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Creating New Standards: Jazz Arrangements Of Pop Songs

A thesis presented as partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
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in Jazz Performance

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Abstract

This study involves the research, analysis, and performance of existing arrangements of songs that have been played and recorded by jazz musicians, and are identifiable as pop songs of the last thirty years. This project will discuss the development of these songs as new repertoire in the jazz idiom. In particular it will examine transcriptions of arrangements by Herbie Hancock, Dianne Reeves, Brad Meldau, Charlie Hunter, Christian McBride, and Bob Belden. The analysis of these transcriptions will consider the techniques these musicians used in their arrangements including reharmonisation, melodic interpretation, rhythm, and restructuring of the form of the original song.

Further, the techniques identified in the analyses will be applied in the creation of new arrangements of similar songs from that era for jazz ensemble of various sizes.

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