

FULL SCORE

DOCTOR DEJA VU'S PROMENADE ("PRAH-MEH-NOD")

**COMMISSIONED BY THE KENTUCKY MUSIC EDUCATORS ASSOCIATION
FOR THE ALL-STATE JAZZ ENSEMBLE I**

BY ANTONIO J. GARCÍA

(a jazz composition in New Orleans Mardi Gras Indian
and 2-3 streetbeat grooves, even-eighths)

Instrumentation: 5 Saxes (AATTB), 4 Trumpets, 4 Trombones, Piano, Bass, Drums; plus optional Guitar, Vibraphone, and Percussion.

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Notes on “Doctor Deja Vu's Promenade” (“*prah-meh-NOD*”)

“DDVP” was commissioned concurrent with my being invited by the Kentucky Music Educators Association to rehearse and direct the All-State Jazz Ensemble I in February 2021. With such turmoil surrounding the year 2020, I was tempted to compose a brooding piece; but ultimately I decided that we all needed some upbeat music to celebrate the good in life. And what city knows better how to celebrate life amid challenges than my native New Orleans?

I was easily inspired by the spirited, funky piano styles of Dr. John (who passed away during my time composing this piece), Professor Longhair, James Booker, Henry Butler, Harry Connick, Jr.; such drummers as Johnny Vidacovich, Ricky Sebastian, Willie Green (of the Neville Brothers), Zigaboo Modeliste; and the music of The Meters, the Neville Brothers, Lil’ Queenie and the Percolators, and the Mardi Gras Indians, among many other artists. The Mardi Gras Indians are African-Americans who celebrate not only Fat Tuesday but also their chosen kinship with Native Americans, bound together by a shared history of oppression throughout American history. You can find countless photos, audio and video recordings, and histories on the Internet and in libraries. These New Orleanians spend an entire year sewing and beading elaborate costumes by hand in the style of Native American headdresses. The Mardi Gras Indians also have a rich musical heritage rooted in the following groove, found throughout this composition:

4/4: | ♩. ♩. ♩. | ...which easily transitions to a 2-3 New Orleans streetbeat groove: | ♩ ♩ ♩ | ♩. ♩. ♩. | . I kept both feels in even eighths.

Harmonically, I was drawn to writing a piece that was bluesy without being a blues, that had few V-I progressions, and that had harmonic surprises. “DDVP” delivers on all counts. An AB tune rooted in C7, the opening I-VI-ii-V progression jumps quickly to a bVII and a IV chord on their return to the I chord, which in turn leaps a major third and a minor third before providing our first V-I cadence of the tune. Melodic phrases spin in 8- and 6-bar sections before arriving at an extended section on the IV chord (F7) and the bVII (Bb7), providing easy underpinnings for funky solos (improvised or as written). By the time the extended section is over, the tune feels as though it has modulated to F7, with a turnaround of bVII, bVI, bII to I (F7). The bass solo at letter K can really be of any length so long as it ends with a phrase in G7 that will lead to the piano’s featured return on C7 at letter M in the form of the tune. (K could also feature an adventurous rapper in the southern style of Dr. John’s drawl!) The pianist can remain the focus at letter P, or another soloist (not scored) could be added on top of the band at that point. Repeated tags of harmonies a major-third apart lead to the return of the extended funk section, now offering all the horns in the band a chance to improvise a bit before the surprising harmonic shift at the end to Ab Dorian.

While the piano part is more challenging than that of the other bandmembers, the chart remains playable if the pianist is not as experienced: the right-hand melody alone can be performed. Or the provided cues for bass, optional guitar, and/or optional vibraphone can be utilized to fill in the pianist’s material. An optional percussion part will add the colors of tambourine and cowbell to the mix; if the one-handed parts are too challenging, either two players could share the part, or the percussionist should choose solely the tambourine.

While no one existing recording captures the essence of “DDVP,” the following recordings offer great context:

- Junko Partner (James Booker);
- My Darlin’ New Orleans (Lil’ Queenie & The Percolators): moving from Mardi Gras Indian to 3-2 streetbeat smoothly and back;
- Mama Roux (Dr. John): based on 2-3 streetbeat;
- Mama Roux (Henry Butler): variation on 2-3 streetbeat;
- Tippatina (Dr. John): slower, but funky even-8 piano;
- Treme Song (John Boutté): Mardi Gras Indian groove, but faster;
- Drink A Little Poison (4 U Die): 3-2 streetbeat;
- My Indian Red (Dr. John): variation on 2-3 streetbeat;
- Go To The Mardi Gras (Professor Longhair): variation on 2-3 streetbeat, with a double-time feel that resembles that style in this chart.

Soloists could be almost anyone at any time due to the doubling of key background parts but are scored to feature Alto 1, Trumpet 2, Trombone 1, Tenor 1, Bass, and Piano. Everyone improvises collectively near the end of the chart.

Additional rehearsal notes:

Articulations in this piece are *extremely* important and include long (–), accented (>), and accented and especially full-value (≥). Accents appearing as (^) are accented, short, but *fat* (at least half-value); any regular accents (>) are *not* short. Many grace notes are included so as to emphasize half-step slides: accent these on the timing of the note following. In other words, if it's a grace note to a downbeat quarter note, play the grace note accented on the downbeat; then slide to the larger pitch. If it's a grace note to an upbeat note, play the grace note accented on the upbeat, then slide to the larger pitch. To mimic the arrhythmic “shakes” in the piano part, at times horns play rapidly alternating pitches in rhythmic opposition: some might be in eighth triplets while their neighboring bandmember plays them in sixteenths! Critical to both the inherent grooves are the many accents on beat four rather than beat one. Go for it! The drummer should note that the Mardi Gras Indian groove at the top of the chart includes few snare rolls (more rolls towards the end of the chart), while the streetbeat always includes more snare rolls.

Very early into writing this piece, I decided to buy the 2020 New Orleans Jazz Fest poster for my home. It features Dr. John visually; and the poster is unique because due to the pandemic, the live festival was canceled for the first time in its history. Not to be outdone, a virtual “Festing in Place” archival broadcast took its place for listeners around the globe. With the Kentucky All-State event also becoming virtual due to the virus, it is ironically fitting that this new composition, inspired in part by Dr. John, is part of the “Festing in Place” for the 2021 KMEA All-State Jazz Ensemble I.

I have an available MIDI demonstration recording. “DDVP” runs five minutes as scored. My thanks go all the students and their directors bringing this new music to life. Special thanks go to David Jump and John Stroube of KMEA for accepting this composition. I am honored to have been a part of this opportunity to bring musicians together towards the realization of a new work.

— **Antonio J. García**

TRANSPosed SCORE

5'00"

NEW ORLEANS MARDI GRAS INDIAN, EVEN 5TH J = 120

DOCTOR DEJA VU'S PROMENADE

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A

The score is arranged for a jazz ensemble. The woodwind section includes two staves for Alto Sax, two for Tenor Sax, and one for Baritone Sax. The brass section includes four staves for Trumpet and four for Trombone. The string section includes staves for Violin (VIBRAPHONE OPT), Guitar (GUITAR OPT), Piano (PIANO), and Bass (BASS). The percussion section includes staves for Drum Set and Percussion (OPT). The score is in 4/4 time with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The piece is marked with a tempo of 120 beats per minute. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, dynamics (e.g., *mf*, *mp*), and articulation marks. Chord symbols are provided for the piano part, including G7, C7, A7, Dm7, Bb7, F6, F7, and C13. A 'SOLO' section is indicated for the guitar, violin, and bass. The score is divided into measures 1 through 9.

B

1
ALTO SAX

2

1
TEN. SAX

2

BAR. SAX

1
TRP

2

3

4

1
TRB.

2

3

4

Vib.

Gtr.

PNO.

BASS

D. S.

PERC.

10 11 12 13 14 15

PLAY: *mf*

PLAY: *mf*

PLAY: *mf*

PLAY: *mp*

FLAT STICK ON SHARE

FILL DIMBLE

CONBELL

TAMBOURINE (HAND, NO STICK)

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