

JAZZ AT LINCOLN CENTER LIBRARY — BLUE ENGINE RECORDS

# UNSQUARE DANCE

FROM THE MUSIC OF DAVE BRUBECK

Dave Brubeck  
Arranged by Christopher Crenshaw  
**Full Score**

## UNSQUARE DANCE • INSTRUMENTATION

Reed 1 – Alto Sax

Reed 2 – Piccolo

Reed 3 – Soprano Sax

Reed 4 – Tenor Sax

Reed 5 – Baritone Sax

Trumpet 1

Trumpet 2

Trumpet 3

Trumpet 4

Trombone 1

Trombone 2

Trombone 3

Piano

Bass

Drums

## ORIGINAL RECORDING INFORMATION

**Composer** • Dave Brubeck

**Arranger** • Christopher Crenshaw

**Recorded** • April 10-12, 2014 at Jazz at Lincoln Center’s Frederick P. Rose Hall

**Original issue** • From the forthcoming Blue Engine Records album *The Music of Dave Brubeck* (BE0028)

**Personnel** • Sherman Irby, Ted Nash (alto sax), Victor Goines, Walter Blanding (tenor sax), Paul Nedzela (baritone sax), Ryan Kisor, Kenny Rampton, Marcus Printup, Wynton Marsalis (trumpet), Elliot Mason, Chris Crenshaw, Marshall Gilkes (trombone), Dan Nimmer (piano), Carlos Henriquez (bass), Ali Jackson (drums)

**Soloists** • Ted Nash (piccolo), Dan Nimmer (piano)

## THE MUSIC OF DAVE BRUBECK NOTES

...The association of The Dave Brubeck Octet with JALC actually began in 2004, with a performance at Avery Fisher Hall, because The House of Swing was under construction. The Dave Brubeck Quartet opened the concert, followed by the New York premiere of the Octet. Wynton was the host that night. One memory I always will keep with me happened backstage, just before going on, when Wynton saw that Lew Soloff, one of the greatest trumpet players of all time, was holding sheets of Octet music in his hands.

Wynton: Lew, have you been....practicing?

Lew: Wynton, this is the hardest music I have ever played in New York. One minute you think everything is fine, then you turn the page and suddenly find yourself soloing in Twelve-tone.

Dave’s drummer from the classic quartet, Joe Morello, once said that the easiest way to work with Brubeck was to walk on stage and hang on for dear life.

As I listen to these thrilling arrangements by JALC writers, played by this world-class jazz orchestra, I am struck by how original each arrangement is. It’s as if each arranger were holding a prism up to the piano and hearing, then writing down, all the colors.

Dave would have been well pleased.

—Excerpt from *The Music of Dave Brubeck* liner notes by Russell Gloyd, 2020

... Listening to this record is “time out”, taking us right back to the 1959 classic and a significant jazz landmark created by Brubeck himself. A period when Brubeck explored “unusual” time signatures – at least not common to jazz in those years. Those who knew Brubeck’s wish in that period, a wish to bring a kind of newness to jazz via “time”, would relate to the vision of this careful song selection by the JLCO and Wynton Marsalis. What is presented here is a reflection of what Brubeck might have imagined for the futures of this artform.

In a documentary where he reflected on the 1950-60s, Brubeck once spoke about how it is to represent and be the voice of freedom when you do not yet have freedom yourself. Perhaps this filtered into Brubeck’s preoccupation with “time”, being ahead of the norms and creating freedoms in the music that were hoped for socially.

As you are about to experience, the arrangements here are both sophisticated and deeply meaningful, situated in the jazz tradition while being progressive in its execution at the same time. The sophistication lives within the complexities of time and the harmonies that gives birth to the poetics that carry the entire work...

...Another one of Brubeck’s metric workouts is “Unsquare Dance”. Arranged by Chris Crenshaw, the song starts with an intense bass groove accompanied by hand claps that carry the rhythm quite strongly throughout most of the piece. From the recording one can also tell that this was a highlight for the audience...

... A broad listening to this record almost feels as though each arranger got into Brubeck’s mind, and in many ways, each could express a kind of future freedom that Brubeck could only imagine at the ‘time’ that he recorded most of his music. Naturally, every pianist’s imagination is concerned with multiple voices, paying constant attention to locating their role within the multiple layers of the music. One of the freedoms for a pianist playing with an orchestra is that the responsibility of carrying the melody and harmony is shared. The JLCO’s arrangements and orchestrations on this record could be thought of as extensions of Brubeck’s melodic, harmonic and rhythmic imagination.

This record has many incredible moments, and though I have written these many words, it does not come close to describing the wonders that still live inside this music and the joy that comes with the interpretations of the JLCO.

This album is a portal to travel through time: to the time and music of Dave Brubeck, but also to the time of the performance of this live recording at Lincoln Center. Through this record, we can in some way join that audience on the night of the performance. I am here under the tree overlooking the uMsunduzi river [in South Africa], but I’m simultaneously at Lincoln Center. The sounds of that performance seeps into my surroundings here in KwaZulu Natal, and conversely the sounds of the birds infuse how I hear the recording...

In this time of greater isolation, albums like these play that important role it did in the early days of the recording industry, which were also days of more limited travel: it connects us across continents, across the distances that separate our living rooms from the concert halls. It provides us a way of being together and communicating, a means to combat detachment.

Take “time out” and travel this journey yourself, perhaps sonic travels are the only answers for humanity in the current moment as we sit in isolation and detachment from the world.

—Excerpt from *The Music of Dave Brubeck* liner notes by Nduduzo Makhathini, 2020

## GENERAL PERFORMANCE GUIDELINES

**1. Rhythm Section and Balance** • The rhythm section determines the style, groove, and feel of each piece. It is the section that can comfortably play alone, and regularly does. In a typical 3-piece rhythm section, there is one string instrument (bass), and two percussion instruments (piano and drums); in a 4-piece section (with the addition of guitar), there are two string and two percussion instruments. In order for the rhythm section to achieve a swinging balance, it is crucial that the string instruments are clearly audible. The voices of these instruments must be respected by the two percussionists.

The drummer acts as the ‘President’ of the group, with the quick power to make dramatic and definitive changes to every aspect of the music.

The bass is the ‘Judiciary,’ holding the responsibility of constraining the volume and power of the drums. Their second responsibility is to play the mobile, lower melody that defines the integrity of the rhythm/harmony progression.

The piano is the ‘Congress,’ and has the ability to function as drummer, bassist, soloist, and accompanist; weaving in, out, and in between all of these roles to represent the widest range of voices and possibilities.

In a 4-piece section, the guitar acts as the ‘conscience’ or integrity of the rhythm and volume of the entire ensemble. They prevent the drummer and bassist from rushing or dragging and forces them to play softer and listen more closely.

The members of the rhythm section should know exactly what the names of grooves mean: *boogaloo*, *12/8 shuffle*, *bossa nova*, *2/3 clave*, etc. Every groove has a detailed function and definition. The top and bottom parts of the groove (drums and bass) must work together; at the same time, the interlocking rhythms of the piano and guitar must cooperate, honoring the context of the groove while also not interfering with each other.

When improvising with the rest of the band, the rhythm section should create a clear, basic, and danceable groove. They should also feel a sense of accomplishment from swinging with consistency and emotion.

When accompanying, the rhythm section should not feel compelled to have a constant stream of dialogue with the band; just like a friendly conversation, the dynamic should feel natural, with give and take. The goal is not to create constant “chatter.” Be proud of accompanying and swinging—they remain essential elements to any successful performance.

Members of the rhythm section must remain conscious of constraining power. For balance to be maintained, one must give up their desire to play louder than the other members of the section. As in any relationship, it is the constraint of power that creates the equilibrium within the section.

On the bandstand, each musician should be aware of balance at all times. This requires constant adjustment. The most important relationship is the drums and bass. If they are out of balance, the band does not sound or feel good. Do not let the PA system become your default ‘balance’ position.

Like a good democracy, the big band functions best when adhering to a system of checks and balances. Ultimately, the band should balance to the dynamic of the bass (as the softest acoustic instrument). Each section in the big band should both follow and play under their respective lead player.

**2. Improvisation** • A solo is an opportunity to express your personality and to exert tremendous influence on the success of a performance.

Responsibilities of the soloist:

1. Know the melody.
2. Understand the rhythm in relation to the groove.
3. Understand the harmonic progression.
4. Solo with emotional commitment and try to develop thematic material or musical ideas that relate to some aspect of the song.
5. Understand the function of background or accompanying parts.
6. Create your solo inside, outside, and alongside the arranged parts.
7. Create an ending for your solo that either leads into the next written part, hands off something good for the next soloist to play, or finishes with the right mood.
8. Do your absolute thing!

**3. Follow the Lead** • Within each section, know who has the lead (it isn’t always in the “first” part) and always play under that part. Do not assume that the lead player can tell if you are too loud; constantly re-assess within your section, in relation to other sections, and across sections if you are under the lead. Follow their phrasing, style, articulations, dynamics, and breathing. Lead players: you have a greater responsibility than others—be definitive in your concept, but not dogmatic. You must know the arrangement, including how your part fits into the overall dramatic and thematic objectives of the piece. You have to make musical decisions that help your colleagues follow you.

**4. Personalize Your Parts** • When referring to the performance of parts, clarinetist Jimmy Hamilton once said, “This is Duke Ellington’s music; it’s not written in stone. Duke always told us, ‘Personalize your parts.’” When done tastefully, all of the various vocal expressions that we can muster (i.e. vibrato, bends, swoops, shakes, moans, and vocal effects) will create a warmer and more human performance. Your parts should be played with the feeling and vocal expression of an improvised solo. These elements allow an audience to feel your humanity, and also welcomes them into nuances of your feeling. (You can do this while also following the lead).

**5. Internalize the Form** • Form is your defense against chaos. Every member of the ensemble has a responsibility to understand the architecture of each piece they play. Ask yourself, *Is it a blues? AABA form? An extended form? Where is the coda?* Be aware of entrances, repeats, and endings in relation to the form of the piece. *Is this an interlude or a shout chorus?* Sections often hand off phrases to other sections with an almost psychic level of awareness and nuance. At the very first rehearsal, begin figuring out how the piece is structured to achieve the composer’s goals. Focus on understanding the total architecture and the function of your individual part within the context of the piece. Remember, everyone in the ensemble has the responsibility of understanding and fulfilling both the most complex and most basic requirements of the arrangement.

**6. Have Integrity When Rehearsing** • *Your time is too valuable to waste.* Always be professional. Arrive on time and pay attention to everything—whether it’s a general concept or the most minute details. Take yourself and the music seriously at all times, and you’ll be shocked to see how much better you get just by changing your attitude in rehearsal. Be conscientious about playing better each day, and over time the improvement will be exponential.

**7. Listen to Jazz** • Go to every conceivable performance of jazz possible—whether you like it or not—so that you can develop both a feeling and understanding of the music. There is an almost infinite amount of diverse and high-quality recordings of jazz at your disposal, which create a sonic history of the music that can inform, enlighten, and inspire you. The more music you know, the more you will enjoy.



CONDUCTOR

Jazz at Lincoln Center Library - Blue Engine Records

UNSQUARE DANCE

Dave Brubeck

Arranged by Christopher Crenshaw

Country & Western ♩ = 220

Reeds 1

Alto Sax  
clap

2

Piccolo  
clap

3

Soprano Sax  
clap

4

Tenor Sax  
clap

5

Baritone Sax  
clap

Trumpets 1

clap

2

clap

3

clap

4

clap

Trombones 1

clap

2

clap

3

clap

Piano

clap

play around with Bass line after 1st x

Bass

A m D m A m E 7 A m

Drums

A m cross stick D m A m E 7 A m

1 2 3 4 5 6

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**A**

[illegible]

# Unsquare Dance

3

**B**

Alto

Picc.

Sop.

Tenor

Bari

Tpts. 1

2

3

4

Tbns. 1

2

3

Pno.

Bs.

Drs.

Solo  
A m

A m D m A m E7 A m

A m D m A m E7 A m