that we do when in the context of classical music. And I've been able to distinguish one from the other and I went out and made a lot of money playing saxophone in saloons, I've played more elks clubs, weddings, country clubs, and bars than I'll ever

be able to remember, and of course that's one of the ways that I dealt with the hardship of being a musician, that you can always sell commercial music a great deal more easily than you can sell classical music. And honestly, I didn't really want to be a jazz player, and I had and still have some great friends in that business. I have students who have gone forth, I have a student in New York who is having a wonderful career as a jazz player, composer, player who records a great deal, I don't know how the hell he stays alive, how he manages to keep it all together, but he does. And so, I see it all as music, it's just a continuum, and if you play the saxophone well then you'll merely have to choose the dialect that makes your heart sing. Your dialect, because I know people who truly go both ways, in fact that was one of the exciting moments in my life, I always said that I wanted to have a saxophone student who remind me of Wynton Marsalis to the extent that he could play classically one day and jazz the next. And indeed he [Houlik's student] won a competition with the *Pittsburgh Symphony* and I went down to the city to hear him play, and he played the Ibert with the *Pittsburgh Symphony*, and then that night he went out and played a jazz job somewhere in town. And I felt particularly proud of my teaching, because here is someone who is living in both worlds. And I think maybe that's one of the things that saxophonists have to think about, not getting too narrow.

When I teach my saxophone retreat in North Carolina over the summer, kids will arrive who are playing only music where the ink is still wet, contemporary music, and frankly it's remarkable what they can do, but often the sounds that they are making are only going to appeal to a handful of people. If we become too specialised we're going to pay a price for it. So at any rate I was motivated by jazz because it was such a great use of the instrument, I had the good fortune of living near New York, and so I would be able to hear great players. I remember being with the great Coleman Hawkins, and hearing him play, and he was on the backside of his career, but he was a brilliant player. I was absolutely fascinated with Cannonball Adderley and I think that his use of the saxophone, because he was university trained, he played in tune, he had a lovely sound, he had admirable vibrato, and so there were things to be learned. I played in big bands and I sat next to some very fine players and I was inspired by the dimension of their tone. Certainly I had Marcel Mule recordings and Rascher recordings, but it all sounded almost too cultivated,

as if they were trying to avoid the ultimate expressivity of the saxophone, and by playing with these jazz players I was inspired to seek another voice, another way of seeing classical music without becoming too precious.

So my goal has been to take this instrument to where it hasn't been, and to play it in a way that it would appeal to classical musicians as well as jazz musicians, and I have an interesting following because it's all of this, but most importantly I play for the great unwashed and they get it! That's what I would like; I'd like to play for audiences that don't have an opinion about the tenor saxophone.

Royer: Given today's environment, and your experience, do you have any pointers on what I should do to establish a career as a tenor saxophone specialist?

Houlik: You know it goes back to what we call marketing, packaging, and we could also call cooperative activity with other musicians. I have a student who had graduated from Duquesne last year, he has stayed in Pittsburgh, he has a jazz emphasis, but he has a classical sensibility. And he and a couple of friends have put together an ensemble, and it is...(he has explained it to me, and I'll do my best explaining it to you), fundamentally they're telling stories and one of the people speaks and or sings, you might call some of it for lack of a better term Classical Rap. It's a great thing they are doing, it's fun, it's unique, very unique and among other things, some of the things they do are abstractly art, and by abstract I mean it doesn't have any other purpose but to entertain and to do what art does. But some of the things they are doing also relate to real story telling, and they're trying to take this story telling down to a level where they might be teaching things to children in schools and this student is African American and so the students with whom he could contact and communicate very effectively would be black kids in our schools. And so they're trying to create something, which is art, which also has a direct impact on human beings and to market it that way, and my guess is, if they pull this off, that they will get work, they will do good, and they will get to do their thing.

But that's kind of a stretch, but when you think about it, if we have new ways of packaging, if we have new ways to use our voice there will be work. It's

pretty obvious to me at this point that all of us, and come on I'm institutionalised for heaven sake, I've been working at a university for more than forty years and as a result I've had a cheque, I've had a benefit package, and so I'm not really qualified to talk about going out making it into the world with the tenor saxophone because I've had this great advantage of employment, but at the same time, I have always judged myself, first as a musician, and the real musicians. By that I mean not someone who talks about it, or plays one faculty recital a year, but someone who goes on the road and lives as a musician. Next month I'll be on the road for eight or nine days playing a concert every day, on one of those days two concerts, and I'm no kid, but that's how I judge myself, and that's how I want my students to see me and how I want whatever public there is for me to see me, that I am a living musician. And so I have to keep working up new packages.

Two years ago I got a crazy idea, and in the summertime, I went to *Amazon.com* and bought every book that I could find that had the word saxophone in it. Well I wanted to, and some of the books are wonderful pieces, you know the damn instrument is so sexy, that authors seize it and they use it in their fiction, and it's great because it's a little larger than life you know. There's a book called *Road Island Red*, and it's about a black woman with a PHD from Harvard who wants to play her tenor saxophone on the street. That's what's really exciting, and of course the book is her explaining it to her parents, and all of those things that go on, but I took quotes from fiction, from poetry that involved the saxophone and I put a recital on the road where I could, actually it was probably eight or nine days, each piece was introduced first by me reciting something from serious literature that included a reference to the saxophone. I was able to see those dates, we had some big houses where we played which meant that the sponsors were pleased.

So I think my tip for young saxophonists is to work with composers, certainly if I go into a city and I'm offering [to play] a recital and I want to get some attention from the press, what I need to do is to play a world premiere. So some composer's excited about me playing in Chicago or New York or San Francisco but you might be noted in the newspaper and get some recognition, and you work together, and I will get lots of attention because I'm doing something new, you just can't be doing old stuff. And it's hard to imagine that

the Russell Peck is now old stuff. I played it in 1985, it's still a great piece of music and I'm doing it this year in Colorado, but indeed, I think it's coming up with new packages, new presentations, and having some sensitivity, where is my audience and what makes them tick.

There's an American cellist who has been playing in bars, he's been playing unaccompanied Bach suites in bars and that sounds like such a crazy idea, but he has filled big houses, and I have to tell you Erin, he has gotten a hell of a lot of attention in the press for it. If nothing else, it's keeping his name out there you know. So I think it has to do with putting together interesting combinations, working with other musicians in new and different ways, and I've been up for all of that and it's worked and I can't see any reason why it won't work as long as there are places for us to play.

And here's the kind of thing that I find interesting, I don't know if Australia is getting old, and that I should probably know, this country is full of old people, and they are living together in retirement homes and all kinds of things. But interestingly enough all these retirement homes have little concert halls, and that looks to me to be the next place to play, and to put together music that would make sense to those people and to brighten their day and to get me a place to work. I'm agile, I'm old but agile, and I am really exciting about always finding new places to work, and new projects, and spreading the gospel as it were.

But you know I met with my career class on Monday night for the first time and one of the things I asked them to do was to tell me what it was they hoped to be in five or six years, but then to sit very quietly and ask themselves if they in fact have the personality profile that would allow them to get there. You have to be pretty damn optimistic, you have to be creative beyond playing, and I would never suggest that anyone limit themselves by their perception of themselves but they might have to develop some new skills, and some new courage to do some of the things that they hope to do.

You should know that Andy Scott and I are working together, I've been playing some of his music and he's talking about a concerto for tenor [saxophone] and orchestra and he has talked about me playing the premiere. Andy has really slid pretty heavily into composition at this point, but I love the

music that he writes and so he'll write a concerto and I'll try to treat it like another one of my many vehicles and get on it and ride it around.

Royer: Are you going to be coming to the world sax congress next year in Scotland [2012]?

Houlik: I just heard today from the coordinator of that event and I think there's a chance that I might be playing the Paul Harvey Concertino which I played at the London concerts in maybe 1979, it's a wonderful piece, I've played it maybe a half a dozen times, but it was a wonderful song. Yeah I think that I'm going to end up there, I will be teaching in Italy prior to that and so it will be a pretty easy shot for me to just go to St Andrews from Prussian.

Additional comments:

Houlik: If you pause to think about the recital that I gave with the literary quotes, I'm always trying to find a bridge to bring people in because you watch and think that it's a piece that's going to go over a year either so...

Houlik: I would very much like to end up down under [Australia] and doing some concerts and some classes, and maybe you can point me in the right direction.

Royer: Do you make your mouthpieces yourself (the James Houlik mouthpiece)?

Houlik: No they are made by the Babbitt Company, which make lots and lots of mouthpieces, and you mentioned the Meyer, they make the Meyer in fact. But I designed it and I actually play test all of them and put a little piece of paper in each one telling us what indeed its characteristics are because while we can measure them in a size that they are in a different promised range, they tend to respond a little differently, one from the next, it's just really how all mouthpieces end up unless they're just manufactured without any hand

work. But these all have hand work, so they are made in Indiana, and they arrive here and I play every one of them and categorize them so that people get something that they're hoping for.

Appendix B

The Following is a transcript from the interview with Andy Scott via digital recording, which took place on the 9th September 2011, Perth Western Australia.

Erin Royer: Given that you started your music education on the cello, was there anything, or anyone in particular that drew you to the saxophone? Why the tenor saxophone in particular?

Andy Scott: Yeah when I was about eight or nine years old, my family, (there was a lot of them), were musicians and there was always music around the house. So I think at that age it didn't really matter which instrument I was playing and it just happened to be that my parents sorted out that I learnt those instruments to start off with. But when I got to about eleven, I think eleven years old, I had a change of teacher, I got on really well with the cello teacher, and then she moved or something and I had to have a new teacher and that seemed a natural point to move to a different instrument. And so my parents said, "well you choose the instrument", so, I still don't know why, I just came up with the saxophone, and it just sort of started like that.

From school, so from eleven years to when I went to music college in Manchester, (The Royal Northern College), I always played alto [saxophone], with a little bit of soprano [saxophone]. I'd never played tenor [saxophone], and it was the usual things you know; wind bands, big bands, sax quartets, that sort of stuff, and I'd get little groups together. When I was about fifteen – sixteen, I'd start a sax quartet or start a seven piece jazz band, and I would transcribe pieces that I liked. So I was sort of creating things at that age with it just happening, and not really thinking about it too much, and then it was only in 1985 when I moved to Manchester and went to the Royal Northern, and at that point in time saxophone had only been a first study instrument for maybe three or four years, and that was the case in the whole of the UK, it was only sort of early 1980's where you could go to music college and study saxophone first study. And it was the first time they had four people in the same year at college who played saxophone, two of the guys were clarinet

players, but were very good saxophone players, and so the four of us, they shoved us in a room on Friday afternoons, starting from our first week, and that became the *Apollo Sax Quartet*, us four guys. And it was that thing, you know what it's like with a quartet, like when it's starting off it's just a question of who plays which instrument, and it was just luck, it was just, we naturally sort of went to the instruments at the beginning of that rehearsal, discussed it, and you know I'd never played tenor before, but I played tenor and we stuck on those instruments ever since and I suppose that's how it came about.

Royer: So since you started the tenor in 1985, did you play tenor from then on, or did you stick with alto and soprano as well?

Scott: Well it was mainly tenor actually, but with some alto, some baritone as well, I used to play baritone in the college big band for a couple of years and I loved that, but I think the situation was that we were encouraged to be versatile when we were at music college, thinking beyond college and thinking about being a free-lance musician, everyone at that age or stage was encouraged to be versatile, so keeping your options open. So I could pick up gigs on different instruments, having said that I've never doubled clarinet or flute, I don't know whether you do any of that?

I mean it's good there are lots of people I know who do that doubling and tripling, and great, they've got another form of income, playing shows, I mean I've had to put down a lot of orchestral work the last five – six years because I don't play clarinet, because there's a guy in the UK who's sort of touring with all the major orchestras and the saxophone part is all double clarinet, so it would have been handy, but you know at this stage with the composing it doesn't really matter.

Royer: When you were establishing yourself as a tenor saxophonist, were there any significant events or people that helped or influenced you?

Scott: Yeah, I mean the main thing was actually with the quartet because the teacher we had at the RNCM, you know, it was great...he introduced

saxophone teaching into the Royal Northern but as with all the major UK colleges, that introduction was made by a clarinet player, so you get a clarinet player who was already teaching at the college, who doubled a bit of sax, and they, to give them credit, they introduced the saxophone into the equation so he was very, very busy with all his clarinet playing.

Royer: *Who was that?*

Scott: It was a guy called Neville Duckworth and he used to play in a group called *The English Saxophone Quartet* and they were one of the few quartets at that time who were operating. And he was a lovely guy, he's a great guy, but he was mainly a clarinet player, so what we actually did, the great thing about playing in a sax quartet, was you can just compare notes all the time, you're helping each other out. So it was really, when I was in my twenties, or from eighteen to whenever, well to today really, still just learning from the other guys in the quartet, because you're comparing notes. If you can't do something that you want to be able to do musically or on the sax technically, you just compare notes and you're always helping each other out.

And the one guy that really helped us when we were in our third year at college was John Harle. John was fantastic, because at that point in time he was sort of leading the way in the UK with the classical saxophone and he had really strong and clear concise thoughts about how to play the saxophone in terms of the breathing and embouchure and everything. And he was massively helpful to us, so yeah I guess John was the main influence but everything generated from the *Apollo Quartet*, you know meeting composers who were influences, meeting other players who were influences, a lot of it developed via the Apollo.

Royer: **And were you doing any solo tenor saxophone playing at the time?**

Scott: Occasionally, because I mean it's never really been my mentality to be a soloist, I've never really wanted to be a soloist, I much prefer working with others musicians in an ensemble situation. Also the way it panned out, we

were so busy from eighteen years old with the *Apollo*, we were so busy probably through to, say for about twenty years, the last six or seven years has been a bit quieter for the group, but certainly for twenty years it was full on with that quartet and it was absolutely brilliant. So I had no sort of inclination, I don't think I'm the right personality any way to be a soloist.

You know some times some people are and they just thrive in that situation, but I sort of have to play solo stuff some times and it's okay, it's fine, but it's not something I've ever really pushed.

Royer: What steps do you consider to have been vital for your performing career?

Scott: Yeah again it comes back to the quartet with the playing: because we had this situation where when we were at college, and for about five years afterwards, we'd do the usual thing. So, you'd enter competitions and fortunately we won a number of competitions, which was great. We won, there was a big chamber music competition in Japan and we entered that twice, and the first year we went over there and we got knocked out, but we sussed out what the deal was, and what it was like and what the judges were looking for, especially in terms of repertoire. So we went there the next year and then we won it the next year, and that resulted in an agent or a manager in Japan, which meant that every eighteen months we'd tour Japan and we did that about eight times.

The other thing about the quartet was because it's commissioned over one hundred pieces for sax quartet, it's good yeah, but a lot of these composers we would collaborate with. So they'd come to rehearsals and some really established composers as well, I can think of one example, we didn't commission him, but we played a piece of his called *Facing Death* and that was Louis Andriessen, a Dutch composer, so to be in a rehearsal situation with him, and he's explaining about his music and you're going through the score, and you're playing bits, and he's explaining what he wants, you know we've done that in rehearsals with people like Michael Nyman, Michael Torke, who wrote a great quartet, *July*, Richard Rodney-Bennett's quartet, you know that's fantastic. And what you see first hand, so you get an insight into how

they write, how they're thinking musically, so that collaborative process, with other players as well, you know as well as composers has been fascinating really.

Royer: So would you say that the commissioning of works has been the most important step in your career?

Scott: Yeah definitely because there was no repertoire there really for us, for the Apollo, there was, but after a couple of years at music college we'd been through loads of the French repertoire, light sort of arrangements and all of that stuff, and then we wanted to do new things. And so having built our own repertoire, and having it played by other quartets around the world, which is you know pieces like the Torke and Richard Rodney-Bennett and Nyman, loads of groups play that, which is brilliant.

Royer: Have you found that recordings have helped your career?

Scott: Yeah, I think I am realising the importance of recordings, more so now than I did when I was younger, because I think obviously it depends what stage of your career you're in, but in the early stages, recordings are great in terms of having something available to give to promoters or venues and so on. And I think that's the main purpose for recording, maybe when you are in post music college, or just embarking on a free-lance career, whereas now with the composing what I'm looking at is, well composing and performing, it's just more important to get it recorded to let people know that these pieces and groups exist. Because especially with the composing, I mean people aren't going to, I don't know what you've found, but people are more likely if they hear a piece to think, oh I'd like to buy the music or I'd like to play this, rather than looking at the score or something.

Yeah so it's just a question now of getting as much stuff on CD but trying to arrange it so that the recordings, it sounds obvious but, so they are as good as possible, the actual recording quality, but more importantly the musicians. There's a flute CD of all the music I've written for Flute that came out last week, on a record label called *Nimbus Alliance* and I've got three really, really

good flute players, soloist, top soloists and orchestral musicians playing on that and Craig Ogden on Guitar, Lauren my wife is playing harp on it, and two different pianists, who are all fantastic, and it means you can put it out there and your really confident, you know that's a really good project, and you know I can hopefully get around and spread the word a bit.

Royer: When did you start composing your own works and when did it start getting to the point that you actually wanted to do that?

Scott: It started... going back to that thing when I was fifteen or sixteen and transcribing pieces for bands to play. I didn't do loads of that but just did enough to enable us to do some gigs basically but I was always interested in composing and so when I was at college, music college, there were different groups, like there would be a ten piece Latin American group we used to play in or something, and a couple of us would write charts for it, and when I left college I had a jazz quintet that I wrote all the charts for and gradually other musicians started contacting me and saying I would really like if you could write some pieces for our group and so people started commissioning, probably when I was about twenty-five – twenty-six, and then it's just a gradual you know, its just, you continue like lots of musicians just working really hard, making more contacts, practising and just gradually it slowly snowballs.

Royer: Have you found writing music has further helped propel a performing career?

Scott: Yeah definitely, I mean, it's interesting as well one thing I'm into at the moment, and I have been for the last four or five years, is free improvisation, and believe it or not there's a really strong connection with composition. So I don't want it to be free improvisation where it just sounds as if you are playing anything and it's all squawks and squeaks, and it's not free jazz, which can be a bit clichéd in itself. I sat back and I thought, right, okay, all of these musical influences and styles of music that I play, I wonder if I can bring them into a sort of melting pot, and I think they naturally come out in your sound anyway

after a number of years but, you know, I wouldn't describe myself as a classical saxophone player. I think maybe sort of classically routed in terms of the training that I've had, but I wouldn't call my sound a classical sound, it's a bit brighter than a lot of classical players, it's probably because of the jazz influence and improvising.

But the free improvising what you can do is your being a composer on the spot, so you're thinking of an idea and then your moving onto another idea but while your improvising it you are remembering the first idea so you're creating form and you're creating shape while you're improvising, which is, um, I find it intriguing. It's sort of a real challenge as well, but the composing and the playing for me are just so interlinked.

Royer: When you were at college what was the type of study, was it more jazz or classically based, in terms of the teaching?

Scott: It's more a classical saxophone course really, but everyone's sort of classically trained and you go through all the classical saxophone repertoire and everything, but at the same time there are improvisation classes, there's the big band, and what tends to happen, which I think is a good thing, is that lots of students there become very creative, they take the initiative, they start groups, they sort of make things happen. Which is, you know, again it's an obvious thing to say but it's so good to see that happen because it means that when they leave college, it's like with me teaching there now, it's a nice balance between getting technique sorted and discussing music, but sort of seeing who are the creative students and who will sort of, you know what it's like as a saxophone player, you have to make things happen, you know the phone isn't going to ring and there will be someone booking you for gigs all the time, you just have to make things happen and there's a good atmosphere at the RNCM in the saxophone department. You know there is a very creative thing, coupled with a hard working ethic as well, you know people realise you have to have the technique and just put the hours in.

Royer: I notice you publish a lot of works for saxophone on astute music. Are there any pieces you have either written or commissioned that aren't published?

Scott: Yeah I was looking at that question, I think most of it's published, there are one or two pieces that aren't and the reason they're not published is because I'm not happy with those pieces that I wrote and there are probably three or four maybe from the last ten or fifteen years that I've just thought, I need to revise them, I need to look at them, so in the mean time I don't want them published.

Royer: I was just wondering because when I was asking James Houlik there was a dissertation written on him and out of the eighty works that this dissertation mentions about fifty of them weren't published so I was trying to see if there was any connection coming from a composer.

Scott: Well I mean I can understand why that's the situation because I mean, I went down to London, this is maybe ten years ago, I went down to London and had various meetings with various publishing companies and they would turn around to me and say, yeah we really like your music and we would like to publish your stuff but before we publish originals can you, say for one example, they say can you arrange some *Beatles* tunes for sax quartet, and it's like for fuck sake, there's enough of that stuff around already, but there's loads of that stuff, so I got so fed up with it. What happened was Lauren [Scott's wife] turned around one day and she said I'm going to start a publishing company. She said I'm fed up with this you know, being shunted from door to door, and having to put up with it. They're all run by accountants, lots of the bigger companies and quite rightly the bottom line is they have to survive as a business but having said that, that doesn't help composers who want original works published.

Royer: So Astute Music is your wife's company?

Scott: Yeah she started that, and she has a couple of people who work part time for her, and the thing that's been really good is the exam boards over

here, *The Associated Board* and *Trinity Guild Hall*, they've taken a number of pieces onto their service for sax and clarinet and that has really helped because it means you have got sort of guaranteed sales for some pieces in the catalogue. But yeah you see lots of composers are having to self publish, it's like Graham Fitkin, you look at Graham and Graham has made a deliberate decision, I was talking to him about it, he has made a deliberate decision to self-publish, you know he could be published by one of the bigger companies but he doesn't want to. And all he does is for his orchestral works he has a company that hire out his music and they deal with that but everything else, like all of his saxophone stuff, you go to his website, and then he'll print it up for you and stick it in an envelope. And with the whole thing with the Internet anyway, it's so much easier to start a publishing company and do it yourself these days.

Royer: *It's just been really hard finding solo classical tenor saxophone repertoire, so seeing this list of eighty works and having so many not published is really frustrating.*

Scott: I know, well there is something that has developed over here the last few months, I've been thinking about this for about two or three years and I've wanted to see if I can create an online resource for tenor sax repertoire. And I've got some funding from the Royal Northern College, yeah they have given me what they call a teaching award, and basically it's a bit of money to, there's a guy I used to teach called Matt London, have you met him?

Royer: *Yeah I know Matt.*

Yeah in Thailand [when author met Matt London]...and Matt is going to get a website up and running and we are going to add works for tenor sax to it over the next year and then officially launch it at the World Sax Congress [2012, location St Andrews, Scotland], so we hope to have maybe I don't know two, three, four hundred pieces for tenor sax on there, and we will have sound bites, program notes, duration [and] publisher. So I will probably be picking

your brains about that about any Australian pieces or pieces that you've come across.

Royer: What was your motivation to start up the World Tenor Saxophone Consortium?

Scott: It was the fact that even though I'm not going out and doing loads of solo tenor gigs, I do occasionally, because I play tenor sax in the *Apollo Quartet*, lots of people would send me pieces that had been written for the tenor and I could sort of see, you know obviously I believe passionately about the tenor and about the solo repertoire, and I'll do what I can to help to expand that solo repertoire. And I suddenly thought, I've met all these tenor sax players when I've been travelling with the Apollo, in Japan and all around Europe and in America, and I figured there are all these players who are sort of doing their own thing, who are also passionate about the tenor sax, who are doing their own thing dotted around in different parts of the world, and I thought let's see if we can bring them together, maybe twelve or thirteen of them, and all contribute a certain amount of money and commission someone like Graham Fitkin. And it was hard work, I mean it was hard work getting everybody, everyone was brilliant and you had people like Federico Mondelci and Christoph [Enzel] from Germany was in it, and we tried to premiere the piece on the same night. Which was brilliant, you know, I mean of course it didn't figure out that everyone premiered it but I think there were five or six of us that premiered it around the world on the same night and yeah it was good, but it's been really a question of time that is being able to put together and organise the next, you know I'd love to do something like ask [] it almost needs, in the way that Matt London is taking the lead with the online tenor sax resource, it almost needs someone to take the lead with the consortium, so I could chat to someone, you know and it would be lovely if something else happened at some point.

Royer: Do you have any future aims for the consortium?

Scott: Well not specifically for the consortium, I mean after Thailand, after the World Congress in Thailand, Richard Ingham approached me and said, he said I'd like you to run a tenor saxophone piece at the World Sax Congress in Scotland. So I went up to St Andrews about three weeks ago, it's amazing, it's a beautiful place, it's going to be a great place for the congress to be held. And I was talking to Richard about the focus, the tenor sax focus, seeing if we could have almost a separate room, set up for the week that is the sort of hub for the tenor sax, so you can have a couple of computers there that you can search this online tenor sax resource, you can have people giving sort of impromptu performances there, tenor sax CD's, sheet music etc. And also in fact there is something I wanted to talk to you about, one of the ideas I mentioned to Richard was having during the congress maybe these sort of almost like saxophone celebrity interviews, so we made a list of seven sax players, people like Eugene Rousseau, Jean-Marie Londeix, John Harle, and I thought it would be really good with it being a tenor sax focus to have Jim Houlik as one of the people interviewed, and I was suggesting to Richard that there's a different sort of interviewer for each person that's interviewed, so like John Helliwell, he's another one, he's the sax player from *Super Tramp* and he plays in *SaxAssault*, and I interviewed him at the RNCM sax day a while back, and it went really well, it would be nice to have, you know I'd interview John [Helliwell], Rob Buckland would maybe interview John Harle, and so I was thinking it might be nice if you were up for it, if you interviewed Jim Houlik.

Royer: *Yeah! That would be awesome!*

Scott: Yeah great, and Richard Ingham really likes the idea, I mean everything over the next sort of four or five months for the congress is gradually being slotted into place, and he seems to really like that idea, so if that's okay with you then I'll put you down for that Jim interview, it would be brilliant interviewing Jim because he's just hilarious.

So I think the next, leading up to the congress, I'm very keen to just spend the next sort of nine or ten months or whatever it is, spending a lot of time

focusing on the tenor, so the online resource, I'm writing a new concerto, a tenor sax concerto that will be premiered at the congress, and that's going to take say from January to May to write, and just sort of developing tenor ideas to go with the congress, maybe after the congress that will be the time to sort of look at the consortium again.

Royer: Given the multitude of works you have written for the saxophone, do you regard yourself more as a composer than a performer, or are they one and the same to you?

Scott: It's a good question, they are sort of transiently linked really, and I find it's a constant; you're juggling the two all the time, there might be periods where you get a couple of weeks where you've got a writing deadline and you just have to go for it, and then there might be a couple of weeks after that where you're focusing on your playing. So what I'm trying to do is to get a nice balance, but it's hard.

Royer: So you would say that they are pretty much on equal terms then with your career?

Scott: Yeah I think so and that's how I sort of like it to be, the *Apollo Quartet* next January is, we fixed up a few gigs and a couple of recordings and things, so it'd be nice, that's been on the back burner for four or five years, but that being said, you know we'll see how that goes, and I'm trying to just develop some sort of performing projects and different projects at the moment, possibly another recording, a tenor sax CD as a sort of follow up to the *My Mountain Top* CD.

But things are really busy with the writing, I mean it's like there are deadlines between two and three gigs ahead, so it's a tricky one, I mean when I see students leaving the Royal Northern sometimes some of them take on too much teaching, so they do three or four days a week of teaching and then there's no time to practise and to create ideas, to be creative. And then they're in that teaching route, so one thing I've done is, I mean I hardly do any teaching now, I teach at the RNCM but it's maybe one day a month and then

people come to me for private lessons, you know some people come but like I say once a month from London or something, but it's making space. One thing I've learnt is you can't do everything, you want to do everything, but you can't do everything, some decisions have to be made. So the decision I made was that I was going to back off the teaching.

Royer: Do you ever commission other people, personally?

Scott: Yeah I mean it's mainly been via the Apollo quartet commissions, but yeah, I mean there are people, there are friends of mine who've, you know I've spoken to them about the tenor sax and they've ended up writing pieces, but I mean it's difficult because it's a question of funding as always, which is why it's great Alex [Bradbury] got the Deep Blue commission together, you know it's a constant sort of researching and looking into funding to commission but I'd love to commission a few more tenor sax pieces, I really would.

Royer: Throughout your career have you faced any hardships whilst trying to establish yourself?

Scott: Yeah I mean it is constantly hard work, you know to be a freelance musician it's just total hard slog all the time, which is why, but you see that's fine because if you know, as you know with lots of musicians, if you are passionate about it, and if it's just what you do, then you just do it, and you work all hours, but you see it's worth it because you just have all these incredible experiences, meeting all the different people that you meet, the different countries you can go to, experiencing different styles of music, it's all worth it, but you've just got to be passionate about it.

And I don't think that can be contrived, it's either a passion or it isn't. But this comes back to this whole saxophone thing, I think the people who are freelance saxophonists or saxophonist-composers for a number of years are the ones who are, I think you have to be creative, you know you have to be thinking all the time and have to be creative and make projects happen. It's

what your doing, I mean getting a concerto written and getting repertoire written and pushing the tenor sax thing, that's brilliant.

Royer: Did you ever find choosing the tenor saxophone as your main instrument hard? Were you discriminated against for you choice of instrument?

Scott: I don't think so, I mean obviously in some ways it limits you in terms of gigs and things, in some ways it's more limited simply because there is more alto material out there, and I mean you know if you look at orchestral saxophone playing as well I guess there is probably more alto works programmed from the standard repertoire. And I don't think in terms of discrimination or anything no, I think a lot of the time people need to be educated and I don't mean that to sound patronising but if you say to people, oh yeah I play classical tenor saxophone, 99% of people who you talk to, musicians or non-musicians, won't know what that means, they won't be able to hear it in their head or know what that really means. So it's making people aware that the tenor saxophone for example can be a classical instrument and these are the pieces that are out there, which is why recordings are important, but no not any deliberate discrimination I don't think...I think on my part maybe there was less discrimination because as I was saying in the early eighties with the saxophone being introduced to music colleges as a first study instrument, that probably helped enormously.

Additional comments:

Scott: I think when I was in your situation having being at music college and just left and everything, so much of my time was taken up playing tenor, but in the quartet, I mean there was a period where we just did six hours a day rehearsing for a couple of years and so much time I was playing the tenor but couldn't focus on the solo side or commissioning because the quartet was on a roll, so I think it's a really interesting situation that your in at the moment and how that sort of expands and develops.

Royer: With quartet music have you ever found the tenor sax part to be a lot easier compared to the other parts?

Scott: I think inevitably there's definitely a lot of composers who give the soprano the bulk of the work, you know you hear that happening quite a lot, but I think, I don't know maybe, certainly not with a lot of the contemporary stuff that we've [ASQ] commissioned, but I think the art of playing the tenor in the quartet, if there is one, is just that whole thing of blend and ensemble, but then being flexible enough to come to the fore when you need to. I mean some of the pieces, Will Gregory wrote a piece called *Scintillation*, it's on an *Apollo* CD that we did, and it's a tenor feature and it's a crazy piece it was all in the harmonics and it's just sort of long tones in the harmonics over this sort of bubbling 7/8 thing underneath that the other three play and it's a great contrast to *High Life* and *Hoe Down* and you can make a sort of three movement sort of suite of Will Gregory things with *Scintillation* in the middle maybe.

Royer: Given today's environment, and your experience, do you have any pointers on what I should do to establish a career as a tenor saxophone specialist?

Scott: Yeah I had a good think about this earlier and I think the one thing that I was thinking about was just to keep a level of creativity, we seem to of touched on it a few times, but keeping that sort of creativity and coming up with ideas and coming up with projects and collaborations. If you do that I think then you can continue to really develop and explore, because if you think about it, there aren't really any, I mean Jim [Houlik] I would say is the closest to a sort of full time tenor sax soloist, but there isn't really anyone. And you sort of look and you think, well why is that the case and it's, I guess it's coupled with finding the right sort of person or personality to pursue that career, it's coupled with repertoire, which you know the last ten - fifteen years for tenor sax there's been a lot new repertoire, and that's a really positive thing. But it's coming up with, it's keeping promoters, I mean essentially if you're looking to get solo gigs, and you're revisiting promoters and venues every couple of years, it's being able to pester them all the time, and send

them publicity, send them recordings, but creating, they love to have a little, certainly in the UK, they love it if you've got a name for a project, the so and so project, or if you've got a really good publicity shot that you can use on the front of their festival brochure or something.

So I think it's looking ahead maybe every eighteen months - two years, and potentially coming up with different themed projects that are all based around the tenor sax, the solo tenor sax idea, you know that could be a saxophone and piano tour, that could be working with, say, tenor sax and string quartet, doing a tour and getting new pieces commissioned or all sorts of things. But it is interesting; it's an unexplored area.

Royer: *That's why I want to touch on it, and find out some more.*

Scott: It's great and do you know a guy, Bruce Weinberger, from the *Rascher Quartet*? He's an interesting guy because, I mean, he is sort of the energy behind the *Rascher Quartet* and he's notorious for being really pushy in a way, in terms of contacting promoters and getting gigs sorted, that's the reason why that group has lasted so long and gets regular gigs, because of Bruce doing the management side of it, and good on him you know, it just needs that, it's making as many people aware of what your doing as possible I think.

Royer: **Do you guys with the Apollo manage your quartet yourself or do you have a set person to do that?**

Scott: We've done a combination actually, we've managed it ourselves and we've had different managers and we've found it, it's been strange, because we've found it more effective when we've just done it ourselves. Because trying to explain to someone who's not a saxophone player, what you do and, but certainly for next year we have the best of both worlds, we've got someone who's a saxophone player and who's also a manager administrator who understands the whole thing. Because Rob Buckland and myself are the two guys that really have done all the management and admin side for the *Apollo* but it's reaching the point where both of us are really busy and that's

really why the *Apollo's* been on the back burner for the last four or five years. So basically with the tenor sax side of things for yourself, I mean, I think self promotion is the way forward to start off with and then when you're more established, you know, then getting someone in there who can help you, who can post loads of stuff out, do email, emails out to people on your behalf.

Royer: What happened when you graduated from the Royal Northern College of Music?

Scott: The college years themselves were great fun. Very intense, lots of rehearsing and gigging with the RNCM Big Band, Wind Orchestra and ASQ. Learning a lot from each other about music and life in the quartet - brilliant to be able to discuss lots of ideas on long car journeys to gigs. So Neville Duckworth was tutor of saxophone at the RNCM, and in our third year at the RNCM (a four year course) the college agreed to pay for the four of us in the *Apollo* to go to London to study with John Harle (an intensive day or two each month for six months). This was great and gave us loads to think about both individually and as an ensemble.

John Harle then made a year of study possible with him at the Guildhall School of Music, postgraduate. In effect we just saw John for lessons, again maybe once a month. We were happy to be based in Manchester, and didn't want to move to London particularly. We auditioned and secured funding from places such as the Countess of Munster Musical Trust that was paid to the Guildhall. There was no piece of paper at the end of it, as we missed all academic lessons and ensemble rehearsals and just showed up for lessons with John Harle!

The quartet won competitions such as the *Royal Overseas League*, *The Tunnell Trust*, *Erasmus Concours* and *Tokyo International Chamber Music Competition*, and quite often the prize was concerts. So we were busy, and coupling this with a successful audition for *Live Music Now!* [LMN] meant that we undertook loads of education concerts, workshops etc. in special, primary and high schools, hospitals and hospices etc. The age limit for LMN is

twenty-seven years, and we had a lot of work from them, often in conjunction with a festival or music club concert.

Royer: What is the title of your degree?

Scott: My degree is GRNCM, Graduate of the Royal Northern College of Music. The ASQ was awarded a PPRNCM (performance platform I think...RNCM), it was the first time that an ensemble had been awarded a distinction for a PPRNCM.

Royer: Did you get a job straight away after college?

Scott: So I was gigging with the quartet, then some orchestral work gradual started coming in (Halle, BBC Philharmonic Orchestra, Royal Liverpool etc.) when I was in my twenties, I did jazz, big band, funk, Latin gigs and contemporary classical ensembles. All the time these groups (especially ASQ) were working in a 'creative' arena, with composers, with inventive musicians.

Royer: Where you performing with any specific ensembles and what were you doing to maintain a steady income?

When did you get a teaching job?

Scott: In my twenties I did a little bit of teaching, private students and sometimes one day a week in a school.

In my thirties I taught at various Universities; Salford, Huddersfield (who have a famous new music festival as well), Manchester, Bangor, Liverpool Hope. (Not all at the same time!) Still one day a week teaching.

All through my twenties and thirties I was writing/arranging for groups that I started, like *SaxAssault* (1995-) and a jazz quintet called *Purple Circle!* (ridiculous name). But all these gigs and showing (not consciously) people that I was creative and pro-active has stood me in good stead I think.

Royer: When did you start teaching at the RNCM?

Scott: I think that this was ten or eleven years ago, I can't remember... maybe twelve, as the first RNCM Saxophone Day was in November 2000.

Royer: When and what was your first published piece of music? (Was astute your first publisher?)

Scott: Publishers in London wanted me to write books of arrangements of pop tunes for sax quartet (yawn), so I didn't do that and had some pieces published by *Saxtet Publications* (Nigel Wood) before Lauren decided to start *Astute Music* and publish my music. I'm not sure when the first piece was published, but *Astute* must have been operating for seven or eight years now.

Looking back, even when I was fourteen I was playing the saxophone, arranging music for bands that I started, and that trend seems to still be happening.

Additional Comments:

Scott: One main challenge is time management; practising and gigging is hard, add in composing as well and it's very hard, but there's a history of people managing this, and the bottom line is it's what I enjoy and am very fortunate to be allowed to do this as my living! This is why I've never taken on too much teaching, although I understand people that do; it gives financial security and for some people teaching is their passion and focus of energy.

In my forties (old!) I'm finding that the writing commissions are operating maybe a year to two years ahead now, which gives me some kind of financial security. There's a huge amount of hours required to keep up with admin, management (I have someone working one day a week for me) and creative projects (things like CD projects can take over your life for a year at a time). Arranging pieces that you've written for other instruments if there is demand,

attending premieres (I was in Norway last weekend doing this) etc. Then the graft of writing and practising. In 2012 there are some good projects for the ASQ, after a period of maybe five years (where it has been quiet) – [these projects include:] a commission from Mark Anthony Turnage, [a] CD recording with Barry Guy, gigs etc, then the WSC [World Sax Congress, Scotland]. Plus gigs with my Duo partner percussionist Dave Hassell (probably told you, we've been working together since mid-90s and gigged in USA, Mexico, France and the UK, two CDs, and some cool collaborations). *SaxAssault* is on the back burner at present, it's too hard at the moment securing gigs for a 12-piece group.

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