

Thursday 9th of March 2016

Rob van Bavel & Hans Vroomans

Solo piano workshop: 'playing standards'

In this workshop we'll take a closer look at playing standards as a soloist.

Topics will be playing rubato (harmonization & phrasing), swing-feel (different approaches for the left hand, different styles) but also the freedom and responsibility when playing solo.

Together we'll listen to and analyze examples by Evans, Hancock, Hersch, etc

1. Rubato playing – freedom of tempo, key, harmonization of the melody, modulations (!), pedalpoint
2. Swing (medium/medium up) – several approaches for the left hand : Bud Powell voicings (also Jarrett), Root playing (Peterson), walking bass (Hancock, Dave McKenna, van Kreeveld), Stride (Tatum, Peterson, Barron), ostinato pattern (Peterson), Pedalpoint (Hancock), polyphonic approach (Hersch, Mehldau)

Examples :

First of all a great inspiration for solopiano is the CD collection 'Live at Maybeck' (42 pianists playing solopiano, oa Dave McKenna, [Kenny Barron](#), [Barry Harris](#), [Alan Broadbent](#), [Hank Jones](#), [Richie Beirach](#), [Cedar Walton](#), [Fred Hersch](#), [Roland Hanna](#), Kenny Werner, [Monty Alexander](#)....

This pianosolo series inspired producer/recording engineer Willem van Barneveld to release 'Jazz at the Pinehill' with dutch pianists Rein de Graaff, Rob Madna, Rob van Kreeveld, Rob van Bavel, Lex Jasper, Hans Vroomans, Frans Elsen, Karel Boehlee, Harry Happel, Jan Huydts and Bert van den Brink (Spotify, last.fm, iTunes)

My all-time favorites:

Bill Evans 'Alone', 'Alone again', 'the Solo Sessions' plus solo-recordings of 'I loves you, Porgy', 'Danny Boy'

Herbie Hancock 'The Piano'

Keith Jarrett 'The Köln Concert', 'Dark Intervals' (improvised) & 'The Melody at Night, with You' (standards) plus solo-recording of 'Over the Rainbow'

Oscar Peterson 'my favourite instrument'

Chick Corea 'Expressions'

Fred Hersch 'If I should lose you'

Jacky Terrasson 'Autumn Leaves'

Audio examples:

1. 'Green Dolphin Street' – Hancock (The Piano) **pedalpoint**
2. 'Here's that rainy day' – Evans (Alone) **reharmonisation plus modulations**
3. 'Indiana' – Peterson (Youtube) **single bassnote left hand + stride uptempo**
4. 'Oh, what a beautiful Morning' – Hank Jones (live at maybeck) **reharmonisation**
5. 'Cherokee' – Marcus Roberts (youtube) **most creative walking bass**
6. 'If I should lose you' – Fred Hersch **polyphonic approach**
7. Dave McKenna 'Nobody else but me' (youtube) **walking bass (third hand)**
8. 'Nice work if you can get it' Art Tatum **stride/fast fills**
9. 'I'm getting sentimental over you' Kenny Barron **easy stride**
10. 'Green Dolphin Street' Rob van Kreeveld (youtube) **reharmonisation**

Transcriptions: Here's that rainy day (Evans), Danny Boy (youtube), Green Dolphin (Hancock)