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## The Double Bass as a Supportive and Melodic Instrument in a Jazz Piano Trio: Extended Program Notes for Thesis Recital

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## FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY

Miami, Florida

# THE DOUBLE BASS AS A SUPPORTIVE AND MELODIC INSTRUMENT IN A $\mbox{JAZZ PIANO TRIO:}$

## EXTENDED PROGRAM NOTES FOR THESIS RECITAL

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of MASTER OF MUSIC

by

Kai Sanchez

2012

To: Dean Brian Schriner College of Architecture and the Arts

This thesis, written by Kai Sanchez and entitled The Double Bass as a Supportive and Melodic Instrument in a Jazz Piano Trio: Extended Program Notes for Thesis Recital, having been approved in respect to style and intellectual content, is referred to you for judgment.

We have read this thesis and recommend	d that it be approved.
	Michael Orta
	Karen Seoane Fuller
	Gary Campbell, Major Professor
Date of Defense: March 24, 2012	
The thesis of Kai Sanchez is approved.	
	Dean Brian Schriner College of Architecture and the Arts
	Dean Lakshmi N. Reddi University Graduate School

Florida International University, 2012

#### ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS

# THE DOUBLE BASS AS A SUPPORTIVE AND MELODIC INSTRUMENT IN A JAZZ PIANO TRIO:

#### EXTENDED PROGRAM NOTES FOR THESIS RECITAL

by

#### Kai Sanchez

#### Florida International University, 2012

#### Miami, Florida

#### Professor Gary Campbell, Major Professor

This thesis presents a recording of seven jazz compositions as performed in the author's Master's Recital on March 24, 2012. One of the compositions is my own, and four others are my own arrangements. The present paper includes scores of the original compositions and arrangements as well as program notes that offer historical background, summaries of the form, and observations on performance practice for each selection. I have sought to explore systematically explore the multiple roles of the double bass as a functional, supportive, and melodic instrument in a jazz piano trio. The seven compositions present the full range of challenges the double bassist must face in a small group setting. I explore different approaches and musical concepts that enable a high level of improvised music performance, without disregarding its ties to tradition.

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#### I. INTRODUCTION

Double bass technique in the jazz idiom has evolved tremendously in recent decades. In comparison, classical bass technique, while both challenging and effective, has been largely in place for over a century. If one compares the first pioneers of jazz bass, like Jimmy Blanton, Slam Stewart, or Oscar Pettiford, all of them innovators from the mid-1930s through the mid-1940s, then fast forwards twenty or thirty years to groundbreaking bassists such as Ray Brown, Scott La Faro, or Eddie Gomez, it is impossible to not be awestruck by the advances these musicians have achieved in so many areas of jazz bass performance and in so brief a period.

One common ground all these bassists share is their respect and profound understanding of jazz traditions. They all have invested hours absorbing the DNA, as it were, of jazz, by learning bass lines, solos, and all sorts of musical inflections from their predecessors. Even though all the masters have a different approach that makes each one of them unique, strong ties to their roots are always audible in their playing.

This Master's Recital demonstrates how one can perform a variety of styles or "grooves" in an original manner without severing traditional ties. I accomplish this by emphasizing the importance of playing with a strong feel and mature tone, by infusing solos with rich melodic and rhythmic content, and most importantly, by careful listening. By *listening*, I mean purposely focusing on what others are playing and allowing the collaborative process to influence my musical choices as I improvise.

#### II. UP JUMPED SPRING

#### ABOUT THE COMPOSER

Freddie Hubbard was born in 1938, in Indianapolis. He is considered one of the most important jazz trumpet players to follow in Clifford Brown's footsteps. Upon arriving to New York in 1959, he participated as a sideman in many recordings that went on to become classic, ground-breaking jazz albums. In 1962 he recorded one of his best albums as a leader, *The Artistry of Freddie Hubbard* on Impulse! Records (Shadwick, 2001, 9).

#### ABOUT THE SONG

"Up Jumped Spring" is a jazz waltz that has become part of the jazz standards repertoire. It is in AABA form; each A section is sixteen measures long, and the B section, or bridge, is eight measures long. This tune was recorded by Art Blakey on the album *Three Blind Mice* and on Hubbard's album *Backlash* (Sher 1988, 426).

#### PERFORMANCE ASPECTS

The piano takes the melody while the bass and drums accompany with a broken feel, or "in 2," as it is known in the jazz idiom. The bass takes the first solo, followed by a piano solo, after which the piano plays the melody once more to end the song. During the piano solo, the bass continues with the broken feel, eventually switching to a walking bass line, this device adding a propulsive intensity to the solo. The A section is refreshed upon its final return with a new harmonization: in the first measure, an A-flat Lydian dominant replaces a B-flat major seventh, and in the third measure, a G-flat half-diminished seventh replaces a C minor seventh.

#### III. KEITH

#### ABOUT THE COMPOSER

Pianist Mike Levine is a man of many talents whose career blends different aspects of music. He attended the University of Miami where he studied piano with Vince Maggio. At the University of Miami, Mike formed a group with sax player Billy Ross. They released their first album, *That Summer Something*, in 1981, featuring Pat Metheny as a guest artist. Mike wrote the majority of the band's compositions. The recording earned national recognition for them and stayed on the top ten contemporary jazz (AOR) charts for six weeks. Subsequently they recorded *Humidity*, which also did well. The Ross-Levine Band was the opening act for Michael Franks, Gato Barberi, Dionne Warwick, and many others.

Levine can be heard on the following recordings: Michael Bolton's *Vintage*, Jaco Pastorius Big Band's *Word of Mouth Revisited* and *The Word is Out*, Ed Calle's Sunset *Harbor* and *Double Talk*, Billy Ross's *The Sound* and *Woody*, and Duffy Jackson's *Swing, Swing*.

#### ABOUT THE SONG

This tune was inspired by early recordings guitarist Pat Metheny made for the ECM label. The composer also drew inspiration from the writing and playing style of pianist Keith Jarrett; as the title implies, this song is dedicated to him. This song is in AABA form with a four-measure vamp that follows the melody's last rendition.

#### PERFORMANCE ASPECTS

We performed this song in the style of early Pat Metheny recordings, with a straight eighth-note feel, the drummer playing a cross-stick pattern on each quarter note, combined with a sixteenth–sixteenth–eighth rhythm on the ride cymbal. The bass plays straight eighth notes, in a syncopated style between bossa nova and rock. The most common bass pattern used in this style is a 4/4 measure in the following rhythm: dotted quarter note—eighth-tied-to-dotted-quarter—eighth note. Obviously, any other rhythmic ideas are allowed, depending on the context and on what the other instruments are playing. The piano plays the melody and the first solo. The bass takes the second solo. After the melody is played the second time, there is a four-measure vamp over which the drummer solos; the ending is on cue.

#### IV. MY ONE AND ONLY LOVE

#### ABOUT THE COMPOSER

Guy Wood was born on July 24, 1911, in Manchester, England. He moved to the US in the early 1930s. He worked for Paramount and Columbia Pictures for five years until he led his own band from 1939 until 1942. His credits as songwriter included such charts as "After All," "Till Then," and "Shoo-Fly Pie and Apple Pan Dowdy." He also wrote the theme for the children's television show *Captain Kangaroo*. Guy Wood died on February 23, 2001.

#### ABOUT THE SONG

"My One and Only Love" is a ballad belonging to the American Songbook repertoire, written by Guy Wood with lyrics by Robert Mellin. This song was recorded by Frank Sinatra in 1953 in an album titled *I've Got the World on a String*, and also by John Coltrane with singer Johnny Hartman on the album *John Coltrane and Johnny Hartman*. The song's melodic range is wide, featuring large intervallic leaps. The counterpointing of a descending bass line against an ascending melody in the A sections create beautiful contrary motion. It is in a thirty-two-bar AABA song form.

#### PERFORMANCE ASPECTS

This song is performed as a solo piece for double bass. I play the melody both *rubato* and *a Tempo*, employing various technical devices such as double stops and natural harmonics wherever taste and the instrument's limitations allow it. After playing the melody, I play a solo on the first two A sections, then the melody for the second time beginning at the bridge.

#### V. HOW DEEP IS THE OCEAN?

#### ABOUT THE COMPOSER

Irving Berlin was born on May 11, 1888. Originally named Isidore Baline, he was born in Mohilev, Russia, to Jewish parents who immigrated to the United States, escaping from the anti-Semitic atmosphere of Czarist Russia. On September 13, 1893, the Balines arrived at the port of New York on a transatlantic passenger ship. Irving Berlin began his career singing in saloons and vaudeville theaters, eventually working as a singing waiter at a bar in Chinatown called the Pelhalm Café. It was there that he had his first hand at writing the lyrics to "Marie from Sunny Italy." This, song as well as many others on which he collaborated as a lyricist, had very little or no success, but he was learning his craft and on his way to becoming a composer. He had his first hit tune in 1911, with a ragtime called "Alexander's Ragtime Band" (Bergreen, 1990, 9).

#### ABOUT THE SONG

"How Deep is the Ocean" was a hit in 1932 (Bergreen, 1990, 306). It is a love song featuring the long, lyrical phrases typical of popular song in the 1930s. The lyrics answer the question "How much I love you?" with a series of other questions ("How Deep is The Ocean?"; "How High is The Sky?"). The minor key at the beginning creates a tension that at the end is released with a modulation to the relative major key.

#### PERFORMANCE ASPECTS

This song will be performed by a piano and bass duo. Absent the sonic footprint of the drums, the bass sounds with more clarity but at the same time must assume responsibility for keeping time and projecting the overall feel. The song is performed in swing style. The bass accompanies starting with a two-beat feel and then in a walking

bass line style. The bass will play the melody the first time, followed by piano and bass solos, then four-bar trades between the piano and bass; finally, the piano plays the melody out.

#### VI. SERENITY

#### ABOUT THE COMPOSER

Kai Sanchez was born in Maracaibo, Venezuela. In 1992 he began attending his hometown Conservatory Jose Luis Paz, where he studied music theory and double bass with Roberto Di Mazo and Maciej Zlotkowski, respectively. At the end of 1995, Kai moved to the United States and in 1996 began attending Miami-Dade Community College. He later switched to the School of Music at the University of Miami, where in 2001 he earned the Bachelor of Music with an emphasis in Jazz Performance. Since then, he has resided in Miami, studying with Vincent Bredice, Don Coffman, Nicky Orta, Matt Bonelli, and Jamie Ousley.

Kai's extraordinary versatility with musical styles has enabled him to perform with many artists in a variety of genres on the double bass as well as on the bass guitar. In the jazz idiom, Kai has performed with such artists as Dave Valentin, Ira Sullivan, Randy Brecker, Richie Cole, Johnny Rodgers, Nicole Henry, Jim Snidero, Phillip Strange, Nestor Torres, and The Harry James Orchestra. In the Pop and Latin genre, Kai has recorded and performed with a long list of artists that includes Engelbert Humperdinck, Los Bacilos, Rey Ruiz, and Francisco Cespedes. He has earned two Grammy Awards and one nomination as a recording musician in albums by Latin pop music artists Willy Chirino and Johnny Ventura. Kai has participated in many musical theatre productions, including Carly Simon's *Romulus Hunt* and *13*. He has also worked for television shows and recorded commercial jingles.

#### ABOUT THE SONG

"Serenity" is a song in the ECM style. This style is attributed to compositions reminiscent of recordings from the European jazz label ECM. The melody is sparse, with long sustained notes, while the harmonic rhythm is highly active. The song consists of 26 measures, divided in two sections. The first, 12-measure section consists of two phrases (6 + 6), the second responding to or resolving the first. The second section is a 10-measure phrase, extended by means of holding the last note of the melody for an extra four bars, where the last note holds for an extra four measures over further chord changes.

#### PERFORMANCE ASPECTS

This song could be performed with a straight eighth-note feel. The melody is played by the piano, with the drummer providing subtle colors by using brushes and cymbal swells. The bass takes on a supportive and conversational role, or broken style. After the piano solo the melody is played again, ending the song.

#### VII. JACO

#### ABOUT THE COMPOSER

Mike Levine has performed at the Aruba Jazz Festival with saxophonist Ed Calle and singer Dana Paul. He has played at both the Reading Jazz Festival and the Detroit Jazz Festival as a member of the Jaco Pastorius Big Band. His many performing credits include backing up the following artists: Tom Scott, Michael Brecker, Toots Thielman, Stanley Turrentine, Nat Adderly, Randy Brecker and Ira Sullivan. Mike was also a sideman for saxophonist Marc Colby on tour, opening for Hubert Laws and Hank Crawford. He accompanied female jazz vocalist Dee Daniels with the Palm Beach Pops Orchestra. Levine had a weeklong trio engagement with Mel Torme at Bubba's, the former Fort Lauderdale Jazz Club. He worked on the *Sabado Gigante* and *Don Fransisco Presenta* television programs, two highly-rated, internationally acclaimed Hispanic shows.

As a producer, Mike earned a 2002 Grammy Nomination in the category Latin Pop Instrumental. In the summer of 2007, Levine performed at the Syracuse and Montreal Jazz Festivals with the Jaco Pastorius Big Band. At the Amelia Island Jazz Festival, October 2007, Mike was one of the featured artists. Mike has recently released his CD *From the Heart*, which features Hiram Bullock and Ed Calle as guest artists.

#### ABOUT THE SONG

This song was inspired by Jaco Pastorius' writing style. Jaco Pastorius was a jazz musician who revolutionized the electric bass guitar (Roberts, 2001, 131). For example, there are two dominant chords, a descending minor third apart, reminiscent of some of the composing devices Pastorius would use (see mm. 39–40).

#### PERFORMANCE ASPECTS

This song will be performed with a backbeat feel characteristic of Old Soul and Rhythm-and-Blues recordings. The bass plays in an energetic rock bass style, ECM style, or broken feel emphasizing straight eighth notes. The piece begins with a four-bar introductory vamp, over whose chord changes the piano improvises before playing the melody. The bass will play the melody at the bridge section for the first iteration of the form only. After the piano solos, the bass will solo for the first two A sections. Then, the piano will continue by playing the melody in the bridge section and the last A section, ending with the four-bar introductory vamp.

#### VIII. CUTE

#### ABOUT THE COMPOSER

Neal Paul Hefti was born on October 29, 1922 in Hastings, Nebraska. He played trumpet and composed and arranged many tunes for Woody Herman, Count Basie, Harry James, Tommy Dorsey, Tony Bennett, and Barbara Streisand, among many others. Some of the songs he wrote are the following: "Lil' Darlin," "Girl Talk," "Cherry Point," "Cute," and a string of television themes, including those for *Batman* and *The Odd Couple*.

#### ABOUT THE SONG

"Cute" is a standard jazz tune written and arranged in the 1950s by Hefti for the Count Basie Orchestra. Count Basie recorded it for the first time on the 1958 album *Basie plays Hefti*. The tune is written to feature the drum; its multiple rests allow the drummer to improvise fills. Lionel Hampton, Jimmy McGriff, Oscar Peterson, Dexter Gordon, and Willie Bobo, Benny Green, and many others have recorded "Cute."

#### PERFORMANCE ASPECTS

I transcribed Benny Green's own arrangement of "Cute." He recorded this tune on his 1991 album *Greens*. I perform Green's arrangement as he recorded it. The melody is followed by a *pizzicato* bass solo (unlike the recording, on which bassist Christian McBride performed with a bow). After the *pizzicato* passage, there is a drum solo accompanied by cleverly placed riffs played simultaneously by the piano, bass, and drums, followed by eight-bar trades between the piano and the drums. Finally, the piano takes his solo before returning to the melody.

## LIST OF REFERENCES

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## APPENDIX: LEAD SHEETS AND SCORES







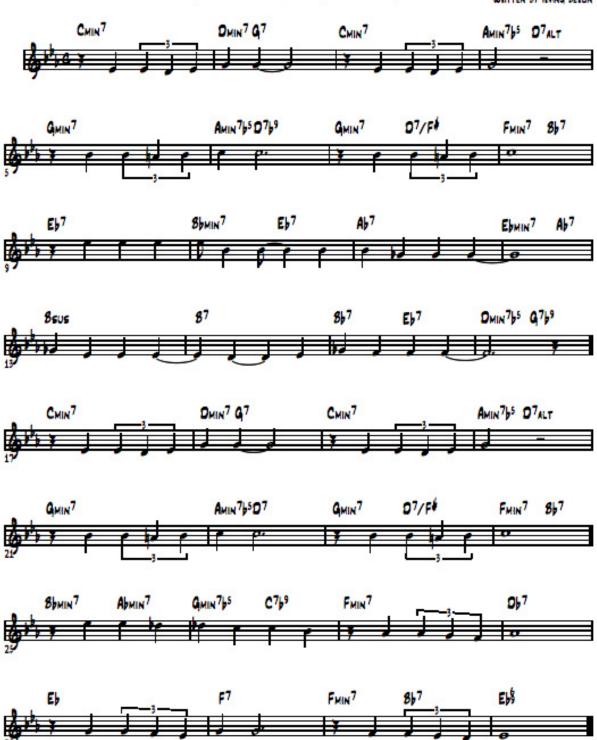
## MY ONE AND ONLY LOVE

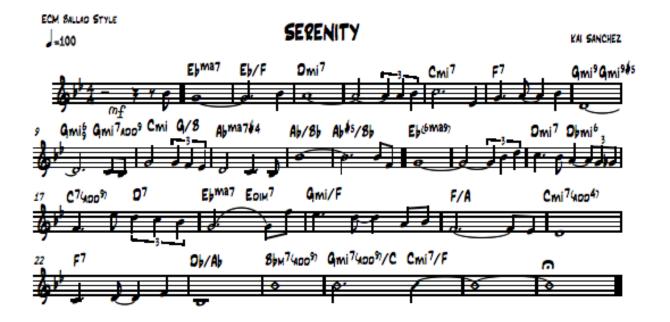
WRITTEN BY QUY WOOD

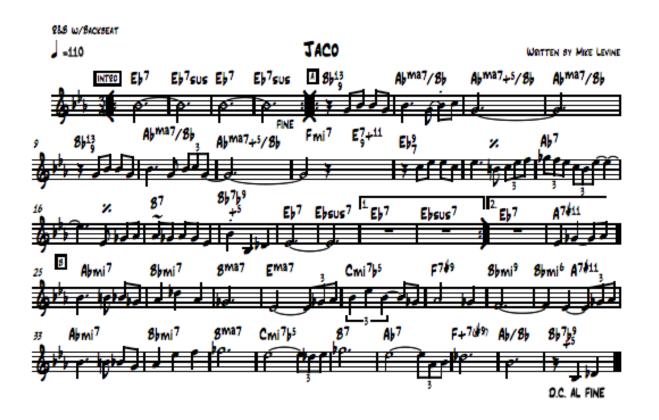


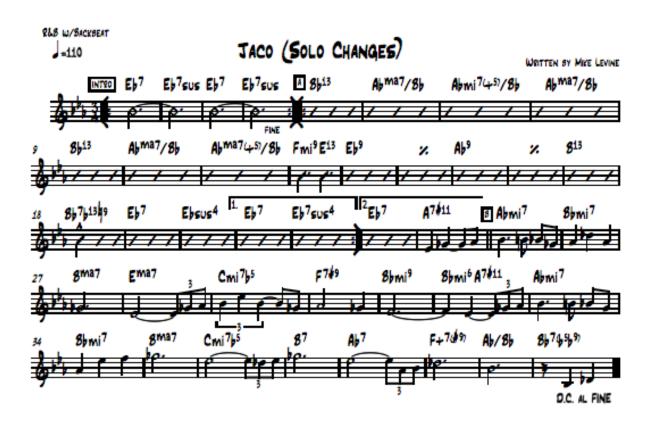
## HOW DEEP IS THE OCEAN

WRITTEN BY IRVING BERUN











WRITTEN BY NEAL HEFTI AS PLAYED BY BENNY GREEN









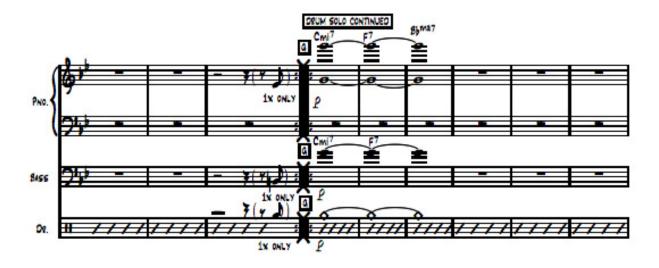


















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