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Student Recital: Mark Lomanno, jazz piano

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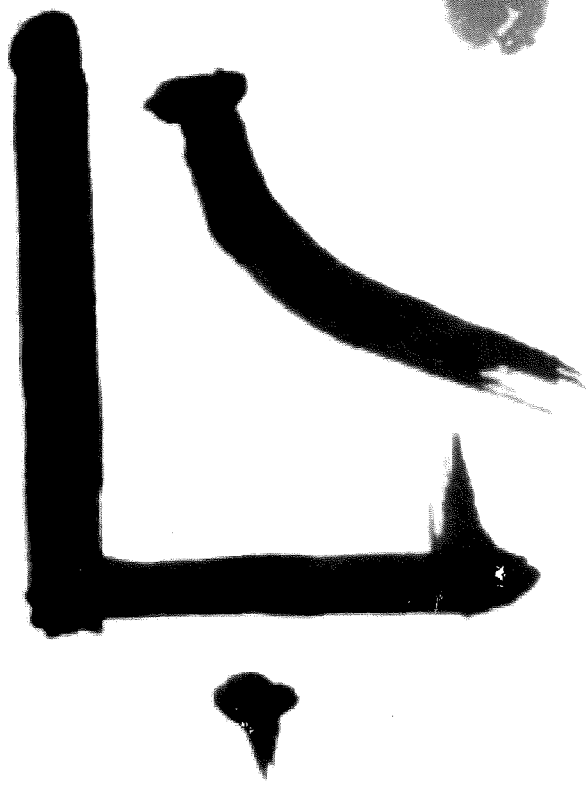
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“They think we choose to play music - that’s not how it is. We have to play music. Music is part of us - an essential part. Asking us not to play music is like asking them not to breathe.”

Livingston Taylor



Mark Lomanno, a native of New Hampshire, currently performs in the greater Richmond area both as leader of the Mark Lomanno Trio and as sideman to many of the area's finest jazz musicians. He is the recipient of numerous awards for jazz piano performance on the state and regional level, including a nomination to the All-Eastern Jazz Ensemble in 1997 and a scholarship to study piano at the University of Richmond.

Mark's performance credits include concerts with James Gates, Clark Terry, Ingrid Jensen, Joe Kennedy, Jr., Curtis Fuller, Mike Davison, Gene Bertoncini, Rene Marie, and Howard Curtis. He performs regularly with the University of Richmond Jazz Ensemble and Groove Sophisticate, a quintet which he founded in December 1999.

In the spring of 2000, Mark recorded his first CD, *'All's Well that Swings Well,'* with Groove Sophisticate. He is currently in negotiations for a record contract and production of his next recording has begun.

Mr. Lomanno has studied with Dick Hyman, Geoff Keezer, Mark Shilansky, Johnny Griffin, Dave Seiler, Paul Verrette, David Baker, Ed Saindon, Frank Foster, Ryan Parker, Richard Becker, Kristin Korb, Jon Faddis, and Christian McBride. Currently he studies improvisation with James Gates, jazz arranging and composition with Dr. Mike Davison, and piano with Russell Wilson and Joanne Kong. During the summer of 2001, Mr. Lomanno attended Berklee College of Music, where he studied with Eduardo Tancredi, Wayne Naus, Bob Christensen and Frank Carlberg. In March 2002, he traveled to Cuba on a UR grant with Dr. Davison and several students to study Afro-Cuban music and perform with several Cuban groups. Mr. Lomanno will return to Cuba in October to perform with a band including Mr. Gates and Dr. Davison at the first annual jazz festival in Santiago de Cuba.

Mark currently resides in Richmond, where he performs in many styles, from funk and rock to all forms of jazz. He performs seasonally in New Hampshire and the greater Boston area. Mr. Lomanno will be finishing his undergraduate degree - a B.A. in Music Performance and Latin - in May 2002, after which he plans to pursue a career in jazz performance.

1. Keepin' the Kitchen Clean

Lomanno (b.1980)

Mark Lomanno, piano

Tom Gardner, alto sax

Mike Laroche, bass

2. Relaxin' at Camarillo

Charlie Parker (1922-1955)

Mark Lomanno, piano

Tom Gardner, alto sax

Mike Laroche, bass

3. I Loves You Porgy

G. Gershwin (1898-1937)

Mark Lomanno, piano

4. April in Paris

Vernon Duke (1903-1969)

Mark Lomanno, piano

Laura Ann Boyd, vocal

5. Mood Indigo

Duke Ellington (1899-1974)

Mark Lomanno, piano

Laura Ann Boyd, vocal

6. Moonglow

Hudson / DeLange / Mills

Mark Lomanno, piano

Laura Ann Boyd, vocal

Matt Scott, tenor sax

Curtis Fye, bass

Aaron Binder, drums

7. Cherokee

Ray Noble (1903-1978)

Mark Lomanno, piano

Laura Ann Boyd, vocal

Matt Scott, tenor sax

Curtis Fye, bass

Aaron Binder, drums

INTERMISSION

8. Enso (Circle)

Lomanno (b.1980)

Mark Lomanno, piano

Matt Scott, tenor sax

Jason Gay, soprano sax

Curtis Fye, bass

Aaron Binder, drums

9. Murielle

Lomanno (b.1980)

Mark Lomanno, piano

Jason Gay, soprano sax

Curtis Fye, bass

Aaron Binder, drums

10. What is this Thing Called Love?

Cole Porter (1891 1964)

Mark Lomanno, piano

Jason Gay, tenor sax

Curtis Fye, bass

Aaron Binder, drums

Santos Ramirez, congas

11. Armando's Rumba

Chick Corea (b.1941)
Mark Lomanno, piano
Aaron Binder, clave
Santos Ramirez, congas

12. Besame Mucho

Skylar / Velazquez
Mark Lomanno, piano
Laura Ann Boyd, vocal
Jason Gay, tenor sax
Curtis Fye, bass
Aaron Binder, drums
Mike Laroche, clave
Santos Ramirez, congas

13. A Felicidade

Antonio Carlos Jobim (1927-1994)
Mark Lomanno, piano
Laura Ann Boyd, vocal
Jason Gay, soprano sax
Tom Gardner, alto sax
Matt Scott, tenor sax
Curtis Fye, bass
Aaron Binder, drums
Mike Laroche, clave
Santos Ramirez, congas

Keepin' the Kitchen Clean

Lomanno
(b.1980)

This song is a 16-bar blues written in the Horace Silver tradition. Simplicity and "singability" of melody, along with uncomplicated chord changes, are characteristic of this style of composition. Silver led a movement in the late 1950's and 1960's that called for a return to simpler, blues-inflected jazz; this movement, along with the Free Jazz movement (led by Ornette Coleman) were reactions to the Bebop era. Silver and Coleman and their contemporaries sought to find other directions to take jazz away from the complex chord changes of bebop, which some musicians viewed as too confining.

Relaxin' at Camarillo

Charlie Parker
(1922-1955)

During the summer of 1946, Charlie Parker and Dizzy Gillespie traveled to California to introduce their new brand of jazz to the West Coast. After a two-week engagement in Los Angeles, the band received a lukewarm reception from audiences and critics alike who were baffled by the band's blazing tempos and musical acrobatics. Parker's ever-present drug problems culminated during this time to a point of mental instability, leading to an incident in which he accidentally set fire to his hotel room and was subsequently arrested and committed to Camarillo State Mental Hospital.

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He spent six months there recuperating and healing his mind and body. Upon his release, Parker played with renewed vigor, and one of the first compositions he wrote was a 12 bar blues entitled "Relaxin' at Camarillo." The highly syncopated, yet beautiful melodic line is set over a basic blues progression, lending the tune a feeling of complexity and simplicity at the same time.

(note by Tom Gardner)

I Loves You Porgy

G. Gershwin
(1898-1937)

This beautiful ballad with a standard AABA song form - from the opera *Porgy and Bess* is widely recorded by jazz musicians. The melody is remarkably lyrical and is based on arpeggiating seventh and ninth chords. The harmony is simple - the A sections are composed of ii-V progressions and secondary dominants; the B section tonicizes flat-III minor and flat-V minor.

The great jazz pianist Bill Evans recorded a well-known solo version of this song on his *Live in Montreux* album. Evans played the song in F; I chose A-flat, for its richer and more evocative quality. I believe *Bess's* plaintive words and sense of melancholy is better captured in the slightly darker key of A-flat.

April in Paris

Vernon Duke
(1903-1969)

The Russian-born Vladimir Dukelsky studied at Kiev Conservatory and earned respect as a composer in the classical idiom, writing opera, choral works and instrumental music. With his family he fled the Russian Revolution and settled in Paris, where he was commissioned in 1924 to write a ballet based on his piano concerto. At the suggestion of his friend, George Gershwin, Vladimir adopted the alias "Vernon Duke" when writing for musical theatre and popular music.

Many of Duke's songs have become part of the standard jazz repertoire. This song has a sequential melody and is in AABA song form. The Count Basie Orchestra has used an arrangement of this song as its anthem, and the album entitled *April in Paris*, on which this arrangement was first recorded, is one of the best albums ever recorded in jazz history.

Mood Indigo

Duke Ellington
(1899-1974)

Duke Ellington is one of the most recognized names in all of Western music. His musical contributions reach far beyond the realm of the jazz world. By far, he is the most prolific composer in jazz history and one of its best band leaders.

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This song contains several Ellington “trademarks,” including prominent use of the II7 and chromatic melodic fragments. Of note is the absence of a secondary key area in the B section of the song. The B section also contains a 4 bar phrase whose harmonic motion (I7 to IV7) references the blues progression. The form is AB, where the B section has both faster harmonic and melodic movement. Performing this song in the key of D-flat intensifies the dark and brooding qualities of the melody.

Moonglow

Hudson / DeLange / Mills

This song was made famous by the great jazz vocalist, Sarah Vaughan. The melody and chords are simple and based on the ii-V progression trademarks of a jazz standard. This song is also in AABA song form.

The B section contains a descending chromatic passage expressed in the melody and mimicked in the chord structure that accompanies the lyric “We used to fly right through the air.” This is a jazz example of the classical practice of “word painting,” in which the music is written to evoke an effect which the text communicates.

Cherokee

Ray Noble
(1903-1978)

This jazz standard is famous for its fast tempo. While tempo and even stylistic genre are flexible in jazz performance practice, there are some “unwritten” rules to which any conscientious jazz musician will adhere. These rules could apply to a song’s chord progression, key, style, or, in this case, tempo.

The melody is simple, consisting mostly of whole notes and half notes. The harmony of the A sections is simple, again centering around the ii-V progression. The B section cycles through four different keys in 16 bars, tonicizing B, A, G, and F (#I, VII, VI, and V), all by means of ii-V’s in each of the key. The trumpet player Clifford Brown - whose brilliant career was ended tragically at the age of 26 in a car accident - recorded what is regarded as the consummate rendition of this song.

Enso (Circle)

Lomanno
(b.1980)

The melody of this waltz is structured in two sections: the first (A) is a melodic fragment (f# - a f b-flat e-flat) and the second (B) is a sequenced phrase played once and then repeated up a whole step with slight alteration.

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The form of the melody is AABA, although the A melody is harmonized differently all three times. The harmony of the piece is non-functional - the traditional jazz chord progressions (e.g., ii-V-I) are not used. The solo section of the piece contains completely different chord changes: there is an oscillation between A-flat and A sus4 chords, and the "B" part of the solo section references the B section of the melody, using similar chord changes but with a change in mode from minor to major.

The tune's name is the Japanese word for "circle" and is a reference to the tradition in Zen calligraphy of artwork featuring the enso, which is usually drawn with only one stroke.

It is said that the personality and inner mind of the calligrapher usually a Zen master - can be seen in the brushstrokes of his work; so too are a composer's thoughts and mindset communicated in his work.

Murielle

Lomanno
(b.1980)

This tune was inspired by a brief, but powerful and moving friendship. It was composed in one moment, conceived as a whole. The harmonic structure follows standard jazz progressions and is colored with some non-diatonic chord extensions (chord tones other than the root, 3rd, 5th, and 7th).

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The B section of the song tonicizes IV and flat-VI and the last A section includes a very dissonant and overt chord substitution. The melody is simple and somewhat sequential at times. I believe the song captures the essence of this short relationship and the reverberations it causes within me a relationship whose potential will never be realized.

What is this Thing Called Love?

Cole Porter
(1891 1964)

This tune is considered a jazz standard a song which has been recorded many times and is part of the standard repertoire of most jazz musicians. Its harmonic progression is composed almost entirely of ii-V progressions and the melody outlines the chords. It is interesting to note that the first key tonicized in the piece is the IV (minor); the bridge tonicizes flat-VII (major) before returning to the V chord via a tritone substitution.

Armando's Rumba

Chick Corea
(b.1941)

This song was written for Corea's father who played in a Latin music ensemble. Chick, whose birth name is Armando, was a child prodigy and received musical instruction from his father.

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The piece is in two sections: a set of four chords surrounding C minor repeated twice, and a series of chromatic dominant seventh chords leading up to B-flat which is the dominant chord of E-flat, the relative major to the song's tonic key area, C minor. Latin music is primarily focused on rhythm and rhythmic variation; the music is often harmonically simple to allow the musician to explore rhythm in a simple setting. Corea's use of chromaticism hints at the influence of jazz and Western harmony on Latin music.

Besame Mucho

Skylar / Velazquez

Kiss me, kiss me passionately, / as if tonight was the last time. / Kiss me, kiss me passionately, / because I fear to lose you, / to lose you again.

I want to have you very close / to see myself in your eyes, / to see you next to me, / think that perhaps tomorrow / I already will be far, / very far from you.

Kiss me, kiss me passionately, / as if tonight was the last time. / Kiss me, passionately, / because I fear to lose you, / to lose you later.

(trans. Valentin Anders)

Sadness has no end / happiness does. / Happiness is
like a feather / that the wind lifts through the air. /
It flies so lightly / but has a brief life. / It needs for
there to be endless wind.

The happiness of the poor is like / the grand illusion
of Carnaval. / People work the entire year / for one
moment of a dream / in order to have a fantasy of
/ a king or a pirate or gardener / and all is ended on
Ash Wednesday.

Happiness is like a drop / of dew on a flower petal.
/ It shines quietly then swings lightly / and falls like a
tear of love. / My happiness is dreaming / in the eyes
of my girlfriend. / It is like that night that passed by /
in search of the dawn. / Speak quietly please /
in order that she wakes happy like the day / offering
kisses of love.

Happiness is a crazy thing / and also so delicate. /
It has flowers and love of all colors. / It has bird nests.
/ It has everything nice. / But because she is like this,
so delicate, / I always treat her very well.

(trans. Jason Brazile)



I would like to thank:

All the great musicians who played tonight; my teachers - Russell Wilson, Joanne Kong, James Gates and Mike Davison; the Music Department; Kathy Panoff, Bill Luhrs and the Modlin Center; Tiffanie Chan; Matt McCabe; Jared Karnes; Michele Eicher; the Classics Department; the UR Players and the Theatre Department; Dr. Steven Addiss; Dr. Keo Cavalcanti; Prof. Lorenza Marcin; and all my family and friends.

Mark Lomanno on the web

For biography, gigs, and samples, visit:

<http://www.marklomanno.com>

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