

# QUARTAL CAPER

by  
**Thomas Tyra**

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Grade 1

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Conductor Score  
**QUARTAL CAPER**  
Thomas Tyra

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*This series of compositions is designed to introduce 20th Century compositional devices to young instrumentalists. Confronted daily with the sounds of contemporary music through recordings, radio and television, young musicians can readily learn to cope with and enjoy these devices in their own music. Besides presenting playable program music, each composition will explore a single specific 20th Century compositional technique within the technical limits of young performers.*

## PRESENTING THE CONCEPT

In an attempt to move away from the sonorities of the tertian harmonic system and its implied tonality, twentieth-century composers turned to many different techniques. One of these was to abandon chords and melodies built on thirds in favor of those built on fourths. This technique was favored as a harmonic device. The use of quartal harmonization is not a new device since some of the earliest harmony known in Western music employed parallel fourths (organum of the 12th and 13th centuries). Although all types of fourths have been used by contemporary composers, the most popular has been the perfect fourth. This interval is usually used in groups of three or more, and the augmented fourth (the tritone) is generally avoided because of its strongly tonal implications.

QUARTAL CAPER utilizes the interval of the perfect fourth both harmonically and melodically. The melodic material of the first section (mm. 5-28) is built on two ascending and two descending fourths harmonized in fourths, while the harmonic background of the section is constructed of two perfect fourths a perfect fourth apart. In measures 21-28 the melodic material of measure 5 is used in inverted imitation. It should be pointed out that in this section (mm. 21-28) even though fourths are used they occasionally result in tertian harmony. Measures 29-35 employ chords of the fourth used in a mirror progression in a purely harmonic function. Measures 37-48 are a return of the initial material of the piece. The final four measures represent the only section of the work in which more than two fourths are used at the same time. Here, six fourths are "piled up" to prepare for a "cadence" on A-flat. (It should be noted that the key signature of A-flat concert is used only to prevent a large number of accidentals from appearing in the parts and does not imply the key of A-flat, since the use of fourths generally denotes a non-tonal approach to pitch center.)

## REINFORCEMENT THROUGH LISTENING

Although, as with most contemporary compositional devices, few compositions are built solely on the interval of the fourth, there are a number of composers who have used quartal harmony extensively. The following is a partial list of compositions available on recordings which use fourths to some extent and can be employed to further reinforce the concept of quartal harmony.

Claude Debussy, **La Cathédrale Engloutie** (Piano Preludes, Book 1, No. 10).  
Claude Debussy, **Nuages** (from **Three Nocturnes**).  
Bela Bartok, **Piano Concerto No. 2**.  
Aaron Copland, **Fanfare for the Common Man**.  
Arnold Schoenberg, **Kammersymphonie**, Op. 9.  
Early Gregorian Organum (13th century)

## REINFORCEMENT THROUGH CREATIVITY

Students should be encouraged to experiment by harmonizing familiar melodies with chords of the fourth. Initially this can be done easily by having E-flat and B-flat instruments play the same untransposed melodic line. This will automatically result in parallel fourths. The same can be done with B-flat and F instruments, F and C instruments, and with combinations of C, F and B-flat instruments, etc. Later, students can create their own melodies using fourths and fifths.

These are presented as suggestions. The creative teacher will be able to use this as a springboard for further reinforcement through his own teaching methods and abilities.

Thomas Tyra

**QUARTAL CAPER**  
**Instrumentation**

Conductor.....	1
Flute.....	10
1st Bb Clarinet.....	6
2nd Bb Clarinet.....	6
Eb Alto Clarinet.....	1
Bb Bass Clarinet.....	2
Oboe.....	2
Bassoon.....	2
Eb Alto Saxophone.....	8
Bb Tenor Saxophone.....	2
Eb Baritone Saxophone.....	2
1st Bb Cornet.....	5
2nd Bb Cornet.....	5
F Horn.....	4
Eb Horn.....	2
Trombone.....	6
Baritone B.C.....	2
Baritone T.C.....	2
Tuba.....	4
Percussion.....	6
Bells.....	4

# Quartal Caper

CONDUCTOR SCORE

Thomas Tyra  
(ASCAP)

A 119

5

Fast (♩ = 110-132)

Flute  
(Bells)  
Oboe

Alto Saxes div.

1st and 2nd  
B♭ Clarinets

1st and 2nd  
B♭ Cornets

E♭ Horn  
(E♭ Alto Clar.)

Low Woodwinds  
Low Brass

Percussion

*f dim.* *mp*

*f dim.* *mp*

*f dim.* *mp*

*f dim.* *mp*

*f dim.* *mp*

*f dim.* *mp*

A 20 - 19

13

mf

mf

mf

Alto Sax. a 2

mf

mf

mf

21

*f marcato*

a 2

div.

a 2

*f marcato*

a 2

div.

a 2

div.

*f marcato*

a 2

*f marcato*

*f marcato*

*f marcato*

*f marcato*

*f marcato*

*f marcato*

*f marcato*

29

div. a 2 div. *p legato*

a 2 div. a 2 div. *p legato*

div. *p legato*

+A. & T. Sax. A. Sax. div. T. Sax. lower notes *p legato*

(b) *p legato*

(b) *p legato*

37

+ A. Sax. div. *f dim.*

*f dim.*

*f dim.*

+ T. Sax. *f dim.*

*f dim.*

41

Musical score for measures 41-48. The score consists of six staves. The top staff is in treble clef with a key signature of two flats and a common time signature. The bottom staff is in bass clef. The music features a steady eighth-note accompaniment in the lower staves and more complex melodic lines in the upper staves. A dynamic marking of *mp* (mezzo-piano) is present in the first measure of each staff.

49

Musical score for measures 49-52. The score consists of six staves. The top staff is in treble clef with a key signature of two flats and a common time signature. The bottom staff is in bass clef. The music features a steady eighth-note accompaniment in the lower staves and more complex melodic lines in the upper staves. A dynamic marking of *f cresc.* (forte crescendo) is present in the first measure of each staff. Additional markings include *ff* (fortissimo), *div.* (divisi), and *cresc.* (crescendo). Specific instrument entries are noted: *2. + A. Sax. I* and *2. + A. Sax. II*. A *Ten. Sax.* entry is also indicated. The score concludes with a *ff* marking.