

# BRUBECK

Vol. I

Original themes and improvised variations  
for solo piano by Dave Brubeck.

Transcribed by Frank Metis  
from the Columbia Records Album  
"BRUBECK PLAYS BRUBECK"

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\$2.00

# ABOUT BRUBECK

**DAVID WARREN BRUBECK** was born in 1920 in the small California town of Concord. His father was a rancher and cattle buyer; his mother a piano teacher of sound and traditional musical background. Naturally enough, his early training started at home, and in addition to an aptitude for his formal keyboard studies, young Dave soon demonstrated an ability to pick out melodies of his own and make up his own tunes.

**WORKING** his way through college as the leader of a campus dance band, Brubeck received his undergraduate training at the Conservatory of the College of the Pacific in Stockton, California. A three and one half year stint in the service followed—mostly in Army Band and entertainment units in the U.S. and Europe.

**RETURNING** from military service, Brubeck continued study with Darius Milhaud who encouraged Dave's growing conviction that improvisation of jazz was as valid for him as the improvisation of toccatas and fugues was for Bach.

**SUBSEQUENT** critical and popular acclaim has sustained this judgment. Today, Brubeck, as a performer and as a creative musician stands in the forefront of an emerging new tradition in American music: The schooled musician who has deliberately selected jazz as the medium for expressing himself and his times.

**LIKE** any healthy and growing movement in any art form, it is firmly based on the accomplishments of the past and is essentially a synthesis . . . blending the heritage of the great classic contrapuntalists with the harmonic experimentation of the post-Impressionists and the rhythmic vitality and spontaneity of jazz. The result: Creative improvisation—with a beat.

**THE MUSIC** in this folio and its companion volume has been extracted from the Columbia Records album of solo piano selections entitled, "BRUBECK PLAYS BRUBECK." The exacting and brilliant job of transcribing these selections was done by Frank Metis, prominent New York arranger, and the pre-publication manuscripts were carefully reviewed with Brubeck by Metis to make as certain as possible of their faithfulness and accuracy.

**THE PUBLISHERS** are proud to present these first printed examples of Dave Brubeck's work and would like to acknowledge the helpful co-operation of George Avakian, Director of Jazz Artists and Repertory for Columbia Records, Inc. and Carter Harman, Music Editor of *Time Magazine* in the preparation of the written and musical material that appears in this volume.

# ABOUT THE MUSIC . . .

As will be noted below, the themes in this volume were first conceived at different periods in my life—some dating back to college and army days. The improvisations, however, were completely spontaneous at the time of their creation at the Columbia recording session from which this music has been transcribed. Certainly at that time I had no idea that this music would end up on paper. If I were to sit down with the purpose of composing formal variations to these themes, the results would be quite different. Also, if I were to improvise at any future time on these melodies, the sounds forthcoming would, I hope, be of still another variety. I must admit that it is rather frightening for a jazz musician to contemplate his improvisations on paper—after the fact, so to speak. However, what you find here is the way things happened to turn out on that particular day.

**WEEP NO MORE** was written in 1945. In this version I use an improvised chorus and a half. (Incidentally, this is my personal favorite of the nine numbers in these two volumes.)

**TWO-PART CONTENTION** is based on two melodic lines, and is divided into three main sections, marked by tempo changes, each section containing one or more improvisations. The first section (which includes the theme and the first two improvisations) is in a medium tempo. The second section (third improvisation) is slow. In the second half of this section I introduced a pattern of "answers" in abruptly changing registers. The last section (two more improvisations and repetition of the theme) is in a fast tempo. These two improvisations are done within the limitation of the theme's two basic melodic lines.

**ONE MOMENT WORTH YEARS** recalls a moment years ago when I bought my first phonograph record. It was Fats Waller's "Fair and Square" backed by "There's Honey on the Moon Tonight." Something of the Waller swinging bass tradition is preserved in the theme and chorus and a half of improvisation.

**THE WALTZ** contains improvisation which to me is quite humorous. Inadvertently, I started to improvise in half-time, then tried to get back into the original meter. Once back, I decided I rather liked the half-time, so changed again for the ending. On each listening I experience a certain anxiety at this indecision, and then finally surprise and relief when I have "crossed the tightwire" and am once more "back on the platform."



## Performance Note:

That Dave Brubeck's hands are large (capable of playing a 12th) will be immediately apparent upon examination of some of the passages in this volume. Although these pieces have been transcribed exactly "as played" by Brubeck, to assist the pianist less favorably endowed in hand span, we have used two optional editing devices: (1) The sign R.H. [ indicates notes which may be played by the right-hand thumb to relieve some of the large spans required of the left hand. (2) On some of the numbers an optional cut is indicated to avoid a difficult improvisation.

No formal metronome or tempi markings and a minimum of interpretative suggestions are shown. Jazz is essentially a very personal kind of music and each pianist must find the tempo that "swings" for him. Of course, the best guide to Brubeck's own interpretation is the Columbia album.