

Transcription of Jaco Pastorius' Bass Solo on "Used To Be A Cha Cha" From His Debut CD

By: Lucas Pickford

Jaco's debut CD burst onto the musical scene in 1976. It completely revolutionized not only what could be done on the electric bass but it also revolutionized the role a bass could play in a band. Jaco showed us the bass could not only be the groove & time keeper, but it could also be the melody instrument, a percussion instrument, and a dazzling solo voice that was as compelling as any sax or piano solo.

In this tune "Used To Be A Cha Cha", a fast double time feel samba, Jaco really showcases his deft melodic lines, his machine gun like sixteenth note runs, along with a total command of his instrument both technically and harmonically to create a tour de force of modern jazz improvisation.

The solo section to this tune has only six chords that repeat in a twelve Bar form. The solo section looks like this:

The image shows a musical transcription of a bass solo on a double bass staff. The notation is written in a 4/4 time signature. The solo consists of 12 measures, divided into three systems of four measures each. The chords are: 1. C (C major), 2. Dmi9 (D minor triad with 9th), 3. Cmi9 (C minor triad with 9th), 4. A13(b9) (A dominant 13th with flat 9th), 5. A7(#9) (A dominant 7th with sharp 9th), 6. Bb7(#9) (Bb dominant 7th with sharp 9th), 7. Eb9(#11) (Eb dominant 9th with sharp 11th), 8. Cmaj7(#11) (C major 7th with sharp 11th), 9. Cmaj9(#11) (C major 9th with sharp 11th), 10. Eb9(#11) (Eb dominant 9th with sharp 11th), 11. Cmaj9(#11) (C major 9th with sharp 11th), 12. C (C major). The notation includes various ornaments like slurs, ties, and triplets, and includes measure numbers 1 through 12.

The chord scales that fit these six chords are as follows:

1. Dmi9 takes D Dorian - D-E-F-G-A-B-C-D
2. Cmi9 take C Dorian - C-D Eb-F-G-A-Bb-C
3. A13(b9) takes A Symmetric Diminished - A -Bb C-C#-Eb-E-F#-G-A
4. Bb7(#9) takes Bb Altered Dominant Scale -Bb-B-Db-D-E-F#-Ab-Bb
5. Cmaj7 (#11) takes C Lydian -C-D-E-F#-A-B-C
6. Eb9(#11) takes Eb Lydian Dominant Scale - Eb-F-G-A-Bb-C-Db-Eb

I'll have more on chord scales in the future, but for now, go through Jaco's solo and see how he utilizes these scales. Also look for pentatonic patterns as well, another favorite device of Jaco's. Come up with your own fingerings, it's best if you find the fingerings that work best for you. I'll be back in the next issue with another challenging solo. Until then this should keep you busy."

Jaco Pastorius' Solo on Used To Be A Cha – Cha

This musical score is a transcription of Jaco Pastorius' solo on the piece "Used To Be A Cha – Cha". It is written in 4/4 time and features a complex, rhythmic bass line. The score is organized into 12 systems, each consisting of two staves. The notation includes various musical symbols such as slurs, accents, and dynamic markings. The key signature is one sharp (F#), and the time signature is 4/4. The piece is characterized by its intricate, syncopated rhythms and melodic lines, typical of Pastorius' innovative electric bass playing. The score includes several instances of the word "vib" (vibrato) and "3" (triplets), indicating specific performance techniques. The notation is dense, with many sixteenth and thirty-second notes, reflecting the fast and complex nature of the solo.

This image shows a page of musical notation for a violin part, consisting of seven staves. The notation is written in a single system and includes various musical symbols such as notes, rests, accidentals, and dynamic markings like "vib".

The first staff begins with a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a 2/4 time signature. The music consists of eighth and sixteenth notes, often beamed together. The second staff continues the melodic line with similar rhythmic patterns. The third staff features a "vib" marking above a group of notes, indicating vibrato. The fourth staff continues the melodic development. The fifth staff has three "vib" markings above different groups of notes. The sixth staff includes some notes marked with an "x", possibly indicating a specific performance technique or a correction. The seventh staff concludes the page with a few final notes and a "vib" marking.