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Convergent Styles: A Study of Dave Brubeck's Points on Jazz

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CONVERGENT STYLES: A STUDY OF DAVE BRUBECK’S POINTS ON JAZZ

A Monograph

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty
of the Louisiana State University
and Agricultural and Mechanical College
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
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in

The School of Music

by

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To Julie, for making dreams possible
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“Diversity is the special quality of Brubeck’s playing. Brubeck is a collagist, impressionist, exoticist, and both classical and jazz musician along with being a composer and improviser.”

-Ilse Storb and Klaus-Gotthard Fische
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ABSTRACT

The music of Dave Brubeck encompasses diverse classical and jazz styles from around the world. Due to the eclectic nature of Brubeck’s music and the difficulty in categorizing his style, little has been written about his compositions. This document will aid musicians in better understanding his suite *Points on Jazz*, a work for classical piano.

The first chapter examines the development of Brubeck’s style from his early childhood years until 1958, the year he composed *Points on Jazz*. The second chapter details the background of this piece and some of its influences, including *Dziekuje*, the piece upon which *Points on Jazz* is based. The third chapter presents a performance guide outlining stylistic, artistic, technical, and interpretive considerations, including score comparisons from other works which may have influenced Brubeck. The fourth chapter summarizes Brubeck’s style and provides an overview of this style in some of his other compositions.

This study proves that Brubeck’s music cannot be defined by any established style but rather is a unique convergence of many different styles. This monograph will lead to a better understanding and interpretation of *Points on Jazz* and can be used as a resource for further studies of Brubeck’s classical compositions.
INTRODUCTION

Dave Brubeck was best known as a jazz composer, pianist, and band leader of the Dave Brubeck Quartet. His original jazz compositions have earned him international acclaim. Perhaps less well known are his classical piano compositions which meld musical styles from around the world. Brubeck explained his multicultural approach by saying “Milhaud always told me to keep my ears as well as my eyes open while touring the world, and to be cognizant of the various sounds, rhythms and, fragments of melody that envelope us night and day… My style is the summation of all experiences to which I have been exposed.”¹ Brubeck’s music comprises numerous eclectic musical languages including Baroque, Romantic, 20th Century, Ragtime, Swing, Blues, and Polish and Turkish folk music, just to name a few. The purpose of this document is to reveal how Brubeck’s style developed through the lens of a performance guide for Points on Jazz, on which limited scholarship has been published. This guide will facilitate deeper insight into a composer whose concert works have not been well understood and will demonstrate how his love of eclectic music evolved into an original style.

The first chapter is divided into six sections that characterize the experiences that shaped Brubeck’s early life and led to writing Points on Jazz. As a child, Brubeck’s family facilitated his earliest musical training and introduced him to jazz and classical music.²

The second section explores Brubeck’s struggles to read musical notation, the development of his ability to hear music, and how he used that ability to overcome his deficits. This natural ability later influenced his career and allowed him to overcome other personal and professional obstacles.

² Add references for both of these paragraphs.
The third section reviews Brubeck’s years on the family ranch and the lifelong values his father taught him. Brubeck’s father had a profound impact on his morals and these shaped who he worked with, where he played, and the types of music he incorporated into his style.

The fourth section covers his studies at Mills College with Darius Milhaud. As Brubeck’s primary music teacher, Milhaud was an important influence and provided encouragement and support during difficult times. Milhaud also taught Brubeck to write freely in many different styles and empowered him to find his own musical voice.

Following his studies with Milhaud, Brubeck had many responsibilities; he needed to earn money to support his family, performed in various jazz groups, and traveled all around California in search of work. The final section examines how these factors shaped his music from the year he graduated until 1958, when he wrote the main theme for Points on Jazz.

The second chapter covers the history of Points on Jazz, from the work’s commission, to how the music and storyline connect, to the different versions of the piece. Before conceptualizing the individual movements, Brubeck wrote the main theme (Dziekuje), which later formed the foundation for Points on Jazz.

The third chapter introduces a performance guide for Points on Jazz, including a look at what gives this work its interesting and unique identity. The guide covers practical considerations for performers wishing to express the various musical elements, as well as technical guidance for learning the music. An examination of recorded performances of Points on Jazz is also included to show different ways the music could be interpreted. Additionally, materials to enrich an understanding of the music are provided, including a review of composers who may have influenced Brubeck and recommendations on other classical and jazz works with which the performer should become familiar.

The fourth chapter defines Brubeck’s style through an overview of the types of music used in each of the Points on Jazz movements as they come together to present one unified
style. A brief survey of Brubeck’s other compositions, albums, and recordings shows how his style is represented in other works.

**Literature Review**

Little has been written about Brubeck’s classical music. As a 20th century musician, Brubeck was mostly known for his jazz compositions, but among these, few theoretical documents are written. This section will observe the major works written about Brubeck and will show how this document fills in the areas of missing information.

Among the biographies written about Brubeck, there are two major works. The first is *Dave Brubeck: Improvisations and Compositions: The Idea of Cultural Exchange* by Ilse Storb and Klaus-G Fischer. This work contains two major sections: a brief biography of Brubeck, and a second, much larger section, which reviews Brubeck’s classical compositions. This book provides an excellent overview of Brubeck’s classical style as it gives succinct descriptions of almost every classical work Brubeck wrote.

The other biographical work written about Brubeck, *It’s About Time: The Brubeck Story* by Fred Hall, delivers a much more in-depth examination of Brubeck’s life and includes many personal interviews with the composer. This book is a valuable resource for understanding how Brubeck developed as a musician and composer. The book includes an overview of his styles along with musicians that influenced him throughout his career.

The dissertation *An Evaluation of the Jazz Pianist/Composer Dave Brubeck* by Danny Ronald Zirpoli covers almost the entire history of Brubeck’s life and career. This dissertation contains an overview of many of his classical and jazz compositions and shows Brubeck’s development as a musician. With a number of quotes from personal interviews with Brubeck, it is an invaluable work for learning more about his classical and jazz contributions.
Another important evaluation of Brubeck’s music is the paper *Chromatic Fantasy Sonata* by Vasil Atanasov Cvetkov. This document brings valuable insight into Brubeck’s *Chromatic Fantasy Sonata* as well as his compositional process and style. The paper includes manuscripts of Brubeck’s original scores and notes which provides a firsthand account into how Brubeck worked as a composer.

For a more personal look at Brubeck’s life and style, *The Great Jazz Giants* by Len Lyons contains a series of lengthy personal interviews with the composer. Although this book includes only one chapter on Brubeck, the information within is almost entirely composed of lengthy personal quotes from the composer. These quotes provide a rare look into Brubeck’s musical development as a child and also his development in later years as he traveled and became famous.

Any serious look at writings on Brubeck must include those of the American pianist John Salmon, who has devoted a large part of his career to the study of Brubeck’s music. Salmon worked with Brubeck while the composer was still alive and formed an important collaboration with him through recording his pieces, editing his music, and writing many articles about Brubeck. A number of articles written by Salmon appear in various journals and musical magazines. These articles provide insight into Brubeck’s classical music as well as his composition process.
CHAPTER I: LIFE AND MUSICAL INFLUENCES

Brubeck was born December 6th, 1920, in Concord, California. He was the youngest of three brothers in a family where musical and cultural backgrounds played an important role. From an early age, Brubeck was surrounded by diversity. His mother was of Polish, Russian, and English background\(^3\), and his father was of Native American ancestry. Those who knew Brubeck said you could see the Native American in him, and he was sometimes called by his nickname “Geronimo.”\(^4\)

Brubeck’s first music teacher was his mother, Elizabeth (Bessy) Brubeck. Elizabeth trained to be a concert pianist, and she studied with the famous English pianists Tobias Matthay and Myra Hess. Elizabeth believed in pre-natal musical influence,\(^5\) and while Brubeck was still in the womb, she played classical music for him. It was through her that Brubeck was first introduced to the music of Bach, Beethoven, and Chopin. Bach and Chopin came to be his favorite composers.\(^6\)

Brubeck’s two brothers were also very musical. His oldest brother, Henry, was a drummer and violinist and played in a band that rehearsed in the Brubeck family home once per week. “When I was five years old, I heard my brother Henry’s jazz band right in my own house every Tuesday night,”\(^7\) Brubeck said. Through Henry, Brubeck first encountered jazz. Henry later went on to play drums in the Gil Evans Band and eventually moved to Santa Barbara, where he became superintendent of the music program in their public high schools.\(^8\)

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\(^4\) Ibid., 5.
\(^5\) Storb and Fischer, 1.
\(^6\) Ibid., 2.
\(^7\) Ibid., 1.
\(^8\) Ibid., 2.
When Brubeck was 12, he also heard jazz through the radio and began attempting improvisations on the pieces he heard. Following this, he purchased his first records, which included recordings of Fats Waller, Teddy Wilson, Art Tatum, Count Basie and Duke Ellington, among other jazz artists.9

Also during this time, his family moved to a ranch near Ione, California, where his father worked as the ranch manager.10 Being the youngest child, Brubeck was the last of the children to leave home, and he spent a lot of time by himself riding his horse through the pastures. This time on the ranch influenced his music in later years as he wrote a number of pieces that were based upon themes from the Old West. The Native American and Hispanic music he heard there would also influence later compositions.11

Brubeck’s middle brother, Howard, was a musician, composer, and music teacher. Throughout Brubeck’s career, Howard helped write down his compositions and transcribed his performances and improvisations.12 Howard transcribed Points on Jazz for Brubeck and was also responsible for orchestrating the piano music.13

Brubeck’s father, Howard “Pete” Brubeck, played a significant role in shaping Brubeck by instilling in him respect for all people, regardless of race or creed. In a personal interview with the composer, Brubeck recounted a story from his childhood of the first African American person he met. The interview was given 60 years after the event, but the experience stayed with Brubeck throughout his life. He recalled through tears: “The first black man that I saw, my dad took me to see on the Sacramento River in California. And he

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9 Hall, 11.
10 Storb and Fischer, 2.
11 Hall, 10.
12 Hall, 8.
13 Storb and Fischer, 106.
said to his friend, ‘Open your shirt for Dave.’ There was a brand on his chest. And my dad said, ‘These things can’t happen.’ That’s why I fought for what I fought for.”

Although this experience may not have had a direct influence on his music, it had a profound impact on the musicians Brubeck worked with, where he booked concerts, and the development of his style through his use of African American music. Brubeck saw the value of racial equality, and through this value he made many African American friends, played concerts in all-black clubs, included in his contract a “no tolerance” policy for racial inequity, and collaborated with many African American musicians throughout his career.

His belief in racial equality did not stop with African Americans. Brubeck encountered many different types of music and musicians from all around the world. These encounters influenced his many albums and recordings, which often incorporated the styles he heard and included collaborations with the musicians he met. The people Brubeck encountered along the way influenced him so much that their music became part of his style. These influences are evident throughout *Points on Jazz*, as each movement includes music from diverse cultural backgrounds.

**Development of a Musical Ear**

A large part of Brubeck’s development as a musician stemmed from his inability to read music due to dyslexia. He did not learn to read music until late in life, but his extraordinary ear allowed him to learn almost anything he heard. Wherever he went, he could hear a piece and then sit down at the piano and play it. As he traveled the world, he was able

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15 Hall, 72-73.
to use it to pick up music from many different cultures. His music eventually became an amalgamation of many types of music.\textsuperscript{16}

Brubeck’s musical reading problems continued through his teen years. During that time, he began to play in local jazz bands to earn money while going to school. Brubeck said about his reading ability, “I faked it good enough so that they didn’t know, and I didn’t tell them.”\textsuperscript{17} In these bands, Brubeck played such tunes as \textit{Please Be Kind}, \textit{Boo Hoo}, \textit{Heigh Ho}, \textit{Harbor Lights}, \textit{Tiger Rag}, and \textit{Twelfth Street Rag}.\textsuperscript{18}

By the time Brubeck was preparing for college, his father insisted that he enter veterinary school so he could come back to work on the family ranch.\textsuperscript{19} Upon reaching veterinary school, though, it became apparent that his mind was not in veterinary work. He headed home on the weekends to play with the local jazz band and other musicians around town. By the end of his first year, his zoology professor told him, “Brubeck, your mind’s not here. It’s across the lawn in the conservatory. Please go there. Stop wasting my time and yours.”\textsuperscript{20} Brubeck transferred to the music program the following semester.\textsuperscript{21}

Brubeck progressed through all four years of music school without anyone discovering his inability to read. In his harmony and ear training classes, Brubeck was able to pass because he could play back whatever the teacher played, even though he could not label the chords.\textsuperscript{22} During his senior year, Brubeck was required to take a keyboard class, and within the first lesson, his teacher discovered he could not read music. He was immediately brought before the dean of the music school, who stated that Brubeck would not be able to

\begin{itemize}
\item[16] Hall, 8.
\item[17] Hall, 12.
\item[18] Ibid.
\item[19] Ibid., 13.
\item[20] Ibid., 17.
\item[21] Ibid.
\item[22] Ibid.
\end{itemize}
graduate. Brubeck responded, “It doesn’t make any difference to me. I don’t care whether I
graduate or not. All I want to do is play jazz. I agree with you!”23 Luckily for Brubeck, he
had been one of the top students in his class, so when the department threatened not to let him
graduate, his teachers defended him.24

Despite his difficulties with reading music, Brubeck was able to learn and compose
many pieces throughout his career, and he proved that a traditional approach is not necessary
to become a great musician. His non-traditional technique, though, was often met with
opposition, and when he had a lesson with Arnold Schoenberg, the composer was not happy
with the young Brubeck. Schoenberg said to him, “You have to have a good reason for every
note you write.” Brubeck Replied: “Because it sounds good. That is my reason.” Schoenberg
insisted, “No, that is not a good reason. There must be other reasons too.”25 Despite his
encounter with Schoenberg, Brubeck went on to prove that his ‘sounds good’ approach does
indeed work, and he became one of the most successful jazz musicians of all time.

**Marriage, Military Service, and Post-War**

Following his time at the College of the Pacific, Brubeck was drafted into the
military. The day before he was shipped out to serve in World War II, Brubeck married his
long-time college girlfriend, Iola Whitlock. She was an important influence throughout his
career and later helped to write *The Real Ambassadors* and the lyrics for a song version of the
*Dziekuje*. After their wedding, Brubeck spent four years in the military from 1942-1946.
During his service, Brubeck met Paul Desmond, who collaborated with Brubeck throughout
his career and played a key role in Brubeck’s music. It was also during this time that Brubeck

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23 Ibid.
24 Ibid.
25 Storb and Fischer, 4.
formed the first all-African American military band, which was called The Wolf Pack. Brubeck refused officer status because accepting would mean he could no longer live with his African American bandmates.\textsuperscript{26} His experience with The Wolf Pack set the tone for most of Brubeck’s career as he continued to play with African American musicians despite strong cultural resistance.\textsuperscript{27}

After his discharge in 1946, Brubeck decided to continue his music studies at the Mills College in Oakland, California, where he studied with Darius Milhaud. Milhaud played a central role in Brubeck’s musical growth. Brubeck said of his experience with Milhaud, “I had seen Milhaud before I left. If I survived the war, I knew the first thing I was going to do was study with him, because he understood me.”\textsuperscript{28} Milhaud wrote one of the first classical-jazz fusion pieces, \textit{La Creation du Monde}. As a classical composer, Milhaud’s avant-garde approach and love of jazz music encouraged Brubeck to compose jazz-inflected classical works as well as compositions in irregular styles. Through his studies with Milhaud, Brubeck came to flourish as a musician.

Along with his love of jazz music, Milhaud also influenced Brubeck in several other areas of composition. Milhaud taught Brubeck about polytonality, polyrhythms, and how to write 16\textsuperscript{th}-century Baroque counterpoint. Part of Milhaud’s French Conservatory background included an in-depth understanding of counterpoint, and he required all his students to be well-versed in these rules. Through his studies with Milhaud, Brubeck learned to write a fugue and Chorale, both of which can be seen in \textit{Points on Jazz}.\textsuperscript{29}

\textsuperscript{26} Hall, 29.
\textsuperscript{27} Hall, 22-31.
\textsuperscript{28} Ibid., 33.
\textsuperscript{29} Ibid., 32-35.
Milhaud required Brubeck to follow the rules of counterpoint in all his compositions, but also allowed him to experiment and compose in any musical language he desired.\textsuperscript{30} This structured freedom allowed Brubeck to flourish as a composer and to develop a style which included music from a wide variety of composers and musicians. Brubeck later said of his teacher, “Milhaud was fantastic, because he took each one of us as we were and tried to help us do whatever was in us, what we wanted to do. He did not try to make us be like him.”\textsuperscript{31} Brubeck went on to say later, “Three Jewish teachers have been a great influence in my life: Irving Goleman, Darius Milhaud, and Jesus.”\textsuperscript{32}

Milhaud also encouraged Brubeck to develop as a jazz musician. At one point, after Brubeck requested to learn classical music, Milhaud replied to him, “Boo boo, play me some boogie-woogie! Brubeck, you must do what is in you. You’re natural in jazz.”\textsuperscript{33} During their composition classes, Milhaud had his students write harmony and counterpoint exercises, which they then arranged and performed. Together with his classmates, Brubeck formed an octet that would continue to perform and play together after the classes with Milhaud ended. One of the students in the class was the clarinetist Bill Smith who collaborated with Brubeck throughout his career.\textsuperscript{34}

During his time with the octet, Brubeck wrote and performed pieces that used a variety of modern compositional techniques: polyrhythms, polytonality, jazz, classical, and music from around the world. The group performed more than just jazz; it incorporated a fusion of many styles. The music Brubeck wrote for the octet would later set the stage for

\textsuperscript{31} Storb and Fischer, 6.
\textsuperscript{32} Salmon, “What Brubeck Got from Milhuad,” 2.
\textsuperscript{33} Storb and Fischer, 5.
\textsuperscript{34} Hall, 32-33.
writing eclectic music in other ensembles with which he played. It was largely through his
time with ensemble groups that Brubeck developed his wide-ranging style.35

As he traveled and performed, Brubeck became more and more famous as a jazz
figure. Through his performances, Brubeck was introduced to several important musicians
who came to hear his groups play. These musicians included Charlie Parker, Charles Mingus,
Duke Ellington, George Shearing, and Stan Kenton.36 Several of these musicians collaborated
with Brubeck in later years, and the influence of their music can be seen in many of
Brubeck’s compositions, including Points on Jazz.37

Developing as a Musician

After finishing his studies with Milhaud, Brubeck performed in a number of jazz
ensembles. The first years after college proved to be difficult for Brubeck as he had to
support a family, and finding work in the jazz world was very competitive. After the octet
split up, Brubeck formed several jazz combos, a trio, and in 1951, a quartet, which would
eventually become known as the Classic Quartet.38

During his time with the Classic Quartet Brubeck wrote some of his most successful
tunes. The group consisted of Paul Desmond on saxophone, Eugene Wright on bass, Joe
Morello on drums, and Brubeck on piano. Freddie Dutton and Herb Barman were the original
bassists and drummers, but it was not until Eugene Wright and Joe Morello joined that the
group came to be known as the Classic Quartet.39 Forming the quartet was an important step

35 Ibid., 34
36 Storb and Fischer, 7.
37 Ibid.
38 Hall, 43-56.
39 Hall, 48, 60
for Brubeck because through the group, he developed much of his style as a composer and musician.

During the years the Classic Quartet performed and recorded, they were known for switching back and forth between traditional and experimental styles in their albums. Some of their experimental styles included polyrhythms, mixed meter, polytonality, irregular harmonies, and the incorporation of a variety of styles from other cultures. The group’s musical experimentation shaped Brubeck’s style. He later said of his music, “I never wanted to be trapped into a particular style that wouldn’t allow for the expression of the whole range of the human emotion and an awareness of the entire history of jazz.”

The Classic Quartet received many awards and became one of the most famous jazz groups of all time. In 1954, Brubeck was featured in Time magazine and created an album based upon the article called “Brubeck Time.” The album sold over 100,000 copies and became the highest-selling jazz album of all time. The group’s all-time greatest hit, Take Five from the album Time Out, sold more than one million singles, an unheard-of number for a contemporary jazz group at that time.

World Travels

As the fame of the Classic Quartet grew, they concertized in many different countries around the world. Brubeck was exposed to a wide variety of music from different cultures, and these styles became an important part of his music. One of quartet’s longest tours covered 125 concerts in 37 cities and 14 countries, including India, Russia, England, Germany, Poland, Japan, and Australia.

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40 Storb and Fischer, 9.
41 Hall, 40, 57-63.
During their tours, the Classic Quartet would perform and record with local musicians. While in India, the quartet made a recording which included Indian and jazz music mixed together.\textsuperscript{42} In a trip to Mexico City, Brubeck played with Gerry Mulligan and a group of Mexican musicians. The album, \textit{Bravo Brubeck}, was recorded without rehearsals or scores and met great success in Mexico.\textsuperscript{43}

The trend of incorporating music from other cultures into his own can be seen in many of Brubeck’s recordings: \textit{Themes from Eurasia} (Afghanistan, German, Turkey, Poland, England, India, and Africa), \textit{Bossa Nova} (Brazil), \textit{Jazz Impressions of Japan}, \textit{Watussi Drums} (Africa), \textit{La Fiesta de la Posada} (Mexico), and \textit{Reminiscences of Cattle Country} (Western United States). The music Brubeck heard from around the world became part of his style, as is evident throughout his music and especially in \textit{Points on Jazz}.

\textbf{Overcoming Racial Barriers}

Brubeck’s belief in racial equality greatly shaped his musical pursuits. This value, which he first learned from his father, influenced his friendships and collaborations with various African American musicians. Brubeck’s decision to support African Americans also meant facing a great deal of opposition, as racism was still prevalent in the United States and in some of the countries he visited during his tours. The bassist in the Classic Quartet, Eugene Wright, was African American, and some of the venues where the Classic Quartet played would not allow racially-mixed groups.

During their tour in the South, Eugene White was told frequently he could not play with the group on stage. Brubeck made it his goal to overcome racial barriers and wrote a “no

\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{42} Hall, 74.\textsuperscript{43} Ibid., 82}
tolerance” policy for racism into the Classic Quartet’s contract. Brubeck said about his performances, “What I did everywhere was, if they wouldn’t integrate the hall, I wouldn’t play.”

Brubeck also stated about one of their tours, “On one tour in the south, we cancelled twenty-three out of twenty-five engagements. That was the equivalent of half a year’s work. In later years [after integration], we played most of those same southern colleges.”

In 1962, Brubeck and his wife, Iola, wrote a work that took a major stand for their views on racial equality, the jazz musical *The Real Ambassadors*. Louis Armstrong played the Ambassador. The creation and performance of this musical was an important milestone in Brubeck’s fight against racism in America. At the College of the Pacific, a special oral history project about *The Real Ambassadors* was created. It said of the work: “*The Real Ambassadors* pointed out the absurdity of segregation and made the case that artists such as Louis Armstrong are the best and "real" ambassadors to demonstrate a nation's ideals. The jazz musical was recorded in 1961 and performed live only once during Brubeck’s lifetime— at the Monterey Jazz Festival in 1962.”

Through Brubeck’s value of racial equality, he gained the respect of many important jazz musicians; such names as Duke Ellington, Louis Armstrong, and Miles Davis. These musicians, along with other important African American musicians, had a great influence on Brubeck.

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44 Ibid., 162.
46 Ibid., 66.
CHAPTER II: BACKGROUND OF POINTS ON JAZZ

Before Points on Jazz was written, Brubeck composed the piece, Dziekuje, pronounced “Jen KOO yeh.” The song’s title, which means “thank you” in Polish, is part of a series of songs Brubeck wrote while traveling with his quartet throughout Europe. In each of the countries they visited, he wrote a song titled with the regional word(s) for “thank you.”

During that tour, Brubeck saw the opportunity to play in Poland as relief work for the Polish people who had suffered during WWII. For this reason, it was very important for Brubeck to reach Poland, and the group endured many difficulties while traveling. When they finally arrived, they found the country in ruins; concerts were held in auditoriums and towns that had been bombed and heavily destroyed during the war. The Polish people were only just beginning to recover from the destruction. In seeing all the poverty, Brubeck was inspired to write a piece for the Polish people. That piece, Dziekuje, includes many elements of sadness and grief to represent the Polish people’s suffering.

In March of 1958, during the intermission of the final concert of the tour, Brubeck played the Dziekuje theme for his group, and they premiered it on the second half of the program without rehearsal. The announcer introduced Dziekuje as a “reciprocation of the warm-heartedness which the group had received from the Polish people.” After the piece ended, the audience reacted with “astonished quiet – then with applause mixed with tears.” Brubeck later recounted:

There were no musical barriers with this jazz-conscious public. They greeted us with warmth and friendliness that was touching. In each city, groups of students or musicians would guide us to historic and cultural landmarks, such as the old restored “Old Town” in Warsaw or the castle in Krakow. Our last day in Poland, students of

49 Hall, 76.
50 Storb and Fischer, 105.
51 Ibid.
Paznan took us to the Music Museum where we saw a collection of instruments from all over the world. Of special interest was a room dedicated to the memory of Chopin. A statue of Chopin that had been demolished in World War II had been lovingly reconstructed. The visible scars across the face gave the statue impressive power and significance—like the crack in our own Liberty Bell. I saw a cast of Chopin’s hands, his death mask, and I had the thrill of touching the pianos upon which he performed. With these impressions fresh in my mind, we performed that night, “Dziekuje,” a theme I had written based on the Polish phrase for ‘thank you.’ The piece uses some typical Chopin devices for piano—the arpeggiated chords in the left hand, and large strong leaps of melody, followed by a descending step-like motion in the right hand. After our first performance of Dziekuje, there was complete silence. I thought I had insulted the audience by linking the memory of Chopin to jazz. Then came the applause and I realized with relief that the Polish audience had understood that this was meant as a tribute to their great musical tradition and as an expression of gratitude.\textsuperscript{52}

Dziekuje became a regular song the quartet played and soon became quite popular among the general public as well. The music was featured on the cover of a Polish Jazz magazine and was being performed by other jazz groups in Poland. Brubeck’s quartet played the song throughout their American and European tours as well, and it later appeared on his album, “Impressions of Eurasia.”\textsuperscript{53}

Dziekuje later became the basis for Points on Jazz, after the Polish-American choreographer Dania Krupska commissioned Brubeck to write the music for her jazz ballet. Brubeck said of their collaboration, “When Dania Krupska heard Dziekuje, on the album, she immediately wired to ask if I would use the theme to write music for a jazz ballet she was preparing. At our first meeting, she told me the story of the ballet and variations in rhythms she had outlined for her dancers. As the story unfolded, I improvised variations on the theme.”\textsuperscript{54}

These variations later grew into movements that became Points on Jazz. The original music was written for two pianos and was later orchestrated by Brubeck’s brother Howard.

\textsuperscript{53} Storb and Fischer, 105.
\textsuperscript{54} Dave Brubeck, Points On Jazz: Jazz Ballet for Two Pianos/four Hands; Dave Brubeck - Classic Series (United States: Alfred Music, 1993), 2.
Because I was constantly touring with my quartet at that period, I had to approach the actual writing of the composition in an unusual way. First, I wrote a piano part which developed the ideas for each section of the ballet. Then I recorded that basic piano track. Next, I improvised and recorded a second piano part while playing the tape of the first piano. My patient brother, Howard, had the almost impossible task of notating the piano part that I had improvised. When this was completed, he then orchestrated the two-piano piece for the instrumental requirements of the American Ballet theatre.56

The Story Behind the Music

Understanding the story in the ballet sheds light on the meaning of the music. Brubeck lays out Dania Krupska’s story and its connection to each movement in the liner notes of Points on Jazz. The story begins with the Prelude. Brubeck explains, “The Boy is the Theme. He is all alone on the stage – detached. Gradually movement begins. The Girls make their entrances. He tries to reach out and make contact with them, but cannot. Even with other people on the stage he is all alone.”57

The Scherzo follows the Prelude, and Brubeck narrates, “Now the Girl enters. She is fresh, gay, bubbling with life. I improvised the SCHERZO with bright arpeggios and a pounding, rhythmic pulse.”58 The Blues movement follows. Brubeck writes, “‘Here comes the Temptress.’ She is a slow BLUES, ‘I played a slow BLUES. She entices The Boy, then leaves him to summon other men to gather around her. They fight for her in a primitive dance

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55 Hall, 133.
56 Dave Brubeck, liner notes to John Salmon Plays DAVE BRUBECK “Piano Compositions,” performed by John Salmon.
57 Brubeck, 2.
58 Ibid.
and she is tossed wildly from one man to another. The BLUES tempo quickens. Then the temptress snaps her fingers and walks out on the men—End of the Blues variation.\textsuperscript{59}

“The FUGUE was designed as a choreographed ‘chase,’” Brubeck explains, “with entrances of the dancers corresponding to the musical entrances.”\textsuperscript{60} After the Fugue, the Rag continues the story with, “Next the Girls and Boys are happily together again. They are wacky, happy couples—this is the Rag movement.”\textsuperscript{61} The music takes a dramatic shift with the Chorale. Here Brubeck writes, “Their happiness makes the boy feel even more alone. The boy’s theme is the CHORALE.”\textsuperscript{62}

In the Waltz movement that follows, Brubeck writes, “The Girl reaches out for The Boy. She wants to comfort him.” After the Waltz, in the A La Turk and Finale, “The Girl is overjoyed,” Brubeck says, “She must call everyone to share her happiness. A LA TURK variation and FINALE begins. In the confusion of their celebration The Boy and The Girl are separated. After a climactic search, they find each other, embrace and walk away arm in arm.”\textsuperscript{63}

After Brubeck finished composing the ballet, the opening performance of Points on Jazz ended up being cancelled. Brubeck instead contacted the pianist duo of Arthur Gold and Robert Fizdale to perform and record the work. The duo’s recording became one of the most well-known performance of Points on Jazz at the time.\textsuperscript{64}

Points on Jazz was eventually premiered as a ballet with Dania Krupska in Hartford, Connecticut in 1961. Other versions of the music were also released later. Dziekuje was converted into a vocal piece under the title There’ll Be No Tomorrow, with text by Iola

\textsuperscript{59} Brubeck, 2.
\textsuperscript{60} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{61} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{62} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{63} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{64} Storb and Fischer, 106.
Brubeck, appearing on Brubeck’s album *Bossa Nova*. The two-piano version was also transcribed to solo-piano by the American pianist John Salmon. There were several arrangements of *Dziękuję* for various jazz and chamber ensembles. The two-piano version has become the most famous, and it is this version which will serve as the basis for the performance guide in the following chapter.\(^\text{65}\)

\(^{65}\) Ibid., 106-7
CHAPTER III: PERFORMANCE GUIDE

The performance guide will serve as a means to better understand Points on Jazz and will provide practical advice for bringing out the unique qualities of the music. This chapter is written specifically with the performer in mind with the aim to reveal musical meaning in the score. This section should be read not to learn Points on Jazz in a particular way, but rather as a starting point for becoming more familiar with the music.

The guide will cover a variety of stylistic and artistic considerations. Since much of the suite is written in a jazz style, acknowledging these elements will be helpful to the musician who is unschooled in jazz vocabulary. Musical examples from the Points on Jazz suite as well as from other composers will be provided to highlight some of the important details and to show how Brubeck may have been influenced by other composers.

Prelude

The Polish-American choreographer Dania Krupska, who wrote the story for the Points on Jazz ballet, described the opening as representing the Boy; “He is all alone on the stage--detached.” The Prelude opens with this lonely atmosphere as the theme begins with soft dynamics, a line moving in chromatic stepwise motion, dissonant wide intervals, and a slow tempo. Throughout the beginning, the lack of direction in the melody also expresses this lonely character.

To show this feeling, the first eight bars can be played slowly, without accent, and with soft dynamics. The rhythmic figures have a halting quality which can be brought out through a slight tenuto accent on the first note of each interval leap, which Brubeck marks in the score. On the repeated notes in each of these figures, special care should be taken to play these notes more quietly. This de-emphasis of the second note of each motif will help to bring a hushed quality to the music and increase the directionless character of the line. Example 1
shows how these articulations can be brought out. Although some of these markings may seem obvious, it is easy to over-accent the line, and having a clear phrasing plan for the theme is important for creating continuity throughout the movements. A red accent mark indicated notes to be de-emphasized (throughout the paper all markings in red are suggestive only and not marked in Brubeck’s original score).

![Example 1: Notes to be De-emphasized in the Prelude, mm. 1-5](image)

Brubeck marks the opening tempo “Quiet, Calm $\downarrow= 56$.” Many performances begin the Prelude with a much slower tempo than this, though. Performances by Anthony and Joseph Paratore and John Salmon (solo piano version) open the movement half as slow at $\downarrow= 56$. Howard Brubeck’s performance notes recommend that the performer “listen to the record(s)… In each of these different conceptions will be found clues to the essence, the nature, and the meaning of the music.” Taking this advice to heart, the tempo marking, as well as all the metronome markings in subsequent movements, can be used as reference

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66 Brubeck, 4, Points On Jazz.
67 Ibid., 1.
points for a starting tempo but should not be adhered to as a strict mandate. As in much of jazz and improvisation, the music can be played freely and with rubato. The most important consideration will be in deciphering which tempo will be most suited to the musical characteristics of the theme.

Brubeck’s Dziekuje theme was most likely influenced by Chopin Mazurka Op. 24 No. 4 which features a melodic line almost identical to Brubeck’s. The first three notes of both pieces begin with broken octave pickups that move in chromatic motion. Since Dziekuje was written right after Brubeck visited the Chopin museum, it is not surprising that the Polish composer’s music influenced this composition. Furthermore, the influence of the Polish style is also represented through the fact that the Mazurka itself is a popular Polish folk dance. Brubeck’s quotation of Chopin’s music would have been seen as a great tribute to the Polish people who first heard it when Brubeck premiered the piece in 1958. See Examples 1 and 2 to compare the opening lines of both pieces.

Example 2: Chopin Mazurka Op. 24 No. 4, mm. 1-7

At m. 9, Brubeck makes a dramatic shift into a jazz setting. This measure marks a turning point in the piece where the middle of the theme is emphasized; the same emphasis occurs in all subsequent variations at the same spot. Brubeck introduces the first chord of the

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movement, a C minor 7th chord. The melody is also played off the beat and in ascending motion for the first time in the piece. Unlike in the previous measures, there is not a pickup or rhythmic motion in the beats prior to this measure, so when the chord does arrive, it sounds abrupt; see Example 3. The pianists can emphasize these changes by moving forward with the tempo, immediately increasing the dynamics, and bringing out this opening chord. The melodic line should begin to move faster in m. 9 and continue to push the tempo even more in mm. 13-14 and in mm. 15-16. One could argue that Brubeck’s “poco a poco accel.” marking could have started in m. 13, as the quarter note counter melody needs accelerate to bring the tempo up to the “Slightly Faster \( \frac{1}{4} = 154 \)” marking in m. 17.

Example 3: Turning Point in the Prelude, mm. 6-16\textsuperscript{69}

\textsuperscript{69} Brubeck, 4.
The first variation is written in a free, playful, swing style which can be brought out with a faster pulse, louder dynamics, and emphasis of accents on syncopated rhythms. The dance character of the music comes out in the swing rhythms which can be seen in the interplay between the accompaniment and melody. Brubeck writes several patterns that fall off the beat in the melody while occasionally marking the downbeat or pickup in the harmony. Howard Brubeck makes notes of this:

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 element of rebellion against the primacy of a steady, unchanging beat is a natural part of the jazz musician’s makeup. His solution is a typical American one: in the lower pitched rhythm instruments (piano)… 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…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 proceeding beat. A good portion of the quality normally referred to as “swing” comes from this triplet feeling.\(^\text{70}\)

The jazz style in the accompaniment part can also be enhanced through a shorter, lighter touch. This will allow the melodic line to remain slightly ahead of the beat, emphasizing the syncopations. A gentler attack on these chords can also emulate the traditional jazz comping technique, where the performer improvises chords following the harmonic progression of a piece. This comping style features similar short/light chords in the mid-range of the piano. The performer balances the soloist, playing underneath with a softer sound and not overpowering the melody. The person comping can play with shorter rhythms and with staccato accentuation as well. The comping technique can also be brought out in \emph{Points on Jazz}, much of which Brubeck already indicates in the score.

\(^{70}\) Brubeck, 2.
Special care should be taken to bring out the off-beat accent markings. In the first variation, these stresses are clearly marked in the melodic line. The juxtaposition of off-beat rhythms against the regular rhythms (in the accompaniment), in part, gives the music its unique jazz flavor. Brubeck even write some of these accents in parentheses to show that throughout the movement, “the accent should at least be felt by the performer, if not actually heard by the listener.”\textsuperscript{71}

Once the performer reaches the second variation in m. 33, the music can begin to quicken with a slightly faster tempo. Brubeck marks this section “Bright” to match the louder dynamics, high register shifts, and now-regular quarter-note motion in the bass. To convey the “Bright” quality, the performer can also speed up with a slightly faster tempo and short staccato motion in the accompaniment.

Example 4 highlights some of the swing style evoked through the interplay between the accompaniment and melodic line. The quarter note against triplet motion creates a tension which can be brought out through a strong pulse in the accompaniment. Although not marked, the performers may also wish to add a slight accentuation on the first and last beats of each measure to emphasize this.

\textsuperscript{71} Ibid., 3.
The stepwise motion throughout is written in the style of a walking bass and thus should be played with a short, punched quality accenting each note. Bringing out this line will also help to create a dramatic shift as the performer moves into the slower, more sustained, romantic style in the third variation.

Variation three (m. 48), a double variation, is twice as long as previous sections and marks the middle and focal point of the Prelude. The singing, lyrical quality becomes the primary focus of both pianos as Brubeck marks, “bring out the melody.” The phrase is

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72 Ibid., 6.
highlighted by the fact that the melody is presented in a simple style with soft chordal accompaniment. To emphasize these qualities, the tempo can be played slower than Brubeck’s marking with a more flowing pulse.

Here Brubeck also changes the rhythmic subdivision of each measure into two larger beats. Beats one and three are emphasized in the accompaniment of Piano I. The pianist may wish to articulate these chords to show the broader pulse of the new rhythmic grouping.

The two pianos have a dialogue as Piano II plays the melody in a straightforward style while Piano I echoes with a syncopated jazz version on the offbeat. If executed with equal dynamics, the two instruments create an interesting effect as each line is mirrored back and forth. Example 5 shows how the two parts interweave. The circled notes indicate those which are echoed between the two pianos.

![Example 5: Conversation Between the Pianos, Fourth Variation, mm. 49-52](image)

The sustained whole-note chords as well as measure-long harmonies call for rich pedaling to be held over the length of each bar. These progressions create contrast with the previous section which is written largely in an un-pedaled walking bass style. A slightly slower tempo,

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73 Ibid., 8.
although not marked by Brubeck, will accentuate these sustained chords. To highlight the romantic quality in this section, the performer can also linger on rhythms and harmonies at the ends of measures.

The romantic style of the music dramatically shifts in m. 65, when Piano I moves into regularly marked quarter notes in the left hand. The new marching rhythm can be reflected by playing dryly and without pedal. Adding a subito piano at the beginning of m. 65 (not marked by Brubeck) can especially bring contrast to this short segment which otherwise shows little dynamic change from the previous section.

After the highly contrasting variation three, variations four and five mark a return to a style similar to variations one and two. Variation four starts with a sassy melodic figure in Piano I that employs chromatic neighboring motion on E natural in mm. 81 and 83, and chromatic neighboring motion on A natural in mm. 85-86. The unstable quality of this figure can be shown through a dry, percussive attack, and loud dynamics, the last of which Brubeck marks at the beginning of the section. The performer can also maintain a faster, more marked pulse to keep up the energy of the line.

Variation five and variation one mirror each other as Brubeck returns to the melody from the beginning of the movement (m. 17), this time written in octaves. The grand style of this section is seen in the long-held chords, thick textures, and legato melody. This can be brought out by playing slightly slower than Brubeck’s marking with a return to the tempo of variation one. The performers may wish to emphasize the return to the opening theme by using richer pedaling and playing with dynamics louder than Brubeck marks.

At m. 105, Brubeck comes to the middle section of variation five. The quieter dynamics, lower register, and slower melodic motion indicate a slight pulling back of the tempo. Slowing down the pulse can help transition the return to the opening tempo at m. 113 where Brubeck brings back the opening theme.
Altogether, the *Prelude* amounts to a series of mirrored pairs consisting of: beginning and ending themes, variations one and five, variations two and four, and variation three (a double variation). Each of these parts contain matching styles and thusly can be played with tempos that match. Example 6 shows how Brubeck lays out the sections.

**Example 6: Form of the Prelude**

Understanding the structure of the *Prelude* can also help to better understand where crescendos, diminuendos, accelerandos, and ritardandos can be used to bridge sections. When heading into a faster tempo, connecting sections can end with a slight accelerando, and when transitioning to a slower variation, the section can end with a ritardando. Similarly, dynamics can grow or diminish as Brubeck moves into quieter or louder sections.

**Scherzo**

The *Scherzo* begins full of energy, with strong momentum and the quality of a march. The listener is immediately attracted to the animated style which emerges from the steady, linear chords and staccato markings in the accompaniment and arpeggio figures. The counterpoint between each of the parts as well as constant quarter note motion gives the music a dynamic, vibrant quality.
Piano II can bring out this lively quality by playing the accompaniment in a short and jagged manner to accentuate the bass melody which, in contrast, is written in a smooth, legato style. Example 7 highlights the legato and staccato styles employed.

Example 7: Accent Marks in the Scherzo, mm. 1-5

Throughout the opening section of the movement, Piano I plays ascending arpeggio chords in the treble clef. Their high register and continuous motion creates a sound like the ticking of a clock. These rising figures are highlighted by staccato and accent markings on

\[Ibid., 15.\]
the highest point of each arpeggio (see Example 7). To bring out these figures, the arpeggios can be played with precise rhythm and light dynamics. The last note of each figure should be strongly emphasized, as Brubeck writes an accent on each of these to mark the loudest point.

To feature the dynamic style, both pianists can play in a fast, forward-moving tempo. Brubeck writes the opening at $\frac{3}{4} = 150$. If this marking proves to be too fast, the performers may wish to slow the tempo down to $\frac{3}{4} = 138$. This marking, although not Brubeck’s, maintains a fast pulse with a more manageable speed. At this pace, the 16th notes will still have an incredible velocity and energy.

The momentum of the music can begin to gain at dramatic points in the music, which fall in mm. 3-4 and 7-8 where Brubeck doubles the melody in octave unisons. The doubled line, higher register, and crescendos on these figures all contribute to an increased intensity. Piano I can help to further augment this liveliness through a slight acceleration in mm. 4 and 8.

The use of accents contributes to an unusual rhythmic grouping that alters the 4/4-meter to sound as if in 2/4. These accents on beats two and four can be seen throughout the first 22 measures in Piano I and differ from the traditional 4/4 meter, which features accents on beats one and four. This meter lends to a livelier style, since each group is divided into shorter, faster clips. Piano II can accent the half-note on the second beat of the melody in mm. 1, 2, 5, and 6 (although no accent is indicated) to bring out this rhythmic shift.

The music takes on a festive quality starting at m. 23, where Brubeck transitions into B-flat Major in the second B section of the piece (the overall form being AABB). The music begins to move in a new direction as the melody in Piano I changes to a descending motion, contrary to the previous A section which moves in ascending motion. The melody features sequential material highlighted by chromatic inflections. The line can be shaped through
accent marks as well as louder dynamics, both of which Brubeck marks in the score; see Example 8.

Example 8: Lively Percussive Section in Scherzo, mm. 21-26

Brubeck also changes the rhythmic pulse in this section to 4/4. The repeated chords in each of the beats can be played slightly louder than the first. Although both chords are marked with accents, an emphasis on the second chord will help to underline the syncopated feel. To add to the celebratory sound of this section, Piano II can convey the “Percussive”

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75 Ibid., 17.
quality, which Brubeck marks, through an aggressive attack on each repeated note. After the first repeat, this section can be performed with increased dynamics, growing louder to amplify the intensity of the music.

At a fast tempo, the repeated rhythmic figure in Piano I may prove difficult for the performer. If execution is not possible, the pianist may wish to break up the chord into two beats, with the bottom note of the chord on beat one and the top three notes of the dotted eighth note on the second half of the beat (m. 23). This technique, which is imperceptible, will help ease some of the difficulty of this passage.

The movement ends with a short, four-bar coda. This light, crystalline figure (Example 9) is made up of material that was introduced on beats two and three in mm. 23-26 of the B Section. Descending figures, which are introduced high in the register of Piano I, signify the end of the movement as Brubeck marks “decrescendo to end.” The lighter timber of the high register of the piano, along with the quieter dynamics, helps to end the movement as the overall sound begins to dissipate. Although Brubeck does not notate any change in dynamics aside from the decrescendo, the chords in Piano I & II can be played with a softer touch so as not to overpower the light melodic figures.

An interesting feature of this section is the hemiola Brubeck incorporates to give the illusion of sounding in 3/4. The hemiola helps lend finality to the ending as the repetitious style and shortening of the meter provides the sensation of dying out. To help enhance the hemiola effect, the first and third beat of each group in Piano I can be lightly accentuated. Each of these ten-note groups can also be phrased to sound as part of a single unit. The final bar should be played as softly as possibly, as marked by Brubeck, to give the sensation of fading (Example 9).
Blues

The *Blues* begins in a cool, laidback, improvisatory style. One can imagine this soulful music played in a smoke-filled club with a soloist improvising the melodic line. The jaunty middle section features a biting melody that moves against the ostinato accompaniment and rises to a dramatic climax before abruptly returning to the opening theme.

To express this casual, relaxed quality, Piano I can play in a meandering, spontaneous style while Piano II lays out a simple harmonic progression in slow quarter-note motion. The performers can emphasize this calmness by not rushing the rhythms and by allowing the imbalance of the two parts to work together. As Piano II plays slow-moving chords on the beat, Piano I plays the melody off the beat. The two parts pull against each other, with a free sense of rubato, allowing each part to give and take. Piano I should also be sure to bring out all of Brubeck’s marked syncopations, off-beat accents, and irregular rhythms as these are integral to the Blues style; see Example 10.

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76 Ibid., 20.
Transitioning into the middle section (mm. 18-109), Brubeck introduces faster boogie-woogie music. The style here is highly energetic and Blues-inflected. The parts come into struggle as the two pianos move in opposing rhythms, textures, and melodies. This tension can be emphasized to create excitement and contrast. From the opening of the middle section at m. 18, Piano I begins with a free, syncopated triplet pattern, which is followed by a steadier 16th-note pattern in the next measure. Piano I may wish to delay the rhythms here, playing slower and with rubato; then to contrast, Piano II can play in a steadier, faster rhythm in the following measure. Piano I can set the pace at roughly $\frac{1}{4} = 52$. This tempo, which is slightly slower than Brubeck’s actual marking, will help the music to move in a more

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77 Ibid., 21.
laidback style. Meanwhile, Piano II can play at a slightly faster clip, pushing forward against Piano I.

As the middle section progresses, the growing tension can be emphasized through a slow acceleration and increase in dynamics. At m. 24, the performers can begin with a slightly faster tempo; \( \frac{4}{4} \) = 80 can work as a starting point here. Although this pace is notably slower than what Brubeck marks, the original tempi are marked very fast and allow little room for transition. At m. 26, Brubeck marks accelerando and the performers can begin to increase the speed every two measures. The goal will be not to accelerate too much as the “Fast Blues Tempo” can be difficult to play at very high speeds. A recommended goal for this section (starting at m. 34) is \( \frac{4}{4} \) = 112-120, which is slightly slower than Brubeck’s marking.

The music at “Fast Blues Tempo” has a biting quality. As Brubeck introduces the harmony of the G minor blues in Piano I, the tri-tone D-flat interval above this in Piano II creates a sharp dissonance in the harmony. The loud dynamics, fast tempo, thick texture, deep bass octave chords and percussive melody all contribute to the aggressive style. These elements are especially brought out in the accompaniment, where Piano I can play in a heavy forte style. The accompaniment is repeated over and over throughout the section; to give the music momentum, this should be played with loud dynamics, strong forward-moving velocity, and an assertive attack. The energy of the accompaniment will also help to propel the melody along as the music builds toward the climax of the section.

The phrase structure of the music is broken up into irregular groupings of alternating four-bar and six-bar phrases. This format can be seen in the octave bass line, which outlines the main harmonic progression of Points on Jazz (i, ii, V, I) and the places where a new phrase begins in the melody (these spots are clearly seen in mm. 38, 44, 50, and 54). Both
pianists can bring out the line by strongly accentuating the beginning of each phrase group and by separating the ends of groups.

At the end of the section, the two pianos finally come together with matching rhythms and dramatic intensity; see Example 11. Here the music reaches an intense climax with both pianos coalescing in fierce, upward-ascending triplet patterns bursting with explosive dynamics and repeated chords. These lines can be brought out with an extra-loud fortissimo, a percussive attack, and unified motion in both pianos.

Example 11: Circle-of-Fifths and Matching Rhythms in *Blues*, mm. 97-102

In Example 11, Brubeck finally breaks from the mold of the ii – V – i progression and moves into a series of circle-of-fifths progressions. These jazzy, Gershwin-esque figures can especially be accented and played with even louder dynamics. Brubeck writes “fortissimo” to emphasize these chords, one of the few times the music pulls away from the regular harmonic pattern of the suite.

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78 Ibid., 34.
Fugue

The *Fugue* opens with an emphatic, unceasing energy. This motion remains in a state of tension that is expressed throughout the themes, harmony, rhythm and interplay between the various parts. As the textures clash, the pressure builds and the music comes to a dramatic climax. The music is largely based upon Baroque counterpoint and the rich, polyphonic textures that permeated the music of Bach but is used here with a modern 20\textsuperscript{th} century twist. The performers can emphasize these rich sonorities through accentuation of the many Baroque elements throughout the movement: subject, real answer, counter-subject, stretto, inversion, augmentation, and diminution.

Biting chromatic dissonance is displayed in the intervals of the subject. This theme, which is based upon music from the *Prelude*, consists of an octave leap followed by a minor second. To highlight the chromatic qualities here, the staccato notes can be played especially short and accented, with the addition of a slightly stronger accent on the repeated note; see Example 12. As the subject continues throughout the movement, it will be important for the performers to play this theme in a uniform style so it will be easily recognizable in each of the four voices in which it returns.
Example 12: Notes to be Accented in the Fugue, mm. 1-8

The opening marking, “In a swinging style,” will require some stylistic knowledge of jazz. The swing effect is primarily displayed through the alternation of short and long values of eighth and quarter-note rhythms. These beats can be adjusted to sound as a triplet rhythm. One of the primary difficulties of this movement will be in coordinating these elements as both pianists attempt to play off the beat. A good approach for practicing will be to play in a straight rhythmic style, leaving out rhythmic alterations. As the performers become more coordinated, they can gradually introduce swing elements.

79 Ibid., 37.
After the opening bars, Brubeck moves into a section of lighter modulatory material. This episode, which appears at m. 14, is based upon material from the subject and counter-subject. The effect of the music in this section is of lowered intensity, which brings relief to the listener in an otherwise intense movement. This section can be performed with quieter dynamics and less marked accentuation to evoke a calmer atmosphere. A slight pulling back of the tempo here can further dampen the intensity.

At m. 16, one can imagine a traffic jam with many horns and sounds all coming together at once. The music creates an agitated polyphony as multiple voices are presented in separate harmonies. On top of this, Piano I plays a theme consisting of repeated notes presented in changing position in each measure; first on beat two, then on beat three, then on beat four, and finally back to beat one. Piano I should bring out this theme clearly and with the same articulation each time it is played, despite any changing rhythmic implications. This will help to unify the section.

Brubeck creates a pulling back and lightening of texture at m. 34. Here several lines of the accompaniment are left out and Brubeck writes quiet dynamics. The soft marking can be enhanced further and played as a subito piano to convey more of a dramatic shift. Both pianists can play with a gentler touch as well. This section is additionally differentiated through the hemiola rhythms incorporated throughout. The listener is left with the sense of temporarily being in 3/4, even though the music is written in 4/4; see Example 13. The performers can emphasize Brubeck’s accent on the first beat of each three-beat group, as well as differentiate each set through the marked slurs. The performers also may wish to de-emphasize the regular agogic accents on beats one and four to help create the illusion of 3/4.
Starting in m. 46, the music begins to develop a stagnant quality as the rhythmic pace decreases. Brubeck introduces a series of longer-held rhythms, which in contrast to the constant eighth and quarter motion used in the rest of the movement, progress at a slower rate. In the bass, Brubeck writes the subject in augmentation; the rhythmic values are twice as slow as previous statements. This theme should be played loudly above the other parts as marked by Brubeck. The melodic line can also pull back, slowing down the momentum of the accompaniment.

The music in this section creates an irregular balance as the two lines move in contrary motion. Piano I travels in descending stepwise motion high in the register of the treble clef; meanwhile, Piano II ascends in leap-wise motion in the bass. The performers can highlight these lines through a careful balancing of the parts. The accompaniment in Piano I (which Brubeck marks “mezzo forte”) can be played slightly softer but with clear attenuation.

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80 Ibid., 53.
The intensity of the music begins to build and new voices enter as Brubeck employs stretto at m. 101. Brubeck overlaps multiple entries of the subject spaced over several octaves and uses fortissimo dynamics. As each statement emerges, the intensity of the music continues to build as the listener anticipates the end of the movement. Both lines here can be emphasized, creating a battle as each part competes to be heard loudest. It may be helpful for the performers to practice playing with equal dynamics to underline this clash.

As the movement comes to a climax, the octave chords and double trills can be accentuated; see Example 14. The last cadence on C minor marks the final, and only real, resolution of the dense contrapuntal writing in this movement. This closing chord should be the loudest point in the movement, marking the long-anticipated resolve.
Example 14: Dramatic Ending to *Fugue*, mm. 112-118

**Rag**

The *Rag* begins in the intense vein of the previous *Fugue*, with aggressive, agitated music for the first 16 bars. The opening augmented chord is presented with an aggressive attack and fortissimo dynamics, setting a tense atmosphere in the music; see Example 15. This passage serves as a transition into the more lighthearted ragtime style that begins at m. 17.

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81 Ibid., 46.
Example 15: Introduction to Rag, mm. 1-8

Despite the numerous grace notes and offbeat accents during the introduction, it is important to keep a steady, fast tempo. The “Fast” marking that Brubeck notates offers a strong direction to the music, even though the shifting harmonies add a level of uncertainty. The performers can define this direction by maintaining a strong leading pulse for the first sixteen bars.

After the opening chord, Piano II follows with the subject of the Fugue, which is presented in pedal point with repeated notes in the bass. Meanwhile, Piano I moves in a circle

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82 Ibid., 47.
of fifths pattern: A – D – G – C. After this progression, the music becomes unstable as Brubeck introduces chromaticism and shifting harmonies.

In the final bars of the introduction, the rhythm in the pedal point pattern begins to change as Brubeck shifts the pattern across bar lines, distorting the sense of meter. This figure is originally written in 5/4 time, but at m. 7 the music shifts to 4/4. Brubeck marks accents which are repeated each time the theme returns; it is important for these accents to be brought out to maintain the original sense of 5/4.

An abrupt change in the music comes as Brubeck moves from the introduction into the main section of the movement, switching from 20th-century fugal counterpoint to 19th-century ragtime music. This shift (m. 16 going into m. 17) can be softened by slowing down on the last two beats of m. 16. The new section can also begin at a slightly slower tempo than the opening. Although Brubeck does not mark either of these tempo alterations, the music requires a certain degree of change in order to transition into the new section. The slightly slower tempo will especially aid in the transition by adding a laidback quality to the ragtime section.

This section begins in a cheerful atmosphere as Brubeck evokes the ragtime style of Eubie Blake. The mood is brought out with bright, syncopated major chords. Piano I can emphasize the carefree qualities by changing from the heavily-accented fortissimo dynamics of the previous section to a lighter, gentler fortissimo dynamic. The chordal melody can be played with chords slightly shorter than what Brubeck marks to underscore this carefree quality. A slight prolonging of the first beat in m. 17 can support this transition as well.

The music moves with an engaging rhythm as the accompaniment in Piano II alternates in a slow “oom-pah” figure juxtaposed against the off-beat chordal melody in Piano I; see Example 16. The syncopation created between the parts adds a dancing quality to
the music which can be conveyed as Piano I accents Brubeck’s off-beat triplets. Piano II can remain in time while Piano I bends against the beat.

Example 16: Syncopations in the \textit{Rag}, mm. 17-25$^{83}$

The light atmosphere of the music is also brought out through the C-Major harmony Brubeck transposes from the \textit{Prelude}; the \textit{Rag} is one of the few sections in major mode in the entire suite. Example 17 shows the harmonies of the \textit{Rag} and the \textit{Prelude} compared back to back. To better unify these movements and the suite, it can be helpful to create a

$^{83}$ Ibid., 48.
phrasing/accent plan which is consistent throughout. Brubeck stresses chords that are played off the beat and does not accent chords that are played on the beat. Although much of this is already marked in the score, it will be helpful for the performers to be especially aware of these markings as they contribute to the syncopated, swinging feel of the music. In the *Rag* especially, these accents bring a flashy style to the music.

Example 17: Chord Progressions in the *Prelude* and *Rag*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Prelude: B-Flat Minor</th>
<th>Rag: C Major</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bb min7</td>
<td>C7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gb maj7</td>
<td>F7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C min7 b5</td>
<td>V7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G min7 b5</td>
<td>C7 b5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The middle trio section brings relief in the texture as the music moves into a gentler, more static quality. The style here is made up of non-thematic material consisting of a light accompaniment, melody in thirds, softer dynamics, and harmony in the sub-dominant. These qualities all add a sweetness to the music. Transitioning into this section, a short ritardando can be added from m. 37 going into 38 to offset the changeover. The tempo here can also be slightly slower than the rest of the movement to help differentiate the sections and to emphasize the lighter mood (although Brubeck does not mark either of these suggestions).
Chorale

The somber Chorale presents an abrupt change from the previous upbeat Rag movement. This bi-tonal interlude is written in overlapping C minor and C major key areas; see Example 18. The style of this writing is akin to an early pre-tonal renaissance chorale, which may have featured similar four-part modal writing. Although Brubeck draws his harmony from the overlapping of various key areas, the aural effect contains similarities to this early modal music.

Example 18: Bi-Tonal Harmony in Chorale, mm. 1-7

The listener is immediately drawn to the new square version of the main theme; the melody is presented in quarter- and half-note values with rhythms in reversed order from the Prelude. These flipped rhythms give the Chorale a greater sense of direction as the pulse beats with a steadier motion. Example 19 compares the rhythmic values of the theme as it is presented in both movements.

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Example 19: Changing Rhythmic Values in the *Chorale*\(^{85}\) and *Prelude*\(^{86}\)

These inverted quarter- and half-note values are essential to bringing out the slow, somber quality of the music. Half notes can be held slightly longer and quarter notes can be played shorter. This formula essentially lengthens the longer-held rhythms, giving the music a more sustained, gloomy atmosphere.

A tempo slightly slower than Brubeck’s original marking may bring out even more of the subdued quality. The tempo \(\frac{3}{4} = 48\) can be used as an initial reference, although a marking slightly slower than this may be desirable. In passages with all quarter-note motion, the performers can hasten the tempo.

The simple style of the *Chorale* can be displayed through clear phrasing and articulations, such as lifting at the ends of slurs and slight accentuation at the beginnings of phrases. The one-bar groupings are noticeably shorter than the phrases used in the rest of the movements. Differentiating these markings can also add contrast to the otherwise static motion.

\(^{85}\) Ibid., 53.

\(^{86}\) Ibid., 4.
The form is composed of two repeated A sections, similar to a traditional chorale form. To separate these sections, Brubeck writes a half-cadence on B-flat at the end of the first section. Instead of resolving this chord to the tonic, though, the harmony resolves to the original C minor, creating a deceptive cadence. The performer can pause in the music here, highlighting this dramatic moment.

**Waltz**

The upbeat jazz riff which opens the Waltz immediately sets the mood: an energetic dance in the modern jazz style. After the slow, somber, atmosphere of the Chorale, the Waltz marks a new direction with a return to a faster, livelier atmosphere. The repeated motif which opens the movement is also similar to the beginning of Brubeck’s *Take Five*.

The lively dance quality in the music is generated through an alternation between syncopated and regularly-marked bars. Brubeck marks this difference with alternating 3/4 and 9/8 measures. In Example 20, Piano II plays rhythms on the off-beats in one measure, but in the following measure, the primary beats (1, 2, & 3) are accented. The contrast of regular against irregular rhythms helps to create the swing feel. The performers can especially accent the half-note chords in these measures. In addition, an unhurried, moderate tempo will set the mood of the piece. A marking of $\frac{3}{4} = 126$, although slower than Brubeck’s, may be better suited for allowing the music to flow at a relaxed pace.
In Dania Krupska’s account of the ballet, this movement is based upon a *Pas de Deux*, which according to the Oxford Dictionary, “is a ballet duet in which two dancers, typically a male and a female, perform ballet steps together.” In Brubeck’s *Waltz*, the two themes represent the Boy and Girl characters in the ballet. Piano I plays short, syncopated arpeggio lines representing the Girl while Piano II accompanies with chords and melody as the Boy. Piano II can clearly articulate the melody above the chords here to remind the listener of the lonely theme from the *Prelude*. Example 21 shows these two parts together.

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87 Ibid., 54.
Example 21: Girl and Boy Themes in the *Waltz*, mm. 7-13

As the two themes interact, both pianos can be heard repeating the melodic notes. Piano II plays the repeated “F” in the melody while the same note appears in Piano I as accented at the end of the arpeggio figure. If executed clearly and with equal dynamics, the two pianos can create an echo effect similar to the romantic middle section of the *Prelude*.

The accompaniment material in Piano I (m. 9), is borrowed from the *Scherzo*, although looking deeper, the role of the music is much different here. Brubeck transforms the accompaniment into a sparkling figure which is more ornamental here. Piano I can enhance

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89 Brubeck, 54.
the glittering quality by playing these arpeggios in a short, light, and crisp manner. Care
should be taken to accentuate the melody above the accompaniment part as well.

The melodic figures in Piano I and Piano II eventually coalesce in the last section at
m. 53. The movement makes a dramatic shift as the style becomes thick, fierce, chordal, and
filled with syncopations and regular quarter-note counterpoint. The story in this last section
reflects the Boy and Girl finally reuniting. Brubeck titles this dramatic section “Slightly
Faster,” and the music evokes a Viennese waltz in the style of Johann Strauss.

The performers can accentuate some of these fiery qualities through increased
dynamics and faster tempo. The syncopated rhythms, with triplets juxtaposed against quarter-
note rhythms, can also be emphasized as the two parts intertwine and play off each other; see
Example 22. As the section progresses, there are occasional occurrences of the two pianos
coming together with equal rhythmic values in mm. 63, 78, and 80. These unified
progressions can be especially accented with both parts playing in a pesante style and with
additional emphasis on the downbeats.
The Viennese style in this movement also appears in the upper neighboring notes and lilting waltz figures Brubeck incorporates in mm. 69-84. As the melodic line in Piano I moves in stepwise motion, these figures can be accented on the higher notes and de-emphasized on the lower notes. The performer should be sure to follow Brubeck’s notation, which has already marked much of this in the score.

**A La Turk**

The *A La Turk* begins with great anticipation and energy. The bass plays an ostinato figure on E-flat that repeats for 20 bars; meanwhile, Piano I plays chordal and melodic figures showing glimpses of the main theme of the movement. The unclear direction and harmony of the movement leaves the listener in suspense and waiting for a resolution. The unresolved major 7th chords and short melodic figures both play into this uncertainty as well.

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90 Ibid., 59.
These figures should be played noticeably louder than the bass as Brubeck inscribes.

Meanwhile, the repeated E-flat figure can maintain a fast, strict tempo, bringing out each of Brubeck’s accents to contribute to the nervous energy. Example 23 highlights the opening with its irregular accents.

Example 23: *Aksak Rhythm in A La Turk*, mm. 1-3

The jittery effect in the introduction finally resolves when the music modulates to B-flat minor at m. 21 and the main theme of the movement is announced. The Turkish *aksak* rhythm is presented here in both parts. This 9/8 theme is subdivided into four unequal beats (1-2, 1-2, 1-2, 1-2-3) and the original theme from the *Prelude* can be heard on the highest notes of each melodic line. The bright melody can be showcased with short, clipped rhythms on each of the eighth-note groups. Bearing great resemblance to Brubeck’s *Blue Rondo A La Turk*, this theme is initially marked with very loud dynamics and can be played with great force and energy. Example 24 shows the *aksak* rhythm as it is presented here.

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91 Ibid., 62.
Example 24: *Aksak* Rhythm and *Prelude* Theme Combined, mm. 19-24\(^\text{92}\)

Coordinating both pianos presents one of the chief difficulties of the movement. With accents on every-other beat and irregular groupings, it is difficult for the performers to synchronize parts as the regular sense of meter is obscured. The usual subdivision of three is now divided into four unequal beats; meanwhile, Piano II often plays against the *aksak* rhythm with subdivisions of two, three, or an equal group of four. It may be helpful in the early practice stages to divide the rhythm into regular compound meter subdivisions, leaving

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\(^{92}\) Ibid., 64.
out the aksak rhythm and practicing both parts slowly. Once everything is lined up, the Turkish rhythm can be reincorporated.

It is interesting to note that A La Turk also may have been influenced by Bartok’s Bulgarian Dance No. 6 from Mikrokosmos Book 6. This dance is written in a rhythmic pattern of 1-2-3, 1-2-3, 1-2, a configuration similar to Brubeck’s. According to Ilse Storb, “Brubeck emphasizes that, besides the African influence in Jazz today, the importance of the influence of contemporary composers—Bartok, Stravinsky, and Milhaud—must also be given its due.” Note in Example 25, Bulgarian Dance No. 6, and in the previous Example 21, that both pieces contain octave accompaniments in the left hand, irregular subdivisions of three, and chordal structures in the melody. Studying this Bartok dance may lead to deeper understanding of Brubeck’s A La Turk.

Example 25: Bartok Bulgarian Dance No. 6, mm. 1-4

Despite the intense energy of the movement, Brubeck incorporates moments of relief when he inserts bars with regular compound rhythm. These single-bar interjections provide stability against the irregular aksak pulse and can be emphasized through a subtle pulling

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93 Ilse Storb, Jazz Meets the World-The World Meets Jazz (Münster: LIT Verlag, 2000), 142.
back by the performers. In each occurrence (mm. 24, 28, 32, 35, 36, etc.), Brubeck writes three chord changes per measure. Performers may wish to add a very strong emphasis on each of Brubeck’s accents, as well the crescendo marking.

After the main opening section (mm. 21-42), Brubeck transitions into a series of variations based on the theme. The A La Turk almost mirrors the Prelude as it is the only other movement to feature a longer middle section with variations. In this middle section, the melody often appears in a syncopated style. Brubeck also writes melodies that lapse over several bars as well as triplet and quintuplet figures that are very difficult to coordinate with both pianos. Throughout this section, it will be important for the music to maintain an improvisatory feel; both pianos will want to give and take with these irregular rhythms. Slow practice will be especially useful in organizing the parts. It may be also helpful to play these variations in a slightly slower tempo, although Brubeck does not mark this.

Starting at m. 122, Brubeck introduces a melodic idea written in a floating, Schubert-like style. This theme is written across two-measure segments and is presented in a regular compound 9/8 meter, offering relief from the previous irregular rhythmic sub-divisions. The accompanying piano may wish to play as quietly as possible, allowing extra room for the melody to play Brubeck’s soft dynamics. This theme, shown in Example 26, can be generously pedaled with a pulling back of the tempo below Brubeck’s marking. At m. 138, the performers can begin accelerating back to the opening aksak marking and by m. 139, the music should return to the full speed of the opening.
After the variations, the music transitions into the “Finale (Theme)” section which opens in a most grandiose, bravura style. Piano II plays large, sweeping arpeggios while the Prelude theme is presented in chordal octaves in Piano I. The performers can add a transition into Brubeck’s “Broad” tempo marking through a ritardando on his two-bar crescendo in mm. 153-154. Brubeck marks the “Finale (Theme)” to be played at two-thirds tempo and with very loud dynamics.

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95 Ibid., 76.
The piece ends with a four-bar coda at m. 188 consisting of an abbreviated version of the theme. After all of the variations, the music comes to a long rest on the final two bars. To create a dramatic close, the performers can extend the fermata marking on the last chord, with the addition of pianissimo dynamics on the final octave chord.
CHAPTER IV: DEVELOPMENT OF AN ECLECTIC STYLE

Brubeck’s style is based on a conglomeration of composers, musicians, and types of music. In *Points on Jazz*, one can see the influence of Chopin, early jazz swing (Duke Ellington, Louis Armstrong), Stravinsky, Scriabin, Blues, Baroque (J.S. Bach, Dietrich Buxtehude), ballet, 20th century modern jazz, Turkish music, Ragtime, Liszt, and Darius Milhaud. Brubeck synthesizes these eclectic styles into his own musical language using the unifying elements of polytonality, rhythmic displacement, counterpoint, block chords, a dense accompaniment, and jazz rhythms.

Amidst the many styles Brubeck employs, one of the hallmarks of his music is the element of surprise he creates through abrupt changes. Since the movements are written like a series of variations on the *Dziekuje* theme, it is necessary to vary the musical material in each of the movements to avoid sounding repetitive. Brubeck achieves this variability through rapid shifts in dynamics (pianissimo to forte or fortissimo), unforeseen key changes, dramatic swings in rhythm or pulse, unexpected stylistic transitions (i.e. Blues to Fugue to Rag), and sudden alterations in tempo.

Brubeck was greatly influenced by the 20th century composers Milhaud and Stravinsky, both of whom experimented with polychords and polytonality. These techniques are used throughout *Points on Jazz*. The Chorale is entirely polytonal, and the *A La Turk* features a number of polychords. Stravinsky uses similar techniques in the second act of *Petrushka*, which the composer himself said was written “in two keys.”96 Brubeck later stated that Stravinsky’s influences were like “a bag from which he could pull things when he was

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composing and performing.” These polytonal techniques are also an integral part of Milhaud’s music; his famous *Scaramouche* shows examples of polytonal structures.

Another correlation between Brubeck and Stravinsky is the use of rhythmic displacement. Brubeck uses accents to highlight off-beats, which according to music theorist Mark McFarland, “is a hallmark of Stravinsky’s music.” Other similarities between the two composers that McFarland identifies include, “changing meter…the underlying stable meter at odds with the notated meter, the rhythmic immobility of motifs in relation to the notated meter, and the change in rhythmic placement in relation to the underlying stable meter.” In sections where the first and third beats normally are accented, Brubeck will do the opposite and accent the second and fourth beats.

Counterpoint is another hallmark of Brubeck’s style. Evident throughout his compositions, including *Points on Jazz*, is a predisposition for well-written lines. Brubeck learned counterpoint in his classes with Milhaud and developed his technique from the music of J.S. Bach and Dietrich Buxtehude. The *Fugue* and *Chorale* movements are particularly indicative of this.

Brubeck sometimes wrote in a thick chordal style with octaves, thirds, and fifths. This style of chordal writing is especially prominent in the music of Liszt, Scriabin, and later ragtime composers such as Scott Joplin. Brubeck used these chords to outline the melody in the right hand or the harmony in the accompaniment part. This type of sound was often featured with a percussive attack which set him apart from many of his jazz contemporaries.

Brubeck’s predisposition to draw from many different genres mark him as the epitome of a 20th century composer. In previous eras, composers would all write in a single

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97 Ibid.
98 Ibid., 172-173.
99 Ibid., 173.
musical language: Baroque, Classical, Romantic, etc. But in the 20th century, exoticism, eastern music, nationalism, expressionism, impressionism, and many other types of music from around the world became part of the Western tradition. Brubeck embodies this modern approach by employing many individual styles in his compositions, a technique which was a hallmark of some of the great modern-era composers, such as Stravinsky, Copland, and Debussy. To define 20th century music as a single style would go against the essence of what makes this music unique. So, too, with Brubeck; his style cannot be defined as a single type of music, but rather as the conglomeration of many styles joined together.

Brubeck’s Style through his Other Works

Brubeck’s use of polytonality is evident in many of his works. Curtain Music, one of Brubeck’s early compositions, was written during the period Brubeck studied with Milhaud and contains many examples of multiple key areas superimposed on top of each other. Brubeck continued to use polytonal technique throughout his life, and his later piece Struttin, from the suite Glances, also contains many examples of polytonal key relationships.

The influence of Stravinsky’s harmony is evident in Overture, another piece from Glances. This movement features thick block chords reminiscent of the opening of Stravinsky’s Petrouchka. The pandiatonic style used in Overture may have also been influenced by Milhaud’s Scaramouche, a piece with similar pandiatonic structures.

As many of Brubeck’s earliest musical influences come from his time living on a ranch, his Reminiscences of Cattle Country suite contains many themes from the Old West.

100 Kerman, 307-348.
101 Ibid.
102 McFarland, 158.
104 Hall, 3-14.
The titles in this set are particularly evocative of Western themes: *Sun Up, Breaking a Wild Horse, The Fairgrounds, Look at My Pony, The Chickens and the Ducklings, Dad Plays the Harmonica*. Brubeck uses quartal and quintal harmonies to represent some of these western themes, harmonies which he also employs in parallel motion in his album *Jazz Impressions of Japan*. Similar examples of this technique can be seen in Debussy’s *Pagodes* and *Étude 3 pour les quartes*, which are also influenced by Eastern music.

Brubeck has a number of other compositions inspired by music from different parts of the world. *Impression of New York* contains several examples of the rumba and other Latin American styles. *Impression of Eurasia* incorporates musical influences from Afghanistan, Germany, India, and Africa. *La Fiesta de la Posada* includes inspiration from Mexico. Finally, his *Light in the Wilderness* oratorio contains an array of music from all around the world, mixing both modern and ancient styles with Middle Eastern music. The styles in this piece include country hoedown, jazz, rock and roll, martial drums bitonality, and quartal and quintal harmony.105

Brubeck also created a number of rhythmic experiments focusing on polyrhythms. “When I first started doing polyrhythms no one played those rhythms,” Brubeck writes, “and the people got really confused and no one expected that, because usually there is 4/4. So the other musicians didn’t know what I was doing and yet I tried to explain to them that in African music there is polyrhythms…The first African music I heard was from an expedition into the Belgian Congo.”106 This African music influences a number of his albums: *Brubeck Time, Time Out, Time Further Out, Countdown-Time in Outer Space, Time Changes*, and

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105 Storb and Fischer, 123.
106 Ibid., 55.
Adventures in Time. These albums feature polymetric and irregular meters, including 5/4, 6/4, 7/4, 9/8, 10/4, 11/4, and 13/4.¹⁰⁷

Altogether, these works represent a small portion of Brubeck’s output as a composer. Brubeck explored many other musical genres and continued to write in different styles until the end of his life.
CONCLUSION

The music of Dave Brubeck has often been difficult to categorize. His writing flows freely between classical and jazz. Along with these major trends, though, Brubeck expands into the music of nationalities and cultures from around the globe. In Brubeck’s words, “I’m looking for the day when all music is accepted and understood. I’ve always loved all music…We’re finally living in a time when we’ll accept all musical cultures and know that they’re all great, valid expressions of their people…”

To understand the cultures that influenced Brubeck is to understand his music.

In order to better grasp Brubeck’s style, it is necessary to understand him as a person. Brubeck loved people, and not just those of his own, social, ethnic, or racial background. Brubeck’s father taught him to respect all people, regardless of race or creed. This value, for Brubeck, was expressed in the form of music. In all of his compositions, Brubeck takes on the musical practices of other cultures. This process, which sometimes seems disjointed in Brubeck’s music, effectively mirrors the disjointed experience of human integration. The combining of any two cultures is often messy and unpredictable. This is the nature of integration; this is the nature of Brubeck’s music.

Brubeck’s value for people went beyond his music, though. He stood up for racial equality and fought against the segregation which was a major cultural element during his lifetime. These values influenced his experiences as he traveled to other countries where racism was still prevalent. Brubeck’s belief in equality also gained him respect from an international audience. As his pursuit of integration became known, his acclaim grew, and his music became popular in various ethnic communities.

Brubeck’s love of people prompted him to travel across the globe, collaborating with and supporting musicians from all around the world. He learned their music and joined forces to write and perform together. Brubeck reached out to musicians in poor communities, visited areas that had been destroyed during war, traveled to remote parts of the world, and even risked his life traveling to dangerous areas for the sake of sharing music.

To study *Points on Jazz* is to witness Brubeck’s love for people. Brubeck used his compositions as a way of connecting with other cultures by integrating their styles with his own. His ability and willingness to weave so many different types of music together sets him apart from other musicians. He had a unique concept: to weave together music to cross all cultural, racial, social, and ethnic boundaries.
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**Musical Scores**


**Online Sources**


APPENDIX: SCORE TO POINTS ON JAZZ*

The Original Two-Piano Score of

POINTS ON JAZZ

A Ballet by Dave Brubeck
(commissioned by the American Ballet Theatre)
I—Prelude • II—Scherzo • III—Blues • IV—Fugue • V—Rag • VI—Chorale • VII—Waltz • VIII—A La Turk

I. PRELUDE

Quiet, Calm \( \frac{d}{s} \) transcribed by Howard Brubeck

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II. SCHERZO
Fast Blues Tempo
Gradually slower to

Slow Blues Tempo $\frac{1}{4}=88$
IV. FUGUE

Moderately fast in a swinging style \( \text{d} \cdot 80 \)
V. RAG
On repeat play 2 octaves higher through 2nd ending (left hand as is).
VI. CHORAŁ

Slow $d=64$

[Music notation]

1

[Music notation]

2

[Music notation]

1

[Music notation]

2

[Music notation]

1

[Music notation]

2

[Music notation]
VII. WALTZ

Moderately fast

bring out the melody
Slightly faster - 68
VITA

Born in Saint Louis, Missouri, Ethan Rogers started playing piano at age twelve. He has performed as a recitalist, chamber musician, and accompanist in several states across the United States including Missouri, Illinois, Vermont, Indiana, Colorado, North Carolina, and Louisiana. Ethan gave his first solo recital at age fifteen and soon after recorded his first CD of original compositions.

Ethan has placed as a finalist in several Missouri competitions. His primary teachers include Pat Eastman, Alice Rybak, Daniel Schene, and Gregory Sioles. Ethan has completed his undergraduate and master’s degrees in piano performance from the University of Denver and Webster University. Besides piano, he enjoys composing, hiking, exploring, and photography.