

Table of contents

Forewords	4
The history of the Double Bass at a glance	9
The history of the Double Bass	17
Tunings	23
Shapes	26
Sizes	29
Tonewoods	34
Bows	42
Electric Upright Bass (EUB)	50
On the road with the double bass	54
The double bass and its parts (in four languages)	58
Range of the double bass, the notes on the piano keyboard	60
Lutherie	61
Craft and industrial stringed instrument making	62
Factory made violins from Germany	62
Germany as a developing country	64
Quality as competitive advantage	67
The 20th century	69
Labeling fraud	83
American-made plywood basses	86
Strings	93
Rosin	100
Important bassists	101
Johann Matthias Sperger – *1750 †1812	102
Domenico Dragonetti – *1763 †1846	103
Václav House (Wenzel Hause) – *1764 †1847	104
Giovanni Bottesini – *1821 †1889	104
Franz Simandl – *1840 †1912	105
Serge Alexandrovich Koussevitzky – *1874 †1951	106
The Double Bass in Jazz	107
Bowing, plucking or slapping?	109
1930–1940: The Swing era	110
1940–1950: The Bebop revolution	111
Jazz Jam Sessions—breeding grounds of bebop	113
Red Mitchell about the bass scene of the 1950ies	119
1950–1960: Modern Jazz	120
1960–1970: Free Jazz and Avantgarde	121
1970: The electrification of Jazz	123

Technological Backlash	124
Bassists and the Cello in Jazz	125
Bassists in the Jazz polls	127
Jazz Bass Timeline	129
Electrical amplification of the Double Bass	135
Microphones	136
Piezos	137
Magnetic pickups	138
The development of pickups	141
Phase cancellation for pickups	147
Do-it-yourself pickups	147
Amplifier and speakers	148
Impedance	152
Tone controls and filters	152
Feedback	153
Digital signal processing	154
Setup und sound optimization	155
The fingerboard	156
The bridge	160
The nut	170
The soundpost	171
Where does the soundpost go?	176
Cutting a new soundpost	176
The Tailpiece	178
The Saddle	180
The Endpin	181
Climate	183
Sharp tools	184
Glues	185
Sound improvement from the laboratory	187
Chladnian sound figures	187
Mode Matching	187
Vibration dedampening	188
Wolf tones	189
The acquisition of a double bass	191
How does the bass sound?	196
Prices yesterday and today	199

Instrument Portraits	203
Gasparo da Salò	204
Giovanni Paolo Maggini	208
Hans Christoph Zäncker	210
Peeter Borlon	212
Johann Joseph Stadlmann	213
Matteo Gofriller	214
Domenico Montagnana	216
Domenico Busan	218
Giovanni Battista Ceruti	220
Giuseppe Baldantoni	222
John Frederick Lott	225
Hawkes & Son	228
J. T. Lamy	231
The “Karr-Koussevitzky” bass	232
Bass making in Mittenwald	234
Bass making in the Saxon/West Bohemian region	235
Bass making at Bubenreuth	237
Acknowledgements	238
About the author	239