

Lead Sheet

by
Per Danielsson

The most common way of explaining a jazz tune is to write out a lead sheet. The purpose of a lead sheet is to display the melody, chords and material that are essential to the composition. It's important to be very specific and clear with the material to give the player a good understanding of the piece, and what the composer intended to do with it. If the composition is very detailed and require a lot of explaining, it might be better to make a full arrangement. Remember, if a full arrangement is written there is usually less room for personal interpretation by the performer, so the beauty with a good lead sheet is the freedom it gives the player.

Things to remember when writing a lead sheet.

1. Indicate the style of the tune. Be creative with words in order to get your ideas across.
2. Indicate tempo or tempo range.
3. Make sure the melody is written so it's easy to read. The most wonderful song in the world is worthless if you can't read it.
4. Make sure the chords are indicated exactly the way you want them to sound. That means to be very specific with alterations and other harmonic material. It might be OK to just write down a C7 if you don't care what alterations are added to the chord. In jazz, most players will add alterations to dominant chords and the good players will use their discretion and consider the melody.

Morning Shine.

The following lead sheet is of an original tune that I wrote a couple of years ago. There are a few specific chords and rhythms that I have indicated because of their importance to the tune. Other than that I left it pretty much wide open for interpretation. I felt comfortable to do so because I knew who was going to play the composition with me. Knowing who you are writing for is a big part of being a composer, or should I say, a smart composer. I knew that Mark Neuenschwander on bass and Danny Gottlieb on drums would be able to get the feel and understand the lead sheet from the beginning, so there was no need for me to be more detailed. Actually, I wanted them to add their personal ideas to my tune, and in a way they are co-writers. (I better send them some royalty money).

Listen to the recording and follow along with the lead sheet. If you want, feel free to make markings and add your own ideas to the composition, it's jazz!

Per Danielsson

FLOWING IN TEMPO

♩=94

MORNING SHINE

PER DANIELSSON

CM7#5 DbM7#11 GM7#5 AbM7 F#M7#5

5 Eb7sus C7(#9) DbM7#11 GbM7 EbM7 Db9

9 CM7#5 DbM7#11 GM7#5 AbM7 F#M7#5

13 Eb7sus C7(#9) F#M9 Bb7sus AbM7 Db7sus

17 GbM7 G13 GbM7 G13

21 CM7 GM7 CM7 BbM7(b5) AbM7#5

25 AM7 D/Gb G7sus

29

Cm7#5 DbM7#11 Gm7#5 AbM7#7 Fm7#5

33

Eb7sus C7(#9) Fm9 Bb7sus AbM7 Db7sus Eb7sus

REPEAT TO BEGINNING
FOR SOLOS

LAST X ONLY

37

Gbm7