**A Guide to Developing a South African Jazz Repertoire**
By Mike Rossi

- Meadowlands by Steve Vilakazi (kwela; vocal) - F & E$^{b}$
- Pata Pata by Jerry Ragvoy, lyrics by Miriam Makeba (marabi; vocal) - E$^{\mathbf{b}}$
- Ntyilo Ntyilo by Alan Silinga, lyrics Miriam Makeba (ballad; vocal) - F & C
- Yakhal 'Inkomo by Winston Mankunku Ngozi, lyrics by Thembi Mtshali (medium 12/8 swing; instrumental & vocal) - E$^{\mathbf{b}}$
- Montreal by Tony Schilder (samba, vocal) - C
- Daveyton Special by Darius Brubeck (swing & mbaqanga; instrumental) - E$^{\mathbf{b}}$
- Stimela by High Masekela (afro beat, vocal) - B$^{\mathbf{b}}$
- Maraba Blue & Soweto (slow swing, ghoema; instrumental) - G
- Zukile by Tete Mbambisa & Duke Makasi (instrumental) - F
- Angola & Timelessness by Bheki Mseleku (hard bop; instrumental) - C?!
- Bokke Boogie Japan by Mike Rossi (kwela; instrumental) - C
- Days of Dorian Di by Mike Rossi (afro ¾; instrumental) - multiple dorian

As jazz education continues to grow throughout South Africa with the goal to educate, enrich and expand audiences, I have experienced that there seems to be a limited scope of pieces that hover around a specific time period. Darius Brubeck remarks that, "for approximately 30 years three famous musicians represented South African jazz and, to a very large extent, the South African cause, to the world. They are Abdullah Ibrahim (originally Dollar Brand), Hugh Masekela and Miriam Makeba. Music, Culture, History, "The 80s and Beyond" (SA Jazz lecture notes). Vocalist and jazz educator Nicky Schrire notes 'in order to make South African jazz repertoire more inclusive to vocalists, I have written lyrics to several tunes by pianist Bheki Mseleku'. She further makes the point that the songs "Yakhal'Inkomo", "Ntyilo Ntyilo", "Seliyana", while stalwarts in the South African jazz archives, are now over-sung and also less sophisticated than the current wave of South African jazz music being shared around the world. The groundwork laid for South African vocalists by seminal figures like Miriam Makeba, Busi Mhlongo and Sibongile Khumalo, is now being built upon by a later generation of vocalists and composers like Siya Makuzeni, Tutu Puoane, Nomfundo Xaluva and their instrumentalist peers like Bokani Dyer, Sisonke Xonti, Shane Cooper, Kyle Shepherd and more.

The general aim of this masterclass is to assist with **developing your repertoire and to introduce lesser known styles,** while creating a greater awareness of the South African Jazz repertoire. Let us from here in Italy, help to expand the South African tributary of Jazz beyond its borders.

From my own general experience, South African Jazz tends to be grouped into two periods; pre and post Apartheid or pre and post 1994; mainly two rather large thirty-year periods. Post 1994 and along with the explosion of jazz education in the country, there have been thousands of new compositions created and freely shared across the informal and formal sectors. School and community-based music education has embraced "local" music into teaching and learning outcomes. I would venture to say that South African Jazz has become the "classical" music of the country like that of Italy is known for with its contribution to Opera. Perhaps the same correlation may be made for the importance of Choro within Brazilian music.

As the general jazz community is aware, jazz styles and periods from the United States tend to be broken down into smaller eras or periods. For example, Early Jazz, Dixieland, The Big Bands, Swing, Bebop, Cool, Hard Bop, Modal, Latin, Free Jazz, Jazz Rock, Fusion, etc. fall mainly into 10 to 15 year periods. South African Jazz styles revolve mainly around three or perhaps four groups that are associated with certain decades and/or events that helped to shape South Africa as a country. Kwela, Mbaqanga, Ghoema and Afro Pop have become in a way, pillars of South African Jazz, while other off-shoots of these styles have occurred and continue to morph into new threads of expression.

The compositions noted in this masterclass are by no means a definitive work, but could serve to act as a rough guide to increasing:

- one's own personal repertoire and musical experiences
- South African Jazz course content
- work related national and international opportunities (gigs, workshops, exchanges, etc.)
- uncovering and exposing repertoire available within the South African domain.

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**Roots & Routes: A Guide to Developing Repertoire and Styles,** (available for C, B$^{b}$, E$^{b}$ instruments) play along book & 2 cds, Rossi, M., Edition Gruber GmbH, Rottenburg/Neckar, Germany, 2022.
www.all-sheetmusic.com/Artists/Mike Rossi/
https://www.alle-noten.de/

**Cape Jazz Collection**; forty original tunes by South African Composers, complied by Colin Miller, published by jazz.co.za, 2008.
Website: www.jazz.co.za

**The South African Jazz Real Book**, 116 original tunes by 86 South African composers, vol. 1, Jika, jazz.co.za, 2021. www.sheetmusic.co.za

Other sources: www.music.org.za and www.musicinafrica.net

https://www.mixcloud.com/smh2002/
**South African Jazz –** an eight part series presented by Seton Hawkins, who serves as Director of Education Resources and Public Programming at Jazz at Lincoln Center

**Timeline and tunes/cd titles**

**1950-**

Miriam Makeba: *Pata, Pata*, 1957, mbaqanga, easy
Nancy Jacobs: *Meadowlands*, 1956, kwela/swing, easy
Alan Silinga: *Nytilo, Nytilo*, 1954 easy, ballad
Zacks Nkosi: *Ten-Ten Special,* Various SA Jazz disc 1
Little Lemmy "Special" Mabaso, *See You Later*, Kwela With Lemmy And Other Penny Whistlers, 1959, easy
African Swingsters: *Shay Utshane*, (1959?) https://www.worldmusic.net/guide/south-african-jazz/

**1960-**

African Jazz Pioneers: *Nonto Sangomo*, easy
Jazz Epistle verse 1, Vary-um-von, African Classics, medium
Hugh Masekela: Grazing in the Grass, The Promise of a Future, Afro Pop, easy
Jazz Epistles: Vary-um-von, African Classics, medium
Jazz Epistles: Dollar's Mood, medium up, medium advanced Jazz Epistles: Scullery Department, medium monkish swing, (RGSA Jazz), medium
Winston Mankunku: Yakhal 'Inkomo, 12/8 ballad, easy

**1970-**

Tete Mbambisa: Dembese: easy, Tete's Big Sound
Duke Makasi: Zukile, Baby I Don't Know; easy, Years Ago; ballad, advanced
Basil Coetzee/ Abdullah Ibrahim: Mannenberg, easy
Abdullah Ibrahim (Dollar Brand): African Market Place, medium-advanced

**1980-**

Winston Mankunku: Crossroads Crossroads, Jika (see Cape Jazz Collection),
Chris McGregor's Brotherhood Of Breath: Country Cooking, Venture
Christopher Columbus Ngcukana*: Mra, mbaqanga**,** easy
Moses Molelekwa: Genes and Spirits, ¾ Afro Groove, easy, advanced rhythmic groove
Sabenza (Basil Coetzee): Song for Winnie, Afro Pop/Funk, medium easy

**1990-**

African Jazz Pioneers: Nonto Sangomo, African Jazz Pioneers, KAZ Records, 1
Errol Dyers: Sonesta, Nkomo Records
Brubeck/Ntoni: Kwela Mama, (featuring Barney Rachabane), Afro Cool Concept
Morris Goldberg; Station Road Strut, Harare, Cape Doctor, Ojoyo Plays SAFRO Jazz

**2000-**

Darius Brubeck: Tsakwe (Royal Blue), For Lydia and the Lion
Feya Faku: Ode to Mra, Hope and Honour, Keeper of the Spirit, medium swing, medium advanced, David's Samba, samba, medium advanced
Morris Goldberg: The Guma Blues, medium
McCoy Mrubata: Romeo and Alek Will Never Rhyme Part 1, Hoelykit, medium gospel
Bheki Mseleku Angola, medium advanced, Joy; medium, Monwabisi (see Cape Jazz Collection, SA Real Book, vol. 1); medium
Zim Ngqawana: You Think You Know Me, Zimology, easy
Morris Goldberg: The Guma Blues, medium

Judith Sephuma: A Cry, A Smile, A Dance, Afro Pop, medium advanced

**2010-**

Carlo Mombelli: Me, The Mango Picker, medium advanced
Zim Ngqawana: Mamazala, medium slow gospel-blues with Parker like changes
Selaelo Selota: Seshego, medium
Marcus Wyatt: Umculo Wakwantu, medium, medium advanced

**Middle School/Junior High School level**

A Song for Bra Des Tutu - Winston Mankunku Ngozi, African Jazz, Molo Africa,
Cape Samba - McCoy Mrubata, Cape Samba, 1998
Crossroads Crossroads, Mbaqanga, 2004
Mannenberg - Abdullah Ibrahim, Cape Jazz Style, released 1974
Lullaby for an African Princess - Marcus Wyatt, African Jazz, Gathering, 2000
Kippie - Chris McGregor, African Sound, 2016
Meadowlands - Nancy Jacobs, kwela/swing, African Classics (various recordings), 1956
Ntyilo Ntyilo - Alan Silinga, Jika, 1986
Pata Pata - Miriam Makeba, Welela, 1989
See You Later - Lemmy Special Mabaso, Jazz Offerings from South Africa (various) 1962
Shebeen Queen - Jonas Gwangwa, Cry Freedom, 1990
Slup Chips - Mike Campbell, Kwela/Swing 2010
Soweto Is Where It's At - Abdullah Ibrahim, 1982

**High School level**

African Market Place - Abdullah Ibrahim, Mindif, 1979
Bo Kaap - McCoy Mrubata, ghoema, Tears of Joy,1998
Bra Ntemis Kwela - Ntemi Piliso, arr. Mike Campbell, Full Spectrum, UCT Jazz 2006
Etosha - Dan Shout, In With a Shout, 2014
Lakutshon'ilanga - Miriam Makeba, Reflections, 2016
Kgomo - Jonas Gwangwa, Flowers of the Nation, 2001
Monwabisi - Bheki Mseleku, Cape Marabi, Home at Last, 2003
Mozambique - Zim Ngqawana, Afro Cuban, 2003
Ngena, Ngena - Hugh Masekela, 1992
Switch - Chris McGregor, African Sound, 2016
Ten Ten Special - Zacks Nkosi, Our Kind of Jazz (various), 2007
Tsakwe (Royal Blue) - Abdullah Ibrahim, Cape Town Revisited, 2000
Yakhal'Nkomo - Winston Mankunku Ngozi, medium 12/8 or swing, 2007
Wesley Street - Alvin Dyers Cape Jazz, (DAJO) 2018

**College level**

A Cry, A Smile, A Dance - Judith Sephuma, Selaelo Selota. A Cry, A Smile, A Dance, 2001
A Song for Bra Des Tutu - Winston Mankunku, Darryl Andrews, (DAJO) Cape Town 2018
Aja - Bheki Mseleku, Beauty of Sunrise, 1997, advanced
Angola - Bheki Mseleku, Celebration, 1992
Die Goema - Kyle Shepherd, A Portrait of Home, 2010
Hanepoot - Darryl Andrews (DAJO), Cape Town 2018
Joy - Bheki Mseleku, Celebration, 1992
Kwela Kong - Spokes Mashiyane, Kwela Dreams of Africa, 2014

Ledimo – Jonas Gwangwa, Flowers of the Nation, 2001
Love Joe–Aja - Bheki Mseleku, Beauty of Sunrise, 1997, medium advanced
Mamazala - Zim Ngqawana, Ingoma, 1999
Mra - Chris McGregor/Dudu Pukwana, Brotherhood of Breath, 1971
Snoek Town - Mike Campbell, latin, UCT Jazz, 2009
Timelessness - Bheki Mseleku, Bheki Mseleku, 1993
Woodpecker - Mike Campbell, Full Spectrum, UCT Jazz 2006

## Characteristics, Performance Practices Overview Found in South African Jazz

1. Jazz Music for many years was identified with the struggle against apartheid; Jazz represents freedom. Slogans "Jazz for the Struggle and The Struggle for Jazz".
2. 1960 was a decisive year. The unleashing of the period of unprecedented state repression, and politically and culturally, it was the end of an epoch…" Christopher Ballantine, Marabi Nights.
3. The saxophone in particular plays an important part in helping to create and develop South African jazz as an identifiable art form.
4. Use of specific identifiable styles and forms found in marabi, kwela, mbaquanga, ghoema mainly over 4-bar cyclical forms
5. Creation of South African Standards; a body of works
6. Lack of available resources in the Early South African Jazz years (pre-internet) played an important part in the development of the music
7. American Big Band and Swing influences played an important role. African musicians began to model themselves both musically and in social appearance and dress context after the big band era/phenomenon, would substitute African languages for the English lyrics found in the era's classics.

## Musical Characteristics commonly found in South African Jazz

1. Articulation differences
2. Beat placement more on 1-3, rather than on 2-4
3. Sliding scooping into target notes
4. Vocal qualities strong in instrumentalists-use of *bent* thirds
5. How musicians *hear* pitch
6. Outward expressions of emotion-singing, dancing, chanting common throughout African society
7. Organic in development
8. Music internalized aurally and performed organically

*It is important to note that the above is often found in mainstream jazz and throughout the jazz tradition, but not to the effect as often displayed in Early South African Jazz and its development up to circa 1980.*