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

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

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

Nicholas Leo  
University of Northern Iowa

May 2018

## APPROVAL PAGE

This Recital Abstract by: Nicholas Leo

Entitled: Master's Recital in Jazz Pedagogy: A Performance-Demonstration of Rhythm Section instruments, Compositions and Arrangements by Nicholas Leo

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

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Date

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Christopher Merz, Chair, Thesis Committee

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Date

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Dr. Robert Washut, Thesis Committee Member

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Dr. Jonathan Schwabe, Thesis Committee Member

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Date

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Dr. Patrick Pease, Interim Dean, Graduate College

## APPROVAL PAGE

This Recital Performance by: Nicholas Leo

Entitled: Master's Recital in Jazz Pedagogy: A Performance-Demonstration of Rhythm Section instruments, Compositions and Arrangements by Nicholas Leo

Date of Recital: February 26, 2018

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

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Christopher Merz, Chair, Thesis Committee

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## OVERVIEW

The recital is presented to demonstrate skills and facility on the rhythm section instruments as well as to provide opportunity for the recitalist to present original compositions and arrangements. Proficiency on rhythm section instruments is necessary in that it offers, among other things, an understanding of the technical components and how they relate to the application of musical concepts of performance and education.

The curation of the recital program also functions as a representation of the recitalist's artistic aesthetic, specifically in how it relates to pedagogy. The influential jazz educator and pianist Ran Blake asserts that an artist's primary arsenal as a performer is their personally developed repertoire, as it is their listening made concrete.<sup>1</sup> My teaching philosophy draws and expands upon the importance of listening as well as exploration into the historical and social-cultural contexts behind the artists, their compositions and recordings, and their associated musical genres. An awareness of the factors that influence the works presents valuable insight and skills to a student that are necessary for a greater engagement and enjoyment of the music.

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<sup>1</sup> Ran Blake, *Primacy of the Ear: Listening, Memory and Development of Musical Style*, (Brookline, MA: Third Stream Associates, 2010), 41.

## PART I. PERFORMANCE-DEMONSTRATION OF BASS AND DRUM SET

The recitalist will perform the first half of the program on bass guitar and drum set in order to demonstrate technical and artistic proficiency. The bass and drums are integral components of the rhythm section of jazz ensembles of all sizes. It is crucial that a jazz educator has personal knowledge and first-hand experience with their musical roles in order to successfully communicate the techniques, concepts, and contexts of their roles within the music.

The first piece presented in the recital is the 1978 composition “Angélica” from Emiliano Salvador. Salvador (1951-1992) was a Cuban composer and pianist of Latin jazz and Afro-Cuban music. The selection is performed on bass by the recitalist and will demonstrate several methods in which the bass is able to function that are idiomatically appropriate to Latin jazz. The piece is also selected because of the way it demonstrates various performance concepts of Latin jazz throughout the rhythm section. A nuanced understanding of Afro-Caribbean music is often lacking in regard to jazz education and common practice of jazz musicians due to a lack of knowledge relating to cultural, historical, and performance contexts. The presentation of several performance practice methods will provide the listener an exposure to idiomatically appropriate concepts of Latin jazz.

Born in Puerto Padre, in the former Oriente province of Cuba, Emiliano Salvador was an important link between traditional and contemporary aspects of Cuban music performance and composition. In the mid-1960s he studied at Havana’s *Escuela Nacional*

*de Arte*. He was the pianist for the *Grupo de Experimentación Sonora del ICAIC* (a collective organization dedicated to contemporary music) from 1969 until the group's breakup in 1979. During his tenure with the GES, Salvador studied orchestration and composition with Leo Brouwer and Frederick Smith, studied piano technique with María Antonieta Henríquez, and wrote several movie scores for the film industry. His best known-work from the GES was as the musical director and arranger for Pablo Milanés, one of the founders of the influential *nueva trova* movement in Cuba. Despite the domestic and international successes with Milanés as well as Silvio Rodríguez, Salvador's debut LP, *Nueva Visión*, was the break out moment that gave him international fame as one of the great Latin jazz pianists. In his album, which included the first recording of "Angélica", Salvador mixed different Cuban genres (*son*\*,<sup>2</sup>, *guaguancó*\*, *mambo*\*) within the structures of Latin jazz as reflected through his own influences from bop, hard bop, and especially the music of McCoy Tyner, John Coltrane, and Miles Davis.<sup>3</sup>

"Angélica", dedicated to his daughter, utilized a traditional conjunto format augmented with electric bass, electric piano, and soprano saxophone. The piece is 32 bars and opens with a repeated 4-bar ostinato that pivots between two minor 7 chords one whole step apart. The piece itself is characterized by a simple, song-like melody that follows diatonically with the underlying harmonies. The harmonic content is a combination of tonal, modal, and chromatic features. The keys of A minor, F minor, Eb

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<sup>2</sup> For the reader's benefit, the first appearance of all special terms that occur throughout this document will be marked with an asterisk and be defined in the "Glossary of Special Terms."

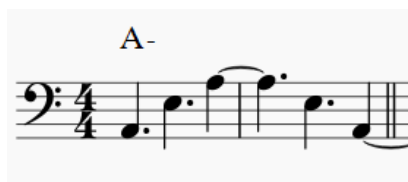
<sup>3</sup> Leonardo Acosta, *Cubano Be Cubano Bop: One Hundred Years of Jazz in Cuba*, (Washington DC: The Smithsonian Institution, 2003), 232.



major, and G major are all briefly tonicized using diatonic root movements. The piece also contains a passage of planing\* sus9\* chords that descend through chromatic mediant relationships. Minor 7<sup>th</sup> chords are planed through ascending whole steps occurs at the end of the piece, in doing so referring to the parallel minor 7<sup>th</sup> chords of the opening ostinato.

The role of the bass is rhythmic and harmonic, providing typical tumbao patterns as well as variations. *Tumbao* refers to the repeated syncopated pattern that intrinsically defines the role and function of the bass in a wide variety of Afro-Caribbean musical genres. The origins of bass *tumbaos* derive from syncopated African rhythmic cells. As their origins rest in rhythmic foundations, the melodic nature is primarily static, and the rhythmic drive of the bass takes precedence over melody. The primary harmonic function of the *tumbao* is to provide the root of each chord. It generally moves in an octave range, either descending or ascending, and will also include the fifth of each chord. Once begun, the note on the fourth beat of the measure will tie over the bar line, and the following tonic will not be played unless specifically indicated or improvised by the player.<sup>4</sup>

#### Example 1 Standard *Tumbao* Pattern



<sup>4</sup> Rebeca Mauleón, *Salsa Guidebook: For Piano and Ensemble*, (Petaluma, CA: Sher Music Co., 1993), 106.

**Example 2** *Tumbao* variation with added chord tones



“Angélica” is a Latin jazz piece as opposed to a Cuban popular piece of music. While the primary function of the bass in Latin jazz is similar to traditional *tumbaos*, the bass lines transcribed from the recording illustrate a different degree of openness and flexibility that a bassist is able to utilize in a Latin jazz style.

**Example 3** Transcribed bass lines from “Angélica”

A-7 G-7

F-7 Bb13(#11b9)

F13sus Ab-9 Db13

When a student listens to and identifies the countless variations that a bass player may choose to play, he or she will stand to gain greater flexibility, ease, and awareness when performing in an idiomatically appropriate nature.

The second selection of the recital is “Reflections” by Thelonious Monk. The 1952 composition first appeared on Monk’s *Thelonious Monk Trio* album for the Prestige label. The author Gary Giddens describes the piece as "classic, paradoxical Monk, beautiful and memorable yet a minefield of odd intervals, each essential to its bricks-and-mortar structure".<sup>5</sup>

The form of the composition is AABA, totaling 32 measures in length. The ‘A’ sections are firmly in the tonic key of Ab major, though they are noted for the repeated use of ascending and descending root motion that connect the standard diatonic progressions. The ‘B’ section features chords moving in fourths before eventually resolving to the piece’s relative minor. The second half of the ‘B’ section contains a disguised cycle\* of chords that leads back to the Ab major harmony that begins the last ‘A’ section.

The selection is presented in a typical jazz piano trio setting of piano, bass, and drum set. The melody is performed on bass by the recitalist. The model for interpreting the melody is the 1959 recording by soprano saxophonist, composer, and bandleader Steve Lacy (1934-2004). Lacy was one of the first fierce advocates for Monk’s compositions, being drawn to their “profound humanity, disciplined economy, balanced virility, dramatic nobility, and innocently exuberant wit.”<sup>6</sup> Lacy performed and recorded Monk’s compositions throughout his prolific career and was known for the deep level of respect for the music as well as the ability to impart a highly personalized aesthetic in his

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<sup>5</sup> Gary Giddens, *Weather Bird: Jazz at the Dawn of its Second Century*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 588.

<sup>6</sup> Jason Weiss, *Steve Lacy: Conversations*, (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2006), 13-14.

interpretations. Lacy's recording was specifically selected due to the subtle flexibility in the way that he states the melody.

**Example 4** "Lead sheet" melody of A section contrasted with transcribed melody of Lacy's version.

The image displays a musical score for the piece "Silver Lacy". It is divided into two parts: a "Lead Sheet" and a transcribed version of the melody. The score is written in 3/4 time with a key signature of two flats (B-flat and E-flat). The lead sheet includes a treble clef staff with a melody line and a bass clef staff with a bass line. The transcribed version follows the same structure but includes a more detailed bass line. The score is organized into six systems, each with a measure number (5, 11, 16, 21, 26) at the beginning. The lead sheet includes a variety of chords such as AbΔ, Cb7, F7, Eb7, Eb7(b9), AbΔ, Bb7, B7, C7, F7, G7(b5), A7, AbΔ, Aø7, Eb7, Eb7, AbΔ, C7(b5), F7, Eb7, Eb7, Ab7, Db7, C7, Db7(11), C7, F-, F7, Bb7(b9), Eb7, Eb7, A7, AbΔ, Cb7, F7, Eb7, Eb7(b9), AbΔ, Bb7, B7, C7, F7, G7(b5), Eb7, A7, AbΔ, G7, and Ab6. The transcribed version includes a more detailed bass line with triplets and other rhythmic patterns.

In addition to demonstrating the melodic capabilities of the bass in a small group jazz ensemble, the recitalist will demonstrate the primary jazz bass performance practice

of “walking” bass lines. A walking bass line establishes legato quarter-note pulse that connects the harmonies of a piece. This harmonic/rhythmic function can be done with devices including diatonic motion, chromaticism, and arpeggios.<sup>7</sup>

**Example 5** walking bass

The musical notation for Example 5 is a walking bass line in bass clef, 4/4 time, and B-flat major. The chords are B $\flat$ -7, E $\flat$ 7, A $\flat$ 7, D $\flat$ 7, C7, and F-7. The bass line consists of quarter notes: B $\flat$ , E $\flat$ , A $\flat$ , D $\flat$ , C, and F.

The next selection to be performed on bass by the recitalist is “Afro-Centric” by jazz saxophonist Joe Henderson. The composition first appeared on the artist’s album *Power to the People*, released on the Milestone record label in 1969. The twenty-six-measure piece displays Henderson’s fondness for irregular phrases and forms. Afro-Centric provides an excellent example of Henderson’s unique compositional approach. The piece eschews conventions found in the jazz literature through its avoidance of standard chord progressions, instead using juxtaposing major seventh chord movements. Arthur Lynn White identifies this as a typical compositional approach that Henderson employed throughout many tunes in his output. He also states that the similarities in harmonic content found in “Afro-Centric” as well as throughout other pieces such as “Jinriksha” and “Gazelle” suggest a format that Henderson was trying to achieve, as he wrote compositions specifically designed to provide an outlet for his own style of

<sup>7</sup> Ronald Carter and Richard Miles, *Teaching Music Through Performance in Jazz*, (Chicago: GIA Publications, 2008), 52.

improvisation.<sup>8</sup> Ron Miller uses “Afro-Centric” as an example of what he defines as the ‘plateau modal’ subgroup of modal harmony. It is characterized by slow harmonic rhythm that is symmetrical in nature, uses mostly non-diatonic root relationships, and lacks a clearly defined home key.<sup>9</sup>

“Afro-Centric” follows the quintet arrangement of the original recording; tenor saxophone, trumpet, piano, bass and drum set. The rhythm section will improvise an introduction of indeterminate length based on the syncopated bass motive that appears in various transformations throughout the piece.

**Example 6** bass motive



The form begins after the horns enter with their opening statement. The melody is played mostly in unison by the tenor saxophone and trumpet, but also features occasional passages of harmonized fourths. The harmonic rhythm is one chord for every four measures for the first twenty measures. The motion increases to one chord each measure for the final six bars. The escalated harmonic rhythm of the final six measures is also

<sup>8</sup> Arthur Lynn White, “Joe Henderson: An analysis of harmony in selected compositions and improvisations” (DMA diss., The University of North Carolina at Greensboro, 2008), 93-94.

<sup>9</sup> Ron Miller, *Modal Jazz Composition and Harmony. Volume 1.* (Mainz, Germany: Advance Music, 2013), 13.

space for one of the horns to briefly solo, leading either to the second iteration of the melody or into the solo section.

The first piece to be performed on drum set by the recitalist is “A Sleepin’ Bee”. The song was one result from the unlikely collaboration between composer Harold Arlen and the author Truman Capote for the 1954 musical *House of Flowers*. The piece uses an interesting ABAB’A’ form of thirty-six bars. The melody is mostly pentatonic with a harmonic structure that remains mostly diatonic. The few exceptions consist of tritone\* or “back-door\*” substitutions for the original, diatonic progressions. The overall melodic construction has a meandering, linear quality that serves as an interesting way of providing forward motion. The piece will be performed by a quartet consisting of alto saxophone, piano, bass, and drums. A rubato introduction of roughly four bars will be performed on solo piano to set up the piece. The melody is played by alto saxophone throughout the tune, referring to the iconic recording by Nancy Wilson and Cannonball Adderley.

Chosen in part to feature a work from an important jazz composer, the piece also highlights the understated yet driving swing drumming of the 1961 album *Nancy Wilson/Cannonball Adderley*. The drummer on the session was Louis Hayes (b. 1937), a prolific jazz artist whose most well-known associations were with Horace Silver’s Quintet, the Cannonball Adderley Quintet, the Oscar Peterson Trio, and a long professional relationship with the great bassist Sam Jones.

Hayes demonstrates quintessential techniques of drum “comping\*”. Comping ideas are designed to accompany and complement both the ride cymbal and the entire

band. Comping is done for a number of reasons including: to enhance the groove; add variety to the time flow; to support or stimulate the soloist; and to respond to ideas played by other band members. The typical trajectory for learning to play jazz drum set involves combining steady ride cymbal and hi-hat patterns with accents played on the snare drum, bass drum, or any combination.

On the recording, Hayes plays with a deep swing feel and his understated comping is extremely effective in driving the music forward. In jazz, the time flow comes from the phrasing of the ride cymbal pattern. The quarter note pulse is paramount, because it gives the music a sense of forward motion.<sup>10</sup> His use of anticipated accents to augment the drive of the ride cymbal is a great example of a practice that drummer Kenny Washington recounts learning from Betty Carter, something she described as “watching your ‘ones’”. From Carter’s perspective, the process of performing offbeat accents to delineate a piece’s harmonic-rhythmic structure assures that the rhythm section keeps its place within the form and “hooks up”. Carter described the anticipated ‘ones’ as something analogous to punctuating different sections of a letter.<sup>11</sup>

The next selection is “Social Call”, a 1955 composition by alto saxophonist/composer Gigi Gryce with lyrics written by Jon Hendricks. The original version was instrumental and was recorded for the Art Farmer album *When Farmer Met Gryce* on May 26, 1955. Less than five months after the original recording, Gryce arranged a new version for a nonet featuring Ernestine Anderson on vocals. The

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<sup>10</sup> John Riley and Dan Thress, *The Art of Bop Drumming*, (New York: Manhattan Music Publications, 1998), 7.

<sup>11</sup> Paul F. Berliner, *Thinking in Jazz: The Infinite Art of Improvisation*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994), 299.



memorable and lyrical melody details a casual visit which the singer hopes might rekindle a relationship. The vocal version became quite popular and within eight months of the first vocal recording, Betty Carter released her own version as did Earl Coleman. The tune remains popular with vocalists to this day.

The piece was arranged for sextet by the recitalist and includes piano, upright bass, drum set, tenor saxophone, trumpet, and a vocalist. The formal structure of the piece is AABA', totaling thirty-four measures in length. The 'A' and 'B' sections are each eight measures, though the last 'A' appears as a variation and features a two-measure extension bringing the total to ten measures. The harmonic content of the composition is primarily diatonic to its key of F major. The 'A' sections are centered in the tonic, though feature extensive use of cycle\* motion and disguised cycle substitutions. The 'B' section first tonicizes Bb major then descends by one whole step and tonicizes Ab major before setting up the transition back to the 'A' sections.

A four-bar horn introduction and a four-bar coda have been added, both of which utilize material from the tune to add unity to the arrangement. The melody is performed by the vocalist throughout the piece, and the horns play comping figures as well as brief melodic interjections that are played mostly in unison or separated by one octave. The drums and bass demonstrate common jazz performance approaches including playing in a "two-feel" and transitioning to walking in 4/4.

The final piece of the first half of the recital is the recitalist's arrangement of a Brazilian choro composition titled "Lamentos". The piece was written by the monumentally important Brazilian composer Alfredo da Rocha Viana, Jr. (better known

by his nickname Pixinguinha) in 1928. The piece was composed after an incident in which Pixinguinha was barred admittance to a hotel in Rio de Janeiro due to segregated entrances. Pixinguinha was at the hotel on an invitation from journalist Assis Chateaubriand for his group, *Os Oito Batutos*, to be honored for their recent successes touring throughout France. As he was lamenting the state of racism and segregation in Brazil he decided to write a melancholic choro and title it “Lamento”. Years later, the famous poet/lyricist Vinicius de Moraes set text to the piece in 1962 which has since become standard.

Choro emerged in the 1860s through a combination of European harmonies, forms and melodic styling and African and native-Brazilian rhythmic elements.<sup>12</sup> Improvisation has always been considered a crucial component in choro, and its relationship to jazz both historically and in the present, has been extensively explored by many researchers including Jason Stanyek<sup>13</sup>, Everton Luiz Loredo de Matos<sup>14</sup>, and Paula Veneziano Valente<sup>15</sup> among many others.

The piece was arranged as a quintet by the recitalist and features accordion, upright bass, mandolin, drum set, and pandeiro\*. The form is AABBA followed by a coda. A four-bar introduction has been added that references the classic recording by mandolinist Jacob do Bandolim on his 1967 album *Vibrações*. The ‘A’ sections are twenty-four

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<sup>12</sup> Julie Koidin, “Benedicto Lacerda and the Golden Age of Choro,” *Luso-Brazilian Review*, Vol. 48, no. 1 (2011): 36.

<sup>13</sup> Jason Stanyek, “Choro do Norte: Improvising the Transregional Roda in the United States,” *Luso-Brazilian Review*, Vol. 48, no. 1 (2011): 100-130.

<sup>14</sup> Everton Luiz Loredo de Matos, “A Trajetória Histórica da Improvisação no Choro: um enfoque de configurações estilísticas e processos de hibridação cultural” (Master’s thesis, Universidade Federal de Goiás, 2012).

<sup>15</sup> Paula Veneziano Valente, “Horizontalidade e verticalidade: os modelos de improvisação de Pixinguinha e K-Ximbinho no choro brasileiro,” *Per Musi*, n.23 (2011): 162-169.

measures in length that begin in the home key of D major before brief tonicizations of E minor, B minor, and F# major. The ‘B’ sections are thirty-two measures in length and are characterized by a device called Contrapuntal Elaboration of Static Harmony (CESH). Jerry Coker notes that CESH is a very common musical device and offers an extensive list of examples throughout the jazz standard repertoire that employ it.<sup>16</sup>

“Lamentos” is an example of possible ways in which a jazz drummer is able to utilize typical Brazilian drum set patterns (samba, bossa-nova). One standard approach that jazz drummers utilize for playing Brazilian genres is to establish the time feel with a steady stream of 16<sup>th</sup> notes on the ride cymbal or hi hat. This practice simulates the forward momentum generated by percussion instruments in a traditional *samba batucada*\* or *escola de samba*\* ensemble.<sup>17</sup>

Brazilian percussion and drum-set performance method texts such as *O Batuque é um privilégio*.<sup>18</sup> and *The Essence of Brazilian Percussion and Drum-Set*.<sup>19</sup> emphasize the assimilation and transference of folkloric Brazilian percussion to the drum-set. Through awareness of the roles in which percussion instruments are used, the drummer can create a greater number of rhythmic options and thusly a more satisfying musical experience.

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<sup>16</sup> Jerry Coker, *Jazz Keyboard for Pianist and Non-Pianists: Class or Individual Study* (Miami, FL: CPP/Belwin, 1991), 43.

<sup>17</sup> Andy Smith, “O Baterista, Contemporary Brazilian Drum-Set: Afro-Brazilian Roots and Current Trends in Contemporary Samba-Jazz Performance Practice” (DM Diss., The University of Indiana, 2014), 60.

<sup>18</sup> Oscar Bolão, *O Batuque é um Privilégio: a percussão na música do Rio de Janeiro* (Rio de Janeiro: Lumiar, 2003).

<sup>19</sup> Ed Uribe, *The Essence of Brazilian Percussion and Drum-set: With Rhythm Section Parts: Rhythms, Songstyles, Techniques, Applications* (Van Nuys, CA: Alfred Music Publishing, 1993).

## PART II. PIANO PERFORMANCES: QUINTET, DUOS, AND TRIOS

The first piece to be presented by the recitalist on piano (his primary instrument) is an original composition titled “Roads”. The instrumentation is acoustic bass, piano, drum set, tenor saxophone, and trumpet. The piece is 18-bars in length is divided into an 8-bar ‘A’ section followed by 10-bar ‘B’ section. The harmonic structure is loosely oriented around a home key of Db major, though it employs extensive use of cycle, disguised cycle, and substitute chords. This is done both to accommodate the melodic content as well as to provide increased harmonic content for the soloists and the tune as a whole.

The piece is selected for the program because it illustrates a few basic compositional devices and how they can be applied to jazz composition. A classic method for creating compositions, at least in the beginning stages, is to devise specific restrictions and parameters for a piece. In the “Jazz Composer’s Companion”, author Gil Goldstein presents many such exercises that limit a component of a composition to a specific scale, pitch set or rhythmic value, among many other examples. “Roads” is a result of such an exercise, with the specific restriction being that all the melody notes belong to the same diminished scale. Goldstein states that “because of their symmetrical structure, these scales are capable of creating a shifting and ambiguous musical impression.” The reason is each symmetrical scale can be transposed to yield identical intervallic structures within the original note collection. Using these scales to create

melodies (as well as harmonies) is a fertile source of musical material for the contemporary composer.<sup>20</sup>

“Roads” is arranged for a quintet (piano, bass, drums, and two horn players). Working within typical instrumentations as the one presented, a pianist can make any number of musical decisions when moving from one soloist to the next to lend distinctiveness to a group’s music. “Pianists constantly determine what emphasis to place on particular rhythmic patterns, where precisely to emphasize repetition and change, when to provide formal markers, and when to withhold them. Like other rhythm sections players, they can vary the accompaniment in relation to a piece’s harmonic-rhythmic section, delineating form at different structural levels.”<sup>21</sup>

The next selection is “It Could Happen to You,” a 1943 composition written by Jimmy Van Heusen with lyrics by Johnny Burke. It first appeared in the 1944 Paramount musical comedy film *And the Angels Sing* and has since become a very popular jazz standard.

Standards are compositions that have become established items in the jazz repertory and include popular songs from early twentieth century, songs from Broadway musicals and Hollywood films, and tunes newly composed by jazz musicians.<sup>22</sup> Part of the impact of a performance based on a standard derives from its familiarity to the listeners, who are better able to appreciate skillful arrangement and inventive improvisation because they know the original work.

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<sup>20</sup> Gil Goldstein, *Jazz Composer’s Companion*, (Mainz, Germany: Advance Music, 2014), 36.

<sup>21</sup> Paul F. Berliner, *Thinking in Jazz: The Infinite Art of Improvisation*, 335.

<sup>22</sup> Robert Witmer, “Standard,” *The New Grove Dictionary of Jazz*, ed. Barry Kernfield (London: Macmillan, 2002), Volume 3: 649-650.

The piece's form is ABAB and is thirty-two measures in length. The harmonic content is primarily derived from the tonic key of Eb. Secondary dominants are regularly used to help connect the diatonic harmonies, and a coloristic substitute of bVII7 for V7 is used at the beginning of each 'B' section. One distinguishing characteristic is the use of ascending root movements at the beginning of the piece, a gesture found in many pieces such as Eubie Blake's "Memories of You".

The tune will be presented as a duo for piano and tenor saxophone. The choice of playing a well-known standard without employing a predetermined arrangement was made to facilitate group improvisation between the two players. Through the heightened state of empathy, improvisers are able not only to respond supportively to each other but are also able to stimulate one another's conception of new ideas that grow directly out of the group's unique conversational interplay.<sup>23</sup> Rewarding interplay depends in the first place upon the improviser's keen aural skills and ability to grasp instantly the other's musical ideas. In a sense, these talents represent the culmination of years of rigorous training begun in students' initial efforts to acquire a jazz vocabulary. In addition to Paul Berliner's landmark work "Thinking in Jazz", Ingrid Monson offers a deep analysis and deconstruction of improvisational interplay through artist interviews and musical examples in her work "Saying Something".<sup>24</sup> Both texts are valuable assets to students, performers, and researchers of jazz and group improvisation.

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<sup>23</sup> Paul F. Berliner, *Thinking in Jazz: The Infinite Art of Improvisation*, 390.

<sup>24</sup> Ingrid Monson, *Saying Something: Jazz Improvisation and Interaction*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996).

The next selection to be presented is “Eric (For Eric Dolphy)”, written by the pianist/composer/jazz educator Geri Allen (1957-2017). The piece first appeared on Allen’s 1985 debut album *The Printmakers* featuring Anthony Cox on bass and Andrew Cyrille on drums and percussion. The recital performance will follow the original and be presented as a typical jazz piano trio of piano, bass, and drums. The unorthodox form begins with a vamp of unique slash chords that contain repeated usage of minor 9th intervals.

**Example 7** “Eric (For Eric Dolphy)” opening vamp

The musical notation shows a four-measure vamp in 3/4 time. The Piano part is written in treble clef and consists of four chords: F9/A $\flat$ , E $\flat$ 2/G $\flat$ , F9/A $\flat$ , and D $\flat$  $\Delta$ 9/C. The Acoustic Bass part is written in bass clef and consists of four notes: B $\flat$ , G $\flat$ , B $\flat$ , and G $\flat$ .

This vamp (V) appears throughout, acting as an interlude between major sections. The form can be thought of as (V)AB(V)A followed by an eight-measure pedal\* that closes the form. The ‘A’ sections are each twelve measures in length and are loosely oriented around B $\flat$  major. Varying levels of dissonance are explored through non-functional harmonic motion that appear to be guided by chromaticism. The ‘B’ sections are ten measures in length. The harmonic rhythm remains constant at mostly one chord for each

bar, but repetition of harmonies appears for the first time and functions to evoke a feeling of brief resolution in contrast to the preceding chromaticism.

After the initial statement of the vamp, a collective improvisation occurs before the form begins. This initial improvisation is indeterminate in nature and is guided by the group regarding length, texture, dynamics, and harmonic content and density. Collective improvisations such as these are “not only products of purely musical concepts, tastes, and technical skills but also products of the group’s distinct modes of social interaction, power relations, and predispositions toward collegiality and compromise.”<sup>25</sup>

The next piece to be performed is “Portrait”, a unique composition by the bassist, composer, arranger, and bandleader Charles Mingus (1922-1979). “Portrait” was an updated version of an earlier composition titled “Inspiration” that was recorded in 1949. Mingus revised the music and wrote lyrics inspired by spiritual conversations with his longtime friend Farwell Taylor. Two takes were recorded at Lennie Tristano’s Manhattan Studio on April 12, 1952 that featured Lee Konitz on alto saxophone, Phyllis Pinkerton on piano, George Koutzen on cello, Charles Mingus on bass, Al Levitt on drums, and Jackie Paris on vocals. One of Mingus’s favorite vocalists was Jackie Paris. Mingus admired him because of his harmonic sophistication, flexibility in phrasing, and clarity of his interpretations. Paris achieved notoriety for being the only singer to tour with the Charlie Parker Quintet, and for being the vocalist selected to introduce the now standard lyrics to Thelonious Monk’s classic “Round Midnight”.

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<sup>25</sup> Paul F. Berliner, *Thinking in Jazz: The Infinite Art of Improvisation*, 430.



“Portrait” can be categorized as one of Mingus’s more abstract compositions owing to its unconventional form, phrase structure, and harmonic movements. The form is ABAC and is thirty-two measures in length. The ‘A’ sections are each eight measures in length and start and end in the tonic key of Db major. The interior of the section employs cycle motion and substitute harmonies in a harmonic rhythm of either two or one chord for each measure.

### Example 8 “Portrait” A section

Example 8 shows the A section of "Portrait" in 4/4 time, key of Db major. The notation is in treble clef. The section is marked 'A' and consists of 8 measures. The chords are: D $\flat$  $\Delta$ , G $\flat$ 13, F7alt, B $\flat$ 7alt, E $\flat$ -9, A $\flat$ 7alt, D $\flat$  $\Delta$ , A $\flat$ 7alt, D13, D $\flat$  $\Delta$ , A $\flat$ 7alt, D13, D $\flat$  $\Delta$ . The melody features triplet rhythms and cycle motion.

The ‘B’ section extrapolates the prevailing idea of harmonic roaming by tonicizing C major, Ab major, and F major before leading back to the ‘A’ section using tritone substitution.

### Example 9 “Portrait” B section

Example 9 shows the B section of "Portrait" in 4/4 time, key of Db major. The notation is in treble clef. The section is marked 'B' and consists of 12 measures. The chords are: D-7, G13, C $\Delta$ , B $\flat$ -11, E $\flat$ 13, A $\flat$  $\Delta$ , G-11, C13, F $\Delta$ , B $\flat$ 7( $\sharp$ 11), E $\flat$ 13, A-7, D13( $\sharp$ 11). The melody features triplet rhythms and tritone substitutions.

The 'C' section shifts between Db minor and Db major before using more disguised cycle motion.

**Example 10** "Portrait" C section

The image shows the C section of the jazz standard "Portrait" in Db minor. The notation is written on a single staff in 4/4 time. The key signature has three flats (Bb, Eb, Ab). The section begins at measure 25, marked with a 'C' in a box. The first four measures are: D7-9 (with a triplet of eighth notes), D7Δ9, D7-9, and D7Δ. The next four measures are: D7-9, Gb13, FΔ9, and BbΔ13. The final four measures are: EbΔ, AbΔ9, AΔ, and D7(b9) D7Δ. The notation includes various chord symbols and rhythmic markings such as triplets and slurs.

The selection will be performed by the recitalist on piano along with Tommy Boynton on vocals. Piano and vocal duos have a long history not only in jazz but in countless musical genres. The duo setting facilitates the opportunity for increased spontaneity and improvisation. The lack of a bassist allows the opportunity for harmonic substitution of the structure, and the absence of a drummer defining the pulse allows for the musicians to greatly alter and vary the rhythmic time and phrasing.

The final selection to be presented is the Chucho Valdes composition "Mambo Influenciado". Chucho Valdes (b.1941) is a Cuban pianist, composer, arranger, and bandleader whose career spans over fifty years. In 1973 he founded the group Irakere, one of the best known and influential Latin-jazz bands of the twentieth century. Irakere achieved massive international success and recognition for their unique fusion of jazz, Cuban popular music, and elements of Yoruba\* and Abakuá\* music. A few years earlier, Valdes formed his first Latin jazz combo comprised of veterans and younger players that

shared interests in Cuban popular music and Northern American jazz. Chucho's first combo focused primarily on recording singles that were quite successful for their time. "Mambo Influenciado" was one of the pieces that the group recorded, based on a twelve-bar minor blues. The piece has become a classic of the Latin jazz repertoire and has been recorded countless times by the composer throughout his career as well as by many other musicians.

The selection will be performed as a trio with piano, upright bass, and drum set. The piece was chosen to demonstrate various approaches that can be employed on Latin-Jazz compositions and their related improvisations. The piece is twelve measures in length and is essentially a minor blues in D minor. An ostinato in the tonic key played by the piano and bass starts the tune and establishes the 2-3 clave rhythmic foundation upon which all the elements of the music are based. The clave is a pattern consisting of two rhythmic figures in a relationship of tension and relaxation<sup>26</sup>. More than a rhythmic pattern, the clave is a "rhythmic-organizing principle," that is the basis from which all the rhythms of son are derived.<sup>27</sup> Following the introduction and presentation of the melody, the piano and bass will both improvise over the form. After a recapitulation of the melody, a coda rounds out the performance to incorporate features from Cuban popular music (in the form of piano montunos) superimposed by drum set improvisation.

This recital will demonstrate a variety of skills acquired and developed over the course of study at the University of Northern Iowa as applied to a performance setting.

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<sup>26</sup> Rebeca Mauleón, *Salsa Guidebook: For Piano and Ensemble*, 47.

<sup>27</sup> Christopher Washburne, "The Clave of Jazz" A Caribbean Contribution to the Rhythmic Foundation of an African-American Music," *Black Music Research Journal* Vol. 17, no.1 (Spring 1997): 61.

These skills establish a strong foundation in jazz pedagogy and practice that I will continue to utilize and develop as an educator and performing artist.

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## GLOSSARY OF SPECIAL TERMS

**Abakuá:** the music and dance of the Abakuá sect, an “Afro-Cuban secret male society derived from those prevalent in the Calabar region (southeastern Nigeria and western Cameroon) of West Africa.”<sup>28</sup>

**Back-door substitution:** a harmonic substitution in which a ii-7 V7 is substituted with a ii-7 V7 one minor third above the original.

**Comping:** “refers to the rhythmic presentation of harmonies in relationship to the soloist or the written theme of an arrangement.”<sup>29</sup>

**Cycle:** in a harmonic progression, root movements of ascending fourths or descending fifths towards a given target.

**Disguised cycle:** working backwards from “target chord” using any combination of cycle approaches (including tritone and minor third relationships).

**Escola de samba:** the music played by samba schools that is closely associated with the annual Carnival parades.

**Guaguancó:** “one of three styles of Cuban rumba, featuring a heightened polyrhythmic structure, and danced by male-female couples (in its traditional folkloric setting).”<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> Leonardo Acosta, *Cubano Be Cubano Bop: One Hundred Years of Jazz in Cuba*, 265.

<sup>29</sup> Ingrid Monson, *Saying Something: Jazz Improvisation and Interaction*, 43-44.

<sup>30</sup> Rebeca Mauleón, *Salsa Guidebook: For Piano and Ensemble*, 255.

**Mambo:** “an up-tempo dance style, developed through the Forties and Fifties, that blended several elements of North American instrumentation and harmony with elements of the *son* and other Cuban genres.”<sup>31</sup>

**Pandeiro:** a small Brazilian frame drum that is similar to a tambourine.

**Pedal:** a moment in a performance or piece where a single pitch is emphasized by the bass voice.

**Planing:** parallel motion of chords.

**Samba batucada:** A style of Brazilian samba that is played by percussion ensembles.

**Son:** a highly syncretic genre of Afro-Cuban dance music that demonstrates the fusion of both African and European elements.<sup>32</sup>

**Sus9:** a chord spelled using the scale degrees 1-4-5-b7-9.

**Tritone substitution:** a common harmonic substitution where one or both chords in a ii-7 V7 progression with one or both chords of the ii-7 V7 located a tritone away.

**Yoruba:** “name given in the early twentieth century to a group of related tribes from southwestern Nigeria, including Iyesá, Oyo, Ijebu, and Egba; said to be the origins of the Lucumi religion, language, and other cultural practices.”<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> Leonardo Acosta, *Cubano Be Cubano Bop: One Hundred Years of Jazz in Cuba*, 267.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, 269.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, 270.



*School of Music*  
**University of Northern Iowa**

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presents

Nicholas Leo, Piano, Bass, Drums  
In a Graduate Recital

assisted by:

*Tommy Boynton, vocals*

*Rayne Vitorino Dias, piano, accordion*

*Robert Espe, saxophone, mandolin*

*Ryan Garmoe, trumpet*

*Christopher Jensen, drums*

*Eric Krieger, bass*

*Heather Leo, pandeiro*

In partial fulfillment of the requirement  
for the Master of Music degree in Jazz Pedagogy  
From the Studio of Christopher Merz

Angélica	Emiliano Salvador (1951-1992)
Reflections	Thelonious Monk (1917-1982)
Afro-Centric	Joe Henderson (1937-2001)
A Sleepin' Bee	Harold Arlen (1905-1986)
Social Call	Gigi Gryce (1925-1983)
Lamentos	Alfredo da Rocha Viana, Jr. (1897-1973)
Roads	Nick Leo (b. 1985)
It Could Happen to You	Jimmy Van Heusen (1913-1990)
Eric (For Eric Dolphy)	Geri Allen (1957-2017)
Portrait	Charles Mingus (1922-1979)
Mambo Influenciado	Chucho Valdés (b. 1941)