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**IMPROVISATION AS THE FOUNDATION  
OF JAZZ PERFORMANCE**

**Abstract of the doctoral thesis in arts**

**SPECIALITY 653.01 – MUSICOLOGY  
(PROFESSIONAL DOCTORATE)**

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The thesis was elaborated within the Doctoral School in Art Studies and Culturology of the Academy of Music, Theatre and Fine Arts.

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Doctoral thesis defense will take place on July 1, 2021, at 11.00 in the session of the Commission for public defense of the doctoral thesis of the Academy of Music, Theatre and Fine Arts (Chisinau, 111, Alexei Mateevici Street). The thesis and its abstract are available for perusal in the National Library of the Republic of Moldova (Chisinau, 78A, 31 August 1989 Street), in the library of the Academy of Music, Theatre and Fine Arts (Chisinau, 87, Alexei Mateevici Street, reading room), as well as on the websites [www.cnaa.md](http://www.cnaa.md) and [www.amtap.md](http://www.amtap.md).

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## THE CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK OF THE STUDY

**The relevance and significance of the thesis subject.** Improvisation is considered to be the foundation of the jazz art, the “soul” of jazz performance. Over more than a century of history jazz has not only retained its immanent improvisational quality, but has also strengthened and developed it.

Nowadays jazz performance worldwide has reached a high level of professionalism, the fact largely facilitated by the education system covering institutions of different levels – from children’s music schools to higher educational institutions. In the Republic of Moldova jazz performance and teaching are at an initial stage of development. Moreover, improvisation training, being the most complex component, is the most underdeveloped one in jazz education. Therefore, the study of improvisation as the foundation of jazz art is relevant from the point of view of performance development in this field.

The necessity of the ability to improvise is pushed forward by the intensification of the globalization process to be observed in musical creativity and in the education system. Participation of young performers, teachers and students from different countries in jazz festivals and concerts, exchange of creative experience within academic mobility programs – all these imply an adequate level of education and performing culture nearing international standards. The importance of artistic tasks dealt with by young performers as well as the need for scientific approach to theoretical and practical problems of jazz improvisation determine the relevance and significance of the subject of the present thesis.

The suggested scientific and creative project is based on the author’s desire to summarize his long-term experience in jazz performance and teaching with the view of making it available to new generations of musicians. The creative part of the thesis is represented by the public performance of three concert programs in which the author did improvisations on the themes of both well-known jazz standards and a number of his own compositions. Also, there is a previously published collection of author’s compositions which includes seven jazz pieces for piano composed in various styles and which can be regarded as an additional material for the project. The theoretical part deals with the most important problems of jazz improvisation which are of particular interest for performing and teaching. The complex scientific and creative nature of the thesis dictates its practical orientation: the author set the task of considering, first of all, the aspects of jazz improvisation that will be most useful for aspiring musicians and teachers.

**The purpose** of the thesis is bespeaks a comprehensive study of improvisation as the basis of jazz performance and the most important component of professional jazz training.

**Research objectives:**

1. Consideration of jazz improvisation as a special category of musical activity, namely, creation of music in the process of performance.
2. Analysis of the theoretical aspects of jazz improvisation related to such musical-technological and dramaturgic categories as theme, chorus, harmony, rhythm, form, etc.
3. Identification of the communicative aspects of jazz improvisation as practiced on various occasions: concert, studio recording, informal collaborative music playing (jam session).
4. Study of methodological aspects of jazz improvisation involving individual approach to teaching depending on the category of students learning the basics of jazz performance.
5. Formulation of methodological recommendations for mastering of jazz improvisation (use of manuals and textbooks, listening, transcribing and analysis of jazz improvisations).

**The object of the study** is jazz improvisation as a type of musical activity and performing.

**The novelty and originality of the thesis** lie in the following:

- The practical aspect of jazz improvisation is showcased in stage performances characterized by the novelty of concert programs and the interpretation of musical material. The concert programs contain piano improvisations both on well-known jazz standards and on the author's own themes. The performances featured different groups of musicians particularly assembled for each performance.
- In the theoretical part, for the first time in the Republic of Moldova an attempt was made to define various musicological, performing and teaching aspects of jazz improvisation. The work thereby intends to fill the gap in the national musicology so far lacking any theoretic works on jazz improvisation and teaching techniques for this important component of jazz art.

**The methodological basis of the thesis.** The theoretical part of the work combines three main scientific perspectives, namely, musicological, performing and pedagogical ones. It employed the following research methods:

- study of theoretical sources (monographs, articles, thesis papers) related to the main aspects of the subject;
- analysis of musical texts, audio and video recordings;
- comparative analysis of improvisations by leading jazz performers;
- consideration of didactic material (schools, manuals, collections of exercises, etc.) very important for the methodological component of the thesis;
- generalization of personal experience in the field of jazz performance and teaching.

**The theoretical significance of the thesis.** The work completes and deepens a number of theoretical and methodological elaborations in jazz and jazz improvisation from the point of view of a practicing musician. It can serve as a basis for further research in this particular field.

**The practical significance of the work** lies in the possibility of its application to the educational process when such teaching courses as *Instrument, Improvisation, Ensemble, History of Pop and Jazz Music, Stylistics of Pop and Jazz Music* for students of the specialty *Instrumental Performance (Instruments of Pop and Jazz Music)*. The results of the study can be used by students interested in improving jazz improvisation skills and enhancing their general jazz culture. The conclusions and recommendations will be useful for practicing jazz musicians in preparation of concert performances and studio recordings as well as for pedagogues or those who deal with improvisation in their daily work. All of the above-mentioned will help to optimize the process of teaching the art of jazz improvisation in the system of higher music education.

**Validation of the work results.** The thesis was written at the Doctoral School of Art Studies and Culturology at the Academy of Music, Theater and Fine Arts.

**The practical part of the thesis** was presented in three concert performances in the Great Hall of Academy of Music, Theatre and Fine Arts.

The main **results of the theoretical research** are reflected in 11 publications including 6 scientific articles (5 of them – in specialized editions recommended by National Agency for Quality Assurance in Education and Research) and 5 thesis abstracts presented at scientific conferences. The materials of the thesis were presented at 9 scientific forums including 7 international scientific conferences, 1 regional conference with international participation and 1 scientific and methodological seminar.

The practical and theoretical parts of the work were discussed at the meetings of the Guidance Commission. The thesis was examined and recommended for defense of the Guidance Commission and Science Council of the Academy of Music, Theatre and Fine Arts.

**The structure and content of the theoretical research.** The work includes 82 pages of the scientific text comprising an introduction, two chapters, main conclusions and recommendations.

The thesis is appended with a list of references from 149 sources in Russian, English, Romanian and Ukrainian, as well as a list of audio and video materials used in the course of the work. Appendix 1 contains music notation examples illustrating a number of aspects of the theoretical part of the work. Appendix 2 is a list of abbreviations used in the dissertation. Appendix 3 carries the programs of the author's three concert performances that make up the creative part of the thesis. Appendix 4 includes a list of the foreign names found in the work given in the Russian transcription and in the original.

**Keywords:** concert performance, jam session, jazz, jazz standard, improvisation, methodical guidelines, piano, studio recording

## THE CONTENT OF THE THESIS

The **introduction** proffers reasons for the choice of the thesis subject, determines its relevance and significance, its purpose and objectives, the object of research, the degree of novelty and originality, methodological and theoretical basis, theoretical and practical significance, and contains information about validation of the results of the work.

The first chapter is devoted to **theoretical aspects of jazz improvisation**. Section **1.1** reveals the main features of jazz improvisation and analyzes its theoretical problems associated with it, which are reflected in the special literature. Improvisation and the improvisational principle have long existed in musical folklore and traditional cultures of various peoples, as well as in the music of the academic tradition. Yet, arguably, nowhere else does improvisation possess such significance as in jazz music where the concepts of “jazz” and “improvisation” are oftentimes equated.

The term *improvisation* refers to two different, although interrelated, phenomena: on the one hand, a work of art is created directly during a live performance, and on the other, the very process of its creation. This makes jazz improvisation a special kind of creative activity in which the composer and the performer are joined in the same person. In jazz improvisation a musical text itself is born in the process of playing music, reflecting the style of the composition, the features of the individual performing manner and personal qualities of the musician – musicality, intellect, temperament, features of musical thinking, culture, artistic preferences, knowledge, skills, experience, imagination, psychological state and other factors. At the same time a jazz piece is not “the realm of the unbridled element”, but a dialectical unity of the mobile and the stable, the instantaneous and the prepared, the changeable and the unchanging. The improviser’s creative work is based on models, techniques and clichés of the musical language that have developed over more than a century-long history of jazz art.

Jazz improvisation is characterized by a tendency to be dialogic. Using a particular theme, the improviser participates in a virtual dialogue with the personality of the of the one who created it. Performing in a band, he is in a state of competitive interaction with colleagues, and playing solo, he conducts a kind of dialogue with himself. Finally, during a public performance a distinct kind of a dialogue with the listener establishes itself, creating a special atmosphere of direct communication with the audience.

Analysis of specialized literature allows us to conclude that improvisation in jazz is a multi-faceted phenomenon, diverse in aesthetic and technical forms of its implementation. Evolving over decades, it has absorbed the characteristics of various ethnic cultures and historical periods, but preserving its essential nature.

Section **1.2** is devoted to the principles of treating jazz standards. Jazz standards, often called *evergreens*, make an important and integral part of any jazz artist’s repertoire. They are based on

melodies of vocal pieces and instrumental themes composed by jazz musicians. The reason behind the wide popularity of jazz standards lies in the fact that their knowledge allows jazzmen to communicate with each other making music together: on the concert stage, in the studio, at jam sessions which often unite musicians who do not know one another.

The process of rendering a jazz standard can be divided into two stages, the first being presentation of the theme, the second – its subsequent development in the process of building a jazz composition. There is a wide range of approaches to presentation of the theme from strict adherence to the author's version to introducing cardinal melodic, harmonic, rhythmic, and textural changes. A composition based on a jazz standard, as a rule, is a process of varying a given theme: its presentation is followed by a series of choruses which alter the theme in a certain fashion.

The most variable side of the musical whole is melody which is varied using scales, chord and non-chord sounds, various rhythmic constructions (syncopations, swing figures, triplets and other special types of rhythmic division), the texture of the presentation (monodic, heterophonic, harmonic). Harmony is one of relatively constant aspects of a jazz standard, but it can also become a field for searching and experimenting: we refer to the techniques of re-harmonizing a theme which, while preserving the basis, enrich the harmony through altering chords, making them more complicated with the help of superstructures in the form of ninths, elevenths, thirteenth, as well as introducing new chords. A common means of harmonic development is the so-called "harmonic substitution method". The most widely used is the tritone substitution wherein a chord is replaced by another one located at a tritone distance from the original one.

For harmonic instruments, especially the piano, texture is of great importance, that is, the link between improvisation and style. The stylistic features of improvisation are usually expressed in piano techniques such as stride, "locked hands" (playing block chords), bebop "dotted line" chords, formulas of various genres of Latin jazz etc. Less obvious, but also important, is timbre which is influenced by both special technical devices (for example, mutes, sound processors) and various sound production techniques: pizzicato, flageolets, vibrato, tremolo, two-handed tapping, slap, etc.

Section **1.3** describes the principles underlying the process of constructing a jazz composition. A standard jazz composition is quite stereotypical in terms of form. As a rule, it includes a theme and a series of improvisations called choruses, to which can be added an introduction, a coda, or interludes between parts. The theme is often constructed in the 32-bar song form (a two-part *AABA* reprise form) or has the 12-bar blues structure. The form of the theme is usually not changed during its subsequent improvisational development. At the end of the composition (and sometimes in the middle) the theme is reprised in its original form or, most often, with some alterations.

One of the tasks of the performer is to build up a composition from the dramaturgical point of view, using the available means of improvisational development of the theme. The best option is a

gradual development from simple to complex: increase in texture density, moving from an ornamental variation of the theme to creation of a new melody, from an exact repetition of the harmony to making changes through the use of complicated chords, substitutions, etc. Thus, a line of development is created leading to a climax which is usually located before the final return of the theme or captures its beginning. As an example of the building of a jazz composition, the thesis describes the process of the author's work on the popular theme of the ballad *Round Midnight* by Thelonious Monk performed in one of the concert performances.

Section 1.4 includes conclusions from Chapter 1.

The second chapter is titled **The methodological aspects of jazz improvisation**. Section 2.1 lays down methods that determine an individual approach to teaching different categories of students learning jazz improvisation at the higher educational institution. To the first type of students belong those who have never encountered jazz before and have not tried to improvise; it is the most difficult one if we keep the final result in view. With these student's true improvisation is not generally achieved over the years of study; the learning process is limited to familiarization with the principles of improvisation, analysis of compositions of outstanding performers and practicing the study programs based on sheet music.

When teaching this category of students, it is necessary to make them as thoroughly acquainted with the jazz culture as possible: despite the fact that they are unlikely to end up really improvising, they can develop into good performers of written music, demanded concertmasters, as well as "quality" listeners. However, it is possible that a strong musical talent, clear awareness of their goals, hard work and perseverance will contribute to the development of creative potential which may result in the discovery of a brilliant talented jazz player.

The second group consists of musicians who have already tried their hand at jazz music but have no experience in improvisation. Such students already have some understanding of the process, often have a good mastery of the instrument. While for the first group of students the ability to improvise is optional, for the second group it is obligatory, but this result is sometimes difficult to achieve due to fear of spontaneous play at public performances. This fear forces the player to fall back on well-known patterns, pre-composed or learned from solo notation. Every effort should be made to encourage the student to try to improvise at live performances, their individual study plan should be augmented with participation in concerts, master classes, jam sessions, etc.

The third category of students includes performers with a certain experience in improvisation, and it is the most promising in terms of results. They come to higher institution with a certain experience in jazz performance and spontaneous improvisation. They are usually quite independent, not afraid to improvise, and it only remains for the teacher to guide their development. Such students are the closest to true jazz, but this does not mean that their playing is professionally perfect and does



not yield itself to improvement. However, it is not easy to modify the established skills because their experience allows musicians to persist in defending their point of view. In addition, musicians of this type do not like working with sheet music which carries a lot of useful information. When working with them, it is especially necessary to create the most comfortable communicative atmosphere which may help to avoid possible conflicts in case of divergence of opinions on certain issues.

Section **2.2** is devoted to the consideration of methodological guidelines and manuals that can be recommended to students of jazz improvisation. The first group includes theoretical and methodological works that not only contain information on various conceptual questions of jazz theory, but are also practically oriented. Here one can find material for any training level from basic information about scales, chords, rhythmic structures to complex information about chromatism, polymodality, polyrhythm. The studies that deserve foremost special attention would include the major works by Mark Levine – *The Jazz Theory Book* and *The Jazz Piano Book*.

The second group includes various methodological collections which explain the process of learning jazz improvisation and provide practical exercises for its development. Among the methodological aids should be singled out the comprehensive course of Jamey Aebersold, a series of works by Jerry Coker, Hal Crook, David Baker, etc. This group of materials also includes various video schools, usually built on the “do like I do” principle making them highly receptive.

The third group of materials is music collections. Priority is given to musical transcriptions of solo performances by outstanding jazz musicians, their ensemble playing in trios, quartets, and other combos. One can also use one’s own compositions in educational work.

In addition to theoretical and methodological publications can be used such materials as collections of jazz standards, “minus one” phonograms with accompaniment for self-instruction practice, a variety of audio and video materials with recordings of great jazzmen, memoirs as well as documentaries and feature films about the history of jazz and life stories of famous musicians.

Section **2.3** focuses on teaching methods based on an accumulation of auditive and cognitive experience, namely, listening, transcribing, and analyzing jazz improvisations.

In the process of teaching jazz improvisation, reliance on ear plays a significant role, therefore one of the fundamental teaching methods is listening to music. When listening to playing of outstanding performers a musician absorbs numerous subtleties of musical language associated with melody, rhythm, articulation, phrase construction, jazz articulation, etc.

Transcribing is of great importance, that is, “decoding” of an audio recording, when a musician tries to commit musical material to memory or to paper in order to subsequently repeat it on their instrument. Practicing this type of activity, the performer develops his abilities, activating their hearing, rhythmic sense and memory. Besides, they do not just write a “musical dictation” but follow through the very process of making music which is fixed in consciousness in the form of a

balled-up image of the composition, separate melodic-rhythmic segments, harmonic and textured turns, articulation techniques, etc. All this makes up a palette of expressive features that can come in handy when creating their own improvisations later on.

One of the most important aspects of mastering jazz improvisation, closely related to the accumulation of auditive experience, is the cognitive aspect based on analysis of compositions. For analysis one can use both audio recordings and sheet music; these can be improvisations or composers' works by prominent jazz masters such as Bill Evans, Dave Brubeck, Keith Jarrett and others. The final stage of working with the listened-to, transcribed, and analyzed material is its application in one's own practical activities. This stage combines auditory sensations and analytical notions with the work of the performing apparatus.

The aforementioned process of working on a particular improvisation (listening, transcribing, analyzing, mastering on an instrument) can take two or three times longer than learning a piece from sheet music. However, for those who are interested in quality and professional results, this approach is an indispensable way to comprehend the secrets of the jazz skills.

Section 2.4 defines the specifics of jazz improvisation on various performing occasions: at concert, at studio recordings, at informal creative meeting of musicians called jam sessions. Playing in concert has always been a priority, a favorite form of music activity in jazz. During concert performances the improvising musician has a significant degree of freedom for self-expression. Development of improvisation, employment of various performing techniques are greatly influenced by the reaction of the audience, by the special atmosphere when the musicians and the audience become as one. Sometimes musicians on stage do not feel the response of the audience, especially if the concert takes place in a strait-laced academic hall or with an unprepared audience. The ability to pull oneself together and brace yourself to showcase your abilities in any concert situation is an important psychological task facing the performer.

When planning a studio recording two important factors should be taken into account. The first of them is technical conditions: acoustics, equipment, sound engineering, the ability to use specific techniques such as superimposing tracks, special sound processing, creating sound effects, etc. The second factor is the volume of the material stipulated by the volume of the audio medium. The advantage of recording in the studio is the opportunity to do several takes, try different approaches to building your solo. The negative side is that the music that has undergone the stage of studio processing does not carry the immediacy of a concert performance. There is also a problem of the absence of an audience: for some performers contact with the public is an important inspirational incentive.

A jam session is a tradition upheld by jazz musicians to periodically get together to make music. During the performance, unexpected circumstances may arise, including uncomfortable ones,

in which the musician must show everything that he is capable of. The more jazz standards a musician knows, the more experienced he is in improvising, the better he is primed for the process of making music. In addition, it being a collaborative improvisation, they need a honed intuition that will help to anticipate the unfolding of the composition, to catch up with any sudden deviations that may occur during the performance.

Concluding the chapter on professional training in jazz improvisation, it should be emphasized that success depends on the desire, determination, and diligence of the musician.

Section **2.5** contains conclusions from Chapter 2.

## GENERAL CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Jazz improvisation as a special category of musical activity refers to creation of music in the process of performing as well as to the outcome of this activity. Improvisation in jazz is a multi-faceted phenomenon diverse in artistic and technical forms of its implementation. Evolving over decades, it has absorbed the characteristics of various ethnic cultures and historical periods, constantly changing specific forms of its existence but preserving its essential nature.

2. Having emerged as the result of ethno-cultural synthesis, jazz improvisation borrowed, on the one hand, the standard normativity coming from professional European music, and on the other hand, free unpredictable character typical for traditional African art. Arising spontaneously in the process of making music, jazz improvisation is nevertheless limited by a number of factors, above all by the phenomenon of composition. The main factor of composition in jazz is the form that organizes the musical thinking of the improviser and directs it to the tradition-defined framework.

3. The main musical-technological and compositional-dramaturgic components of improvisation are theme, chorus, form, harmony, rhythm, texture etc. Their analysis can be found in the thesis in connection with work on jazz standards as an important type of performing activity in jazz. The treatment of a jazz standard is presentation of the theme and its subsequent changes in the choruses of improvisation. During the development of the theme there may occur complications of the melodic line, acceleration or slowing down of the rhythm, a shift from an ornamental variation to creation of a new melody, and other modifications. Along with the key role of melodic development also important in this process are texture, timbre, etc. The most constant elements in improvisation are form and harmony, although they also become subject to transformation. Thus, harmonic basis is enriched through alteration of chords, their arrangement, tone superstructures, introduction of new consonances, "harmonic substitutions". Throughout the composition a line of development is created usually leading to a climax. The same theme can become a basis of a large number of compositions that are diverse in form.

4. In the process of teaching jazz improvisation three categories of students have been identified: those who do not improvise, those who try to improvise, and those who already have experience in improvising. The teaching methods are different in each case, although there are common points in the choice of approaches. These include, in particular, use of theoretical works, methodological guidelines, and music publications edited in different countries of the world. This material captures the most important aspects of jazz performance and, as a rule, provides invaluable assistance to those who seek to learn its laws. However, an aspiring musician who is resolved to devote himself to jazz cannot always find his or her way through the abundance of information, so it's up to the teacher to recommend the material that will fit the principle of individual approach to

teaching. Such forms of work as communication with jazz musicians, watching videos, reading and discussing literature, etc. are also important.

5. In the process of mastering the art of improvisation it is worth to accentuate such methods as listening, transcribing, analyzing, and, finally, learning on the instrument of improvisations by outstanding jazz musicians. Despite a large number of printed publications related to various aspects of performance, listening to jazz recordings remains unsurpassed as a source of information. Another method is transcribing (writing down from a phonogram) musical improvisations: notwithstanding the fact that almost any solo for any instrument can be found in music publications, this type of activity in that it contributes to the development of hearing, rhythmic feeling, memory, and also forms an arsenal of techniques necessary to create your own improvisations.

Listening and transcribing are particularly useful if they are supplemented by analysis of jazz improvisations helping a musician to get an insight into the creative laboratory of a master and use the information obtained in his or her playing. The final stage of working with the listened, transcribed, and analyzed material is its application to performing.

6. The communicative features of jazz improvisation depend on various performing occasions: concert, studio recording, free collaborative music-making (jam session). During concert performances the improvising musician has a significant degree of freedom for self-expression which is influenced by the special atmosphere of the hall and the performer's singular dialogue with the audience. Studio work is advantageous in its own way due to the availability of high-quality technical conditions necessary for the creation of the final sound product, the ability to record multiple takes, etc. At the same time some jazz musicians experience a psychological discomfort in the studio due to the absence of an audience and live communication with the audience. In addition, there are musicians who recognize only improvisations played live, in real time, as opposed to ones that underwent studio processing. In the process of an informal creative communication of musicians called jam session the most relaxed playing situation arises, which, however, imposes its own requirements on musicians: improvisation skills, knowledge of jazz standards, ability to handle an unexpected situation during the performance, etc.

7. Learning jazz improvisation is a very difficult creative task. The path to this is different for each student: for example, you can compare it with climbing to the top of a mountain, which can be reached by different paths. Success in this field largely depends on the desire, determination, and diligence of the musician. He must be able to set certain goals and achieve them methodically. It's the only way to achieve the inner freedom necessary for improvisation – the freedom wherein lies in the great attraction of jazz music for millions of fans around the world.

## **Recommendations**

1. To conduct a further study of theoretical aspects of jazz improvisation expanding the range of phenomena for consideration.
2. To continue studying practical aspects of jazz improvisation using the results of research published in analytical essays on the characteristic features of improvisation in the works of outstanding jazz musicians.
3. To develop the art of improvisation in performing activities.
4. To summarize the experience of jazz improvisation on various musical instruments.
5. To create and publish original compositions with the inclusion of jazz improvisations.
6. To expand the field of study of methodological aspects of jazz improvisation.
7. To use the results of theoretical and practical studies of jazz improvisation in such training courses as *Instrument, Improvisation, Ensemble, Methods of Teaching a Special Discipline* for students of the specialty *Instrumental Performance (Instruments of Pop and Jazz Music)*.
8. To update the content of educational programs in the discipline *Improvisation* for students specializing in *Instrumental Performance (Instruments of Pop and Jazz Music)*.
9. To develop methodological guidelines necessary for teaching students the art of jazz improvisation.
10. To extend the experience of the study of jazz improvisation to the field of vocal performance.

## CONCERT PROGRAMS (THE CREATIVE PART OF THE THESIS)

### Concert program No. 1

#### *Jazz & Co. A Tribute to Thelonious Monk*

Academy of Music, Theatre and Fine Arts

Great Hall, building No. 2, 01.12.2016

Improvisations on Thelonious Monk themes:

1. *Blue Monk*
2. *Well, You Needn't*
3. *Bye-Ya*
4. *Round About Midnight*
5. *Bemsha Swing*
6. *Rhythm-a-Ning*
7. *Misterioso*
8. *Ruby, My Dear*
9. *We See*
10. *Straight, No Chaser*

Featuring musicians:

Veaceslav Dașevschi (piano)

Igor Varikaș (double bass)

Nicu Balmuș (drums)

### Concert program No. 2

#### *Jazz & Co. Some Jazz Standards and...*

Academy of Music, Theatre and Fine Arts

Grand Hall, building No. 2, 30.03.2017

*Improvisations on self-composed themes and those of jazz standards:*

1. *Doctorate Blues* (V. Dașevschi)
2. *Someday My Prince Will Come* (F. Churchill)
3. *Have You Met Miss Jones* (L. Hart)
4. *Blue in Green* (B. Evans, M. Davis)
5. *On Green Dolphin Street* (B. Kaper)
6. *Stella by Starlight* (V. Young)
7. *Missing the Blues* (V. Dașevschi)
8. *My Funny Valentine* (R. Rodgers)
9. *Windows* (Ch. Corea)
10. *Tips Blues* (V. Dașevschi)

Featuring musicians:

Veaceslav Dașevschi (piano)

Igor Varikaș (double bass)

### Concert program No. 3

#### *Jazz & Co. Some More Jazz Standards*

Academy of Music, Theater and Fine Arts

Grand Hall, building No. 2, 28.09.2017

*Improvisations on self-composed themes and those of jazz standards:*

1. *In a Sentimental Mood* (D. Ellington)
2. *Things Are Not What They Used to Be* (M. Ellington)
3. *Solitude* (D. Ellington)
4. *Satin Doll* (D. Ellington)
5. *Doodlin'* (H. Silver)
6. *Fool What I Am* (F. Hunt)

7. *I Mean You* (Th. Monk)
8. *You Don't Know What Love Is* (D. Raye, G. de Paul)
9. *Love for Sale* (C. Porter)
10. *Doctorate Blues* (V. Daşevschii)

Featuring musicians:

Veaceslav Daşevschii (piano)

Igor Varikaş (double bass)

Nicu Balmuş (drums)

Mihaela Handuca (vocals)



## WORKS PUBLISHED ON THE SUBJECT OF THE THESIS

### 2. Articles in various periodical scientific publications

2.3. in publications included in the National Register of Specialized Periodicals:

#### Category C

1. Dașevschi V. Improvizatia de jazz: scurtă trecere în revistă a ghidurilor teoretico-metodologice de bază. In: Studiul artelor și culturologie: istorie, teorie, practică. Nr. 2 (31), 2017. Chișinău: AMTAP, 2017 (Notograf Prim), p. 244-248. ISSN 2345-1408. Categoria C.
2. Dașevschi V. Specific features of teaching jazz in the system of higher education. In: Studiul artelor și culturologie: istorie, teorie, practică. Nr. 2 (31), 2017. Chișinău: AMTAP, 2017 (Notograf Prim), p. 262-264. ISSN 2345-1408. Categoria C.
3. Дашевский В. Специфика джазовой импровизации в различных исполнительских ситуациях: концертных, студийных, в условиях *jam-session*. In: Studiul artelor și culturologie: istorie, teorie, practică. Nr. 2 (35), 2019. Chișinău: Notograf Prim, 2019, p. 40-44. ISSN 2345-1408. eISSN 2345-1831. Categoria C.

#### Type B

4. Березовикова Г., Дашевский В. Принципы и методы работы с джазовыми стандартами в процессе импровизации. In: Studiul artelor și culturologie: istorie, teorie, practică. Nr. 1 (36), 2020. Chișinău: Notograf Prim, 2020, p. 38-42. ISSN 2345-1408 (Print). eISSN 2345-1831. Tipul B.
5. Дашевский В. Слушание, анализ и транскрибирование джазовых композиций в процессе формирования навыков импровизации. In: Studiul artelor și culturologie: istorie, teorie, practică. Nr. 1 (36), 2020. Chișinău: Notograf Prim, 2020, p. 38-42. ISSN 2345-1408. eISSN 2345-1831. Tipul B.

### 3. Articles in scientific collections

3.2. collections based on international conferences:

6. Дашевский В. Вклад Телониуса Монка в развитие джазового фортепианного искусства. In: Scientific Collection «InterConf» № 3 (39): Proceedings of the 8th International Scientific and Practical Conference Science and practice: Implementation to modern society. Manchester, Great Britain, 26-28.12.2020. Manchester: Peal Press, 2020, p. 1107–1115. ISBN 978-0-216-01072-7.

<https://www.interconf.top/documents/2020.12.26-28.pdf>

### 4. Materials/abstracts of scientific forums

4.2. international conferences in the republic:

1. Dașevschi V. Improvizare de jazz: o examinare succintă a îndrumărilor teoretico-metodologice principale. In: Conferința științifică internațională Învățământul artistic – dimensiuni culturale. 22 aprilie, 2016. Rezumatele lucrărilor. Chișinău: AMTAP, 2017 (Tipogr. "Notograf Prim"), p. 30. ISBN 978-9975-9617-8-3.
2. Дашевский В. Транскрибирование и работа со «снятым» на слух материалом в процессе приобретения навыков джазовой импровизации. In: Patrimoniul muzical din Republica Moldova (folclor și creație componistică) în contemporaneitate. Conferința științifică internațională. Ed. a III-a, dedicată memoriei muzicologului Vladimir Axionov.

Chișinău, 26 septembrie 2017. Tezele comunicărilor. Chișinău: AMTAP, 2017 (Tipogr. Valinex SRL), pp. 102-104. ISBN 978-9975-3126-7-7.

3. Дашевский В., Березовикова Т. Принципы работы с джазовыми стандартами в процессе импровизации. In: Patrimoniul muzical din Republica Moldova (folclor și creație componistică) în contemporaneitate. (Ediția a V-a). Conferința științifică internațională. 24 septembrie, 2019. Tezele comunicărilor. Chișinău: AMTAP, 2019 (Tipogr. "Valinex"), с 104–105. ISBN 978-9975-68-377-7.

4. Дашевский В. Вклад Телониуса Монка в развитие джазового фортепианного искусства. In: Conferința științifică internațională Învățământul artistic – dimensiuni culturale. 15 mai 2020. Tezele comunicărilor. Volumul I. Artă muzicală, p. 58–59.

<http://amtap.md/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/TEZE-conf.-st.-vol-1.-Bun-tipar-site.pdf>

#### 4.3. Conferences with international participation (abroad)

5. Дашевский В. Специфика преподавания джазовой импровизации в вузе. In: Праксеологічна спрямованість професійної підготовки майбутнього вчителя музичного мистецтва: матеріали регіональної наук.-практ. конференції з міжнародною участю (Миколаїв, 18-19 червня 2016 р.): Тези. Р. 37–41.

## ANNOTATION

**Dașevschi Veaceslav. Improvisation as the foundation of jazz performance.** Thesis for the degree of Doctor in Arts, specialty 653.01 – Musicology, Chisinau, 2021.

**The structure of the thesis:** *Creative part*: three concert programs recorded on DVD. *Scientific research*: introduction, two chapters, main conclusions and recommendations, completed with a bibliography comprising 149 titles, 4 appendices; 82 pages of the scientific text, 8 pages of appendices. The results were reflected in 11 publications.

**Keywords:** concert performance, jam session, jazz, jazz standard, improvisation, methodological guidelines, piano, studio recording

**The purpose of the thesis:** a comprehensive study of improvisation as the foundation of jazz performance and the important component of professional jazz training. **The objectives of the study:** consideration of jazz improvisation as a special type of musical activity, which is the creation of music directly in the process of performing; analysis of the theoretical aspects of jazz improvisation; identification of the communicative specifics of jazz improvisation, practiced in various performing situations (concert, studio recording, jam session); study of the methodological aspects of jazz improvisation, implying an individual approach to teaching, depending on the type of students; formulation of guidelines for mastering jazz improvisation (using of methodological guides and manuals, listening, transcribing and analyses of jazz improvisations).

**The novelty and originality of the thesis.** Stage performances, which constitute the *practical aspect* of the work, are distinguished by the novelty of concert programs and the performing interpretation of musical material, including jazz improvisations; in the *theoretical part*, for the first time in the Republic of Moldova, an attempt is made to characterize the various musicological, performing and teaching aspects of improvisation in jazz.

**The applicative value of the dissertation** lies in the fact that it complements and deepens a number of theoretical and methodological studies in the field of jazz and jazz improvisation from the point of view of a practicing musician. The materials of the work can be applied in the educational disciplines *Instrument, Improvisation, Ensemble, History of Pop and Jazz Music, Stylistics of Pop and Jazz Music* for students of the specialty *Instrumental Performance (Instruments of Pop and Jazz Music)*. The results of the research can be used in concert performances and studio recordings of jazz musicians, in independent studies for students, as well as in the activities of jazz improvisation teachers.

**Implementation of work results.** *Practical approbation* was implemented within the framework of three concert performances in the Great Hall of the Academy of Music, Theatre and Fine Arts. The results of the *theoretical research* were embodied in 11 publications including 6 scientific studies and 5 abstracts of speeches at scientific conferences. The materials of the thesis were presented at 9 scientific forums including 7 international scientific conferences, 1 regional conference with international attendance and 1 scientific methodological seminar.

## АННОТАЦИЯ

**Дашевский Вячеслав. Импровизация как основа джазового исполнительства.** Диссертация на соискание ученой степени доктора искусств по специальности 653.01 – Музыкаведение, Кишинэу, 2021.

**Структура диссертации:** *Творческая часть*: три концертные программы, записанные на DVD. *Научное исследование*: введение, две главы, основные выводы и рекомендации, библиография из 149 наименований, 4 приложения; 82 страницы основного текста, 8 страниц приложений. Результаты отражены в 11 публикациях.

**Ключевые слова:** джаз, джазовый стандарт, импровизация, концертное выступление, методическое пособие, студийная запись, фортепиано, *jam session*

**Цель диссертации:** разностороннее исследование импровизации как основы джазового исполнительства и важнейшей составляющей профессионального обучения в области джаза. **Задачи исследования:** рассмотрение джазовой импровизации как особой категории музыкальной деятельности, представляющей собой создание музыки в живом процессе исполнения; анализ теоретических аспектов джазовой импровизации; выявление коммуникативной специфики джазовой импровизации, практикуемой в различных исполнительских ситуациях (концертное исполнение, студийная запись, *jam session*); изучение методических аспектов джазовой импровизации, предполагающих индивидуальный подход к обучению в зависимости от типа студентов; формулирование рекомендаций по освоению джазовой импровизации (использование методических разработок и учебных пособий, слушание, транскрибирование и анализ джазовых импровизаций).

**Новизна и оригинальность диссертации.** *Практический аспект* джазовой импровизации выявлен в рамках сценических выступлений, отличающихся новизной концертных программ и исполнительской трактовки музыкального материала. В *теоретической части* впервые в Республике Молдова сделана попытка охарактеризовать различные музыкаловедческие, исполнительские и педагогические стороны импровизации в джазе.

**Практическая значимость диссертации** связана с тем, что она дополняет и углубляет ряд теоретических и методологических разработок в сфере джаза и джазовой импровизации с точки зрения практикующего музыканта. Работа может быть применена в учебных курсах *Инструмент, Импровизация, Ансамбль, История популярной и джазовой музыки, Стилистика популярной и джазовой музыки* для студентов специальности *Инструментальное исполнительство (Инструменты популярной и джазовой музыки)*. Результаты исследования могут быть использованы при подготовке концертных выступлений и студийных записей джазовых музыкантов, в самостоятельных занятиях студентов, а также в повседневной деятельности педагогов, преподающих джазовую импровизацию.

**Апробирование результатов работы.** *Практическая апробация* была осуществлена в рамках трех концертных выступлений в Большом зале Академии музыки, театра и изобразительных искусств. Результаты *теоретических изысканий* отражены в 11 публикациях, в том числе в 6 научных статьях и 5 тезисных изложениях выступлений на научных конференциях. Материалы диссертации были представлены на 9 научных форумах, в том числе 7 международных научных конференциях, 1 региональной конференции с международным участием и 1 научно-методологическом семинаре.

## ADNOTARE

**Dașevschii Veaceslav. Improvizația ca fundament al artei interpretative de jazz.** Teză de doctor în studiul artelor, specialitatea 653.01 – Muzicologie, Chișinău, 2021.

**Structura tezei. Componenta artistică:** trei recitaluri înregistrate pe DVD. **Cercetarea științifică:** introducere, două capitole, concluzii generale și recomandări, bibliografie din 149 de titluri, 4 anexe; 82 de pagini ale textului de bază, 8 pagini de anexe. Rezultatele cercetării sunt reflectate în 11 publicații.

**Cuvinte-cheie:** ghid metodic, improvizație, evoluare concertistică, înregistrare de studio, jazz, *jam session*, pian, standard de jazz

**Scopul tezei:** cercetarea multilaterală a improvizației ca fundament al interpretării jazzistice și componentă importantă a instruirii profesioniste în domeniul jazzului. **Sarcinile cercetării:** examinarea improvizației de jazz ca tip specific de activitate muzicală care presupune crearea muzicii nemijlocit în procesul de interpretare; analiza aspectelor teoretice ale improvizației de jazz; relevarea specificului comunicativ al improvizației de jazz practicate în diverse situații interpretative (evoluare în concert, înregistrare în studio, *jam session*); studierea aspectelor metodice ale improvizației de jazz, implicând o abordare individuală a predării, în funcție de tipul studentului; formularea recomandărilor metodice în vederea valorificării improvizației de jazz (utilizarea ghidurilor metodice și manualelor, audierea, transcriptia și analiza improvizațiilor de jazz).

**Noutatea și originalitatea tezei.** Evoluările scenice care reflectă *aspectul practic al tezei*, se disting prin caracterul inedit al programelor de concert și al tratării interpretative a materialului muzical, inclusiv în cadrul improvizațiilor jazzistice. În *partea teoretică*, pentru prima dată în Republica Moldova s-a încercat caracterizarea diverselor aspecte muzicologice, interpretative și pedagogice ale improvizației de jazz.

**Valoarea aplicativă a tezei** rezidă în faptul că aceasta completează și aprofundează, din punctul de vedere al unui muzician-practician, cercetările teoretice și metodologice în domeniul improvizației de jazz. Materialele tezei pot fi utilizate în cursurile didactice de *Instrument, Improvizație, Istoria muzicii ușoare și jazz, Stilistica muzicii ușoare și jazz* pentru programul de studii *Interpretare instrumentală (Instrumente muzică ușoară și jazz)*. Rezultatele cercetării pot fi folosite de către muzicienii de jazz în procesul de pregătire a evoluărilor concertistice și înregistrărilor în studio, în lucrul de sine stătător al studenților, precum și în activitățile cadrelor didactice care predau improvizația de jazz.

**Implementarea rezultatelor. Aprobarea practică** a fost efectuată prin prezentarea a trei programe concertistice în Sala mare a Academiei de Muzică, Teatru și Arte Plastice. Rezultatele *cercetărilor teoretice* sunt reflectate în 11 publicații, inclusiv în 6 articole științifice și 5 rezumate ale comunicărilor la conferințele științifice. Materialele tezei au fost prezentate la 9 foruri științifice, inclusiv la 7 conferințe internaționale, 1 conferință cu participare internațională și 1 seminar metodologic.

**DAȘEVȘCHII VEACESLAV**

**IMPROVIZAȚIA CA FUNDAMENT  
AL ARTEI INTERPRETATIVE DE JAZZ**

**SPECIALITATEA 653.01 – MUZICOLOGIE  
(DOCTORAT PROFESIONAL)**

**Rezumatul tezei de doctor în arte**

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