

Transcribed and Edited by **HOWARD BRUBECK**

# DELUXE PIANO ALBUM **DAVE BRUBECK**

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\*Note: Due to copyright restrictions, the following selections from the record album do not appear in this book: PENNIES FROM HEAVEN, FOR ALL WE KNOW and ST. LOUIS BLUES.



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# NOTES ON PERFORMANCE

By Howard Brubeck

**BOSSA NOVA U.S.A.** uses a tune which Dave wrote long before the current flurry of Bossa Nova tunes. For some unknown reason, the tune remained unused until Dave fitted it with the new rhythm which came to popularity in 1962. The rhythm of the "new" Bossa is usually spread over two measures of eighth notes, with accents falling on the 1st, 4th, 7th, 11th and 14th eighths. In the piano transcription, it was not possible to have this rhythm continuously expressed, due to the natural limitations of piano technique. However, much of the Bossa Nova rhythm **feeling** is conveyed in the composite rhythm which results from the interplay between the melody and the accompaniment. The composition should be played with the lightness and sensitivity which are characteristic of the essence of Latin American music.

**SOUTHERN SCENE** has been performed in other recordings, but this is the first published version for piano solo. It contains expressive concepts which have become idiomatic in jazz. This is particularly true in the introduction and in the coda, which is based on the same material. In this composition there is a quality which reminds one of a simple story being told in a simple, intimate manner. The years which separate the story teller from his grandchild have been rich in experience, and perhaps a little hard. He has seen much and been an acute observer. But along with his wariness has come a capacity for faith and tenderness. In the recording, the beat is kept steady. In this solo version it may be quite valid to give more latitude to the expression of the performer's feelings by means of careful rubato. The pedal should be used freely in order to build resonance in the broader passages. The published material is taken from Dave's opening and closing sections, and follows rather exactly the Carnegie Hall performance.

**THREE TO GET READY** uses not only three-beat measures, but three-measure phrases — both of which are not the usual procedure in jazz. Also out of the ordinary is the use of two measures of 3/4 meter in alternation with two measures of 4/4 meter, which is the rhythmic pattern of the improvisation sections. The eighth notes should be played evenly, with the triplet feeling given to groups of dotted eighths and sixteenths.

**ELEVEN FOUR**, as in the case of many of Dave's tunes in unusual meters, takes its name from the actual meter used. As with TAKE FIVE, the ostinato rhythm in the accompaniment is kept going throughout the composition, and in doing so, it clearly expresses the subdivision of the meter into groups of 3+2+3+3 in each measure.

**KING FOR A DAY** has been claimed, more or less, by Gene Wright as his personal vehicle for Bass solos in the Quartet's concerts. In the Carnegie Hall album, the piano plays a role which is important but not significant as solo material. Since KING FOR A DAY has not been previously published as a piano solo, a brief version is contained in this collection. A piano-vocal arrangement of it is published in THE REAL AMBASSADORS, by Dave and Lola Brubeck. A vocal and instrumental version featuring Louis Armstrong may be heard in the Columbia Records album, THE REAL AMBASSADORS, (OL 5850 and OS 2250).

**CASTILIAN DRUMS**, as the name implies, is primarily a drum solo for Joe Morello. The version given here is taken from other improvisations on this material by Dave. It is not so complex as the Carnegie Hall performance, and is included here to give the pianist who may not have acquired technical proficiency an opportunity to play the composition. Unique in this piece is the use of 5/4 meter as the basis for a rhythmic pattern which generates the Latino feeling.

**IT'S A RAGGY WALTZ**, in Dave's words, "is neither rag nor typical waltz, but a rhythmic combination of both stated in 12-bar 'Blues' form, with an added B section, or bridge." The performer will find this composition an interesting link between the old and the new use of shifting accents, when such devices as **hemiola** and **secondary rag** (the former is a classic 18th century device; the latter is from 20th century popular music) come together in a jazz work.

**BLUE RONDO A LA TURK** takes its title from three important aspects of the composition. The improvised sections which follow the initial theme are in the traditional 12-bar "Blues" form. The harmonic structure uses a variation of the traditional "Blues" pattern. The form of the composition is sectional and clearly shows its derivation from the classic Rondo. The unusual rhythmic pattern, expressed in 9/8 meter, is a native of Turkey, where it is often used to accompany highly animated folk dancing. In playing the 9/8 sections, be careful to keep the eighth note values equal — avoid playing the last three notes in the measure as a triplet group.

**TAKE FIVE** may well be the first composition in 5/4 meter to gain the kind of public acceptance which transforms a popular tune into a "standard." The rhythmic ostinato, which Dave has supplied to Paul's saxophone melody, generates a near-hypnotic swing. It should always be played with a triplet feeling and, when not heard alone, should be kept below the melodic lines in dynamic value.

**CANTIGA NOVA SWING (Swing A New Song)** is an up-tempo jazz tune with a South American influence. The bridge, especially, has the parallel harmonic chord progressions often found in Spanish or south-of-the-border music. The idea of a theme and variations lends itself admirably to this type of piece, and it is most interesting to follow the melodic and harmonic developments arising out of the various treatments the theme undergoes at Dave's hands.

**SUMMER SONG** is one of Dave's greatest tunes. The version in the present collection is taken from the first recording by Dave and the Quartet in *JAZZ IMPRESSIONS OF THE U.S.A.* (CL 984). It later appeared in the musical production *THE REAL AMBASSADORS* (OL 5850/OS 2250) by Dave and Lola Brubeck, in which the moving lyrics of Dave and Lola are sung by Louis Armstrong in sensitive evocation of "... peaceful golden summers away from the city". Yet another setting of **SUMMER SONG** is heard in the album *BRANDENBURG GATE REVISITED* (CS 8763/CL 1963) in which the Dave Brubeck Quartet is backed by full orchestra arranged by Howard Brubeck. No doubt there will be many more recordings. The first theme statement is taken from Dave's initial free rubato performance in the recording. It is followed by two improvisations in steady tempo except for the free concluding section.

**WALTZ LIMP** is taken from a ballet score, *THE MAIDEN IN THE TOWER*, in which varying meter signatures are used to portray certain characters. 3/4 meter is used for the Heroine, who in this particular dance has lost her shoe — thus the title. Actually, 2/4 meter is used to a great extent in this composition. At the start of the work, during the initial thematic statement, the melody is in 3/4 meter while the accompaniment is expressed in 2/4 meter — the duplets used in the left hand part indicate the two-against-three pattern. In the first and second improvisations, the accompaniment remains duple while the melodic part changes at will from duple to triple. In the final two improvisation sections, the piano part adheres to duple meter. Here one must realize that the waltz rhythm, maintained by the drums in the recording, is left to the imagination of the performer, or perhaps to the foot tapping of a cooperative listener. The composition uses the form of the twelve-bar blues, with a harmonic pattern which is derived from the usual blues progression.

**STRANGE MEADOW LARK** is another example of Dave at his lyric best. In the recorded version from which this is taken (*TIME OUT* — CS 8192/CS 1397), Dave plays the first full chorus and the end of the last chorus as a piano solo. In these sections he exercises the full freedom which is his when playing unaccompanied, and gives the performance all the nuances of expression which are possible when a free rubato is used. This work has a very special feature from the standpoint of form which sets it apart from the usual ballad form. It is not Dave's only excursion into unusual forms in jazz, but it is the only case in the present collection in which this particular form is used. Instead of the usual plan of 32 measures divided into four groups of 8 measures each — the most frequently employed ballad form — the initial theme is stated in a chorus consisting of 50 measures with an additional two measure extension to lead to the 1st improvisation section. Where traditional form employs a "period" of eight measures divided into two four-measure "phrases", **MEADOW LARK** takes its first flight with a ten-measure period consisting of a four-measure and a six-measure phrase. After the expected repetition, the "bridge" or "release" is heard in the usual place and in the usual 8-measure plan. However, there is yet another flight to be observed at this point in the composition: the bridge is repeated. The bridge repetition is not quite note-for-note; the opening two notes are changed. The fourth period is twice kept from closing to extend it to 16 measures. All of the first improvisation and all except the last of the second improvisation use the normal steady beat of jazz. In them, Dave often alludes to the original melody, but manages some very deft variations on the melody. The Meadow Lark flies in some strange patterns!

**BLUE SHADOWS IN THE STREET** is taken from the album *TIME FURTHER OUT* (CS 8192/CL 1397). All the compositions in *TIME FURTHER OUT* are in the 12-bar blues tradition. Dave has referred to this composition, which is in 9/8 meter but has the

feeling of a slow waltz, as "... a mood piece which disguises its rhythm and blues derivation by the use of odd melodic skips and dissonances, and shifting rhythmic accents within the repeated triplet figure." Where the skips are too wide, the pianist should roll the intervals involved. The technical device, often used by jazz pianists, of sliding the thumb from a black key up to an adjacent white key is an interesting part of the third improvisation section. The black key is usually notated as an appoggiatura (small face note), and should be attacked **on** the beat with the rest of the chord. The following white key is taken **after** the beat, by sliding the thumb up to it. This effect has its roots in the attempt of instrumentalists, whether they play the piano, the guitar, the trumpet, clarinet, saxophone or kazoo, to approximate the emotional warmth of the human voice in carefully and tastefully slurring up to a note after having purposely attacked it slightly flat in pitch.

**Dave has stated** that in any language LAMENTO is a lament. In speaking of the language of Brazil, the land of the bossa nova, he points out that "Portuguese is a poetic language, often humorous or ironic, sometimes beautiful and always full of poetic imagery". His words provide the key to interpretation of LAMENTO. The first two pages comprise the statement of the theme as played in the recording (BOSSA NOVA U. S. A., CS 8192 / CL 1998). Dave performs this as a piano solo without benefit of the drums and bass, and is therefore free to use a completely flexible tempo. The performer would do well to follow the composer's lead in this respect — let the poetry have free expression with the unfettered rhythm characteristic of this type of expression. The second and third improvisations are taken rather exactly from the recording, with some editing needed to replace the rhythm originally supplied by bass and drums. Here it would be wise to keep the beat steady and accept the challenge to find expression within this limitation.

**HOME AT LAST** is a most apt title for this composition for two reasons: it was actually recorded in Dave's own California home (with the master himself as A & R man and engineer, as well as composer and performer), and it was the last act before a short Christmas vacation at the end of an extensive and exhausting tour. Dave has written that "It attempts to convey my inner peace as I look again upon familiar landmarks — the calm of the Bay, the quiet of the hills, the warmth of the fireside, the love of the family — all felt with increased poignancy after my long absence. The wanderer has returned". Since the work was performed entirely without other instruments, the original concept was one of great flexibility in tempo. The full resonance of the piano can be given ample latitude. If the chord reaches are too wide for some hands, the problem can be solved by rolling where necessary. The performance from which this version is transcribed appears as the last track in JAZZ IMPRESSIONS OF THE U. S. A.

**EVERYBODY'S JUMPIN'** is one of Dave's happiest, most swinging compositions. After a four-measure phrase in 4/4 meter, it shifts to 3/2 meter where it remains for two phrases. The next four-measure phrase is in 4/4 meter, and is followed by a four-measure phrase in 3/4 meter. From that point until the conclusion of the opening forty-eight-measure section, the meter continues to alternate between 4/4, 3/2 and 3/4 — which explains why it was used in the album TIME OUT! The three improvisation sections use the blues-oriented 12-bar pattern, with the metric scheme slightly restricted to alternation between 4/4 and 3/4 meters. The concluding section of 24 measures is basically a recapitulation of opening material, with a strong conclusion in 4/4 meter. This tune, with words by Dave and wife, Iola, is used as the opening chorus in THE REAL AMBASSADORS. A word of advice, to the point that the value of the quarter note remains constant through all the meter changes, may prevent performance difficulties.

## POINTS ON JAZZ

The notation of Dave's **POINTS ON JAZZ** has been of great interest to me. It would seem that there is much of the universal in jazz which can occupy a position of significance in music. But before this can occur, there must be an effort to express in definite note values those rhythmic and melodic practices which are inherent in the various styles of jazz. In the past, the approach to notation of jazz figures has been quite acceptable to the initiated, but quite remote from representing the fine points. That the fine points **can** be notated accurately is questioned by some. It is my feeling that our traditional system of notation **does** permit a reasonably accurate representation, and that once understood, the job of reading it will not be too difficult for the traditionally trained musician.

**It is important** to be aware that the compositions in this collection use two different approaches to notation. In **POINTS ON JAZZ**, the rhythms have been very carefully spelled to produce, almost exactly as written, a jazz feeling. In the other compositions, taken from the Carnegie Hall concert, the usual notation found in jazz has been followed. In the latter case, the performer is expected to impute the triplet feeling to most patterns using tied eighth notes and the dotted eighth followed by a sixteenth — and, to a lesser extent, all eighth notes.

**This work is directed primarily** to students and performers of music who, even though they be not particularly jazz oriented, may wish to play a composition which employs the jazz styles. The plural (styles) is used because in this work one finds allusions to the "Blues," both fast and slow, Rag Time, "Le Jazz Hot" (and cool), the popular ballad (on which the work is based), jazz counterpoint, and even a Chorale with variations using jazz associated harmonies.

**When preparing this composition,** the performer will soon realize the importance of a steady beat and of the triplet in jazz rhythms. Since jazz from its inception has been closely associated with music for dancing (even marching), one finds an adherence to the beat quite prevalent: it is a foundation point. However, a certain amount of rebellion against the primacy of a steady, unchanging beat is a natural part of the jazz musician's make-up. His solution is a typically American one: In the lower pitched rhythm instruments (String Bass, Bass Drum, bass of the Piano) he permits the beat to be heard with strength. He wants the listener to **feel** the beat — to know it's there, like the Constitution. But at the same time he **challenges** the beat. He rhythmically bends **away** from it notes which would normally be heard **on** it. In the melody, and perhaps in some accompanying parts, he frequently plays **off** the beat. When he plays **off** the beat, the note which one would expect to hear **on** it is played slightly **ahead** of the beat. In the majority of cases (but not always) the displaced note is heard as the last sound of a triplet imputed to the **preceding** beat. A good portion of the quality normally referred to as "swing" comes from this triplet feeling.

**The performer will find** that the notation makes frequent use of the accent mark. Sometimes it is given in parentheses, to indicate that the accent should be at least **felt** by the performer, if not actually **heard** by the listener. The nature of the music will indicate the degree of obviousness needed in accenting at any particular moment. In places where the accent is to a note occupying the **last** part of a triplet, subtlety is often, but not always, in order.

**The fingerings supplied** should always be treated only as guides, since the jazz pianist often uses fingerings which may take the more traditional pianist by surprise. The only criterion for the selection of a particular fingering is whether its use results in the desired sound. If the pianist wants a "lump" of sound, he may be well counseled to deliberately use an "awkward" fingering.

**The suggestion most often needed** by the traditionally trained musician to help him in his effort toward jazz is to **relax**. Regardless of how agitated and rhythmically invigorating jazz may sound (and its protagonists appear!) it is usually best performed by those who are mentally alert while at the same time quite relaxed physically. The physical effort can be great, but it should be no more than that which is the natural result of permitting one's body to be used as needed in the execution of an idea. The student might well be told to do a good deal of practice on this music **away** from the keyboard, where he may be free from physical considerations while concentrating on the **sound** he wishes to produce.

**Since this work is in** the "Theme and Variations" tradition, the performer may expect a good deal of variety in styles. Some variations are "swingers," others drive hard. Some are in broad, grand style, while others seem personal and intimate. There is variety in the tempi, in the textures, in the degree of harmonic complexity and emotional intensity. One parting suggestion to the performer: listen to the recording of the original version (Gold and Fildale play Dave Brubeck's Jazz Ballet, POINTS ON JAZZ, Columbia CL 1678 and CS 8478), and continue with the recording after the marvelous Gold and Fildale performance, to include the vocal version with Carmen McRae and Dave's own improvisations. One can also hear an extended improvised version by the Dave Brubeck Quartet on "THERE'LL BE NO TOMORROW" in the album, BOSSA NOVA, U.S.A., Columbia CL 1998 and CS 8798. In each of these different conceptions will be found clues to the essence, the nature, and meaning of the music, which will serve as a base for one's own interpretation.

**P. S.: The transcription** for solo piano of a work originally written for two pianos must, of necessity, leave out some of the notes. Since the desire to include as many notes as possible is an ever-present temptation and challenge, it follows that the solo pianist may be more busy in playing the music than either of the two-piano partners. I take some consolation in the fact that the excellent rehearsal pianist for The American Ballet Theater managed the present transcription in manuscript form for the weeks of rehearsing which preceded the first performance. In places where the reaches are too large for some hands, or the notes too many, some editing may be desirable, and certainly should be considered permissible.