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**Critical Analysis of the Compositional
Techniques and Devices used in Troy Roberts'
Album 'The XenDen Suite'**

Exegesis presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of:

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ABSTRACT

Troy Roberts is a jazz saxophonist, originally from Perth, West Australia. At present, no academic research has been done on Roberts' compositions or playing, making this research project a positive way of contributing new information to the academic body of knowledge.

His album, 'The Xen-Den Suite' was chosen as the material best suited to provide insight into Roberts' musicianship (particularly focussing on his compositional and arranging techniques), as it is both intellectually complex and also musically innovative. The aim of the study was to identify and describe the use of various techniques and devices (including their relevance, purpose and function) present in Roberts' music. Through this study, this researcher attempted to gain a basic overview of Roberts' musical characteristics, with the objective to be able to utilise this information to further this researcher's musical development (including compositions, arrangements and saxophone playing).

The findings were useful for direct application (i.e. the techniques could be used in the same manner as they appeared in the XenDen Suite, and could therefore be immediately applied to other areas such as composition, arrangement and improvisation), but the many different ways in which the techniques were used compositionally by Roberts provided a more insightful look into broader musical concepts, and their application.

PREFACE

The purpose of this project is to gain an overview of Troy Roberts' music, including his compositional and improvisational style. His musicianship has been acclaimed in jazz circles; with reviews and articles in Downbeat magazine, achieving a semi-finalist place in the 2008 Thelonious Monk International Jazz Saxophonist Competition, and receiving a Grammy nomination as a sideman for Sammy Figueroa.

As with all jazz musicians, the integration of tradition with innovation is the method that allows for progress of the music, and Roberts is no exception. His unique application of the conventional jazz techniques described below, along with his own musical characteristics are part of what makes Roberts an interesting and progressive musician. This research aims to facilitate the progress of jazz music, by offering an academic perspective on some of the technical concepts, techniques and conventions of a contemporary jazz musician who has established a unique compositional and improvisational voice.

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