

INTRODUCTION

Music sets me free! I love listening to different versions of the same song. My playlists are full of different artists playing the same piece of music, yet they all have their own individual identity!

One of the highlights of making music for me is that you can interpret it in your own way. There is a freedom that comes with feeling the music, putting your stamp on it and letting it take you to another world. You may have heard a song many times, played by hundreds of different musicians, yet there is an excitement that comes from adding your uniqueness to it – your own magic.

There are amazing composers from all around the world in this book that I have been influenced by throughout my career. I wanted to celebrate the wonderful work of some of the most amazing black composers and songwriters with eclectic repertoire, soulful melodies, mesmerising rhythms and deep, inspirational messages behind their songs. There are songs that I have played and reinterpreted throughout my musical journey – as well as some that I have recently encountered and am still enjoying getting to know!

As instrumentalists, even though we don't communicate the lyrics with our voice, it's important to have the sentiment of the song in mind when playing. Do listen to the original versions (try my very own Spotify playlist of these songs using the QR code below) and pay attention to the words and the phrasing that the artist uses. Then you can make it your own!

Composing music, creating a melody from scratch and sharing a story in song is such a joy to be able to do and I love performing these songs to audiences. I am so pleased to include two of my own compositions in this selection: *TokYo Sunset* and *Million Billion Love*. Both are a blend of jazz, reggae and soul and have a sentiment of family, friendship and being around those you love.

I hope that this collection leads you on your own musical journey. You'll get to know the artists and their personal expression as you listen. This book provides you with the notes, song structure and dynamics but along with that, continue to develop and add your own style to the songs. Enjoy playing along with the backing tracks or with someone accompanying you on piano. Don't hesitate to experiment and find yourself in the music, and I hope you enjoy playing them as much as I do!

YolanDa Brown



Scan the QR code to access YolanDa's own Spotify playlist of the songs in this collection.

MISTY

Music by Erroll Garner

One of my favourite jazz standards. Take your time and take inspiration from the many great interpretations that have been recorded. Some of my favourites are Erroll Garner, Ella Fitzgerald, Stan Getz and Jonny Mathis.

Slow and free ♩ = 76 poco rall. a tempo *legato*

3 *mp*

8 *p*

14

18 *mf*

24 *f*

29 *mp*

34 *mf*

39 *f*

44 *mp*

49 *rit.* *p*

BLUE AND SENTIMENTAL

Words and music by Count Basie, Mack David and Jerry Livingston

Don't rush this one! It has a laid-back feel so you can play around with the relaxed timing of the melody. Try adding some subtone – really let the air flow through to get a mellow, sentimental tone.

Slow swing $\text{♩} = c.72$ ($\text{♩} = \overset{\frown}{\text{♩}} \overset{\frown}{\text{♩}}$)

4

p

9

mp

14

mf *f*

18

p rit.

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TOKYO SUNSET

Music by Yolanda Brown and Oscar Stielor

Enjoy adding your own flavour to this piece with an improvised solo. You can start by playing a variation of the verse from the top of the song, or simply play with rhythms in the scale provided.

Reggae feel (straight eights) $\text{♩} = 120$

3

mf

8

13

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