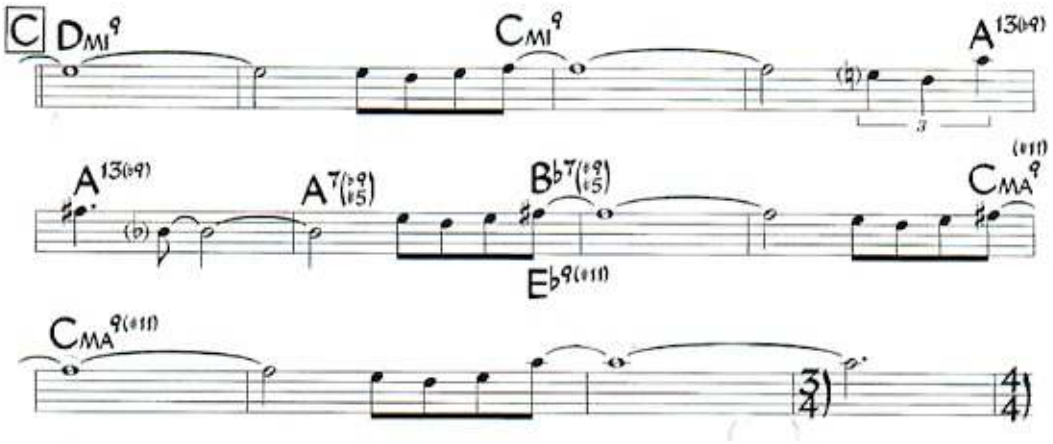
Transcription of Jaco Pastorius' Bass Solo on
"Used To Be A Cha Cha" From His Debut CD

By: Lucas Pickford

Jaco's debut CD burst onto the musical scene in 1976. It completely revolutionized not only what could be done on the electric bass but it also revolutionized the role a bass could play in a band. Jaco showed us the bass could not only be the groove & time keeper, but it could also be the melody instrument, a percussion instrument, and a dazzling solo voice that was as compelling as any sax or piano solo.

In this tune **"Used To Be A Cha Cha",** a fast double time feel samba, Jaco really showcases his deft melodic lines, his machine gun like sixteenth note runs, along with a total command of his instrument both technically and harmonically to create a tour de force of modern jazz improvisation.

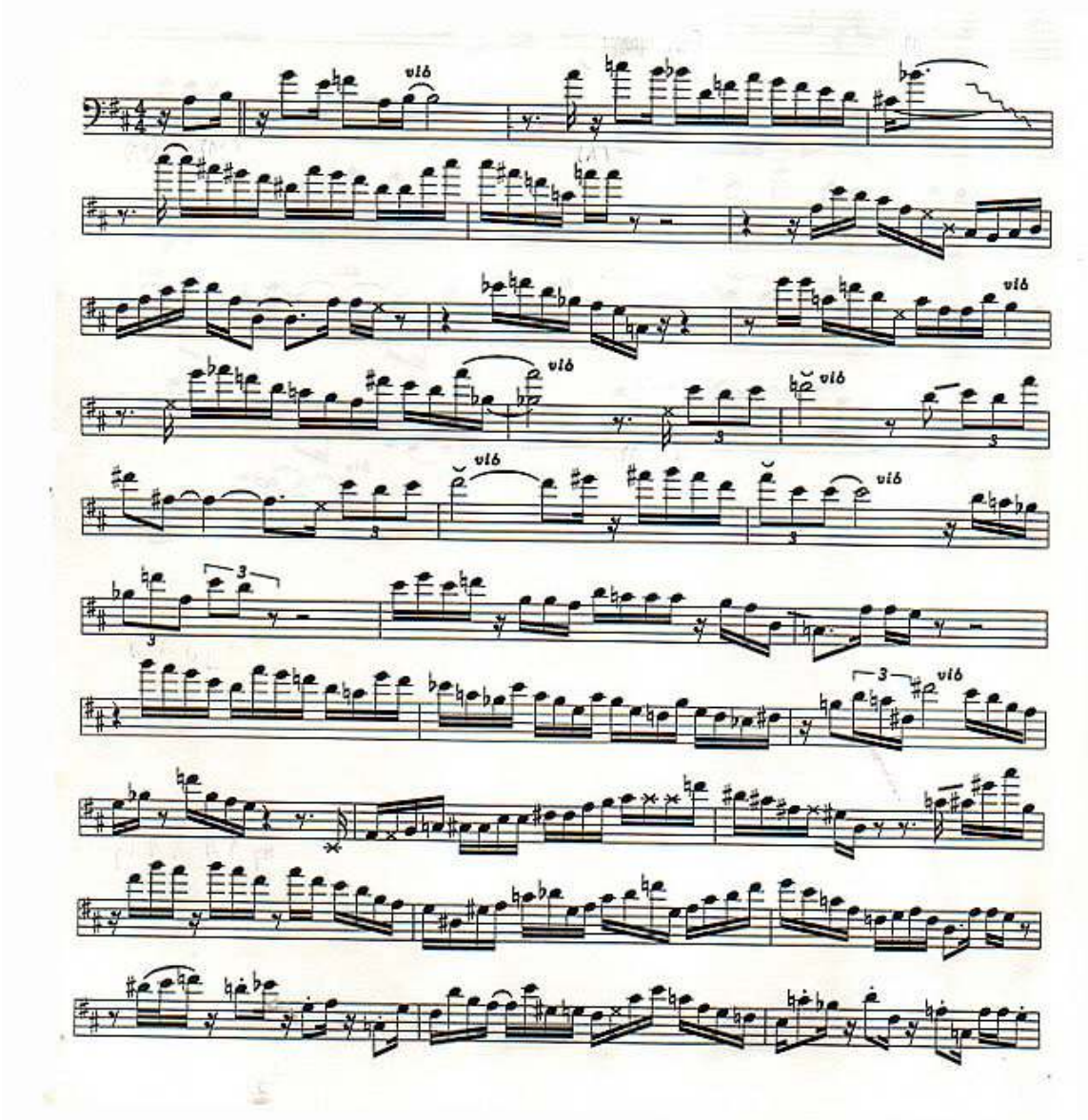
The solo section to this tune has only six chords that repeat in a twelve Bar form. The solo section looks like this:

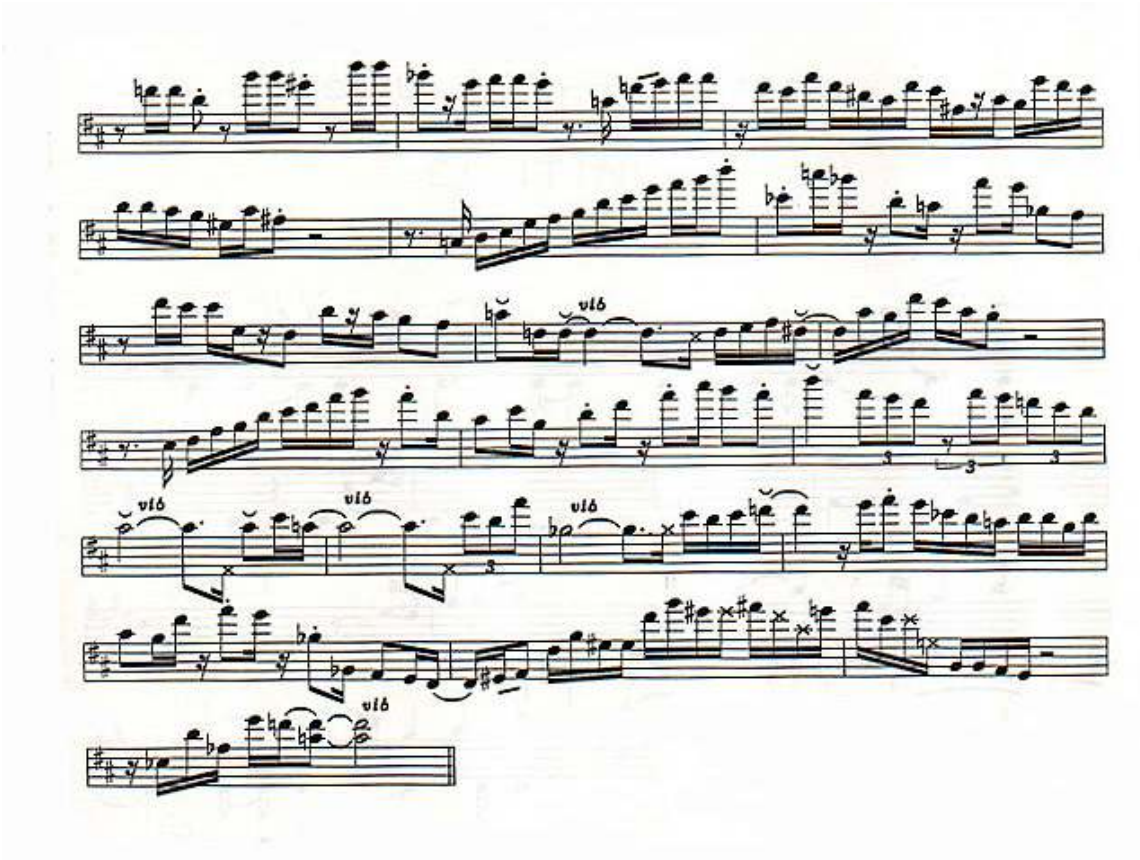


The chord scales that fit these six chords are as follows:
1.Dmi9 takes D Dorian - D-E-F-G-A-B-C-D
2.Cmi9 take C Dorian - C-D Eb-F-G-A-Bb-C
3.A13(b9) takes A Symmetric Diminished - A -Bb C-C#-Eb-E-F#-G-A
4.Bb7(#5 #9) takes Bb Altered Dominant Scale -Bb-B-Db-D-E-F#-Ab-Bb
5.Cmaj7 (#11) takes C Lydian -C-D-E-F#-A-B-C
6.Eb9(#11) takes Eb Lydian Dominant Scale - Eb-F-G-A-Bb-C-Db-Eb

I'll have more on chord scales in the future, but for now, go through Jaco's solo and see how he utilizes these scales. Also look for pentatonic patterns as well, another favorite device of Jaco's. Come up with your own fingerings, it's best if you find the fingerings that work best for you. I'll be back in the next issue with another challenging solo. Until then this should keep you busy."

Jaco Pastorius' Solo on Used To Be A Cha – Cha

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