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THE
LEGENDARY

SCOTT
LAFARO



AN ANALYSIS OF THE BASS PLAYING OF SCOTT LAFARO AS PART OF THE BILL EVANS TRIO

1959 – 1961

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ABSTRACT

Scott LaFaro is widely regarded as a highly interactive bass player, and within the context of the Bill Evans Trio it is commonly believed he was able to cast aside the traditional time keeping role of the jazz bassist.

His considerable reputation seems to rest on this understanding, but as this exegesis aims to show, the general understanding of his legacy within jazz history is open to question

More broadly, this exegesis highlights the fact that any claims about his legacy are supported by very limited analysis of his techniques and approaches, rendering any absolute portrayal of LaFaro misleading.

This exegesis aims to provide a thorough analysis of LaFaro's performances within the Bill Evans Trio. By analysing a representative sample of his work in that context, I hope to discover common techniques and traits that LaFaro employed on a regular basis and which characterise his unique approach to bass playing within a small jazz ensemble.

With the identification of these characteristics, a clearer picture of Scott LaFaro can begin to emerge, as can a more accurate understanding of his legacy.

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