

# PORTFOLIO OF RECORDED PERFORMANCES AND EXEGESIS:

## Messiaen's Musical Language for the Jazz Pianist —

An exploration through performance

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## ABSTRACT

Moving beyond Gunther Schuller's *Third Stream* amalgamation of classical and jazz, this study explores whether the musical language of Olivier Messiaen can make a valid contribution to jazz piano performance. Initially, my project sought to answer such questions as: What elements of the musical language of Messiaen already exist in the jazz vocabulary? Am I able to extend this further? What are the timbral structures and pianistic effects within Messiaen's musical language? What will be the most effective application of Messiaen's musical language to jazz piano performance? Endeavouring to answer the final question led me to consider such aspects as whether the project should be limited to quoting Messiaen motifs, arranging Messiaen melodies, replacing jazz harmonic structures on standards with examples from Messiaen's musical language or whether it would be better to approach the research conceptually. The work of Hubert Nuss provided encouraging reassurance that this was not an impossible task.

In order to articulate this conception, the initial challenge was to decide how the classical and jazz worlds might meet in a 'Messiaen' technique. The approach adopted was similar to that used for undergraduate jazz study, namely, immersion in the piano scores and recordings of Messiaen's music as well as by live performances. This was followed by the development and assessment of a contrived approach when specific techniques, such as tonal colourings or harmonic structures, were developed through prepared exercises and consciously included in my performance. It was then compared with an intuitive approach when no such precise parameters were established.

This submission consists of CD recordings of two public recitals and an exegesis. It documents the development of this Messiaen technique and discusses its application in my performances. It also demonstrates the ways that Messiaen's musical language can be used within jazz piano performance to provide a colour that distinguishes jazz piano performance in a competitive field.

CD 1: Recording of Recital 1 – 9 May 2009

Sound Engineer: Peter Dowdall at EMU Recording Studio, The University of Adelaide

Associate Artists: Mario Marino – Drums, Sam Riley – Acoustic Bass

CD 2: Recording of Recital 2 – 29 August 2009

Sound Engineer: Peter Dowdall at Emu Recording Studio, The University of Adelaide

Associate Artists: Mario Marino – Drums, Sam Riley – Acoustic Bass

CD 1: The Contrived Approach

Tracks	<i>Alice In Wonderland</i>	Fain/Hilliard
1-3	Control, Contrived and Intuitive Takes	(Deanna Djuric, arr.)
Tracks	<i>So In Love</i>	Porter
4-6	Control, Contrived and Intuitive Takes	(Deanna Djuric, arr.)
Tracks	<i>Sweet Lullaby</i>	Djuric
7-9	Control, Contrived and Intuitive Takes	
Tracks	<i>Wouldn't It Be Lovely</i>	Lerner/Loewe
10-12	Control, Contrived and Intuitive Takes	(Deanna Djuric, arr.)

CD 2: In Search of the Middle Ground

Track 1	<i>I Love You</i>	Porter (Deanna Djuric, arr.)
Track 2	<i>Alice In Wonderland</i>	Fain/Hilliard (Deanna Djuric, arr.)
Track 3	<i>There's Something About That Name</i>	Gaither (Deanna Djuric, arr.)
Track 4	<i>Maria</i>	Bernstein/Sondheim (Deanna Djuric, arr.)
Track 5	<i>The Rainbow Connection</i>	Williams/Ascher (Deanna Djuric, arr.)
Track 6	<i>So In Love</i>	Porter (Deanna Djuric, arr.)
Track 7	<i>Steps</i>	Corea
Track 8	<i>Free Improvisation/The Peacocks</i>	Djuric/Marino/Riley Rowles (Djuric, arr.)
Track 9	<i>Messiaen Sketch</i>	Djuric

## DECLARATION

This work contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in any university or other tertiary institution to Deanna Djuric and, to the best of my knowledge and belief, contains no material previously published or written by another person except where due reference has been made in the text.

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I also give permission for the digital version of my thesis to be made available on the web, via the University's digital research repository, the Library catalogue, the Australasian Digital Theses Program (ADTP) and also through web search engines, unless permission has been granted by the University to restrict access for a period of time.

Deanna Djuric  
15 December 2009

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