

Son de Brooklyn Presentation #1 “The Clave and Latin Jazz”

Breaking down the clave rhythm and showing how when we add it to jazz, we get Latin Jazz.

(For those with a musical background)

Objectives: To introduce/re-aquaint the audience with the concept of call and response.
To familiarize the audience with the clave rhythm.
To explore how these elements, when combined, give us Latin jazz.
To bring the audience into the performance through body percussion and voice.

Materials: Pictures/Posters of Dizzy Gillespie, Chano Pozo (optional).

Outline:

1. Son de Brooklyn will perform “Manteca” at the onset of the presentation in order to gain the audience’s attention and interest.
2. **Taylor** introduces himself and asks the audience how they are doing (“How are you?”) two times. The first time is done rubato. Once he has an answer (“I’m fine”), he asks again while clapping the “shave and a haircut, two bits” rhythm. Once the audience gives the “answer” part while saying it in rhythm, he notes that this is call and response. “Call and response is found in our everyday greetings and also in many jazz songs. It is a big part of the song we played, Manteca.” He briefly discusses the piece as a union of Cuban rhythm and American harmony (Latin Jazz or Cubop), first developed in New York City in the 1940s. “How many of you out there know who this is? (He holds up poster of Dizzy Gillespie.) Please raise your hands if you do!”
3. **Taylor** continues: “When two innovators of this music *Cubop*, Chano Pozo and Dizzy Gillespie (holds up photo of each), first met, it sounded like this. Taylor (as Dizzy): “**Hey Chano, how are you today?**” **Igor (As Chano): “Que ???”** O.k., that did not work. (He thinks for a moment) “How are you to-day?”(in ‘shave and a haircut’ rhythm) **Chano: Muy bien (or “I’m fine”)**. Let me shorten it. How are you?” (**Chano: “muy bien/I’m fine”**).
4. “Clap and say that pattern with me. It is called the clave rhythm. Everybody say clah-vee.” The audience is divided into two sides with half saying the call and the other half saying the response. The clave is played forwards and backwards (How are you?, I’m fine and I’m fine, how are you?). **Josh** and **Igor** each assist a side of the audience to reinforce.
5. “Let’s find that clave rhythm in the song ‘Manteca.’” Band plays the “Manteca” groove without the melody and sees if the audience can find the rhythm. They assist the audience as necessary by playing the clave a few times with them.
6. Taylor introduces Ali. **Ali:** “The word clave means ‘key’ in Spanish, and in Cuban music it is the key or foundation for which all of the song’s rhythms are based. All the instruments in the band must play in clave, meaning that their parts must strengthen the clave pattern and not oppose it. We will play another song and you should clap the clave when you hear it.” (Band plays “Happy Birthday” or simply grooves a simple chord progression while the audience finds

the clave and claps it.) Band should terrace their entrances for effect.

7. **Josh:** “Hi, I'm the bass player, Josh. Nice job finding the clave, everybody, in that song Happy Birthday. What do you call that song in this country? Let's now see if you can find another call and response phrase in the song 'Manteca.' First let's learn the lyrics! Repeat after me:

Chano and Dizzy, playing Manteca (3x)
playing Man-
playing Man-
playing Manteca

“Now let's split you up in a true call and response way. The left side of the audience says 'Chano and Dizzy' and the right side says 'Playing Manteca.' Everybody should say “playing man- playing man- playing Manteca together.” (Once again, each audience group receives a band member to assist.)

(End of first half of presentation. For more information or to bring this workshop to you please contact Taylor at sondebrooklyn@yahoo.com. All work copyright 2008-2011 Taylor Watson and Son de Brooklyn.

