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Master's recital in jazz pedagogy: A performance-demonstration of rhythm section instruments, compositions and arrangements by Josh Hakanson

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MASTER'S RECITAL IN JAZZ PEDAGOGY:
A PERFORMANCE-DEMONSTRATION OF
RHYTHM SECTION INSTRUMENTS,
COMPOSITIONS AND ARRANGEMENTS BY JOSH HAKANSON

An Abstract of a Recital
Submitted
in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements of the Degree
Master of Music in Jazz Pedagogy

Josh Hakanson
University of Northern Iowa
May 2016

APPROVAL PAGE

This Recital Abstract by: Josh Hakanson

Entitled: Master's Recital in Jazz Pedagogy: A Performance-Demonstration of Rhythm Section Instruments, Compositions and Arrangements By Josh Hakanson

Has been approved as meeting the thesis requirement for the
Degree of Master of Music Jazz Pedagogy

Date

Christopher Merz, Chair, Thesis Committee

Date

Dr. Robert Washut, Thesis Committee Member

Date

Dr. Anthony Williams, Thesis Committee Member

Date

Dr. Kavita R. Dhanwada, Dean, Graduate College

APPROVAL PAGE

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OVERVIEW

This recital is presented to demonstrate skills and competencies on the rhythm section instruments piano, bass, and drums, as well as showcase compositions and arrangements by the recitalist. The study of the rhythm section instruments has been a valuable asset to my teaching and allowed me to expand my knowledge of how these instruments are used in a functional jazz context. The study of jazz composition and arranging techniques has also supplemented my teaching skills and given me the satisfaction of both writing and performing my own works. Though this recital is not a comprehensive overview of my study at University of Northern Iowa, it is my intention that it demonstrates many aspects of my experience.

PART 1. PERFORMANCE-DEMONSTRATION OF PIANO AND BASS

The recitalist will perform the first half of the program on the bass guitar and piano to demonstrate proficiency on these instruments relevant to jazz pedagogical aims. The bass and piano are integral elements of the rhythm section of jazz ensembles both small and large, and an understanding of their roles as accompanimental instruments is necessary for a successful jazz pedagogue.

The first selection on the program is “Softly, as in a Morning Sunrise” and will be performed by the recitalist on bass guitar. The song was composed by Sigmund Romberg with lyrics by Oscar Hammerstein II for the 1928 operetta *The New Moon*, and has been assimilated into the jazz repertoire by such jazz artists as Sonny Rollins, John Coltrane, David Liebman, and Artie Shaw, among many others.¹ Shaw, in fact, was the first to recontextualize the style of the tune, changing it from a tango to a 4/4 swing style.²

“Softly, as in a Morning Sunrise” was chosen to demonstrate some key aspects of the bassist’s role in the rhythm section. The song has been arranged for tenor saxophone, guitar, bass guitar, and drums. The form of the composition is a 32-measure AABA structure. The ‘A’ section is firmly in C minor, making it an ideal vehicle for exploring minor tonality improvisational possibilities. The ‘B’ section modulates to the relative major of E-flat with a return to C minor in the last ‘A’ section.

¹ Ted Gioia, *The Jazz Standards* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), 375–377.

² *Ibid.*, 376.

The recitalist will demonstrate common jazz bass performance approaches such as playing in a two-feel*³ and walking* in 4/4. The initial statement of the melody will be performed by the bass with light accompaniment from the guitar and drums in a two-feel. The tenor saxophone will then improvise over the form of the tune while the bass returns to an accompanimental role. During the tenor saxophone improvisation, bass and drums will play in a two-feel on the ‘A’ sections and then transition to playing a walking bass line with drums playing a 4/4 swing feel during the ‘B’ section. The bass will continue to serve an accompanimental role during the tenor saxophone solo by walking a bass line for the second chorus* while guitar comps* and drums play a 4/4 swing time-feel. The tenor saxophone will perform the last melody statement after the conclusion of the improvised solo section.

The second selection on the program is a Luiz Bonfá composition entitled “Samba de Orfeu.” This composition comes from the 1959 film score to *Orfeu Negro*. It has been performed and recorded by jazz artists such as Paul Desmond, Clark Terry, and Vince Guaraldi. The recitalist has chosen this composition as a vehicle for demonstrating a typical samba style bass line. The formal structure of the tune is AABA, with the ‘A’ sections comprised of sixteen measures and the ‘B’ section eight measures. The ‘A’ section begins in C major with brief tonicizations of D minor (ii in the key). The ‘B’ section tonicizes F major (IV in the key) and E-flat (lowered III) that is borrowed from the minor mode.

³ For the reader’s benefit, the first appearance of all special terms that occur throughout this document will be marked with an asterisk and defined in the “Glossary of Special Terms.”

The primary role of the bass in a samba style is to emphasize roots and fifths of each chord change while maintaining a steady undercurrent pulse targeting beats one and three. The example (musical example 1) below shows a typical bass pattern that is played in a samba style.

Musical Example 1



One should also note that the characteristic dotted quarter to eighth combination provides forward momentum, rhythmically propelling the groove and imbuing it with driving energy. Additionally, the drummer will also play this rhythm on the bass drum, thereby reinforcing the bass guitar groove.

The tune has been arranged for a quartet consisting of alto saxophone, guitar, bass, and drums. A brief two bar rhythm section introduction has been added to the tune to prepare the entrance of the melody pickups. The melodic content of the song relies heavily on arpeggios and emphasis of chord tones. The melody is played by the alto saxophone similar to the recording by Paul Desmond from 1963 appearing on the album *Take Ten*. Following the solo section, the melody is recapitulated in its entirety. A deceptive-type cadence, landing on a D-flat major 7 chord, concludes the piece. This type of deceptive ending has developed into common practice among jazz musicians and

colors the final note (C-natural) by harmonically recontextualizing it as the seventh of the D-flat major 7 as opposed the tonic of the C major 7 chord.

The recitalist will perform the next three selections on piano, demonstrating comping and soloing. The recitalist will utilize two-hand, left hand, and rooted piano voicing techniques where appropriate for each composition.

The first selection to be performed by the recitalist on piano is the Miles Davis composition “Solar” that originally appeared on the 1954 recording *Walkin’*. This twelve-bar composition has carved out a niche among improvisers as a kind of practice room workout tune.⁴ It should also be noted that “Solar” is a twelve-bar reduction of the chord changes of the standard* “How High the Moon.” As an educator, it can be utilized as an exemplar of theoretical principles such as modal borrowing and key areas descending by step. The accelerated harmonic motion toward the end of the composition is also a notable feature that often propels the soloist into successive choruses.

I have chosen “Solar” to demonstrate both a common approach to improvising over the chord progression and comping behind a soloist. As a piano soloist in a jazz setting, it is often common practice to comp with voicings in the left hand and play a melodic line in the right hand. The right hand functions like a horn soloist, improvising a melodic line, while the left hand comps (complements) and outlines the harmony.

My approach to improvising over the changes is to use “blanket” scales (i.e., scales that will fit in the key area of the moment), while targeting the thirds and sevenths of most of the chord changes. Because the piece consists primarily of seventh chords, the

⁴ Gioia, *The Jazz Standards*, 377.

challenge is to outline linearly the harmonic motion of the progression by playing the appropriate third or seventh of each chord. Bert Ligon in his text *Connecting Chords with Linear Harmony* describes how this approach has been used by countless improvisers to give harmonic clarity to their improvised solos. For example, F major 7 in the fifth bar of the piece has a major third (A) and major seventh (E). Playing an A-flat or E-flat over this chord would not accurately indicate the harmony of the moment and create a discernable amount of tension if sustained.

The role of the piano as a comping instrument is to support the soloist by outlining the harmony and possibly interjecting ideas for the soloist to utilize. These ideas can be rhythmic or harmonic catalysts for the soloist, helping it build energy or create tension and release.

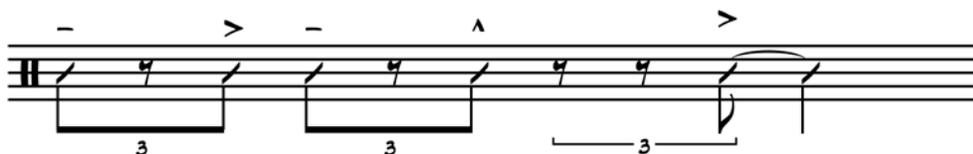
The second selection on the program to be performed on piano is “On Green Dolphin Street.” Originally the title song of the eponymous 1947 film, the piece was adopted into the jazz repertoire in the 1950s. Notable early jazz performances of the piece were recorded by Ahmad Jamal and Miles Davis. Jamal’s trio performance of the piece in 1956 is much like his performances of this period, utilizing lots of space and fragmenting the melodic material against the backdrop of bass and drums.⁵

The form of the piece is ABAB^I and is often performed informally by alternating between Latin style on the ‘A’ sections and swing style on the ‘B’ and ‘B^I’ sections. When performers improvise over the form of the tune, a consensus must be reached about whether to play Latin or swing style during the solos. For this arrangement, the

⁵ Gioia, *The Jazz Standards*, 314.

performers will alternate between Latin and swing style during the “head”*—or melody—of the tune, and then remain in a Latin style for the duration of the solo choruses.

The Latin style will demand a different approach to eighth note articulation. As opposed to swing style, which relies heavily on a triplet division, Latin style moves closer to straight or even eighth notes. The musical examples below illustrate the contrast in style. Musical example 2 illustrates how swing style eighths are executed, however they are not notated in this manner.



Musical Example 2

Musical example 3 is in a Latin style with appropriate articulation, played with even eighth notes.



Musical Example 3

A distinct harmonic feature of the tune appears in the A sections. In bars five through seven of the A section, a pedal point* on E-flat occurs while the chords F7, E major 7, and E-flat major 7 are chromatically planed over the top. While the chords F7 and E major 7 are planed over the E-flat, tension is created because the pitch E-flat changes function: first functioning as the lowered seventh of F7, then as the major seventh of E major 7, and finally as the root of E-flat major 7.

The final selection on the first half of the program is an original composition entitled “Leap Year.” The melody of the composition utilizes the “Romantic Leap” or a melodic leap of a sixth, in this case a minor sixth. Other leaps occur throughout the melody, either major or minor sixths, as well as points of melodic chromaticism to create tension and emotional expressivity. These features allude to Romantic-era melodic construction.

The performance will feature a piano and tenor saxophone duet. The piano will play the harmonized melody of the ‘A’ sections with the tenor saxophone. The tenor saxophone will play the melody of the ‘B’ section (or bridge*) supported by harmonic accompaniment from the piano. This duet setting of the piece demands that rooted voicings be utilized by the pianist to fill out the harmonic void created by the absence of a bass instrument. The form of the composition is comprised of eight-bar ‘A’ sections with a four-bar bridge section. The harmonic rhythm* accelerates during the bridge section, and much of the harmony is derived from the chromatic implications of the melody.

PART 2. COMPOSITIONS AND ARRANGEMENTS BY THE RECITALIST

The second half of the recital program will feature the recitalist on his primary instrument—the drum set—playing his own compositions and arrangements. This portion of the program will serve to demonstrate composition and arranging techniques acquired during the recitalist's course of study.

The first selection on this portion of the program is an arrangement of Victor Schertzinger and Johnny Mercer's song "I Remember You." The song was originally written for the 1942 film *The Fleet's In* that featured the Jimmy Dorsey Orchestra.

The recitalist's arrangement is written for octet as a feature for alto saxophone. It utilizes many standardized arranging practices, including a transformation of the melody, one-, two- and four-part density, orchestration of the melody for rhythm section instruments, and a pedal point introduction. The soli section writing has been harmonized in a four-part block style. Block writing* was first used extensively by the Fletcher Henderson band in the 1920s and 30s. Frequently, block writing is reserved for saxophone soli sections and brass ensemble tutti sections. That being the case, block writing often features a homogenous section or combination of horn sections in a large jazz ensemble. However, in this arrangement, the block chord passages have been orchestrated for trumpet, alto saxophone, tenor saxophone, trombone, and guitar (doubling the lead an octave below), utilizing a mixed instrumentation for the block chord passages versus a homogenous section.

Other arranging devices I have utilized are two-part writing techniques. These include the use of coupling and counter lines. These passages appear during the initial statement of the melody. The melodic coupling techniques serve to both add color to the melodic line as well as provide harmonic definition. The counter lines were placed at breaks in the primary melodic phrases in order to add activity and interest to the melody.

The introductory material serves several purposes. It prepares the listener for the primary statement of the song's melody, is repurposed as an interlude between the articulation of the song form and solo section, and then returns as a portion of the coda. The reuse of this material serves to unify the sections of the piece together by functioning as transitional material, "bookending" the piece. Arrangers often utilize introductions, interludes, and codas to showcase compositional creativity, as is the case in this arrangement.

The second selection on this portion of the program is a contrafact entitled "Is this Thing Called a Glove?" To a seasoned jazz aficionado or enthusiast, the title will immediately reveal the composition on which the contrafact is based—"What Is This Thing Called Love?" In jazz compositional practice, a contrafact is simply a new melody composed over the existing chord changes of a composition, typically a jazz or Tin Pan Alley standard.

The style of the melody alludes to Bebop* practice by targeting and emphasizing thirds and sevenths to define harmonies at certain landmarks. Even though the contour of the melodic line is at times jagged, there are several instances of chromatic approaches as well as enclosures and scalar* type shapes. See the musical examples below for

illustrations of an enclosure (musical example 4) and chromatic approach (musical example 5).



Musical Example 4



Musical Example 5

The arrangement emphasizes unison writing, orchestrated for different instrumental voices as the piece progresses. Interjections from the rhythm section occur at breaks in the melodic line, acting as a kind of call and response device. An interlude, comprised of a melodic line composed over the bridge chord changes and featuring the rhythm section, ties together the solo section and recapitulation of the head. Throughout the arrangement, the eighth note lines are inflected with Bebop articulations. This articulation of eighth note lines connects them in a legato fashion while placing slight emphasis on each up beat in the line. It can be vocalized like this: “doo-dah-oo-dah-oo-dah-oo” etc. Articulating the line in this manner allows for a fluid stream of eighth notes. Additionally, where there are instances of a rising and falling melodic contour of the line,

the dynamic shape follows this contour—crescendoing as the line ascends and decrescendoing as the line descends.

The third selection on the second half of the program is an original composition and arrangement entitled “September’s Song.” The composition is influenced by the chamber jazz qualities of many ECM label recordings and is an exemplar of modal composition. I have orchestrated it for clarinet, flugelhorn, muted trombone, tenor saxophone and rhythm section in order to capture the chamber-like qualities of the composition.

To achieve a unique color with the unison lines, I used different combinations of clarinet, muted trombone, tenor saxophone, flugelhorn and guitar. Instances of two-part coupling occur at ends of phrases where more density was desired. The form of the composition is AA¹B. The initial melodic statement of the ‘A’ section was conceived as a sequenced motive combined with a downward progression of pitches that receive agogic stress. The listener will perceive a descending melodic contour even though there are interjections of wide interval leaps. The ‘B’ section melody uses three brief melodic gestures with G and F as the focal point pitches—again descending by a whole step.

The harmonic content of the composition focuses on four modalities: A Phrygian, B-flat Lydian, E Phrygian, and (briefly) D altered Mixolydian. The duration of these modalities is mostly quite extended. For instance, the first occurrence of the A Phrygian sound lasts for eight bars. Ron Miller defines this type of subgroup of modal systems as “Plateau Modal.” It is characterized by slow harmonic rhythm, a less active bass part,

mostly non-diatonic root relationships, and symmetric harmonic rhythm.⁶ One exception to this definition is that the duration of the A Phrygian sound is prolonged and behaves as if it is the “home” key.

The fourth selection on the recital is an arrangement of Wayne Shorter’s “Ju Ju.” I have arranged the piece for a sextet comprised of alto and tenor saxophones, trombone, and rhythm section. The arrangement will showcase solos by both tenor saxophone and drums. I was attracted to the ominous qualities implied by the emphasis on the whole tone scale in the first section of this composition. The piece has a kind of urgency that is reinforced by the melody, the triple meter setting, and harmonic palette.

I intended to strike a balance between triadic* and quartal* structures when constructing voicings for the horns. To maintain interest, I mixed these types of voicings in the horn soli* section. The initial statement of the melody is voiced with an inverted quartal voicing that creates tense major and minor second “grinds.”

The 24-bar form presented a unique challenge for framing a drum solo, but I intended to maintain the form rather than move into a vamp* section. Therefore, I included horn and rhythm section punctuations that act as signposts to remind the listener that the harmonic structure is still in place even though it is not constantly being stated.

The final selection on the second half of the program is another original composition entitled “Retroactive.” The work is a twelve-tone composition utilizing the following tone row: F A C E D F# B-flat C# E-flat G B A-flat. The primary row (or P0) is never presented in the principal melody, but initially in its retrograde, hence the title of

⁶ Ron Miller, *Modal Jazz Composition and Harmony*, vol. 1 (Mainz, Germany: Advance Music, 2013), 13.

the work. The original row occurs in the bass counter melody. The piece is more of a “spring board” for free improvisation, rather than a vehicle for improvising using the tone row.

The composition unfolds in an additive process. Initially, the melody is stated rhythmically by the drum set. The tone row is then stated by the guitar and drums in unison. Finally, the Chapman stick enters with a counter melody in the bass register. The tenor saxophone also enters at the same time as the Chapman stick, providing another voice on the melodic line. As the piece cycles back through the form, the tenor begins to solo over the two rows played in juxtaposition by guitar and Chapman stick. Then the instrumentalists arrive at a vamp section based on the last two measures of the composition that serves as an accompanimental backdrop for the guitar solo. An *accelerando* occurs once the vamp has begun to repeat, building excitement and energy behind the soloist. Finally, the piece concludes with all the instrumentalists playing the vamp in a concerted fashion.

This performance will serve to demonstrate a sampling of the skills acquired and developed over the course of study at the University of Northern Iowa. I intend to utilize these skills to demonstrate techniques and approaches common to jazz practice and performance.

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GLOSSARY OF SPECIAL TERMS

Bebop: “a style of modern jazz pioneered in the mid-1940s; it has become the basis for most contemporary jazz.”⁷

block writing: use of block chords that homorhythmically harmonize a melody or lead line.

bridge: a term most often applied to the ‘B’ section of a composition utilizing a sectional song form such as AABA.

chorus: “a single statement of the harmonic and rhythmic jazz *cycle* defined by the musical form (e.g., 12-bar blues, 32-bar popular song).”⁸

comping: or complementing. An accompanimental texture most often provided by chordal instruments (e.g. piano or guitar) that is characterized by rhythmically unpredictable interjections based on the harmony of the composition.

harmonic rhythm: the rate at which the harmony changes in a musical composition. Frequently, it adheres to a particular rhythmic pattern.

head: the composed melody of a song or tune that typically appears at the beginning and ending of a small group jazz performance.

⁷ Gary Giddins and Scott DeVeaux, *Jazz* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2009), A13.

⁸ *Ibid.*, A14.

pedal point: a moment in a musical performance or passage where a single pitch is emphasized by the bass voice(s) for an extended period of time and often with harmonies superimposed over this pitch.

quartal: a term for a harmonic structure built on intervals of fourths.

scalar: a melodic passage of music that consists of scale tones—pitches from a collection of notes within an octave, usually combined in whole and half steps.

solì: a soloistic section of music (often written out) for a single section or group of instruments. In jazz contexts, it often consists of a harmonized principle lead line or voice.

standard: a Tin Pan Alley or popular song that has been adopted into the jazz repertory.⁹

triad: “A chord consisting of three notes which can be arranged to form two superimposed thirds.”¹⁰

two-feel: a rhythmic pulse that emphasizes half-notes in the bass line as opposed to a four quarter-note “walking” line.

vamp: a short repeated section of music often characterized by a repetitive chord progression and/or bass line.

walking: typically describes a bass line where four quarter notes are played per measure, outlining the harmonic motion of the composition. It is most frequently performed in a swing style.

⁹ Giddins and Deveaux, *Jazz*, A18.

¹⁰ "Triad." *Grove Music Online. Oxford Music Online*. Oxford University Press, accessed March 13, 2016, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/28347>.

School of Music
University of Northern Iowa

presents

Josh Hakanson, Drums, Piano, Electric Bass
In a Graduate Recital

assisted by:

Andy Braught, acoustic bass

Patrick Cunningham, drums

David Dunn, Chapman stick

Ryan Garmoe, trumpet

Taylor Kobberdahl, piano

Sean Koga, tenor saxophone

Seth Nordin, trombone

Elvis Phillips, guitar

Clayton Ryan, acoustic bass

Sam Stranz, clarinet, alto & tenor saxophones

In partial fulfillment of the requirement
for the Master of Music degree in Jazz Pedagogy
From the Studio of Thomas Giampietro

Softly as in a Morning Sunrise	Sigmund Romberg (1887–1951)
Samba de Orfeu	Luiz Bonfá (1922–2001)
Solar	Miles Davis (1926–1991)
On Green Dolphin Street	Bronislaw Kaper (1902–1983)
Leap Year	Josh Hakanson (b.1983)
I Remember You	Victor Schertzinger (1888–1941) arr. Hakanson
Is this Thing Called a Glove?	Josh Hakanson (b. 1983)
September's Song	Josh Hakanson (b.1983)
Ju Ju	Wayne Shorter (b. 1933) arr. Hakanson
Retroactive	Josh Hakanson (b. 1983)