The Art of The Bow - Towards Developing a Pedagogy For Arco Jazz Bass

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UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI

THE ART OF THE BOW – TOWARDS DEVELOPING A PEDAGOGY FOR ARCO JAZZ BASS

By
Geoffrey Richard Saunders

A DOCTORAL ESSAY

Submitted to the Faculty
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the requirements for the degree of
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THE ART OF THE BOW – TOWARDS DEVELOPING A
PEDAGOGY FOR ARCO JAZZ BASS

Geoffrey Richard Saunders

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From the beginnings of jazz in New Orleans and into the modern styles of today, jazz bassists have utilized the bow to accompany ensembles, play melodies, and improvise solos. There are numerous recordings available of jazz bassists demonstrating these various musical functions with the arco technique. Many consider pizzicato to be the primary method for sound production by the double bass in jazz and other styles, however historically arco has been the principal method of sound production since the origins of the instrument in the 17th century. Beginning jazz students often receive more instruction in pizzicato technique and as a result do not develop important bowing skills that many successful performers possess. The purpose of this study is to investigate recorded examples of arco jazz bass performance in an effort to identify technical features which may serve as a starting point in developing a teaching pedagogy for arco jazz bass. Through transcription and analysis of arco jazz bass performances we gain knowledge of the skills and styles used in professional jazz performance. A selected discography of arco jazz bass performances will include a number of examples of jazz bass bowing on record from the 1920s up to today. After reviewing published
pedagogical methods pertaining to the arco technique, compiling a representative
discography, and analyzing the relevant transcriptions, trends will emerge to guide us in
the development of a pedagogy for arco jazz bass.
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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

The curved wooden rod and horsehair bow is a highly expressive tool that many string instrument performers from all around the world utilize for sound production. Ancient instruments that employ the bow, such as the rebab and tromba marina, have been played for thousands of years.\(^1\) The modern double bass has existed for almost 500 years and was modeled after the early violin.\(^2\) It has been played primarily with the bow for most of its history. By the 1920’s, however, pizzicato replaced arco as the standard technique for sound production for jazz bassists. Many early musicians nevertheless recall a time when they were required to switch back and forth between the techniques. Many jazz bassists throughout the evolution of jazz have used the bow in varying ways in their performances. In the late 1930’s, performers like Jimmy Blanton, Slam Stewart, and later in the 1950s, Paul Chambers reestablished the sound of arco bass as viable and unique solo voice in the modern jazz context. Present day jazz artists are continuing to develop the art of arco technique to this day. Discovering a personal, unique sound and performance style is an important goal among jazz artists. Successful musicians are celebrated for their individual interpretations and contributions.\(^3\) Some contemporary jazz bassists have used the bow to create expressive and compelling music. Although it is not the primary method for performing jazz repertoire on the bass, arco techniques have broadened the sonic palette for the jazz bassist.

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Even with its rich tradition and presence in jazz, a thorough investigation of the bow technique unique to jazz has not been developed. This study will examine scholarly publications pertaining to jazz bass bowing, teaching method books on bow technique, and current performance practices employed by jazz bassists.

**Background**

From the very beginning, stringed bass instruments primarily used the bow and only rarely plucked the strings. The very first pictorial reference to a large gamba-style instrument from 1570 depicts the instrument being played with an arched bow while accompanying a small ensemble. The origin of the double bass dates back to the sixteenth century, with the creation of the instrumental family based on the violin and the distinction between the bass violin and violon-cello. Called by many names, bass-violin in France, violones in Italy, or as rabeçasos in Portugal, bass instruments came in many different sizes, ranging from cello-like instruments to giant versions of the modern double bass. Double basses vary in design and size more than almost any other instrument. The modern double bass as we know it emerged in its own right when the basses of the violin family were standardized and odd-size patterns discontinued. This standardization followed the introduction in the 1660s in Bologna of strings wound with silver that allowed players to use shorter strings and thus the violon-cello (small violone) and the modern double bass were created. The added mass of the silver winding allowed strings to be made shorter and tuned lower than before, this also allowed lower-pitched

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3 Ibid.
strings to retain more tension and therefore create more projection. Constructed at twice the size and one octave below the cello, the initial purpose of the double bass was to reinforce the low frequencies in the early orchestra and initially doubled the celli an octave lower, hence the term “double bass.”

There are two types of the bass bow in common use today. The German bow has a broad frog and is held underhand with the palm of the hand upward, similar to the older viol-type bow. Baroque viola da gamba players, bassists in the Berlin Philharmonic, and American classical bassist Gary Karr have all played with this bow hold. The French bow with its more compact frog, held palm down, is more similar to a violin bow, and may get its name from the French bowmaker, Tourte.

The earliest known works for a solo double bass instrument were sonatas composed by or for Giovannino del Violone, around 1690. No solo double bass music is known from the 18th century until the solo bass parts in Haydn’s symphonies of the early 1760s. Haydn was the first major composer to separate the basses from the celli and compose distinct melodies for each. Then, in the following four years more than 28 concertos appeared by composers including Vanhal, Zimmerman, Haydn, Hoffmeister, Sperger, and Dittersdorf. Mozart composed the aria *Per questa bella mano* (K612) for bass voice and double bass that was performed by the bassist Freidrich Pischelberger (1741-1813). Pischelberger and Johannes Sperger were among the most outstanding virtuosos of their time.

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11 Ibid, 592.
12 Ibid,
13 Ibid, 592
14 Ibid, 592
15 Ibid, 593
In the 19th century, there was a surge of solo literature composed for the double bass and was popularized through composer/performers such as Dragonetti and Bottesini. Bass players began to be featured as soloists in the concert setting. These bass soloists gained in popularity and established worldwide tours.

The renowned bassist Domenico Dragonetti (1763-1846, Venice) became friends with esteemed composers of the day such as Haydn and Beethoven after he established himself in London in the 1790’s. Dragonetti, himself a composer, performed many of his own works which demonstrated his virtuosity on the large instrument. He developed his own style of bow, which is similar to the German style of frog, but features an outward curve of the stick. The construction of the bow allowed for a punctuating bass line and suited the rhythmic sequential patterns common in his own compositions. This style of bow was popular in Britain for almost a century, and after attempts to disseminate it abroad it lost acceptance and virtually disappeared by the 20th century.

While some critics praised Dragonetti’s powerful tone and his ability to play in tune, others scorned him for his rasping style.

Giovanni Bottesini was another influential bass soloist of his time. He travelled to the U.S. in the mid 19th century and included performances in New Orleans and New York. He played an instrument with three strings tuned a whole step higher (solo tuning) and used a French style bow. He was nicknamed the “Paganini of the double bass.”

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17 Ibid, 554.
19 Ibid, 593.
21 Ibid, 85.
“bass” due to his virtuosity, “agility, purity of tone, intonation and exquisite phrasing.”

He extended the range of the instrument beyond its recognized tessitura, and even today his many double bass compositions are seldom performed on account of their great range and difficulty.

Twentieth century classical bass soloists continued to promote the acceptance and further develop the technique of the bass as a solo instrument. Sergey Koussevitsky, (1874-1951) the Russian born bassist, conductor, and composer, began his career as principal bassist and soloist with the Bol’shoy Theater Orchestra then later founded the publishing house Editions Russes de Musique who published music for Scriabin, Stravinsky, Prokofiev, and Rachmaninoff. His legacy includes conducting 99 premieres with the Boston Symphony, directing and founding Tanglewood, and composing a popular bass concerto that is still performed today.

Gary Karr (b.1941) is “One of the most influential players of his generation, Karr has enjoyed a successful international solo career, has recorded extensively and has pioneered new and individual playing techniques.” He was one of the first double bass soloists to perform on television to a wide audience.

Bertram “Bert” Turetzky (b.1933) is an American double bass performer and composer. “Turetzky is a leading exponent of the double bass as a solo instrument and has extended an already noteworthy classical technique to include a large repertory of new bowings, harmonics, pizzicatos, glissandos and, especially, percussive effects from the use of his hands, fingers and knuckles on various parts of the body of his instrument.”

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23 Ibid, 85
24 Ibid, 844
25 Ibid, 845
26 Ibid, 388
Turetzky was also influenced by jazz and jazz composers. His piece, “In Memoriam Charles Mingus (1979), is a mixed-media piece for two singers, three jazz groups, double bass choir, tape and film.”

By the beginning of the 20th century an alternative musical setting was emerging for the double bass; jazz music was developing in New Orleans and bassists first approached ragtime and early jazz in the traditional arco style. As the double bass began to be used more frequently in early jazz ensembles after ragtime, early jazz bassists would accompany the ensemble primarily with the bow until the mid-1910s when pizzicato began to replace arco as the main technique for sound production. As the music developed and the formalization of the jazz style occurred, bassists increasingly began to incorporate pizzicato and rhythmic slap techniques in the early jazz music. Slapping became the new, “hot” style and all of the early New Orleans bassists eventually adopted this technique into their style and used the technique on many early recordings.

According to anecdotal evidence, one of the first musicians to pluck the strings of the bass in jazz was Bill Johnson (1872/74-1972). Born and raised in New Orleans, by 1900 he performed bass with the Peerless and Eagle bands, both were early New Orleans jazz bands that played in the “District” for cabarets and dances. He is reputed to have played the bass pizzicato as early as 1911 and influenced many younger New Orleans bass players, including Pops Foster, Wellman Braud, and John Lindsay. Johnson was a multi-instrumentalist playing guitar, banjo, mandolin, and bass, and in 1908, he travelled with one of the first bands to bring jazz to the West Coast, the Original Creole Band.

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27 Ibid, 900
That band travelled widely around the U.S., but disbanded in 1918. By 1922 Johnson had moved to Chicago and began performing and recording with King Oliver and eventually Jelly Roll Morton. Johnson inspired many New Orleans bassists with his rhythmic power and lively syncopation and can be heard alternating between arco and pizzicato in his recordings of the late 20s with Jelly Roll and His Hot Peppers.\(^\text{31}\)

Another early New Orleans bassist was Ed “Montudi” Garland (1885-1980). Garland began playing the washtub bass as a youngster in an early band with Kid Ory. Garland eventually began to play double bass with musicians such as Buddy Bolden in 1904, Freddie Keppard in 1908, and Ory in 1910. By that time he played mainly with the bow, with some slapping or pizzicato as well.\(^\text{32}\) Later, he moved to Chicago in 1914 and performed with Lawrence Duhé and Lil Hardin, then joined King Oliver in 1919. After Oliver’s group toured the West Coast Garland decided to stay and make his home there in Los Angeles. He continued to work with Ory into the 50s and his arco solo on *Blues for Jimmy* became a staple for the band.\(^\text{33}\)

One of the pioneers of early jazz bass, Pops Foster (1892-1969), performed with many of the New Orleans jazz greats including Louis Armstrong. After beginning on cello, he soon migrated to double bass and from 1906 played with the Eagle band, Louis Keppard’s Magnolia Orchestra with King Oliver, the Tuxedo band, Kid Ory, and Freddie Keppard. In 1929 Foster moved to New York to join Louis Russell and also played in Louis Armstrong’s band from 1935-40. He was known for his steady beat and propulsive rhythmic style that vitalized every ensemble with which he performed.\(^\text{34}\) Bowing was an

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\(^{31}\) Kernfield, *The New Grove Dictionary of Jazz*, 417
\(^{32}\) Ibid, 13
\(^{33}\) Ibid, 13
\(^{34}\) Ibid, 839
important aspect of his style, in his own words: “I first learned to bow the bass, then started doing a lot of picking...It seems like I’ve been switching like that all my life.”\textsuperscript{35} He would frequently begin a piece arco then change to pizzicato adding to the rhythmic crescendo of the band, which is an important element in early jazz.\textsuperscript{36} His arco sound was not sweet and bel canto, but big and gutty, maybe scratchy due to gut strings.\textsuperscript{37} His accompanimental playing on \textit{Bowin’ The Blues} certainly fits the description.\textsuperscript{38}

Wellman Braud (1891-1966) adapted the early New Orleans style to the new jazz styles with the Duke Ellington band.\textsuperscript{39} Braud began performing in New Orleans on various string instruments, until he followed other musicians north to Chicago and by 1917 where he took up the double bass and played with Duhé in 1918 and Charlie Elgar between 1920 and 1922. He joined the Ellington band by mid-1927 and his composition \textit{Double Check Stomp} was recorded by the band in 1930. Braud remained with Ellington until 1935 and his strong rhythmic foundation was an important element to the band’s early success. However his style fell out of fashion as the swing era developed and Billy Taylor ultimately replaced him because he was “more skilled in playing the new variety of music.”\textsuperscript{40} According to the New Grove Dictionary of Jazz, Braud claims to have developed the concept of the walking bass but he can also be heard using the bow in early recordings with the Ellington band in the late ‘20s.\textsuperscript{41} Used mainly for accompaniment, Braud had a smooth but powerful arco sound that suited legato bass lines perfectly. In his performance of \textit{The Blues I Love to Sing} we can hear his tendency to switch between slap

\textsuperscript{36} Ibid, xvi.
\textsuperscript{37} Ibid, xvi
\textsuperscript{38} Bechet, Sydney and Mezzro, Mez. \textit{Bowin’ The Blues}. King Jazz, 141. 1945.
\textsuperscript{39} Kernfield, \textit{The New Grove Dictionary of Jazz}, 292
\textsuperscript{40} Ibid, 292
\textsuperscript{41} Ibid, 292
pizzicato and arco. His ability to use the bow to play legato lines is similar to that of brass players but even smoother.

Early New Orleans bassists used the bow primarily to accompany the band and rarely improvised solos with it. Arco was favored for slower tempo tunes such as blues and slow marches. Many bassists alternated between the two techniques to suit the particular feel of the varying sections of the tune. Due to poor recording quality in the early days of recording, it is difficult to accurately determine if the bassist is using the bow or not, but according to anecdotal and pictorial evidence we can assume that some of these recordings made in the early 20s had arco bass on them. Many photos of early New Orleans jazz bands show the double bassist either holding a bow to the strings or held in their hands as they are playing pizzicato.

As jazz music further evolved into swing, bebop, and beyond, the bassist was more free to add other notes to the walking bass line which developed as performers began to utilize scalar connections between the chord tones. Pizzicato was thought of as the main method of sound production, and arco became an auxiliary technique, as it did not have the same percussive power and presence to drive the band that the pizzicato technique did. In the days before amplification, bass players had to pull the strings very hard in order to be heard against a large, big band.

Around 1939, as bassist with the Duke Ellington Orchestra, Jimmy Blanton reestablished the use of the bow as a powerful, unique solo voice in the jazz combo. Blanton elevated the role of the bass from a mere accompanist to that of a featured

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soloist. He is considered to be one of the most influential bassists of all time because of his virtuosity and expressivity on the double bass. Many players were influenced by his style particularly through the recordings he made as a duo with Duke Ellington in 1939. Their versions of *Body and Soul* and *Sophisticated Lady* featured the bass as a solo voice being accompanied by the piano. Through these important recordings, Blanton shed the role of the accompanist to emerge as a soloist in an unprecedented way. “Blanton also took part in a few of the informal jam sessions at Minton’s Playhouse in New York that contributed to the genesis of the bop style.” In his tragically brief career, Blanton revolutionized jazz bass playing, and until the advent of the styles of Scott LaFaro and Charlie Haden in the 1960s all modern bass players drew on his innovations.

Slam Stewart is an artist who developed the bow as his signature sound. While studying at the Boston Conservatory he heard violinist Ray Perry humming and playing in unison and decided to adapt that technique to the double bass which became his signature. He first gained attention with the duo “Slim and Slam” with Slim Galliard on guitar. Their tune *Flat Fleet Floogie* became extremely popular and features bass solo with his vocal accompaniment. Stewart has collaborated with many jazz greats such as Tatum, Waller, Young, Monk, Goodman, Gillespie and Byas.

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45 Campbell, “Two Profiles in the Development of Jazz Bass Playing.”
49 Campbell, “Two Profiles in the Development of Jazz Bass Playing”.
51 Ibid, 238
52 Ibid, 663
53 Ibid, 663
55 Ibid, 663
The acclaimed bassist with the first Miles Davis Quintet, Paul Chambers, can be heard on many recordings taking horn-like solos with the bow on recordings of his own and as a sideman. Born in Pittsburgh, 1935 but raised in Detroit, he took up bass in 1949 and by the early 50’s was working with Thad Jones, Barry Harris, and Kenny Burrell in local clubs. In 1955 he moved to NYC and quickly was connected with the top jazz musicians in town. He later became Miles Davis’ longest serving band member. His arrangement of the standard *Yesterdays* features a classically inspired introduction and continues with a soloistic treatment of the melody. He then executes an improvised solo utilizing bebop vocabulary and intricate bowing technique.

Throughout the swing and bebop eras, a few jazz bassists have used the bow in their style. Including: Major Holley, Charles Mingus, and Israel “Cachao” Lopez. Performers have continued to develop the art of the bow technique in jazz, although it has remained somewhat in the periphery. Well known bass performers who use the bow currently include: Christian McBride, John Clayton, Dave Holland, Eddie Gomez, John Goldsby, Lynn Seaton, Edgar Meyer, Renaud Garcia-Fons, Ron Carter, Avishai Cohen, Eric Revis among others. In brief, the bow is an expressive tool that jazz bass players initially utilized for accompaniment purposes and later developed it for solos; it has been present throughout the evolution of jazz styles.

**Problem Statement**

Successful jazz bassists possess technical command of the bow necessary for professional level performance, yet beginning jazz bass students often lack the full

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57 Ibid, 417
complement and accomplishment of those skills.\textsuperscript{58} Too few jazz bass students are familiar and comfortable with arco bow technique. Due to a lack of teaching materials and pedagogical approaches specifically addressing arco jazz bass, young jazz bass performers usually leave the bow in the case or do not own one at all.\textsuperscript{59} Usually jazz ensemble directors have less experience with strings than orchestra directors and have little idea where to start giving instruction, thus not making it a priority to teach arco bass.\textsuperscript{60}

Difficulties arise in beginning bass pedagogy; “The sheer size and unfamiliarity of the double bass can make it intimidating to students, parents, and teachers.”\textsuperscript{61} Transporting the bass to and from the student’s home can be problematic, and practice time can be affected by these logistical considerations.\textsuperscript{62} String teachers in elementary and secondary schools are often times not bassists themselves and lack the knowledge to educate a full array of jazz bass performance techniques.\textsuperscript{63}

Furthermore, there are prejudices about the sound of arco bass in jazz. Some are critical, asserting that the arco sound is harsh and frequently out of tune.\textsuperscript{64} Jazz music is transmitted primarily in an aural tradition; students imitate others in order to assimilate the sound.\textsuperscript{65} As John Clayton put it: “Too many people think if you put the bow on the string and move it back and forth you’re gonna get what you’re looking for.”\textsuperscript{66} The

\textsuperscript{60} Anthony Stoops, "Double Bassics: Teaching Double Bass for the Non-Bass Teacher." \textit{American String Teacher} 61, no. 3: 30-34, 2011.
\textsuperscript{61} Miranda Wilson, "6 Ways for the Non-Bassist to Teach Double Bass." \textit{Strings}, 06, 51-52, 2012.
\textsuperscript{62} Wilson, "6 Ways for the Non-Bassist to Teach Double Bass."
\textsuperscript{63} Stoops, "Double Bassics".
\textsuperscript{65} Tirro, \textit{Jazz: A History}.
sound starts in the ear of the student who is inspired by the great bass players of our time, but that is not sufficient. Students require specialized instruction to develop a proper tone with the bow.

**Need For Study**

Pedagogical resources for the use of the bow in jazz bass performing are limited. There is only one commercially available instructional book that specifically addresses arco techniques for jazz: *Jazz Bowing Techniques for the Improvising Bassist* by John Goldsby.\(^{67}\) This text contains techniques and exercises to develop skills for arco jazz bass. Its exercises are based on various ways of playing scales and is similar to the well-known Simandl bass method in its fingering schema, but it is not particularly thorough in regard to various aspects of bow control, especially the all-important bow hold. Goldsby is also the only published writer in journals with his article *Bowing Techniques for Jazz Bass* in Strad magazine. There are scholarly dissertations and essays about jazz artists who use the bow but none that directly discuss the pedagogy of arco jazz bass.

A need for a more comprehensive pedagogy uniquely focused in arco jazz bass performance is apparent. Developing exercises based on authentic techniques that well-thought-of artists employ during performance is an effective way for teachers to enable students to assimilate this style.

The art of arco playing is not emphasized because young jazz bassists are often not exposed to it and as a result are uncomfortable with the various techniques.\(^{68}\) Due to


\(^{68}\) Stoops, "Double Bassics."
the size of the instrument it is difficult to attract young performers to the upright bass.\textsuperscript{69} Consequently, young bass students frequently do not get the same foundational instruction on their instrument and have to play catch up with other students.\textsuperscript{70} Bass performers who do not have prior orchestral training are rarely introduced to the bow and its expressive possibilities.\textsuperscript{71} There is a need for a method for instructing beginning jazz students about the effective of the bow because currently the information is scattered and incoherent. It takes a significant amount of proper instruction and individual practice to master the control and finesse to make expressive jazz music with the bow. The correct approach however can be highly rewarding.

A comprehensive analysis of the history and survey of the evolution of arco technique is important to understand as a basis in establishing a genuine method of instruction. The impact of the bow in jazz bass performance is apparent and should be made clearer to young students. The bow allows artists to express themselves beyond the normal accompanimental role of bass instruments. Slam Stewart was a star of popular music and stood out with his unique vocal/arco technique on the bass. His virtuosic playing and showmanship made him one the top performers of his day. Now, many young bass players have not even heard of him let alone know his music. His impact on jazz could be lost along with the many other bass players who tried to break out of the rigid accompanimental role.

\textsuperscript{69} Tim Crawford. 2009. "Solo Bassists from the Start! The Application of Contemporary Bass Pedagogy Concepts to Beginning String Class Instruction." \textit{American String Teacher} 59, no. 3: 40-43
\textsuperscript{70} Crawford, "Solo Bassists from the Start!"
\textsuperscript{71} Goldsby, John. “Bow techniques for jazz bass.”
Purpose

The purpose of this study is to investigate current practices of arco jazz bass performance technique in an effort to identify pertinent technical features as a starting point in developing a teaching pedagogy. The study will analyze the techniques of various prominent professionals who utilize the bow in their music and will then present pedagogical ideas based on elements of these performances. The study will present common arco jazz bass techniques and analyze them in order to gain a deeper understanding of the idiom.

Research questions include: What are important recordings that illustrate the use of the bow in jazz and what are some of the techniques that are being used in those performances? What are often repeated performance devices found in arco jazz bassist’s presentations? What arco performance devices are unique to jazz? What teaching or learning sequence would be beneficial to students in acquiring jazz bowing techniques?
CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

Much has been written generally on the topic of bass pedagogy, but only a few publications directly address the bow in jazz bass performance. There are a large number of methods that focus on classical style bass bowing and also a number of jazz violin methods that exist with information on swing and phrasing with the bow. This chapter will review the current literature on classical bass pedagogy, jazz bass pedagogy, and more specifically jazz bass bowing pedagogy.

Historical and reference texts explain the history and development of instruction for playing the double bass. Theses/Dissertations expound upon the role of the bass in the jazz combo, and serve as analysis of playing styles. Method books illustrate a plethora of techniques used to produce sound with the bow. There are also journals, magazines, websites, and other sources that discuss the topic of arco jazz bass that focus on or are written by eminent jazz bassists. Recordings are another very useful resource as they are the historical reference material that typical jazz students utilize for the learning of jazz.

Traditional Bass Pedagogy

Double bass methods have existed since the end of the 18th century, but at that time most of the methods were devoted to the left-hand fingerboard technique. One of the earliest and most complete method books for double bass is Franz Simandl’s New Method for the Double Bass. This method from 1881 attends to both right and left hand techniques in preparation for classical orchestral and solo playing. In Part III, Volume 1

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of his method, Simandl addresses notated expression markings and the corresponding bow strokes to create the desired sound. There is very little mention of the bow hold or the technique of the stroke, it primarily focuses on the various expression markings and how to properly perform them. Along with many etudes for left hand technique, he includes a single etude that is to be performed with twenty-eight permutations of bowings, varying from staccato to groups of eight notes played in one bow stroke. Later in the text he addresses various techniques for bowing such as spicatto, martelé, detaché, and trill bowings but does not directly address the technique of the bow stroke.\footnote{Simandl & Zimmerman, \textit{New method for the double bass: English and German.}}

In response to Simandl’s work, Francois Rabbath published his own method in 1977. His \textit{Nouvelle Technique de la Contrabasse} was radical in its freedom of expression and personalization. In his forward, Rabbath gives the student the freedom to take the method’s fingerings with some level of interpretation and inspires the student to find techniques that work best and to explore the complete range of the instrument, as well as tonal and timbral possibilities of the instrument.\footnote{François Rabbath, \textit{Nouvelle technique de la contrebasse: méthode complète et progressive = A new technique for the double bass: a comprehensive tutor}. Paris: A. Leduc, 1977.} Included in the four-volume method are creatively composed etudes designed to familiarize the student with the originally devised fingerboard divisions. These etudes are very musical, lay well on the fingerboard, and progress in a logical way. The method focused on left hand technique and bow articulation within singable and thoughtful etudes. Later method books by other authors have used Rabbath’s same fingerboard division and pedagogical techniques.

As a compilation of advanced repertoire with instruction, George Vance’s \textit{Progressive Repertoire for the Double Bass} is a useful compendium of repertoire for the progressing student. The repertoire advances to a high level, and includes fingerings,
bowings, and other expressions.\textsuperscript{75} The fingerings are based on Rabbath’s schema and help to guide the student in the upper registers of the double bass.

In 1966 Frederick Zimmerman published his book \textit{Contemporary Concept of Bowing Technique}.\textsuperscript{76} In his original work, he directly addressed right-hand bow technique and examined the mechanics of the bow stroke. The author includes diagrams with contact points and illustrations of the bow on the string. He illustrates the bow stroke as three distinct parts that are moving in conjunction. The first is the horizontal movements of the bow arm. The second is the raising and lowering motions of the arm. Thirdly, the tilting actions of the hand. All three of these constituent elements move together and contribute to an even bow stroke. In his method he pays special attention to string changes and how the bow facilitates those switches. The method includes numerous pages of permutations of a single etude with many alternative bowings for the same passage. He connects the abstracted techniques to real musical applications. This is one of the first methods to directly address only the bow technique for double bass and is one of the most comprehensive and complete texts regarding the topic.

\textbf{Jazz Bass Pedagogy}

The well-known contemporary jazz bassist Ron Carter, who performed with Miles Davis and other prominent jazz bandleaders, developed his own method for double bass in 1977. However, his \textit{Comprehensive Bass Method} is not specifically a method for jazz bass; the word jazz is not even present in the book. It is similar to Simandl’s method

in many ways in its fingering schema and position layout of the bass neck. Also, Carter composes musical etudes that have fingerings written out for the student. In some of the examples he provides various fingering solutions for the same passage. A concept that runs throughout this work is Carter’s ingenious use of open strings while in higher positions such as the IV and V positions. This makes for some challenging open string crossing patterns. Of the 94-page text, the first 87 pages are to be practiced with the bow; pizzicato is not mentioned until the last 8 pages of the book. Carter was classically trained at the Eastman School of Music and most likely had access to the Simandl method book as well as other methods; one can see the influence in his method.77

Another well-known method for jazz bass is Rufus Reid’s *The Evolving Bassist*. The author set out to devise a “total bass concept” and includes information on acoustic as well as electric basses, and arco and pizzicato techniques.78 The beginning instructs the student on how to hold the bow and how to draw a sound. As the method progresses, the instructions tell the student that all of the exercises can be performed “with or without the bow, and on the electric bass.” That is where the reference to the bows ends and the book continues with walking bass lines and a section entitled “Soloistic Concept.” It seems that for this teaching method the bow is regarded as a tool for beginning double bass, mostly useful for intonation practice and slow bowing, although he does reference arco soloists such as Blanton and Stewart.

In 1990 John Goldsby, bassist for the WDR Big Band in Cologne, Germany, released his own technique book for jazz bass bowing. His *Jazz Bowing Techniques for the Improvising Bassist* (1990, rev. 2010) is a great method addressing the bowing techniques of jazz artists, such as Jimmie Blanton, Slam Stewart, and Paul Chambers. The book begins with basic open string exercises with various articulations, and then proceeds with string crossing exercises, followed by articulation drills. There is a section exploring the subtlety of the swing rhythm and the nature of bowing those particular rhythms. He composes exercises with various slur bowings through scalar passages utilizing many permutations of bowing possibilities. He then introduces an arpeggio pattern composed of major, minor, and augmented arpeggios and offers various bowing permutations. The second half of the book is devoted to a series of originally composed tunes utilizing the techniques presented previously in the book, along with other performance transcriptions from various artists who use the bow. The original tunes have bowings notated with chord changes in lead sheet style, to be performed with a live ensemble of musicians or with the accompanying CD. The transcriptions are of Blanton, Stewart, Chambers, Eddie Gomez, and the author himself, John Goldsby. They include bowings and chord changes to be performed with a live ensemble. He concludes the text with a discography of early and contemporary jazz bassists who have recorded music with arco bass.

There are a small number of scholarly dissertations on the subject of arco jazz bass and only a few reference jazz musicians that utilized arco in their performing. Jeff Campbell’s *Two Profiles in the Development of Jazz Bass Playing: A Study of Jimmy Goldsby*,Bowling Techniques for the Improvising Bassist.*

79 Goldsby, *Bowing Techniques for the Improvising Bassist*. 
This is a wonderfully written thesis that examines two bass performers who were very influential in modern bass playing. Campbell explores Blanton’s playing and suggests the ideas that Blanton’s soloistic presence brought the jazz bass into a new role from accompanist to soloist. Previously, the jazz bassists primarily functioned as rhythm section accompaniments for lead instruments and rarely took solos. Blanton changed their role in this regard. The profile of Ron Carter explores Carter’s walking lines and approach to ensemble playing. He also suggests the idea that Carter was influenced by the change in technology through the introduction of steel strings and amplification. His dissertation is thorough in its investigation of these two players and contributes significantly to the understanding of the role of the bass in jazz music.80

CHAPTER THREE: METHOD

Developing performance pedagogy is a complicated task. The present study is primarily based upon scholarly research on performance pedagogy in music. Hanna-Weir’s *Developing a Personal Pedagogy of Conducting* (2013) demonstrates that through conducting a survey of common practices and a thorough analysis of texts from leading pedagogues, conclusions about current practice can be made and pedagogical methods can be developed.\(^1\) Robinson-Martin’s *Developing a Pedagogy for Gospel Singing* (2010) proposes that scholarly research along with expert advice can contribute to the development of pedagogy.\(^2\) This study will be based in these methodology and will identify and analyze historical and contemporary jazz arco techniques in order to develop a pedagogy based on that research.

In order to examine the contemporary jazz bassist’s approach to using the bow, an analysis of jazz artists that used the bow on record as well as in live performance is necessary. After careful research, a discography of recordings with evidence of the use of the bow will be compiled. There are hundreds of jazz recordings that include some instance of arco bass and new recordings are being made every day, therefore the discography will necessarily be a purposefully selected sample.

After the discography is compiled, solos and melodies from five notable arco jazz bassists will be transcribed. The focus here will be on contemporary bass players because

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of the prior availability of complete solo bass transcriptions of Blanton, Stewart, and Chambers. I will then identify unique musical practices and techniques within each example. These new transcriptions will include the identification of bowings and the analysis of the techniques used.

A thorough investigation into the current pedagogies of jazz bass bowing, general bass bowing, and jazz pedagogy is necessary to construct a new method. Existing sources for jazz bass pedagogy will provide the foundation of this paper. Method books are a key source; syllabi and course materials from leading pedagogues in the field are equally as important to the body of knowledge.83

The transcriptions will undergo a thorough analysis of the techniques and stylistic considerations. Dissecting the common practices of jazz arco technique are intended to shine a clarifying light on the expressive use of the bow in jazz. Finally, abstracted passages and original etudes based on these techniques will be presented. It will reference Goldsby’s approach to a modern bowing method, but will be original in that its content will be based upon scholarly analysis of other contemporary techniques.

Comparing these common techniques to other current pedagogical trends is the last step in developing performance pedagogy for jazz bass bowing. This synthesis of the existing knowledge and current practice should serve towards the development of pedagogy and add to the body of knowledge of arco jazz bass playing.

83 Hanna-Weir, "Developing a Personal Pedagogy of Conducting."
CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS/ANALYSIS

What are important recordings that illustrate the use of the bow in jazz and what are some of the technical features that are being used in those performances?

Included in the Selected Discography of Arco Jazz Bass Performances, located in the appendix, are many examples of bassists using the bow in performance on record. In order to answer this research question it is beneficial to look at the recordings chronologically, broken into four groups: recordings from the 1920s-‘30s, 1940s-‘50s, 1960s-‘80s, 1990s-present. These groups don’t necessarily represent musical movements or genres and some musicians fall in to more than one group, but the division does help to illustrate stylistic changes that have evolved with the technique over the years.

1920s-‘30s

Recording techniques in the early ‘20s make it difficult for the bass to be heard, if there was one at all. The tuba can be heard on many early jazz records and some believe the tuba to be more suited for outside marching bands and bass for inside dance bands. Before the mid-twenties, records were made by the pre-microphone “acoustical” process, where musicians played into a large horn, which was connected to a mechanical needle that converted the sound waves into grooves on the record. Bass frequencies were especially problematic, as they would cause the needle to skip or not be audible at all. 84 Not until 1925, when the “big two” recording companies Victor and Columbia adopted

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the new Western Electric recording process that utilized electric microphones, did the string bass fill a prominent role in early jazz recordings.\textsuperscript{85}

The recording \textit{Ory’s Creole Trombone} from 1921 of “Montudi” Garland with Kid Ory is very difficult to discern if there is even bass at all although he is listed in the credits on bass.\textsuperscript{86} A majority of early New Orleans bass players describe switching between techniques in the early days of jazz and this early recording may follow that formula. Montudi was known for his arco style, for example, later in his career, his arco bass solo on \textit{Blues For Jimmy} was a common piece in the band’s set.\textsuperscript{87} More recordings were released after 1925 where we can hear the bass much clearer than before, but is still somewhat obscured in the recording quality in some examples.

Bill Johnson was said to be one of the first bassists to pluck his instrument so therefore bowing had to have been characteristic of his style. In his recordings with Jelly Roll Morton and the Hot Peppers from 1926-28, with acute listening, one can hear the bass smoothly slide into notes and accompany blues numbers with the bow. He will often break into slap pizzicato at more lively sections of the piece. \textit{Smoke House Blues} and \textit{Grandpa’s Spells} (1926) are moderate tempo blues numbers where Johnson can possibly be heard with the bow.\textsuperscript{88} The smooth envelope of the bow compared to the percussive attack of the slap-pizzicato give away the transitions between techniques.

One definitive example of a bassist switching between techniques is Wellman Braud’s performance of \textit{The Blues I Love To Sing} (1927) with the Duke Ellington

\textsuperscript{85} Ibid
\textsuperscript{86} Ory, Kid. \textit{Ory’s Creole Trombone}. Nordskog, 3009. 1921/1922.
\textsuperscript{87} Ory, Kid. \textit{Blues For Jimmy}. Crescent, 2. 1944.
\textsuperscript{88} Jelly Roll Morton And His Hot Peppers. \textit{Grandpa’s Spells}. Victor, Vic 20431. 1926.
Orchestra. Braud starts off pizzicato mixing normal pizzicato, slap-pizzicato, and non-pitched rhythmic taps on the fingerboard. He then transitions to arco when the vocalist comes in at measure 11 of Figure 1, then back to pizzicato four bars later. His bow stroke is short with a strong attack, to create a bouncy note to for the vocalist to sing upon.

Figure 1.1 Transition between slap pizzicato and arco in The Blues I Love To Sing

Later in the piece he blends with the trombone section and plays a half-note descending bass line in a more legato and connected manner.

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He transitions back to pizzicato for a moment then ends the piece in arco with a final held note. Braud can be heard bowing in other examples with the Duke Ellington Orchestra such as *Black Beauty*, and *Jubilee Stomp* (1928).\(^9\)

Slam Stewart’s records with Slim Galliard feature the arco bass prominently in his orchestrations with his band mate, a guitar player. Slam would usually fill the roll as premier soloist in the group, as the guitar was usually holding down the rhythm as the first solo in an arrangement would come up. Slam blended the sound of the arco bass with his vocalizations at an octave up, which helped to define the line and project the sound over the other instruments. Hearing the bass playing melodically in the low register is difficult so Slam solved this problem by reinforcing the low with a higher octave. His solo on *Flat Fleet Floogie* (1938) utilizes repetition, blues inflections and scales, a swinging eighth-note feel, and phrasing common to the swing era.\(^9\) He starts the solo without his usual voice accompaniment, which allows us to clearly hear his highly refined approach to arco bass. He mostly uses separate bow strokes on eight-note lines with occasional slurred triplets and other articulations. His tone is even and focused while

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using a German bow on gut strings. He smoothly transitions to slap pizzicato
accompaniment after wrapping up his solo in a tasteful way. Slim and Slam had a great
sense of arrangement and feature lyrical melodic statements, vocal shout-melodies,
instrumental solos, spoken-word introductions and endings in a creative way. Slam was
one of the first musicians to introduce the bow to a wide audience as a refined, soloistic
voice.

1940s-‘50s

Slam Stewart’s career continued the 40s-50s where he and a few other bassists
were utilizing the bow as a solo voice in small group settings. While some older bassists
of the time continued to feature the bow in an accompanimental fashion, see below:
*Bowin The Blues*, Garland with Ory, (1944) players in the 40s-50s generally used the bow
to play legato melody statements or to improvise solos. Stewart continued to record and
feature his characteristic arco style with artists such as Art Tatum, *Dark Eyes (1944)*
and Red Norvo, *Slam Slam Blues (1945)*.

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Another artist to work with Red Norvo and utilize the bow at this time was Charles Mingus. In the trio recording with Tal Farlow and Norvo of *Prelude To A Kiss* (1950) Mingus begins the piece bowing bass notes in the lower register, then begins to pluck during the improvised solos.\(^{95}\) Arco again on a recap of the melody. The arrangement is well-orchestrated, almost classical chamber ensemble feel, with predetermined melodic and harmonic features. Mingus has a big, full, refined arco sound and controlled vibrato possibly due to his studying with the classical teacher.\(^{96}\) Mingus plays in the upper register with great intonation and facility on *Mood Indigo* (1950) from the same session.\(^{97}\) Mingus also introduced the bow to more “free” types of improvisation. If you listen to his recording of *Foggy Day* (1956) from the album *Pithecantropus Erectus*, Mingus can be heard creating programmatic sounds, creating an auditory cityscape.\(^{98}\)

\(^{95}\) Ibid
As discussed earlier, Jimmie Blanton was a highly influential bow stylist. His arrangements with Duke Ellington of *Body & Soul*\(^9\) and *Sophisticated Lady*\(^{10}\) showcase the arco bass in a sophisticated, refined manner that stands up to any other instrumental soloist. In his short career, this session may be the only instances of him playing arco on record. Campbell describes Blanton’s stylistic vocabulary as frequent use of chromatic embellishments, florid decoration, trills, dissonance, and 16\(^{\text{th}}\)-note double time passages consisting of scales, arpeggios, and chromatic groupings.\(^{101}\) Blanton was criticized for his harsh tone but Campbell points out that recording techniques at the time actually accentuated the “scratchy” character of gut strings because the microphones were usually very close to capture the pizzicato sound.\(^{102}\)

As we can see in the Selected Discography, another artist to embrace the bow was Paul Chambers. Paul was a great improviser and would occasionally solo with the bow on many projects as a side musician and on his own albums. Chambers can be heard performing on the bow with such artists as Red Garland, Sonny Clark, Miles Davis, and others. On his solo record *Bass On Top* Chambers interprets the standard *Yesterdays* in a creative way.\(^{103}\) He starts with a rubato introduction in the upper register, playing the melody in a dramatic way similar to a classical bass concerto such as Koussevitzky.\(^{104}\) As he finishes the intro, the time is established with the drums and Chambers plays an embellished melody with eighth-note interjections and bluesy inflections added to the original melody.

\(^{101}\) Campbell, “Two Profiles in the Development of Jazz Bass Playing.”, 42
\(^{102}\) Ibid, 45
\(^{104}\) Koussevitzky
The next artist we see in the discography is Major Holley. Holley was an avid supporter of arco bass and recorded many cuts with his signature bowing and singing at pitch. Many of his records that I found were recorded in the 60s-80s and his style is different than that of his predecessors. Like Slam, Holley had a comical approach to show business and featured his vocalizations as a sort of comic relief to the serious jazz audience. He can be heard bowing on record with Coleman Hawkins, Kenny Burrell, and on a duo record with Slam called *Shut Yo’ Mouth*.\(^{105}\) Again, although it is a little comical at times, these two musicians showcase their command of the instrument and seem like they are having fun the whole time.

1960s-’80s

Artists during the 60s and 70s were experimenting with new sounds and approaches to jazz and Ron Carter was one of those musicians. Known for his work with the second Miles Davis Quintet, Ron was known as a cutting-edge artist and on his later solo recordings you can hear him stretching and pushing boundaries. From his album *Piccolo* Carter plays a small-scale piccolo bass, which he plucks and bows. On the track *Sun Shower* he plays a soaring melody accompanied by bass, drums, and a full band.\(^{106}\) Carter takes a lengthy improvised solo utilizing simple phrasing and a limited register. He uses sequence and repeated phrases as well as double stops. Miroslav Vitous was another musician of this era who played experimental music with the bow. Listen to his free, open solo during the tune *Transformation* on his solo album released on ECM.\(^{107}\)

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The ‘90s and early 2000s saw a renaissance of arco bass soloists with facile technique and its acceptance in to jazz. Many bassists were incorporating the bow in new and novel ways. From studying the greats like Slam, Blanton, and Chambers, new artists were able to push the sound and technique further. One artist to exemplify this is Christian McBride. The bow is all over his original music and arrangements as a bandleader. On his first solo album he performs an incredible version of Night Train unaccompanied. He switches between arco and pizz and the result is a swinging, bluesy, version of the Oscar Peterson classic. On his second album “Number Two Express” he recorded a multi-layered bass over-dub version of Little Sunflower. His version of Ornette Coleman’s Jayne is an example of modern bop vocabulary on an up-tempo contrafact for Out of Nowhere. He can later be heard mixing electronics with the arco bass on the lead track of his live album “Live At Tonic”.

In his performance of Jayne, McBride uses a variety of articulations to create a dynamic performance that swings. He uses a combination of single note bowing and two-note slurred groupings to create a sense of forward motion that does not feel predictable. Often the slurs occur on weak to strong beats such as the second eighth-note to the next downbeat, for example in measures three through five of Figure 2.1. McBride uses this bowing a lot, especially on the and-of-four to one and the and-of-two to three. He also varies the entrances of his phrasing between on-the-beat and off-the-beat entrances as we can see in the figure below.

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110 Ibid.
Figure 2.1 Varied slurs and single-note lines in *Jayne*

McBride would sometimes link consecutive groups of two-note slurs together and create a smooth eighth-note line like in measure five and six of Figure 2.2. He generally starts these phrases on off-beats to begin the sequence of slurs from weak to strong beats like how he starts his the phrases into measure three, five, and ten of this example.

Figure 2.2 Groupings of two-note slurs in *Jayne*

Another recurring feature in McBride’s arco improvisation is his use of slurred neighbor tones. This concept is inherent in consecutive, scalar two-note groupings but is
more specific in that most of McBride’s slurs are between adjacent neighbors, upper and lower. This happens in measure two of the example below as well as in measures three, six, seven, and eight. These slurred neighbor tones facilitate melodic enclosures of chord tones like in measure three to four.

![Figure 2.3 Slurs between upper and lower neighbors in Jayne](image)

McBride plays a series of upper-to-lower neighbor slurs in this dramatic rise in pitch in this example.

![Figure 2.4 Series of upper-to-lower neighbor slurs in Jayne](image)

McBride created a compelling improvised solo on Jayne through the use of eighth-note based bebop vocabulary, utilized varied bowings such as single note, two and three note slur groupings, with chromatic melodic enclosures and diatonic scalar passages. McBride drives the band forward during the melodic solo with a feel that is on the top of the beat, pushing and phrasing with lots of energy. He is a dynamic performer that has many arco performances on record and in his live shows.
Another artist who demonstrates jazz bass bowing in the 21st century is John Clayton. On the Album *L.A. Session*, John Clayton joins Paul Kuhn and long-time collaborator Jeff Hamilton to perform the standard *Emily*. Clayton can be heard on an alternate arrangement of the same tune, this time with the Clayton-Hamilton Orchestra. We will compare both versions. This performance is novel in the fact that the arco bass is featured in an arrangement for big band. Arco bass is normally found in small group settings but this is unique in that regard. He mixes the solo double bass with subtle backgrounds and presents the melody with precision and sensitivity. Clayton primarily plays ballad melodies with the bow or blues type melodies.

Clayton’s improvised solo from “L.A. Sessions” on *Emily* begins with a phrase that mimics the rhythm and contour of the original melody. His phrasing is relaxed and he generally starts melodic phrases on strong beats. Clayton normally uses slurs on two eighth-note groupings and triplet figures as seen in the figure below.

![Figure 3.1 Opening of solo in *Emily*](image)

His vocabulary is mostly diatonic with some chromatic neighbors occurring occasionally. He generally plays in the upper register, using thumb position as an anchor.

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for much of his vocabulary. From observing video footage of him playing, one can notice his use of vibrato with the thumb.

\[
\begin{array}{cccccc}
E^7 & Am^7 & D^7 & Dm^7 & G^7 \\
\end{array}
\]

**Figure 3.2** Slurred chromatic neighbor tones in *Emily*

Clayton adheres closely to the original melody in his solo. As we can see in the figure below, Clayton quotes the original melody but embellishes it with repeated notes, shorter note values, and harmonizations with the original contour like in measure 5 below.

\[
\begin{array}{cccccc}
C & Am^7 & Dm^7 & G^7 & Cmaj7 & Fmaj7 \\
\end{array}
\]

**Figure 3.3** Comparison between the original and Clayton’s variation of *Emily*

Clayton’s approach to the tune is very similar on his recording a few years earlier with the Clayton-Hamilton Big Band. The bass performs the melody on the out head and Clayton beautifully embellishes it with slurred groupings, slurred enclosures, and separate quarter note figures.
Clayton’s beautiful treatment of *Emily* embellishes the original melody through harmonization, quotation, and new original material, utilizing a wide range. He has great intonation and a full, bel-canto tone that he creates with a German-style bow.

Bassist Lynn Seaton has recorded many works utilizing the bow. On his solo bass album “Solo Flights” Seaton can be heard at a blistering tempo on his composition *Trane’s Changes*. An unaccompanied piece that utilizes John Coltrane’s famous “Giant Steps” harmonic sequence and features double-stop chords. He then improvises single line melodies. Lynn’s bowing can seem heavy and scratchy but his facility and harmonic complexity compensate. His solo on *Indiana* from his album “Puttin’ On The Ritz” is quite astonishing.

Lynn Seaton’s performance of *Liltin’ With Milton* is an unaccompanied blues solo performance for arco and pizzicato double bass. Seaton presents an introduction that is free time and ad. lib. and helps to set up the main shuffle ostinato motive that is the anchor for the piece. The opening statement is an open, free-time blues fantasy that incorporates arco and pizzicato techniques in a dazzling way. Seaton frequently plucks

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dominant seven triads as well as second position major triads. He occasionally begins on a C dominant and slides up to F dominant as seen in measure three of the figure below. The pizzicato chords are interspersed with improvised arco blues melodies played with light, airy, almost guitar distortion-like tone. The timing is free and the phrasing follows the feel of the line with much passion. Bowings are primarily separate with occasional grace note slurs.

Figure 4.1 Alternating between pizzicato chords and arco melodies in *Liltin’ With Milton*

Seaton creates a variety of bowing timbres through his control of the bow. In the passage below, the first phrase has a hollow sound with light pressure while the second phrase is played with a heavier bow and sounds rougher with more intensity. The modern bassist frequently moves in and out of these bowing sounds, often times single phrases necessitate multiple bowing timbres and tones.

Figure 4.2 Varied bow timbres in *Liltin’ With Milton*
Lynn Seaton combines the pizzicato chordal motive with arco and creates a compelling musical idea. He first plucks a dominant seventh chord then articulates it with a bowed tremolo sweep of the same seventh chord. This figure descends chromatically in sequence. This passage illustrates Seaton’s frequent change between arco and pizzicato techniques in this introduction.

![Figure 4.3 Alternating between pizzicato and arco in Liltin’ With Milton](image)

After the long introduction, Lynn then transitions into a double-stop shuffle ostinato utilizing the root, fifth, sixth, and dominant seventh of the I and IV chords. This is a main motive of the piece and Seaton frequently returns to this device throughout. The passage is played with a hooked bowing that creates the shuffle feel. The turnaround is a single eighth-note line with the same hooked bowing. Seaton uses the hooked style bowing throughout the piece to create a “liltin’” sense of swing.
Seaton continues with the shuffle pattern ostinato figure for a few choruses then later departs with single line blues improvisations. Seaton’s musical vocabulary consists of scales, arpeggios, and chromatic groupings with some chromatic alteration on dominant chords. He also uses double-stops as a melodic tool, like the fifths illustrated below. Seaton utilizes the whole range of the instrument and often times will stay in thumb position for a period of time and traverse his way down and up the neck. He uses standard modern bebop vocabulary like in the last measure.

Figure 4.5 Melodic double-stops and blues melodies in *Liltin’ With Milton*
Seaton ends the piece with an arco walk up on the Gm7 in the third measure to the D7 in the fourth measure of Figure 4.5. He then bows a series of chromatic lower neighbors that resolve to chord tones with a slur figure in measure five. He plays a harmonic double-stop at the A and E positions on the D and G string which sounds like an A and D an octave up. The harmonics ring out and Seaton ends with a low F on the E string that he accents the attack then backs off, he then quickens his bow speed and pressure to create a crescendo to the end of the note.

![Musical notation](image)

Figure 4.6 Ending statement in *Liltin’ With Milton*

Lynn Seaton combines his raw energy with a deep knowledge of traditional swing and bebop and creates a compelling performance of boogie-woogie blues for the bass. He uses a hooked bowing to create a personal sense of swing and improvises for 13 choruses on the blues. It is a powerful example of an extended, unaccompanied arco bass solo.

Mark Dresser is a bassist that has incorporated free-jazz and contemporary classical techniques in a bold new way. Starting with his time with Anthony Braxton, Dresser has incorporated new techniques in his search for a new harmonic sound. His work with the Arcado String Trio showcases his blending of pizzicato and arco techniques in an ensemble comprised of other bowed instruments playing music that also blends through-composed music and free group improvisation. His music is often experimental, for example, the performer has mixed the arco bass with live electronics in
downtown, top corner (2000) from the album “Later”. 116 Dresser recorded a series of solo records and on his latest release “Guts” he improvises using his multiphonic techniques. 117 In the accompanying DVD and materials for his “Guts” album, Dresser explains several of his techniques that he used while recording the CD, including multiphonics, subharmonics, gravity bow drops, artificial harmonics, compound artificial harmonics, falsetto flautando, and bitones. 118 He also gives us a thorough explanation about natural harmonics and their nodes and how to use them musically.

The track SOffial from Guts “is a lyric piece integrating multiphonic chords with melodicism morphing into multiphonic gestures.” 119 It is an improvised composition by Mark Dresser and reveals several aspects of his modern style and approach to arco jazz bass including extended bowing techniques and harmonics. Recorded in 2010 at the University of California, San Diego. Dresser mentions that he recorded some tracks with a five-string contrabass violin that the Music Department had bought in 2008 made by luthier Hammond Ashley. 120 Dresser mentions this instrument and the inspiring, newly built concert hall at UC San Diego as the key motivating factors for this recording. SOffial was recorded with this bass, as we can tell by the low D notes in the first phrase of the piece.

Figure 5.1 Opening gestures in SOffial

119 Ibid.
120 Ibid.
In the opening statement, Dresser repeatedly lands on an open E string, which is accompanied by an array of overtones generated by the bow. Part of Dresser’s approach can be summed up in his statement: “One note on the bass is not solely one pitch, but rather a constellation of harmonic partials vibrating at different amplitudes.”121 Dresser’s concept of tone utilizes the multitude of pitches that combine to create a single tone and he can control the amount and range of the upper harmonics that we hear. The multiphonic note is notated as a hollow diamond notehead with a stem. This technique of arco multiphonics is generated by a light touch of a harmonic partial and a heavy but slow bow stroke. From his accompanying materials:

Here are some key points in understanding how to produce arco multiphonics:

- The key technical components are bow resistance, left-hand placement and bow location.
- Bow resistance is a combination of pressure/weight, bow speed and angle.
- Bowing angles other than perpendicular to the string can help promote multiphonics. 122

Many of the notes in the first phrase are played with a light bow stroke to create a wispy, breathy sound on the strings. This technique generates many upper overtones and engages the upper harmonics more easily when utilizing multiphonics.

His use of slurred bowings creates a sliding and blending of notes as gestures rather than discreet musical figures. Dramatic swells of volume on held multiphonic notes create dynamic gestures as well.

121 Ibid.
His use of arco multiphonic double-stops with increasing bow pressure is very captivating and creates growing intensity at around 0:56 of the piece. He mentions in the included DVD video that when playing multiphonics, the weight of the bow on the string is what dictates volume, not bow speed as in other more traditional bowing techniques.

The performer utilizes multiple slides during the piece and which creates a non-tonal landscape. At 1:08 he slides from an upper note to a unison D with the adjacent open string, a follows it with an open A multiphonic note. The next gesture is again a falling glissando, but this time it is a multiphonic note cluster created by depressing the thumb in the upper register and lightly touching the partial at the major third above the thumb, he adds bow resistance to make it multiphonic. The bow must move in proportion to the glissando.\footnote{Dresser, Mark. *Guts*. Kadima Collective, KCR Triptyche 1. 2010.}
The next musical idea in the improvisation is upper harmonic flutters of notes created by repeated string-crossings of adjacent strings. This is a technique that Dresser considers a “Preliminary Technique” and discusses in his introduction in the included DVD. There is an exercise that he illustrates continuous string crossings on adjacent strings. It is similar to a technique that he utilizes on the piece *K-tude* on the album.

At the end of the exciting string-crossing section, the improviser winds down to a unison then creates a breathy, flute-like sound that Dressers calls *falsetto flautando*. This sound is created by creating an artificial harmonic with the precise placement of the bow on a harmonic node, and using a stroke with a quick attack and little bow pressure. It is the only arco technique that creates transposable artificial harmonics at the octave.\(^\text{124}\) He does this on a fingered A on the D string.

For the next passage is phrase of notes played with the bow drawn diagonally across the string close to the bridge. This techniques creates a cascading sonic effect, a

swirling of harmonics, it almost sounds like the guitar effect, the flanger.

![Figure 5.6 Diagonal bowing multiphonics in SOffial](image)

The ending showcases two extended bow techniques that create very unique sounds. The first is the circular bowing technique. This technique in discussed in Turetzky’s work and assimilated into Dressers improvisational vocabulary. At the very end he concludes with a gravity bow drop at pppp.

![Figure 5.7 Circular Bowing and Gravity Bow Drops in SOffial](image)

Several new bassists are making important music in regards to arco bass. John Goldsby has a series of recordings incorporating arco into the music. Avishai Cohen uses it sparingly in some compositions of his such as, Umray, Seven Seas, and Ahlma Sleeping. An improviser by the name of William Parker is doing new things with the bow as well as Eric Revis.

Another experimental bassist who collaborated with musicians outside the usual jazz idiom is Edgar Meyer. He has collaborated with artists such as Bela Fleck, Mark
O’Connor, Yo Yo Ma, and Christian McBride. His music blends bluegrass, jazz, and classical elements and his bowing style is a conglomeration of those features.

Meyer’s first record as a bandleader from MCA, “Unfolding”, is an experimental record for the time. The instrumentation includes bass, banjo, fiddle, mandolin, and dobro, which are traditional bluegrass instruments, however the approach is very improvisational and harmonically similar to jazz. This blend of bluegrass and jazz is a signature of Meyer’s style. Meyer has great facility and can execute virtuosic bowings with great control. The piece is at 120 beats per minute so 16th-note runs are impressive at such a high speed.

In this example Meyer begins his solo with a melodic statement that consists of separate single-note scalar movements with occasional three-note slurs. The slurs occur on weak beats, usually on the second eighth-note of a beat. In the second statement, he shifts the entrance of the phrase, which shifts the bowings, but retains the weak beat slur entrances.

![Musical notation](image)

**Figure 6.1** Groups of separate and three-note slur bowings in *Unfolding*

Although it is not technically “swung”, the feel of the line is loping like a jazz line, with emphasis on syncopated beats. The bowing pattern is similar to one that is offered in Chris Haigh’s *Exploring Jazz Violin*. The author suggests that separate bows
and groups of two can seem "lumpy", and interweaving single, two note, and three note bowings can help the music feel smoother.

Meyer develops the melodic motive and adds triplet figures adding to the intensity. Meyer’s bow control is impressive and his quick interjections of triplets illustrate his improvisational facility. Meyer takes a single idea and develops it during the course of the solo.

Figure 6.2 Triplet figures develop the original melodic statement in Unfolding

Meyer then balances the quick, 16th note passages and incorporates slides moving from chord tones in an evocative, bluesy way. These slides are a recurring feature in Meyer’s improvisations, listen to his version of Solar with Bela Fleck from Music For Two.

Figure 6.3 Meyer’s use of slides in Unfolding

Meyer incorporates bluesy, slurred flourishes in the upper register. He accomplishes this with slurs over a moveable thumb position that slides chromatically up
the neck. The moveable thumb technique is useful for slurred groupings as it can be transposed easily.

Figure 6.4 Slurred, four note groupings in *Unfolding*

Bassists throughout the years use the bow in accompanimental, melodic, and soloistic applications. From early New Orleans blues numbers, to extended unaccompanied bass solos, the bow has opened up a multitude of tonal possibilities for the contemporary jazz bassist to utilize.

**What are often repeated performance devices found in current arco jazz bassist’s presentations?**

According to the sample, a few reoccurring performance contexts emerged as common instances where arco bass was found in the jazz ensemble. The performance contexts were accompanimental, melodic, and soloistic. More specifically, they include: blues accompaniment and melody; ballad accompaniment and melody; medium to up-tempo melodies and solos; and freely improvised solos, introductions, interludes, and outros, sometimes unaccompanied.
Blues accompaniment and melody

Several performances found on the Selected Discography feature the arco bass playing blues accompaniment and sometimes the blues melody during the performance. Most of the early New Orleans bass players mentioned have been recorded accompanying blues numbers with the bow. It is mixed between half-note and quarter-note bass lines, depending on the feel of the composition. Sometimes it is two-beat such as in The Blues I Love To Sing or four-beat like in Bowin’ The Blues.

Legato bass melodies are also commonly played by bass players in regards to the bow. For example, Blues For Jimmy in the figure below. The melody is slow and doesn’t encompass a wide range, but is in a register that sings and is unique to the double bass.

Figure 7.1 Arco melody in Blues For Jimmy

Christian McBride also recorded an unaccompanied blues feature, the Oscar Peterson classic Night Train. It features a mix of pizzicato and arco sections and utilizes extended techniques such as col legno.

Ballad melody and accompaniment
The bow has commonly been used to create long held, legato bass note accompaniment in ballads and tunes at moderate tempos. Usually playing half or whole notes following the bass notes of the harmony. From early New Orleans music to modern jazz, bassists have used this device to create somber, dirge-like accompaniments for slow or medium tempos. The bass can blend with wind instruments and create cross-sectional blending in larger group contexts. The bassist will sometimes switch between pizzicato and arco techniques. The bass will also play the melody to a ballad or American standard with the bow in a compelling way.

**Moderate and up-tempo melody and solo**

In regard to faster tempos, the arco bass is commonly found playing melodies and improvised solos but rarely will fill an accompanimental role at these speeds. Some players have adapted bebop melodies like *Donna Lee* (see Michael Moore “Michael Moore Trio”, 2000) and played American songbook standards on the arco double bass (*What Is This Thing Called Love*, with Red Garland, 1956). Generally played in the middle to upper register, these melodies showcase the fluidity of the bow while proper phrasing and control with the bow is necessary.

The vocabulary of bowing consists mainly of one to three note slur groupings, scalar and arpeggiated figures, upper and lower neighbor enclosures, and occasional tremolos and slides. As we can see in this transposed example, McBride uses a similar lick over ii-V7 progressions within a single bar. It utilizes upper and lower neighbor slurs and encloses the third of the G7 chord. This is a lick that McBride consistently returned to in his improvisation.
Figure 7.2 One bar ii-V7 vocabulary in *Jayne*

McBride uses vocabulary in his solo over two-bar ii-V7 harmonic phrases that fit into four different types of melodic information. The first, “A”, is a descending chromatic enclosure that utilizes upper and lower neighbors. This first lick is from measure 19 and 20 of the original transcription as seen in the Appendix. The second pattern is the use of the flatted ninth, fifth, and sixth scale degrees to create a G7 altered sound. The third pattern, “C”, is the introduction of triplets to the melodic vocabulary. He utilizes various types of harmonic vocabulary within the triplets but the rhythm doesn’t occur until later into the solo, so it may be intentional. The fourth pattern, “D”, is a simpler enclosure that is primarily diatonic.

Figure 7.3 Two bar ii-V7 vocabulary in *Jayne*
McBride packs a lot into his improvised solo but it is anchored with a few types of turnarounds and open-chord melodic devices. McBride utilizes common bebop language with a modern approach to altered dominants and diminished scales and arpeggios embedded in dominant harmonies. Below is a sample of those ii V7 licks that he utilized in his performance. The complete sample is in the Appendix.

Figure 7.4 Two bar ii-V7 vocabulary in Liltin’ With Milton

Freely improvised open sections

The arco bass is especially suited to create free improvisations. Its tonal and timbral malleability can create emotional and evocative soundscapes. These can be tonal or non-tonal, have metered or free rhythm, and be accompanied or unaccompanied. A notable performance is Miroslav Vitous on the piece Transformation. It is an unaccompanied bass solo that has free time, arco and pizzicato elements, various bowing techniques, and a wide range of musical devices. Vitous’ bow tone is focused and
controlled possibly due to conservatory training. It is truly a convincing use of arco in unaccompanied bass solo. Dave Holland recorded with the bow on his album “Emerald Tears” for the track *Combination*. It is a solo piece with pizz and arco techniques and Holland’s tone is bel canto with vibrato. The vocabulary is chromatic and non-tonal. Mark Dresser is another artist who frequently will create free improvisations with the bow, many of his recordings contain freely improvised arco bass solos as we discussed with *SOffial*. 
What teaching or learning sequence would be beneficial to students in acquiring jazz bowing techniques?

Through comparing the practices of current professional jazz bassists with the common pedagogical approaches to double bass we can begin to move towards pedagogy specific to arco jazz bass. Various methods explain the same techniques in differing ways but there are common ideas that can be helpful to the beginning bow stylist. The main factors are bow control, bowing technique, and musical style. Control consists of the skills and tools required to properly control the bow while it is drawn upon the string to create various sounds and timbers. This includes the bow hold, positioning or “contact point”, speed, weight, balance, angle, and bodily tension which can inhibit the bow stroke. Technique involves ideas about tone and musical applications with the bow including scales, articulations, and slurs. Style pertains to ideas about swing, feel, repertoire, extended techniques, and musical vocabulary for the various contexts in which the arco jazz bassist may find himself. These ideas will be discussed below. Also included in the appendix, I have composed three etudes highlighting the main ideas I present here. The first is an arrangement of C Jam Blues, the second an etude utilizing the bowing pattern of Lynn Seaton’s *Lilting’ With Milton*, and lastly an arrangement of *Moonlight In Vermont* inspired by Jimmy Blanton. This is not meant to be a complete method, rather a synthesis of ideas used towards a more comprehensive pedagogy for arco jazz bass.
Control

The arco technique is a complicated process and bow control is essential to producing a pleasing sound on the upright bass. Whether you choose the French or German style bow is a matter of personal preference, as many great bassists have illustrated compelling performances on both. The hold must not be too tight or too loose so that the fingers can move and be engaged. Many methods include pictures of bassists using correct posture and hand positioning and should be used as a reference. Eduard Nanny’s introduction in his Methode Complete, is a great starting point for the bass player who is starting from the very basics.\textsuperscript{125} It explains how to stand and hold the bass as well as the basic bow hold. It is also necessary for the instructor to help the student find a comfortable hold that is strong but flexible, every hand and student is different.

The positioning of the bow on the string relative to the bridge and fingerboard is an important factor in tone production. Playing closer to the bridge (ponticello) activates higher harmonics and the fundamental begins to fade, while playing closer to or on top of the fingerboard (sul tast) is a warmer, fundamental, flute-like timbre. The bow position should move relative to the position of the left hand to achieve a consistent tone while playing up the neck. As the left hand moves up or down, so too must the contact point of the bow. Bert Turetzky directly addresses this technique in The Contemporary Contrabass.\textsuperscript{126} He provides examples of contemporary music that requires the player to play with various contact points but this could be adapted for the beginning student to acquire control over this aspect.

\textsuperscript{125} Nanny
\textsuperscript{126} Turetzky
The speed of the bow stroke influences how focused the tone is. If the bow is placed close to the bridge and drawn quickly, the tone is harsh and unfocused and does not engage the fundamental vibration of the string. If the bow speed is slowed down then the tone becomes more focused and controlled. Bow speed is an important factor that many bassists work on for their whole career.

Weight is another important factor as it influences the depth of the vibration of the string. Having a very light bow pressure and a fast stroke create an airy, wispy sound, while a heavy, slow bow stroke can create dark, multiphonic tones. Heavy bow pressure close to the bridge can create similar multiphonic sounds or can create strong, declarative fundamental sounds depending on the bow speed. A full, bel-canto sound can be achieved by placing the bow about 2 ½ inches from the bridge and drawing with moderately heavy bow pressure and moderate speed. Experimenting with the three fundamental control factors: positioning, speed, and weight, is important to developing an expressive and desirable sound.

Other bow control issues are the angle of the bow and the balance of the bow. Zimmerman has many helpful exercises in his *A Contemporary Concept of Bowing Technique* for acquiring skill in balancing and adjusting the angle of the bow. The bow must feel free in the hand so that agile articulations can be made, though it is important to retain control of the stick. Other tension areas in the body and specifically the hand can contribute to a poor sound.

In the arrangement of *C Jam Blues* that I composed, I purposely left out bowing and articulation markings so that the same musical material can be played with a multitude of bowing techniques. The top line, which is the melody, should be played in a
variety of ways isolating the aspects of bow control discussed above. For example it can be played with light to heavy bow pressure, sul tasto or sul ponticello, short and long bows with harsh or soft attack, also fast or slow bows. The different aspects can be combined and experimented with so that the student understands the different musical reactions of the different techniques and begins to develop expression within the simple musical phrase. The second line, the bass line, can be approached in similar ways. Try playing it in a legato, connected manner then play it in a more disconnected, detaché style. Try mixing the techniques in different parts of the arrangement like on C7 chords play disconnected bowings and on other chords play it legato. You will be surprised at the musicality of such a simple concept!

The third and fourth lines of the arrangement are guide tone lines that harmonize the melody and bass line. They consist of moving 3rd and 7th note whole notes. These notes can be played in a variety of ways ranging from soft, wispy sounds with light bow pressure to heavy bow strokes close to the bridge. The rhythm can also be manipulated to create a dynamic accompanying line. Experiment and improvise with the guide tones and the harmony will be very clear in your performance.

The arrangement can be performed in many ways and is open for interpretation. If there are not four players available, a student and teacher duo can play through the different sections as each harmonizes the other. Players can choose which part to play and the arrangement is up to the performing group.
Technique

Technique utilizes the nut-and-bolts technical considerations of bow control and applies them to more musical demonstrations. The tone of the double bass is infinitely variable and the bassist must control and demonstrate these timbral differences in order to create compelling music. The bassist must be able to produce the various tones on all strings of the bass in all registers. Long tones can be a helpful exercise to explore various types of strokes, notice the differences in bow speed the closer or farther way to the bridge it is. Learning to produce a consistent tone using each portion of the bow is important. A useful exercise is to play tones starting on various portions of the bow such as the frog, middle, and tip.

Scales are a common device used in many methods to demonstrate the various ways of executing the same musical passage. Students can play diatonic scales as single notes utilizing various articulations and bow control attributes. Scales should be played in all keys and can be played in seconds, thirds, fourths and so on in limitless permutations. They can familiarize the student with different modes and scales that they may encounter in repertoire. Arpeggios are another useful device with endless permutations that can familiarize the student with the fingerboard while reinforcing practical sound production. Many jazz bass methods include bowing exercises based on scales and arpeggios. Although they can become tedious they are important in developing a fluid bow stroke that can produce a diverse set of sounds.

Slurs are a very common technique as they can be found in virtually all arco jazz bass performances. Various groupings of connected bowings can create a legato, fluid line that sounds far better than streams of disconnected single bowings. Practicing scales
and arpeggios with various slur patterns is an effective way to develop fluidity and connected phrasing.

The etude *Milt’s Lilt* was based on the repeating hooked bowing pattern that Lynn Seaton uses in *Liltin’ With Milton*. This repeating bowing pattern creates a propulsive rhythm and a unique rhythmic ostinato for the bass. It can be played at pitch, or for the more advanced student, an octave above in thumb position. Like with the etude on *C Jam Blues* the student should experiment with various techniques and styles of bowing. Try breaking up the slurs in musical ways and changing articulations.

**Style**

Style is the contextual application of bowing techniques in cultural repertoire. The two categories mentioned before are building blocks that apply to various “real-world” arco jazz bass performances. The basis of style is a repertoire specific to a certain cultural group or genre. In the case of this study, that is jazz. The jazz repertoire includes melodies and transcribed improvised solos of American songbook standards, swing, bebop, and modern jazz originals. Students recreate performances on record and create original compositions and arrangements while attempting to assimilate the musical vocabulary through listening, analytical study, and trial and error. Experts of the style critic students on their performances and help them better understand concepts and skills.

Repertoire is limited to the access of the student through teachers, books, online resources and other cultural access points. Teachers can guide student to important demonstrations and students create their own culture of what is important. When learning jazz repertoire, learning by ear and listening to experts is tremendously helpful in
acquiring improvisational skills. When learning culturally contextualized repertoires specific technical skills are required and live examples are sometimes the most effective teaching tool. For example, in jazz, the eighth-note swing is a nuanced feel that is difficult to notate, thus an expert is necessary to assess the quality of execution.

Harmonic vocabulary is particularly important in differentiating styles. Using the correct harmonic language is important to cultivating an authentic style. Various harmonic devices have developed in the compositional and improvisational vocabularies through the evolution of jazz. The stylistic periods of jazz all have harmonic idiosyncrasies that manifest the style. It is up to the student and teacher to decide what style the student wishes to cultivate, while a basic understanding of many styles can be beneficial to the contemporary bassist.

Extended techniques may be stylistically specific and require the performer to acquire new skills in order to execute the music effectively. Often time new composers will have interviews with instrumentalists to inquire about technical limitations and develop new techniques that the performer must practice before the premier performance.

My etude on *Moonlight In Vermont* is inspired by Jimmy Blanton and is an attempt to arrange an American ballad in a style similar to his. The introduction is influenced by harmonic techniques used by Mark Dresser and the E string is tuned to an Eb. The etude presents the melody with embellishments that utilizes a wide range of the instrument. Vocabulary that was common for the period is used such as diminished arpeggios and scales, chromatic enclosures, and long slurred groupings. It is important to listen to recordings of Jimmy Blanton play and then attempt to recreate the pieces that he performed. Then learning to compose in the style of an inspiring artist is the final step in
assimilating their personal style. The bowings and articulations are more important here and should be performed accordingly.
CHAPTER SIX: DISCUSSION

Jazz bass bowing is a deep tradition that has evolved to a high level of performance. Performers use the bow as well as plucking with their fingers to create impressive and expressive bass melodies. Beginning in New Orleans with early jazz, bassists approached jazz and ragtime originally with the bow and later developed the slap pizzicato technique that is used today. Not until the beginning of the 20th century did pizzicato take over as the main technique for sound production in jazz. Although it fell somewhat out of favor, bassists continued to utilize the bow and further the tradition. Bassists began to play melodies and intricate accompaniments with the bow. Swing era bassists would use the bow to play melodies, solos, and only occasionally accompaniment. Bebop bassists continued and would play facile improvised solos and quick bebop melodies with the bow. By the 1960s and ‘70s bassists began to expand the context in which the bow was found, such as Latin-inspired music, funk, fusion, open-free improvisations, world music, and other improvised styles.

Even though it has been around for thousands of years and its rich tradition in jazz, some beginning jazz students don’t feel comfortable with the bow and do not see a need to develop jazz bass bowing skills. Many great bass performers have recorded with the bow and it is an important aspect of contemporary bass playing that should not be overlooked. The bow can open a multitude of sonic possibilities for the improvising bassist.

There are some bass methods that address the bow, mostly in the classical bass tradition. Some jazz bass methods address the bow but in very loose terms. The purpose
of this project was to investigate the origins, evolutions, and current practices of arco jazz bass performance and how that influences the pedagogy for this technique. Many jazz bass methods begin with modern jazz but this project has shown that arco jazz bass doesn’t just start with Slam Stewart or Jimmy Blanton; jazz bassists have been using the bow since the beginnings of jazz. It would behoove the contemporary bassist to realize this and incorporate the bow in their style.

Playing with the bow is not easy and proper instruction is essential so the student does not create bad habits and be more expressive with the bow. Bow control is very important to develop in order to execute the various articulations and bowings that the improviser may need. Good tone and facile technique are goals for the student and through the practice of scales and arpeggios with various bowing permutations can the student develop a sound and skill. Imitating landmark performances on the arco bass is another way to gain skill. Lastly, developing a style with the bow is important to authentically perform in appropriate musical contexts. Swing feel, vocabulary, and extended techniques can dictate the style and show influence.

Implications for jazz scholarship

The bow is an important tool for the contemporary student and skills should be developed. Jazz teachers should better understand the historical relevance of the bow in the jazz ensemble and encourage its use in the classroom. Even though the bow isn’t played through the majority of a jazz performance, professional saxophone performers are expected to be comfortable playing and improvising on the various saxophones and wind instruments, so too should the modern bassist be able to accompany and play
melodies with the bow in a stylistically appropriate way. Various methods exist to help gain skill with the bow and those resources should be available to the student. Teachers should familiarize themselves with these skills to help guide the student.

Suggestions for further research

A larger more complete discography is a goal, though it would take an immense amount of time and research to compile a complete discography of arco jazz bass performances on record. Further research on any one of these fine artists would be worth while. Although this study aims to be thorough in it’s analysis, due to its scope we cannot go in depth with each individual artist. All of the bassists here have wide catalogues of examples of bowed bass on record.
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DISCOGRAPHY


Cab Calloway and His Orchestra. *Ebony Silhouette*. Okeh, 6192. 1941.


Cohen, Avishai. *Seven Seas*. Blue Note, 509999495492 0. 2010.


## Appendix

### Selected Discography of Arco Jazz Bass Performances

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Artist</th>
<th>Name of Recording</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Publisher</th>
<th>Album Number</th>
<th>Leader/Album Name</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Johnson, Bill</td>
<td>Black Bottom Stomp</td>
<td>1926</td>
<td>Victor</td>
<td>Vic 20221</td>
<td>Jelly Roll Morton</td>
<td>First half possibly arco due to lack of percussive slap. Slap-pizz enters and is noticeably different attack. Very active bass line. Fast tempo.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Johnson, Bill</td>
<td>Bull Fiddle Blues/Blue Washboard Stomp</td>
<td>1928</td>
<td>Victor</td>
<td></td>
<td>Johnny Dodds Washboard Band</td>
<td>Alternates between arco and slap-pizz. Recording quality difficult to be precise but slides and held notes indicate arco. Slap-pizz break at 1:27. Arco very apparent on slow blues.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Johnson, Bill</td>
<td>Grandpa’s Spells</td>
<td>1926</td>
<td>Victor</td>
<td>Vic 20431</td>
<td>Jelly Roll Morton &amp; Red Hot Peppers</td>
<td>Beginning with arco, adds slap pizz. Mod tempo.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Garland, Ed &quot;Montuhi&quot;</td>
<td>Ory’s Creole Trombone</td>
<td>1921/1922</td>
<td>Nordskog</td>
<td>Nordskog 3009</td>
<td>Kid Ory</td>
<td>Bass hard to hear throughout. Light attack and lack of percussive slap suggests arco. Also, time period suggests the style where bassists commonly switched between techniques.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Braud, Wellman</td>
<td>The Blues I Love To Sing</td>
<td>1927</td>
<td>Victor</td>
<td>Vic 21490</td>
<td>Duke Ellington</td>
<td>Alternating between slap-pizz and arco. Warm full sound, plays rhythmic arco accompaniment as well as long, full bass notes behind solos.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Braud, Wellman</td>
<td>Black Beauty</td>
<td>1928</td>
<td>Victor</td>
<td>Vic 21580</td>
<td>Duke Ellington</td>
<td>Introduction and accompaniment of melody arco, then plays slap-pizz during rhythm and solo breaks. Moderate tempo.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foster, Pops</td>
<td>Bowin’ The Blues</td>
<td>1945</td>
<td>King Jazz</td>
<td>141</td>
<td>Sidney Bechet and Mezz Mezzro</td>
<td>Arco blues accomp. Gutty sound, probably gut strings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stewart, Slam</td>
<td>Flat Foot Floogie</td>
<td>1938</td>
<td>Affinity</td>
<td>CD AFS 10</td>
<td>Slim &amp; Slam</td>
<td>Synchopated pizz accomp. until arco bass solo. Repeated motifs, sturred phrases with swinging eighth note lines.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stewart, Slam</td>
<td>Dark Eyes</td>
<td>1944</td>
<td>Tulip Records</td>
<td>TLP 104</td>
<td>Art Tatum Trio</td>
<td>Pizz accomp. until arco bass solo. Use of repeated notes, sequence, and slurred groupings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stewart, Slam</td>
<td>Bowin’ Singin’ Slam</td>
<td>1956</td>
<td>Savoy</td>
<td>MG-12067</td>
<td>Bowin’ Singin’ Slam</td>
<td>Pizz intro and rhythm. Playful solo with bluesy articulations and licks. Slides and vocal humming add to character.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Selected Discography of Arco Jazz Bass Performances

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Label</th>
<th>Catalog</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hinton, Milt</td>
<td>Ebony Silhouette</td>
<td>1941</td>
<td>Okeh</td>
<td>6192</td>
<td>Cab Calloway And His Orchestra: Classical-like approach using bow across range of instrument. Alternates between arco and pizz.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chambers, Paul</td>
<td>What is This Thing Called Love</td>
<td>1956</td>
<td>Prestige</td>
<td>PRLP 7064</td>
<td>Red Garland - A Garland Of Red: Starts with melody, begins to improvise in common bop vocabulary. Varied rhythms and articulations. Sound may be scratchy due to close miking.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chambers, Paul</td>
<td>Yesterdays</td>
<td>1957</td>
<td>Blue Note</td>
<td>BLP 1569</td>
<td>Bass On Top: Slow tempo, dramatic, classically inspired intro. Beautiful treatment of melody. Kicks in to mod tempo. Solo is bebop vocab utilizing eighth notes and various articulations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chambers, Paul</td>
<td>The Theme</td>
<td>1957</td>
<td>Blue Note</td>
<td>BLP 1569</td>
<td>Bass On Top: Arco melody, bridge and first solo.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chambers, Paul</td>
<td>Cool Struttin'</td>
<td>1958</td>
<td>Blue Note</td>
<td>BLP 1588</td>
<td>Sonny Clark - Cool Struttin': Masterful solo over 1 chorus, bebop vocabulary executed with precision and style.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holly, Major</td>
<td>Joshua Fit the Battle of Jericho</td>
<td>1962</td>
<td>Verve Records</td>
<td>V6-8509</td>
<td>Coleman Hawkins Alive! at Village Gate 1962: Pizz throughout most, arco bass solo with signature singing at pitch. References the melody then departs with bebop and blues vocabulary.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holly, Major</td>
<td>Willow Weep For Me</td>
<td>1977</td>
<td>Black And Blue</td>
<td>33.156</td>
<td>Excuse Me Ludwig: Arco with vocals intro and rubato treatment of melody. Swinging and blues improvisation around melody and solo.</td>
</tr>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Holly, Major</td>
<td>Misty</td>
<td>1981</td>
<td>Delos</td>
<td>DE 1024</td>
<td>Slam begins with arco melody and 8va singing. Major responds improvising over bridge and last A section while singing at pitch. Both alternate between pizz accomp.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carter, Ron</td>
<td>Sun Shower</td>
<td>1977</td>
<td>Milestone</td>
<td>M-55004</td>
<td>Piccolo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miroslav Vitous</td>
<td>Bassamba</td>
<td>1978</td>
<td>ECM Records</td>
<td>ECM 1312</td>
<td>Miroslav Imprved arco melody over fast jazz samba, overdubbed bass. Heavily electrified sound with light bow in upper register. Varied rhythms with streams of eighth notes and mostly in upper register. Rhythmic ostinato ending</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miroslav Vitous</td>
<td>Transformation</td>
<td>1986</td>
<td>ECM Records</td>
<td>ECM 1312</td>
<td>Solo arco bass.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cachao, Israel Lopez</td>
<td>La Bayamesa</td>
<td>1977</td>
<td>Salsoul Records</td>
<td>Sal 4111</td>
<td>Cachao y Su Descarga '77 Overdubbed arco intro, melody, and improvisation. Multiple bowed basses layered on top of eachother.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holland, Dave</td>
<td>Combination</td>
<td>1978</td>
<td>ECM Records</td>
<td>ECM-1-110</td>
<td>Emerald Tears Solo piece with arco and pizz. Bel canto tone and vibrato. Chromatic and non-tonal, possibly improvised.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holland, Dave</td>
<td>Candlelight Vigil</td>
<td>1999</td>
<td>ECM Records</td>
<td>ECM 1698</td>
<td>Sombre arco accomp. of contrapunatal melody. Primarily long bass notes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McBride, Christian</td>
<td>Night Train</td>
<td>1994</td>
<td>Verve Records</td>
<td>314 523 9</td>
<td>Getting' To R Solo bass interpretation of bluesy classic. Alternating between arco and pizz he also utilizes extended techniques such as col legno</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McBride, Christian</td>
<td>Jayne</td>
<td>1995</td>
<td>Verve Records</td>
<td>314 529 9</td>
<td>Number Two Express Pizz throughout most of the tune until the arco bass solo over &quot;Out Of Nowhere&quot; changes. Modern bop vocabulary influenced by Chambers' style.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Selected Discography of Arco Jazz Bass Performances

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>Album</th>
<th>Year</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Clayton, John</td>
<td>Emily</td>
<td>1999</td>
<td>Qwest Records</td>
<td>9 47286-2</td>
<td>Beautiful rubato melody with bel canto, classical sound in upper register. Pizz during saxophone solo in new key. Arco bass melody second half of tune on head out with improvised ending utilizing harmonics.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clayton, John</td>
<td>Emily</td>
<td>2013</td>
<td>In+Out Records</td>
<td>IOR CD 77</td>
<td>Paul Kuhn and John Clayton, Jeff Hamilton - The L. A. Session Arco intro then pizz for melody accomp. Improvised arco solo that references the melody towards the end.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moore, Michael</td>
<td>Donna Lee</td>
<td>2000</td>
<td>Arbors Records</td>
<td></td>
<td>Michael Moore and his Trio Arco head in unison with clarinet. Arco bass solo first, melodic and lyrical style with nice full tone.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seaton, Lynn</td>
<td>Liltin' With Milton</td>
<td>2000</td>
<td>Omnitone</td>
<td></td>
<td>Original composition alternating between pizz and arco in the beginning, then solely arco until the end. Improvisation on blues with bluesy and modern bop vocabulary. Virtuosic display of technique.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seaton, Lynn</td>
<td>Trane's Changes</td>
<td>2000</td>
<td>Omnitone</td>
<td></td>
<td>Puttin' On the Ritz Blistering tempo pizz throughout most until arco solo.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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# Selected Discography of Arco Jazz Bass Performances

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<tr>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dresser, Mark</td>
<td>kadima</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>Kadima Collective</td>
<td>KCR Tripty</td>
<td>Guts Improvised piece utilizing extended bowing techniques. Natural and artificial harmonics as well as double stops.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cohen, Avishai</td>
<td>Seven Seas</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>Blue Note</td>
<td>Seven Seas</td>
<td>Seven Seas Aggressive rhythmic pizz with vocalization during intro. Intricate rhythms as melody. After piano break, transitions to arco to play piano melody in unison. It is very quick but characteristic of Cohen’s fleeting use of the bow as another sound color.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Blues I Love To Sing
Bassline performed by Wellman Braud

D. Ellington
Liltin' With Milton
From the album Solo Flights by Lynn Seaton

Lynn Seaton
SOffial

Mark Dresser
21 Circular bowing 3:10  slow  Drop-bow tech

\[ \text{Diagram of musical notes} \]
Unfolding
From The Album Unfolding by Edgar Meyer
Solo by Edgar Meyer

Edgar Meyer
C Jam Blues

Duke Ellington
Milt's Lilt

Geoiff Saunders
Moonlight In Vermont Etude
Inspired by Jimmy Blanton
Karl Suessdorf/Geoff Saunders

```
7  E[maj7]  Cm7  Fm7  Bb7(b9)  E[maj7]  Cm7

10  D(b7 invaders)  Fm7  Bb7(b9)  E[maj7]

13  E[maj7]  Cm7  Fm7  Bb7(b9)  E[maj7]  Cm7

16  D(b7 invaders)  Fm7  Bb7(b9)  E[maj7]

19  pizz  D7  Gmaj7  Em7  Am7  D7  Gmaj7


23  E[maj7]  arco  Cm7  Fm7  Bb7(b9)  E[maj7]  Cm7

27  E[maj7]  Cm7  Fm7  Bb7(b9)  E[maj7]  Cm7

30  D(b7 invaders)  Fm7  Bb7(b9)

32  E[maj7]  C7  rit
```