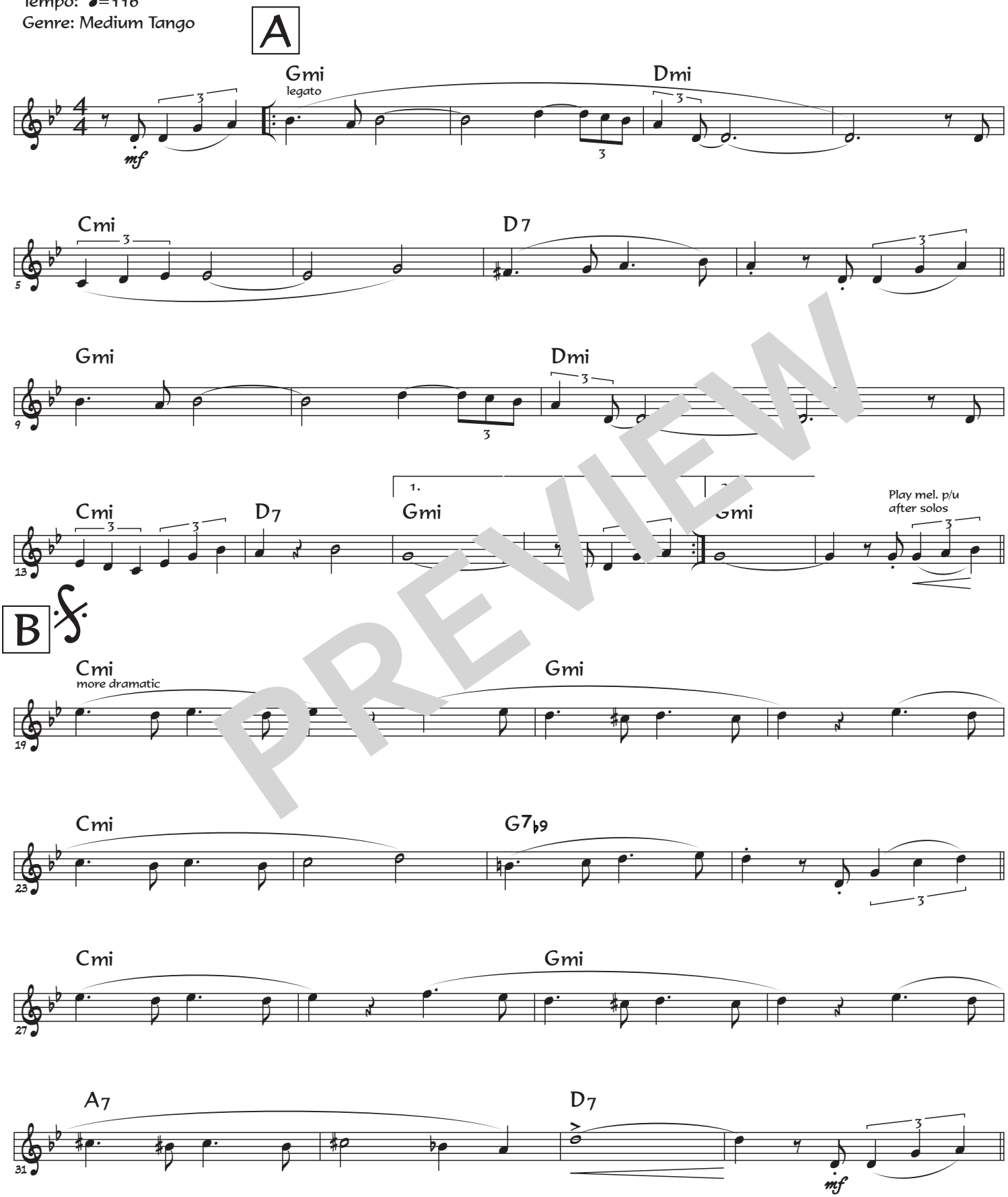
UNISON CHART
C Part

Tango Polski

(As heard on "Labirynt")

written by:
Tom Bergeron

Tempo: ♩=116
Genre: Medium Tango



PREVIEW

UNISON CHART
Master Rhythm

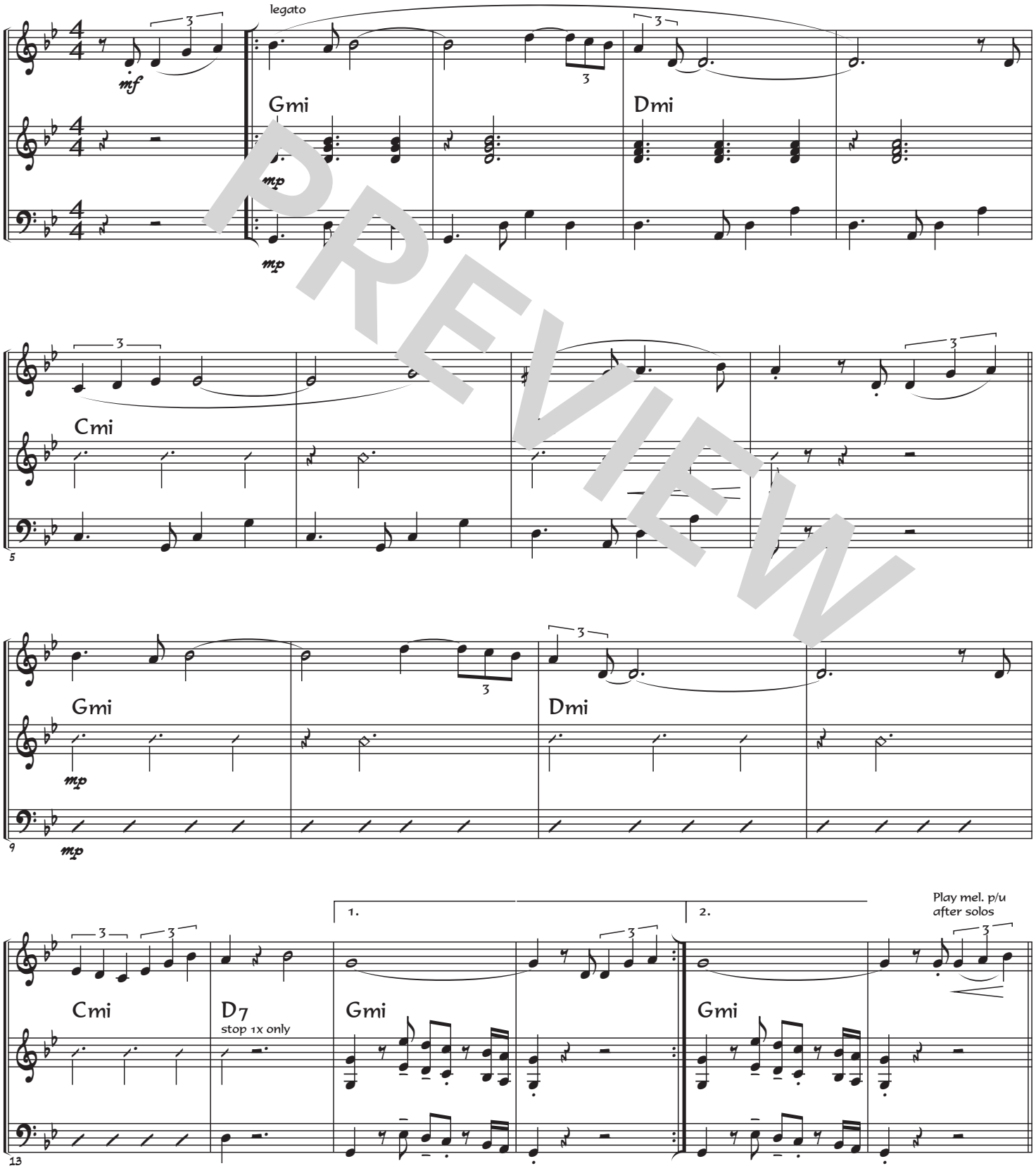
Tango Polski

(As heard on "Labirynt")

written by:
Tom Bergeron

Tempo: ♩=116
Genre: Medium Tango

A



PREVIEW

Tango Polski - Tom Bergeron - Teaching Guides

Genre: Latin *Style: Tango*
World Region: Argentina/Poland *Country: United States*

Overview: "Tango Polskie" was inspired by the composer's interaction with Polish musicians and culture — with echoes of Argentinian tango. The haunting minor-key melody is supported by a chord progression that touches on Im, IVm, Vm, V7, and II7. It demonstrates the difference between the modal Vm and the functional V7 — and can serve as an introduction to the Secondary Dominant concept (II7 = V/V). The simple structure makes for a very accessible tune, while providing lots of space for the drummer to set the vibe and the groove.

Style:
To establish the tango groove in secondary ensembles, minor liberties were take in the charting transcription vs the original recording. The musicians on the recording use a lot of 'space' to imply the tango feel and groove which is a grand goal to aim for. However, to establish and maintain the tango groove, we added the bass and chord comping figures to establish the style. More advance groups or combo, where each person has a strong sense of time, can adopt the recording groove, or element thereof. YouTube 'tango dance music' to view and hear many different executions of the genre.

Unique Teaching Elements: This song is particularly good to emphasize the following:

- Tango groove
- Sparse texture
- Sustained, expressive melody, breath control and phrasing
- Pitch bend
- Modal V-chord (Vm) vs Functional V-chord (V7), and Secondary Dominant (V/V)

Sheet Music Adjustments: The "groove," on the recording is very sustained and the tempo is held together by the snare drum. This "space" can be hard to achieve and maintain by teenagers (but it is something to strive for). Hence, we took the liberty of adding the composer's original keyboard comping pattern, and a professional guitarist's rhythm part, to address this issue. Ask the rhythm section, "What are the differences?"

Structure: These notes on form relate to the sheet music. Once learned, the ensemble can freely rearrange the form (layered introduction, mix up solo section, use different instrument combinations on melody, etc. Changing often keeps musicians on their toes).

A – m1 to m18 – "main A" melody – A is repeated
B – m19 – m34 – "B" melody
C – m35 – m50 – "A" melody restated
D – m51 – m66 – Short Solo section (can DS if they choose to shorten the tune)
E – m69 – m84 – Solo can continue over the B section (same instrument or a new one)
Short Solo section - Just play over D (cue DS after last solo).
Long Solo section - DDED (one instrument may prove hard but switching could be fun!).

Melody:
The melody is slow and sexy, suggesting the dance that is the tango. Experiment with bending some of the notes and with adding a harmony a third above or a third below, especially on the held notes (challenge better players). Wind players may choose to use a sultry vibrato, or to play with a straight tone. Feel free to shape the dynamics to taste, but note that the bridge suggests more intensity. On long phrases, adding a slight crescendo to the lines will help maintain the air flow and push the melody forward.

Harmony:
The harmony can be kept quite simple: triads and 7th-chords are sufficient. More advanced players should feel free to add diatonic extensions — 9ths especially — as well as the b9 in the bridge. Chord instruments can use the suggested patterns or invent their own. Long, atmospheric chords can also be used to heighten the sense of a busy nightclub with amorous partners dancing. Experimenting with basic to advanced harmonies allows for 'development' of the song - either over several months of playing or even one time through (basic to involved).

Rhythm: The tempo must be firm, though not rushed. The challenge is to play with intensity while not making the texture busy. Let the melody be the focus of attention, but keep the groove tight. A basic drum set player can hold this together extra percussion providing a thicker texture (balance the textures, some simple some involved - rotate).

Improvisation/Theory:
Tango Polskie is in a minor key. The harmony includes both the diatonic V chord, which is minor (m3rd & m7th), and the functional V chord, which is a dominant 7th-chord (Δ3rd & m7th). Students will want to pay attention to the difference between these two: The first agrees with the natural minor scale on the tonic; the second agrees with the harmonic minor scale on the tonic.

In the bridge (section B and E during solos), there are two *secondary dominant* chords — chords which serve as V of a scale degree other than the home tonic. These occur in m31 & 81: V/iv ("five of four"); and m33 & 83: V/V ("five of five"). Both of these have a major third — notes that do not belong to the home key. The V/V also has a 5th that is not part of the home key, and the V/iv-chord calls for a b9 — a note that helps point to the key of the *subdominant* (the iv). Focusing on these *non-diatonic* notes will help the improviser make the changes pop!