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An Application of the Musical Style of Jazz Saxophone to the Double Bass

By Gareth Hill

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment of requirements for the degree of

Masters of Philosophy (Music)
In Jazz Performance

School of Music
Australian National University

2008
Declaration

The contents of this dissertation are the result of my original work, except where stated and it has not been submitted, fully or in part, for any other course at this or any other institution.

Gareth Hill, 2008
Acknowledgements

There are a number of people that have helped make this dissertation possible. First and foremost, I would like to acknowledge my two supervisors Stephen Wild and Eric Ajaye. Stephen guided me through the involved process of developing a formal research project and Eric, as my mentor for some time now, has helped me to maintain a strong practical basis in my work. Max Mcbride has also been an important mentor for me; the tuition he has given me has been invaluable in my development as a musician. I would also like to thank the jazz faculty at the ANU School of Music for providing an accepting environment for my project, in particular Mike Price and John Mackey. Generously, I was lent resources from many peoples’ private collections. I thank Colin Hoorweg, Jarrah Jones and Aron Lyon for this. Last but not least, I am indebted to my parents, Jane Keany and Anthony Hill, and my partner Dom Chaseling for their unwavering support.
Abstract

The aim of this dissertation is to explore improvising on the double bass through an investigation of the improvised solos of prominent jazz saxophonists. This involves a melodically focused analysis of solos of Charlie Parker, Dexter Gordon, Sonny Rollins, Joe Henderson, Oliver Nelson and Eric Dolphy. My melodic analysis is in aid of furthering my melodic concept on the double bass and consists largely of analysis in three areas: intervallic content, phrasing and melodic devices. It is through this process that I hope to develop techniques for the double bass and further my own concept for improvising. The disparity between saxophone and the double bass means that there is much to be gained from transferring ideas from each instrument. There are differences in dexterity, phrasing abilities and acoustics that have allowed the saxophone to develop an improvising style entirely different to that of many double bassists. While saxophonists I enjoy, solo in an exciting and complex way, my soloing on the double bass is generally slower, less melodic and lacking in intensity and concept. I believe that this study can give great insights into my playing as well as creating a model which may be used by others to develop their own improvising on the double bass.
Contents

Acknowledgements iii
Abstract iv
Contents v
List of examples vi

Chapter 1
Introduction 1

Chapter 2
Saxophone vs. Double Bass: Construction, Technique and Sound 6

Chapter 3
Analysis of the Saxophone Style 16
Charlie Parker
Eric Dolphy
Oliver Nelson
Dexter Gordon
Joe Henderson
Sonny Rollins
The Saxophone Style

Chapter 4
Application of the Saxophone Style to the Double Bass 60
Melodic Devices
Intervallic Content
Phrasing
Structural Concepts
Brian Bromberg

Chapter 5
Conclusion 83

References Cited 87

Appendix A
Complete Transcriptions including bass clef versions

Appendix B
Bass clef examples from Chapter 3

Appendix C
Further exercises for double bass
List of Examples

Chapter 3

Charlie Parker

Example 1: Use of arpeggiated movement 21
Example 2: Use of stepwise movement 21
Example 3: Use of chromatic movement 21
Example 4: Two note slurring 22
Example 5: Phrasing pattern 23
Example 6: Phrase from B section of Chorus 1 24

Eric Dolphy

Example 7: Intervallic content 27
Example 8: Large intervals 28
Example 9: Directed slurred runs 28
Example 10: Semiquaver note grouping 28
Example 11: A melodic phrase exhibiting slower rhythms 28

Oliver Nelson

Example 12: Transformation of Dolphy’s last phrase 32
Example 13: Sequencing 32
Example 14: Sequencing by octave – Intervallic inversion 33
Example 15: Sequencing 34
Example 16: Sequenced glissandi 34
Example 17: Melodic development 36
Example 18: Melodic development 36

**Dexter Gordon**

Example 19: Limited use of stepwise and arpeggiated movement 41
Example 20: Use of pentatonic movement 41
Example 21: Sequencing, Repetition with variation, Sustained repetition 42

**Joe Henderson**

Example 22: Opening phrases 45
Example 23: Off Beat Quaver Passage 45
Example 24: Sequencing 46
Example 25: Stepwise Motion 47

**Sonny Rollins**

Example 26: Creative Repetition 50
Example 27: Rhythmic Displacement 52

**Chapter 4**

**Melodic Devices**

Example 28: Examples of exercises for the development of sequencing 63
Example 29: Exercises for repetition 66

**Intervallic Content**

Example 30: Variation in fingering of F major 68
Example 31: Fingering variations for G minor seven arpeggio 69
Example 32: Composed large interval phrase 70
Phrasing

Example 33: Fingering style for a three note slur 73
Example 34: Slurring patterns 73

Brian Bromberg

Example 35: Intervallic content 80
Example 36: Slurring examples 81
Example 37: Sequencing 82
Example 38: Rhythmic repetition 82
Example 39: Creative melodic development 82