

— T H E —
JACK FURLONG
Q U A R T E T
OPPORTUNITY

Song Descriptions

Opportunity (Furlong)—The title track of the album, I composed the countermelody first a long time ago. I composed the melody much later using 12-sided Musician's Dice, where each side was marked with a different note on the chromatic scale. Finally, I equated the feel to a half-drunk guy at a bar looking to find a woman at last call, using his terrible dance moves to appear attractive. That's why it says "Slow, Seductive Latin" at the top of the chart...ironically.

Hugo's Gone Again (Furlong)—This hard bop AABA tune was inspired by my friend Hugo, who I met at my favorite pizza place back in 2000. Hugo is a dedicated hard worker who has treated me like his son all these years, but he has bounced back and forth between pizza joints based on which job was better for him! The last time he switched, this tune came into my head.

Losing My Religion (R.E.M., arr. Furlong)—This song pops up in my life from time to time, making it an inside joke for me and my friends. I arranged it in time signatures that go back and forth between 9/4 and 10/4 while always returning to 4/4. Further, I wrote the entire melody up a third from the original melody. The uniqueness of the arrangement lent itself to soprano sax.

Cheap Ride (Furlong)—This waltz takes its chord changes from "Bye Bye Blackbird." When I listened to the tune prior to the composition of the melody, I remembered an experience I had at Pt. Pleasant Beach, NJ, as a kid, when this marvelous dragon stood out to me as the one I had to ride on a Merry-Go-Round. It wasn't until I was on it and the carousel started that I realized I was on the one horse that did not move up and down as we went round and round. I had to look like this is what I had intended all along!

Theme from "TRON: Legacy" (Daft Punk, arr. Furlong)—One of my best friends was constantly talking to me about this movie that I just had no interest in seeing. One day when I was home sick, however, I found this movie on television, gave it a shot, and enjoyed it. The direction of the relationship between characters in the movie followed that of the main musical theme: it began with a descent that further explained the emotional hurt of the main character until he encounters

his long lost father, at which point, it begins to rise again as hope is returned. It remains melancholy throughout, as the resolution of the plot is not a fairy tale ending, but it brings closure and peace.

Cranky (McElroy)—Jon McElroy pitched this tune to me when I announced we were going to do this album. After we recorded it and heard its original mix, I thought it came out as one of the strongest tunes. It's just a simple blues that almost nags at your brain in the same way an anti-histamine can make you drowsy and, thus, cranky!

Zanzibar (Billy Joel, arr. Furlong)—While working with some Billy Joel tunes for my mother (more on that later), I came across "Zanzibar" and was intrigued. I enjoyed Freddie Hubbard's cameo on the original cut, as well as the transitions in and out of each section. I also could relate to Joel's lyrics about sports and the suggested relationship with a waitress at the local watering hole. It originated as just a straight cover song, but it didn't work. I re-imagined it as a ballad and switched to tenor sax to get a lighter tone color, and it worked.

The Legend of Zelda (Koji Kondo, arr. Furlong)—"The Legend of Zelda" video game series is one that has taken many hours of my life away from practicing music. I heard an arrangement of the tune that inspired me to arrange the tune as it was going around the circle of fifths and bouncing between related major and minor keys. I wrote it for soprano sax due to both the key and the symbol of being a small boy when I discovered the original game (hence, the small saxophone).

To Mom, With Love (Furlong)—The title really says it all! The work with my mother referenced above focused on Billy Joel's "New York State of Mind." One day, while listening to it, I began to sing a melody over the A section that was a bit more up-tempo. I developed it from there and wrote a bridge, an intro, and an ending. I had also recently purchased a beautiful soprano sax from my friend Tony Gairo, and I was eager to try it out; this tune was screaming for it. The rest is history! It's a tune dedicated to the one woman responsible for it all.

Take Me Out To The Ball Game (Albert von Tinzler, arr. Furlong)— There are two arrangements of this piece that inspired me: Harpo Marx when he played it on "I Love Lucy," and Yankees legend Bernie Williams when he played it at the opening of the new Yankee Stadium. I began to sketch my own chord changes to the piece and brought it into my arranging lessons with Jim McNeely, who then helped me tweak it to what it is now. Originally, I was playing it on soprano, but I moved it to tenor to try to get better intonation.

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