

PROGRESSIVE TRANSCRIPTIONS FOR THE NOVICE JAZZ SAXOPHONIST:
A STARTING POINT FOR DEVELOPING IMPROVISATIONAL SKILLS AND STYLE

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ABSTRACT

There are many great pedagogical texts and method books that deal with the subject of jazz improvisation and style. These resources range from volumes of play-a-longs, to collections of improvised solo transcriptions, to analyses that explain idiomatic jazz formulae and how to navigate them. However, most of these materials are geared towards the advanced music student. The authors and editors assume of the reader a considerable level of technical facility or a rather advanced theoretical knowledge. There are materials that do cater to the novice jazz improviser, but they often lack an explanation of how and why certain decisions may have been made by the soloist. Furthermore, those that focus on style often rely on composed etudes that remove the improvisational component altogether. Therefore, there is a need for materials related to jazz improvisation and style designed for the novice jazz student that actually use improvised solos as a starting point and that have accompanying analyses to help the student understand what they are hearing/playing.

This document remedies this deficiency in the pedagogical literature by providing transcriptions and analyses of recorded improvised jazz solos chosen for their simplicity, both of required technical facility and music-theoretical knowledge. This document should serve as a starting point for novice jazz students looking to develop their own jazz style and improvisational skills. Students can take the concepts learned from studying these transcriptions and analyses, and begin to apply them in creating convincing and stylistically correct solos in the jazz idiom.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Jazz is a music that is a little over a century old, and it is not surprising that there are gaps in its relatively recently formed pedagogy. Some of these deficiencies exist because of the small number of pedagogical texts written for the younger student. There are quality materials that are geared for the novice but they either lack an improvisational component, an analytical component, or sometimes both. This study offers one solution to fill a void in jazz education at the elementary level (with emphasis on the saxophone) by providing transcriptions of improvised solos and offering some contextual commentary so that the student can start making creative and informed decisions when improvising.

Background and Problems

“Listen and Transcribe”: this is often the first charge given to a private student wishing to initiate a study of jazz.¹ Names such as Parker, Coltrane, Stitt, Hodges, Rollins, Adderley, Hawkins, and Ammons are suggested as good saxophonists to emulate, but rarely is the student offered specific recordings—let alone individual tunes or tracks. The large number of recordings from these artists can leave the students frustrated as they look for a “jumping in” spot.

¹“I have heard many jazz soloists who did not sound as spontaneous or loose as I may have liked but I don’t blame the scales for how they sounded. Poor phrasing or poor solos are caused by many things, but the prime culprit seems to be the lack of basic jazz listening. And I mean listening to *improvisers*, people expressing themselves individually on their instrument.” Aebersold, Jamey. *Major & Minor, Vol 24 of A New Approach to Jazz Improvisation*. Aebersold Jazz, New Albany, Indiana, 1986.

“There is no better way to discover how your favorite players achieve certain musical effects that fascinate you than by studying written-out versions of their solos, either by transcribing them yourself (which is also an effective means of training your ear) or by purchasing some of the many published books of improvised solos...It goes without saying that you should also purchase the recordings and listen to them carefully and then play with them, as you read the transcriptions. Remember, music is an **aural** art, hence we learn by listening and by imitation.” Coker, Jerry. *How To Practice Jazz*. Aebersold Jazz, New Albany, Indiana, 1990.

Furthermore, as great as each of these artists are, very few of their solos are attainable, either technically or musically, by the novice jazz saxophonist. Extreme tempi, double-time passages, and both harmonic and rhythmic complexity have the potential to intimidate and discourage the inexperienced (and even some experienced) players.

There are many pedagogical reasons for having a student learn a transcribed solo. Jazz is a musical language with its own syntax. When learning a transcription, the student begins to learn jazz vocabulary and style. Adept jazz musicians either transcribe solos themselves, or they refer to numerous transcription books that are readily available. It should be noted that many of the transcription books contain solos from advanced artists at the height of their playing prowess, thereby rendering the book almost useless for the intermediate musician. For the young student, the process of either memorizing or notating a solo can be quite daunting; especially if they do not choose a solo appropriate to their level of technical or musical proficiency. Furthermore, learning a solo from a book alone only teaches pitches and rhythms. Since it is cumbersome to notate the nuance, articulation, and phrasing that is absolutely critical to the style of an improvised solo, much of the valuable musical information is not assimilated through reading alone. The preferred way for a student to learn these subtleties is to listen and eventually to imitate and to emulate. The stylistic goal of anyone playing a transcription should be to sound exactly like the performer on the record. The starting place is the notes and rhythms, a compelling argument in favor of providing written out transcriptions. However, the end result includes, but is not limited to, articulations, timbre, sense of swing, rhythmic placement, bends, etc. With intense study of several solos and much repetition some of these nuances will coalesce into the student's own personal jazz style.

Even when a younger student studies a transcription from a published source along with

the recording, the onslaught of rhythmic, pitch, and phrasing information that is transmitted easily overwhelms one who does not know how to listen, distinguish, and prioritize these disparate elements. The compilers or transcribers of solo books seldom provide much if any analysis or listening guidance for the younger student. Because of this deficiency, the student is ignorant of how the solo was constructed or why certain scales and arpeggios were chosen. This study, by providing some analysis and perspective will give the student insight into the syntax of the jazz language so that they can start to creatively construct their own solos with improved knowledge and context.

Current Literature

There are a few texts that do have the younger student in mind. Greg Fishman's *Jazz Phrasing for Saxophone, Volume I*² is a good text with both written and aural components. Fishman has composed melodic etudes and has recorded a performance of them complete with a rhythm section. This is a great tool for the student because it reinforces what they are seeing with what they are hearing or vice versa. Fishman's saxophone playing is also another strength to the text due to his convincing delivery. The student would be well off if they emulate Fishman's style. However, Fishman admits to composing these etudes and even states that he had to edit down his compositions so that they would be appropriate for the young student. Composition is a far different task than improvisation. It allows the musician time to employ all available editorial tools. Improvisation, by comparison, does not afford the author this same luxury. Jim Snidero's *Jazz Conception*³ is another good text with both written and aural components. Like the Fishman text, Snidero's text is a collection of melodic etudes that have

² Fishman, Greg. *Jazz Phrasing for Saxophone, Volume I*. Chicago: Greg Fishman Studios, 2009.

³ Snidero, Jim. *Jazz Conception*. New York: Advance Music, 1996.

been recorded with a rhythm section. Snidero does not specify whether or not he composed these etudes or improvised the melodies and then transcribed them. Both of these texts lack specific explanation, analysis, or commentary about the individual etudes themselves. Both authors stress that the student should try to emulate the recordings as closely as possible but neither explain the choices that were made concerning phrasing, pitch content, or inflection.

Addressing The Problems

To remedy these shortcomings, it is my goal to identify, transcribe, and analyze recorded improvised jazz solos that are musically and technically appropriate for an intermediate saxophonist wishing to initiate a study in jazz improvisation and style. I will focus on the three saxophones most commonly used in both middle-school and high-school band programs: alto, tenor, and baritone. The criteria that will be used to judge the appropriateness of a solo will be as follows:

- Use of the 2 1/2 octave range of the saxophone
- Limited use of saxophone extended techniques
- Manageable tempi and reasonable subdivisions
- Limited “outside” playing
- Use of traditional jazz vocabulary and phrasing
- Relatively short in length.

Most saxophonists identify with one saxophone over the others. This preference influences many factors such as tessitura, phrase length, and special saxophone-related techniques, just to name a few. Accordingly, this study is idiomatic in its approach, providing alto players with solos from alto saxophonists, tenor players with solos from tenor saxophonists, and baritone players with solos from baritone saxophonists.

My research has included many hours of listening to jazz recordings in order to find saxophone solos that fit my prescribed criteria. I have found ten acceptable solos for each of the three saxophones included in this study and have transcribed them using notation that is consistent with other jazz texts. I have provided an analysis that should help the student understand the process of improvising over the chord progression. Special attention has been paid to form, pitch/scale selection, phrasing, nuance, and any special saxophone techniques. For each solo I have included “Helpful Accompanying Exercises” that are gleaned from the solo itself and should be practiced so that the techniques can be used in future improvisations. In the section “Improvisatory Goals,” the student will find practice suggestions that will hopefully guide them in creating solos in the style of the performer whom they are studying. I have used a rubric (see below) to progressively order these solos. This rubric uses range, tempo, key, length, pitch selection, and phrasing to determine the difficulty of each solo.

Rubric				
Tempo	Up to 120		1	
	121-168		5	
	169 and above		10	
Global Key Center	C, G, D, F		1	
	B \flat , A, E, E \flat		5	
	A \flat , D \flat , B, F \sharp		10	
Pitch Selection	Scales	1-3	1	
		3-5	5	
		5-7	10	
	Harmonic Rhythm	Longer than whole	1	
		Whole note	3	
		Half note	7	
	Extensive use of chromaticism		1-5	
	Extensive use of extensions and alterations		1-5	
Rhythm	Predominate durational values	Longer—whole, half, quarter, and eighth	1	
		Shorter—quarter, eighth, and some sixteenth	3	
		Short—eighth and sixteenth	6	
	Turns		1-5	
	Double-time passages		3-10	
Length	12-36 bars		1	
	37-48		3	
	49-64		5	
Range	D ⁴ —C ⁶		1	
	Extensive D ⁶ —F \sharp ⁶		1-5	
	Extensive B \flat ³ —D ⁴		1-5	
	Altissimo-F \sharp ⁶ and above		5-10	
Stylistic Elements	False Fingering		1-5	
	Pitch Manipulation		1-5	
	Timbre Manipulation		1-5	
	Atypical Articulation		1-5	
Total				

Intended Audience

For many students, their first experience performing jazz comes from playing in their middle or high school jazz band. They probably have not listened to much jazz. If they have, it most likely would have been in the context of a television program or movie where jazz was heard as background music. Fortunately, their curiosity draws them to participate in their school's jazz ensemble, which is remarkable given the often extracurricular nature of such groups. As a result, they have shown an unusual commitment, even if only superficially, to learning this music and their instrument. These students typically have a general command of their instrument (i.e., they can play the full range of the saxophone, most major scales, and triadic arpeggios) and a functional knowledge of music notation and vocabulary.

Due to the improvisational nature of jazz, these students often get asked to solo. Most of the charts geared to students at this level have written-out solos. However, due to their ignorance of jazz phrasing, nuance, and style, the student's performances are often disappointing, both to themselves as well as to the audience. Furthermore, as the ensemble matures and the difficulty of the charts increases, the frequency of these written-out solos diminishes, thus leaving the soloist with nothing but "chord changes" and apprehension. This study is intended for these novice improvisers. The transcriptions and the analyses should give the student a starting point in developing their listening and improvisational skills as well as a sense of jazz style.

These transcriptions and the accompanying analyses are intended to be used by the high-school or early-level college student who has the desire to learn how to improvise in the jazz idiom. They are supplemental resources to be studied alongside the student's ensemble music and private lesson materials and are no way designed to be the only method of study for the aspiring musician. The notation, or in some instances the lack thereof, is consistent with other

jazz texts as well as jazz ensemble charts. The analyses use language that one might find both in the music classroom as well as on the bandstand.

Use of These Materials: For The Student

It is always best to find a good private teacher when studying any instrument. Studying jazz is no different. The student should seek out a challenging teacher that will help with concepts contained in this collection.

1. Obtain the recordings. Every transcription in this study can be found on a commercially available recording. Services such as iTunes and/or Rhapsody make these recordings instantly downloadable for a small price.

2. Listen to the recordings. Both types of listening, passive and active, are strongly encouraged. Passive listening is listening while doing something else, i.e., having the recording on while mowing the lawn or doing homework. Active listening involves intently listening to the recording with no other distractions. The student should listen to the recording many times. On some of the passes, the saxophonist should receive the primary focus and critical consideration should be given to the following:

- Sound or Timbre—Is it pleasing? Why or why not?
- Vibrato—When and where does it occur? How fast and deep is it?
- Scoops and Bends—When and where do they occur? How did the saxophonist achieve these effects? Fingered? Voicing? Jaw? Combination?
- Sense of Swing—Are they playing straight? Are their eighth notes evenly distributed within the beat? If not, how much do they “swing?” Triplet-based? Dotted eighth, 16th note? Something else?

- Phrasing—Does the saxophonist employ two-bar phrases? Four-bar? Eight-bar?
Combination?
- Articulation—How is the saxophonist starting and stopping the notes? Breath?
Tongue? Where and when is the saxophonist tonguing? How hard are they
attacking?

Some of the listening passes should focus on the interaction between the saxophonist and the rhythm section.

- How is the saxophonist rhythmically placing his lines? Are they ahead of the established beat? Behind? Does it change?
- Do the notes that the saxophonist is playing seem to fit the chords that the rhythm section is generating? Do any of them “stick out?”
- Does any member of the rhythm section play something that resembles something that the saxophonist has just played or vice versa?

The numerous variables can be frustrating at the beginning. However, with repeated listening and practice the student will hear and process more complexity and begin to incorporate these concepts into their improvisations.

3. Learn the transcription. Just like any other piece of music, the transcription must be practiced. The student should start slowly, using a metronome, and practice until the transcription can be played at the same tempo as the recording. Then the student should start playing the transcription with the recording. Their goal is to sound exactly like the saxophonist on the recording, matching not only the notes and rhythms but also all of the nuance and style elements that have been discussed above. Please note that there are musical phenomena that are not represented on the page. Not every nuance has an accepted symbol or notation.

Furthermore, there are instances where the accepted notation makes the transcription virtually unreadable. The best way around this problem is to listen to the recording multiple times.

A few helpful tips for learning a transcription:

Use headphones when practicing with the recording. They will allow the student to hear the recording better. The student should turn up the volume so that they can hear the recording well but not so high that they might damage their hearing.

Self Assessment: The student should record themselves so that they can use their developing listening skills and critique their own playing. Most smart phones have a recorder of some type that works well for this purpose. Other recording options include: a tape recorder, mini-disc recorder, or the built-in microphone in a computer. The student should ask his self the following types of questions: Am I playing exactly like the saxophonist on the recording? If I am different, how so? How can I change what I am doing to match the recording?

External Assessment. The student should seek out opportunities to play this transcription with the recording in front of their parents, friends, and band director. They should ask for feedback. Undoubtedly, these audiences will hear things that the student will not. Furthermore, it is always good to get used to performing for people.

4. Read and study the analysis that accompanies each transcription. These analyses are designed to inform the student of some of the compositional processes that went into the improvisation. Most of these analyses will focus on phrasing, pitch/scale selection, sense of swing, special saxophone techniques, and other specific topics as they arise in the individual improvisations. With diligent study, the student will learn to hear and recognize these techniques.

5. Practice the “Helpful Accompanying Exercises.” These exercises are mainly scales and arpeggios that go along with the chord progression of the transcription. They should be practiced, with a metronome, across the full range of the saxophone. The student’s goal is to have these materials memorized and under their fingers so that they can play them at will. This arsenal of musical material can then be employed when they begin to improvise their own lines.

6. Practice the “Improvisatory Goals.” It is at this point where all the hard work starts to pay off. The student should use their listening skills, the style and phrasing elements picked up from working on the transcription, and finally the scales and arpeggios that were introduced in the “Helpful Accompanying Exercises” to begin improvising in the style of the recorded soloist.

The Blues

Half of the transcriptions included in this study are over the chord progression and form known as the Blues. It is important not only in jazz but also in other popular genres. The student should listen to the recordings of these Blues and try to hear the similarities and differences. Once a few of these Blues transcriptions have been mastered, the student should play them back-to-back and see if the performers use any similar “licks” or musical ideas. Eventually, the student should learn the Blues progression in several keys and memorize several blues “heads” or melodies. There are several quality texts that address just the Blues progression and its variations. Jamey Aebersold’s *Blues in All Keys*⁴ is a great tool for solidifying listening and improvisational skills.

⁴ Aebersold, Jamey. *Blues in All Keys, Vol 47 of A New Approach to Jazz Improvisation*. Aebersold Jazz, New Albany, Indiana, 1986.

2. ALTO SAXOPHONE

Just A Closer Walk With Thee

Lou Donaldson—Alto Saxophone

Organist Jimmy Smith's album *Rockin' The Boat*⁵ features several solos from alto saxophonist Lou Donaldson that a novice improviser should be able to transcribe and learn with little difficulty. Donaldson's work on "Just A Closer Walk With Thee" is an example of one of these solos. The tune, a 16 bar form, is in the key of G major and uses the diatonic chords of G, C, and D7 along with one secondary dominant, G7, that functionally leads to the C triad.⁶ Donaldson solos for two choruses.

In this seemingly simple solo, Donaldson uses four-bar phrases throughout and employs several techniques to build intensity. Notice his use of whole rests, dotted half notes/rests, and half-notes/rests during the first chorus as opposed to the second chorus where most of his lines are eighth note driven. Donaldson's increase in rhythmic activity over the course of his improvisation is an effective intensity building technique. Also, he uses an expanding pitch-content palette as his solo unfolds. In the first chorus (measures 1-16), for all but one note (the F# in m. 6), he limits himself to using the five notes of the G major pentatonic scale.⁷ As the second chorus (measures 17-32) unfolds, Donaldson incorporates other pitches diatonic to G

⁵ Smith, Jimmy. *Rockin' The Boat*. Blue Note Records. 5767552. CD. 2004.

⁶ There is a G/D chord. This is a G triad with D in the bass. Theoretically, this chord inversion has special properties that affect voice leading. However for simplicity's sake, this analysis will treat that chord no differently than a G triad in root position.

⁷ Please note that he does not start any of his phrases with a G, or scale degree 1. One common problem many young improvisers face is the need to start many of their lines with scale degree 1 or the root of the prevailing chord. This is not necessarily a bad thing unless it is overused. Then you run the risk of sounding predictable and boring.

major as well as the G blues scale. These additional pitches increase intensity by adding dissonance and chromatism to Donaldson's lines.

The entire first chorus of his solo represents Donaldson's interpretation of the tune's melody (see example A1). When a jazz musician interjects a preexisting melody into an improvisation, that compositional technique is known as "quoting."⁸

Example A1

Lou Donaldson's Solo

Just A Closer Walk With Thee

Not only can the improviser quote the melody of the tune that is being played but they can also quote other melodies that fit the chord progression. The elaboration and/or ornamentation of a preexisting melody is one of the most basic forms of improvisation. It is important that a soloist learn and memorize many melodies so that they can interject these quotes as they see fit. Not only does quoting increase the soloist's musical vocabulary but it also links the soloist with a rich tradition that has been cultivated by the jazz masters.

⁸ "A study of hundreds of solos indicates that an overwhelming percentage of the quotes used by the seminal beboppers were drawn from jazz sources such as other jazz compositions; specific licks, patterns, etc., of other great jazz players such as Dizzy, Bird, Bud, Miles, et al., (and many of these ultimately became public domain patterns which are pervasive in the playing of virtually all good players); blues and other patterns drawn from the great legacy of jazz; and, finally, extraneous sources."—David Baker. *How To Play Bebop: Vol. 3.* p. 30

When listening to and trying to perform Donaldson's solo, make sure that you try to match his sense of swing and style. Notice his eighth notes are fairly straight and the swing is generated by his articulation and breath accents. Remember, when working with a written transcription, many elements of nuance are left unnotated. That is why it is important to listen in order to sound like the original performer (see example A2).

Example A2

Using typical jazz notation

Using detailed notation

The image displays two staves of musical notation for a solo in 2/4 time, key of F# major. The top staff, labeled 'Using typical jazz notation', shows a sequence of notes with some slurs and breath marks. The bottom staff, labeled 'Using detailed notation', provides a more precise transcription. It includes performance instructions such as 'LEGATO mē' under the first measure, 'VIBRATO' above a long note in measure 10, and 'NO VIBRATO' above a long note in measure 11. The notation also uses various articulation marks like slurs, accents, and breath marks to indicate phrasing and articulation.

Listen to and match the “laid back” quality of his line, especially in measures 10-11. In measure 20, he is using his jaw instead of his tongue to create the articulation of the quarter-note triplets. Finally, notice that vibrato is reserved for phrase ending long notes. Try to match the speed and depth of Donaldson's vibrato when it occurs.

Helpful Accompanying Exercises:



G Major Pentatonic Scale



G Major Scale



G Blues Scale



Improvisational Goals:

- First learn the melody. Then, improvise by using new rhythms and by adding notes but still keep the melody recognizable.
- Improvise four-bar phrases using the G pentatonic scale
- Improvise four-bar phrases using the G blues scale
- Improvise four-bar phrases alternating between the G pentatonic scale and the G blues scale
- Improvise over the chord progression of “Just A Closer Walk With Thee” and try to use the G pentatonic and G blues scales

A transcription of **Lou Donaldson's** improvised alto saxophone solo on
"Just A Closer Walk With Thee"
 found on the recording *"Rockin' The Boat."*

Transcribed by Daniel Western

Solo starts @ :45

ALTO SAX.

5

9

13

17

21

25

29

Kidney Stew (1)

Eddie “Cleanhead” Vinson—Alto Saxophone

Blues singer and alto saxophonist Eddie “Cleanhead” Vinson’s signature tune is titled “Kidney Stew.” He recorded it on several different occasions.⁹ Two of these recordings, from vastly different sessions, are included in this collection not only to be studied as individual solos but also to be compared to one another. To facilitate this discussion, the title track from the blues drenched album *Kidney Stew (The Definitive Black & Blue Sessions)*¹⁰ will be known as “Kidney Stew (1).” This recording is a twelve-bar blues in the alto saxophone’s key of G, uses three chords—G7, C7, and D7, and uses the V-IV “turnaround”¹¹ in measures 9-10 of the form. Vinson solos for two choruses.

Generally Vinson keeps his phrases to four bars in length. They start in the second half of the measure and lead to the downbeat of the next measure. They often end on beat 4 or the upbeat of 4. He uses repetition as a compositional tool but yet he does not sound overtly repetitious. He keeps his repetitions fresh by altering the material that immediately follows, placing the repeated material in different positions in the measure, and changing one or two notes to match the chord while keeping the rhythm and contour the same. Vinson builds upon his initial idea through repetition and imitation to generate the next four measures. Notice the second idea (measures 2-3) continues the melodic and rhythmic material from the first statement.

⁹ Eddie Vinson And His Orchestra. *Kidney Stew/Old Man Boogie*. Mercury. 8028. 78RPM. 1947.

Eddie “Cleanhead” Vinson. *Kidney Stew Is Fine With Me*. Delmark Records. DS-631. LP. 1969.

Eddie “Cleanhead” Vinson. *Kidney Stew*. Circle Records. CLP-57. LP. 1983

¹⁰ Eddie “Cleanhead” Vinson. *Kidney Stew (The Definitive Black & Blue Sessions)*. Disques Black & Blue. 021. CD. 2001

¹¹ “Turnaround” is a harmonic formula that can occur at the end of a section or form that leads back to the tonic. There are many types of common turnarounds in jazz. A great resource for practicing turnarounds is Jamey Aebersolds *Turnarounds, Cycles, & ii/V7’s: Vol. 16*.

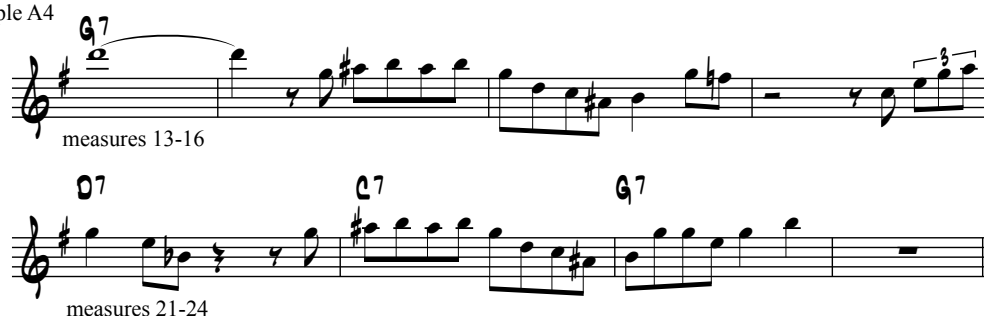
The next phrase, beginning in measure four, starts with similar rhythmic material but varies the pitches (see example A3).

Example A3



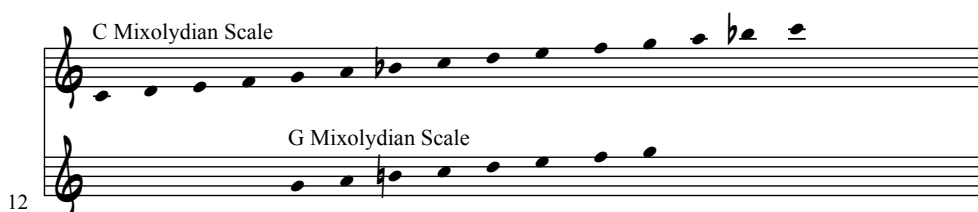
Also, take note of the repetition of the idea that is first stated in measures 13 and 14 and then almost repeated with a different resolution in measures 22-23 (see example A4).

Example A4



Vinson primarily uses three scales to construct this solo—the G major pentatonic and G Mixolydian scales over the G7 chords, and the C Mixolydian scale over the C7. Notice that the only difference between the C and G Mixolydian scales is the B \flat and the B respectively.¹²

Although very similar in pitch content, the placement of the B \flat and B is crucial to “making the changes.” This alteration occurs almost every time there is a motion from C7 to G7. With only two one-measure occurrences of the D7 chords, it is difficult to decipher how Vinson is realizing these chords. One might expect an F# somewhere in his line. He glosses over these chords with



C Mixolydian ideas. Finally, the A#s act as lower neighboring tones to the Bs and always lead to Bs.

As far as style is concerned, vibrato is reserved for certain notes¹³ and varies both in speed and width. Most of his phrases end with either a quick, fingered fall or a “buttoned” tongue-stopped note. Due to the shuffle feel that the rhythm section is generating, Vinson’s sense of swing is causing his eighth-notes lines to be more on the triplet-based side.

¹³ The quarter-note “G’s” on the third beat during measure 5, 10, 11, 19, and 23 as well as the “G” on beat one of measure 21. Please note that not all of the quarter-notes have vibrato.

Helpful Accompanying Exercises:



G Major Pentatonic Scale



G Mixolydian Scale



C Mixolydian Scale



Improvitational Goals:

- Improvise four-bar phrases using the G major pentatonic scale
- Improvise four-bar phrases using the G Mixolydian scale
- Improvise four-bar phrases using the C Mixolydian scale
- Practice using repetition and building from a previous idea
- Improvise four-bar phrases alternating between the G major pentatonic, G Mixolydian, and C Mixolydian scales
- Improvise using the chord progression of the blues

A transcription of Eddie "Cleanhead" Vinson's improvised alto saxophone solo on
"Kidney Stew"
 found on the recording *"Kidney Stew (The Definitive Black & Blue Sessions)"*

Transcribed by Daniel Western

Solo starts @ 1:31

ALTO SAX.

5

9

13

17

21

Soul Meetin’

Lou Donaldson – Alto Saxophone

Recorded in 1961 and 1963, *A Man With A Horn*¹⁴ features a collection of both jazz standards as well as original compositions by alto saxophonist Lou Donaldson. “Soul Meetin’” is one of these original compositions. It is a tune whose form is 16 bars long and it is in the key of G major for the alto saxophone. Donaldson solos for three choruses.

Phrase length is an interesting component of this solo. The first two choruses are strikingly similar. They both start with 6 two-bar phrases that involve repetition and motivic development and they end with a four-bar phrase with a contrasting melodic idea. In the third chorus, Donaldson breaks his pattern. He starts with one long repetitive eight-bar phrase, continues with 2 two-bar phrases, and ends with a single four-bar phrase. Repetition and motivic development do not play as much of a role in the third chorus as they did in the first two.

“Soul Meetin’” has twice as many different chords¹⁵ and at certain points the harmony is moving twice as fast¹⁶ as our previous examples. While it is important to learn the arpeggios that are associated with these chords and address them within the correct harmonic rhythm as they appear in the song, it is equally important to realize that one does not have to acknowledge every chord within their improvised solo. Donaldson uses common tones or uses a scale that he has already established to navigate these faster moving harmonies. In fact, he only uses four scales to construct his solo, three of which are closely related as far as pitch content is

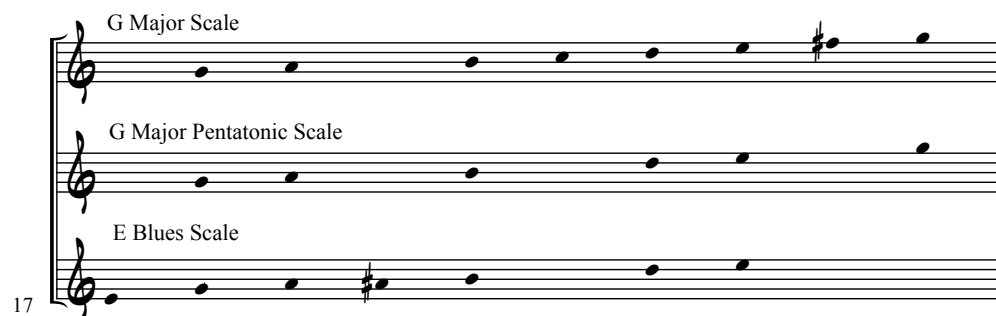
¹⁴ Donaldson, Lou. *A Man With A Horn*. Blue Note Records. 5214362. CD. 1992.

¹⁵ “Just A Closer Walk With Thee” uses four chords and “Kidney Stew (1)” uses three while “Soul Meetin’” uses eight.

¹⁶ The harmony to both “Just A Closer Walk With Thee” and “Kidney Stew (1)” moves at a rate greater than or equal to a whole note. At one point in the form of “Soul Meetin’” the harmony is changing every two beats.

concerned.¹⁷ In the first eight bars of each of the three choruses, Donaldson uses the G major pentatonic scale. Furthermore, in the next four-bar section¹⁸ of each chorus (measures 9-12, 25-28, and 41-44) he adds the A# or Bb to his pitch collection, thus employing the E blues scale. Donaldson switches back to the G major scale in the last four bars of each chorus (measures 13-16, 29-32, and 45-48). He uses the G blues scale as a transition between these other scales, moving fluidly from one to the other (measures 12-13, the last half of measure 40, and the last half of measure 45 through the first half of 46).

Many of the stylistic elements that were discussed with the “Just A Closer Walk With Thee” solo can and should be transferred to “Soul Meetin’.” Due to the similarities in key, tempo, and the groove being generated by the rhythm section many aspects of nuance, articulation, and sense of swing are the same. His eighth notes are relatively straight, there are a variety of articulations that affect both the attack as well as the duration of the note, and vibrato is used sparingly. There are, however, a few special saxophone techniques within this solo that need to be explained. The turn (Bb-C-Bb) during measure 26 is fingered using the bis Bb and side C. This is an unusual fingering for younger players but should be mastered to navigate passages like this. Also, listen closely to the scoops on the high C#s in the first eight bars of the third chorus. Donaldson is using both his jaw and his fingers to create the scoops. He is quickly



¹⁸ It is interesting that this is the section of the tune where the harmony is the most distant from our home key of G major. The C7 implies a resolution to F major and the F7 implies a resolution to Bb major.

fingering C and C# on his way to the high Ds which he bends with his jaw. During the last beat of measure 45 Donaldson alters his timbre by growling. Humming or singing while playing at the same time achieves this effect.

Helpful Accompanying Exercises:



- Improvise two and four-bar phrases using the G major pentatonic scale
- Improvise two and four-bar phrases using the E blues scale
- Improvise two and four-bar phrases using the G major scale
- Improvise over the chord progression of “Soul Meetin”
- Practice growling. Try to interject this technique into your solos.

A transcription of Lou Donaldson's improvised alto saxophone solo on

"Soul Meetin'"

found on the recording "A Man With A Horn."

Transcribed by Daniel Western

Solo Starts @ :49

ALTO SAX. **G6**

5 **A MIN7 D7**

9 **G6 G7 C7 F7**

13 **G6 E MIN7 A MIN7 D7 G6**

17 **G6**

21 **A MIN7 D7**

25 **G6 G7 C7 F7**

29 **G6 A MIN7 D7 G6**

2 Soul Meetin'

The musical score for "Soul Meetin'" is written in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. It consists of four staves of music, with measure numbers 35, 37, 41, and 45 indicated at the start of each staff.

- Staff 1 (Measures 35-38):** Starts with a G6 chord. The melody consists of eighth-note runs. Measure 38 ends with a D7 chord.
- Staff 2 (Measures 39-42):** Continues the eighth-note runs. Measure 42 ends with a D7 chord.
- Staff 3 (Measures 43-46):** Features a G6 chord in measure 43, followed by a G7 chord in measure 44, a C7 chord in measure 45, and an F7 chord in measure 46. The melody includes a triplet in measure 46.
- Staff 4 (Measures 47-50):** Starts with a G6 chord, followed by an A MIN7 chord in measure 48, a D7 chord in measure 49, and a G6 chord in measure 50. The melody concludes with a final G6 chord.

Reelin' and Rockin'

Johnny Hodges – Alto Saxophone

In the pantheon of great jazz alto saxophonists very few are as highly regarded as Johnny Hodges. He was involved with the Duke Ellington Orchestra for nearly fifty years and has been called by jazz historian Mark Gridley “the most influential jazz alto saxophonist to come out of the swing era.”¹⁹

The double CD set *The Soul of Ben Webster*²⁰ was released in its current incarnation in 1995. However, it is actually a compilation of three different late-1950's LP recordings. One of these recordings was Hodges' LP “Blues A-Plenty.” The twelve-bar blues “Reelin' and Rockin'” comes from this recording. It is in the key of D major for the alto saxophone and Hodges solos for two choruses.

Hodges limits himself to the D Mixolydian scale throughout his solo with only a few exceptions. The A#s and most of the Fs (and enharmonically E#s) are chromatic lower neighbors, leading to Bs or F# respectively. The other exceptions are the Fs in measures 5-6, where they are the chordal 7th of the G7. Hodges is quite clever in his choice of pitches. It is a common practice to treat the eighth measure in a twelve-bar blues as some type of vi7 or V7/ii. In this recording, the rhythm section treats the eighth bar as a vi7 or Bmin7 for the alto saxophone. The similarities between D7 (D, F# A, C) and Bmin7 (B, D, F#, A) are many. They share 3 out of 4 pitch classes. Notice how Hodges reserves the pitch B until the eighth measure. This really brings out the “change.” It also should be pointed out that Hodges disregards some chords that are being played by the rhythm section. In this variation of the twelve-bar blues

¹⁹ *Jazz Styles: History and Analysis*, 9th ed. by Mark Gridley (New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 2006), 111.

²⁰ Ben Webster. *The Soul Of Ben Webster*. Verve/Polygram. 5274752. CD. 1995.

progression the rhythm section is treating the second measure as a G7, thus making the harmonic progression in the first four bars I-IV-I-I. Hodges treats these measures all as D7. While this is not an unusual practice, it is interesting since we know now that he would later be quite meticulous in his realization of the Bmin7.

Hodges uses two and four-bar phrases throughout his solo. Most of these phrases are constructed using repetition and motivic development. The first eight bars of the second chorus (example A5) is one example.

Example A5

The musical notation for Example A5 consists of two staves. The first staff contains measures 13, 14, and 15. The second staff contains measures 17, 18, 19, and 20. Chord symbols G7 are placed above measures 13, 14, 15, 17, 18, and 19. A Bmin7 chord symbol is placed above measure 20. The melody consists of eighth and quarter notes with various rests.

Notice how he establishes a motif during measure 13 and then repeats the same material during measure 14. The material during measure 15 starts as it did before but is altered to develop the phrase. It is interesting to look at the melody and harmony of these four bars. Hodges ignores the G7 (one would expect him to play a B (the 3rd) or an F (the 7th) to really bring out the change) and navigates these measures using a D Mixolydian scale. However, he does not emphasize the F# (the 3rd). Then he essentially repeats that entire four-bar phrase with only a few rhythmic differences during the next four bars (measures 17-20: G7-D7). It is common for improvisers to treat the IV chord in a blues as a minor I. Theoretically this works when you analyze the upper structure of the G7 (IV): 5, 7, and 9 are D, F, and A—a D minor triad. Therefore, the reasoning behind the de-emphasis of the F# is quite clever. It allows him to be

melodically repetitive without clashing with the harmony (the F# would have clashed with the F# in the G7).

Because of his importance in the history of jazz, one should pay special attention to Hodges' style. He is known for his wide and fast vibrato as well as his pitch bending abilities. During this solo, most of the notes that are a quarter-note or longer in duration are treated with vibrato and those that do not have vibrato are usually bent. He uses a false fingering twice: once during measure 11 (the D marked with a +) and once in measure 23 (also the D marked with a +). He is using the palm key that is normally associated with high D (written D6) without the octave key. This fingering has a different timbre and the pitch can be scooped if the key is depressed slowly. Finally, make sure to match Hodges' sense of swing; his eighth notes are heavily swung.

Helpful Accompanying Exercises:

The image displays six musical staves, each representing a different exercise. Each staff begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#), indicating the key of D major. The exercises are as follows:

- D7:** The first staff shows a D7 chord (F#3, C#4, G4) followed by a melodic line: D4-E4-F#4-G4-A4-B4-A4-G4-F#4-E4-D4.
- G7:** The second staff shows a G7 chord (B3, D4, F#4, G4) followed by a melodic line: G4-A4-B4-A4-G4-F#4-E4-D4-C4-B3.
- Bmin7:** The third staff shows a Bmin7 chord (D3, E3, F#3, G4) followed by a melodic line: B3-C4-D4-E4-F#4-G4-A4-B4-A4-G4-F#4-E4-D4.
- Emin7:** The fourth staff shows an Emin7 chord (G3, A3, B3, C4) followed by a melodic line: E4-F#4-G4-A4-B4-A4-G4-F#4-E4-D4-C4-B3.
- A7:** The fifth staff shows an A7 chord (C#3, E4, G4, A4) followed by a melodic line: A4-B4-C#4-D4-E4-F#4-E4-D4-C#4-B4-A4.
- D Mixolydian Scale:** The sixth staff shows the D Mixolydian scale (D4-E4-F#4-G4-A4-B4-A4-G4-F#4-E4-D4) written across the staff.

Improvisatory Goals:

- Improvise four-bar phrases using the D Mixolydian scale
- Improvising over the blues chord progression using the D Mixolydian scale only changing to F naturals on the G7.
- Incorporate Hodges' style into your solo; i.e. vibrato, scoops, etc.

A transcription of **Johnny Hodges'** improvised alto saxophone solo on
"Reelin' and Rockin'"
 from the recording *"The Soul Of Ben Webster."*

Transcribed by Daniel Western

Solo starts @ 1:50

ALTO SAX.

The musical score is written for alto saxophone in the key of D major (two sharps). It consists of six staves of music. Above the staves, the following chords are indicated: D7, G7, D7, G7, D7, B MIN7, E MIN7, A7, D7, G7, D7, B MIN7, E MIN7, A7, D7. The score includes various musical notations such as eighth notes, quarter notes, and half notes, as well as triplets and slurs. Measure numbers 5, 9, 13, 17, and 21 are marked at the beginning of their respective staves.

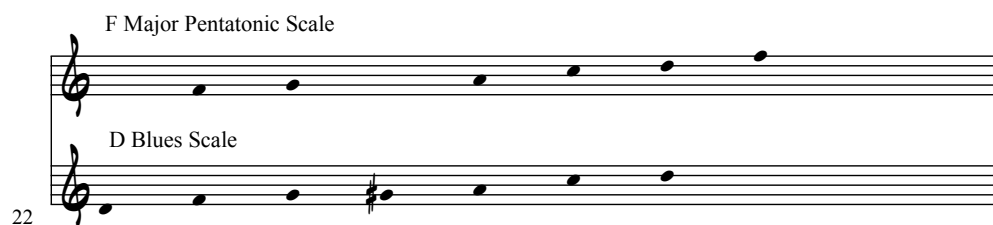
Moten Swing

Jesse Davis – Alto Saxophone

Music plays an important role in the 1996 film, *Kansas City*. It is set in the titular city in the 1930s. One of the primary locations of the film is a jazz club. Period-correct music can be heard throughout much of the movie. Instead of using recordings and actors to play the parts of the in-scene jazz band, the director had real jazz musicians playing jazz in the style of the 1930's on screen. One of the tunes on the sound track²¹ is Benny Moten's "Moten Swing," a tune whose form is AABA and is 32 bars in length. Jesse Davis, an alto saxophonist, solos for one chorus.

The chords in the A sections of "Moten Swing" center around the key of F major and Davis' pitch selection is mostly diatonic. He employs the F major pentatonic and the D blues scale throughout many of these sections. Notice the similarities of these two scales; they are identical, except for a single chromatic passing note.²² When Davis employs the G#/A \flat it acts as a lower neighbor to the 3rd (A) on all but two occasions. In measures 26 and 32 the A \flat is the "blue" or lowered third. Notice that in both occurrences, he bends the note to get that "bluesy" quality. These two occurrences, along with the material that Davis plays at the end of measure 2 going into measure 3, briefly suggest the use of the F blues scale. Although he does not use it much, it would still be wise to practice this F blues scale.

²¹ *Kansas City: The Original Motion Picture Soundtrack*. Verve Records.
Verve 314 529 554. CD. 1997.



The “B” section is harmonically centered around the key of A major. Davis employs the A major pentatonic scale throughout seven bars of this section. Since F major (the key center of the “A” section) and A major (the key center of the “B” section) are not closely related keys, there is a ii-V7 that leads back to F in the eighth bar of the “B” section. Davis outlines the Gmin7 with chord tones, a chromatic passing tone, and chromatic lower neighbor (see example A6).



Davis is playing in a 1930’s swing band style. He is trying to evoke the sounds of Johnny Hodges and Benny Carter. Notice that his vibrato, when used, is fast and wide and his ample use of bends and scoops. These techniques are characteristics of the older swing style. The impressive bend at the beginning of the “B” section, from C to C#, is achieved by a combination of fingering and voicing techniques. He is slowly lifting the middle finger of his left hand and manipulating his air stream with his throat.

Helpful Accompanying Exercises:



Improvisatory Goals:

- Improvise four-bar phrases using the F major pentatonic scale
- Improvise four-bar phrases using the D blues scale
- Improvise four-bar phrases alternating between the F major pentatonic and D blues scales
- Improvise four-bar phrases using the A major pentatonic scale
- Improvise over the chord progression of “Moten Swing”

Be sure to try to incorporate the stylistic elements that you have practiced while learning the solo.

A transcription of **Jesse Davis'** improvised alto saxophone solo on
"Moten Swing"
 from the recording *"Kansas City: The Original Motion Picture Soundtrack"*

Transcribed by Daniel Western

Solo starts @ :59

ALTO SAX.

59

65

71

77

83

89

95

101

107

113

119

125

131

137

143

149

155

161

167

173

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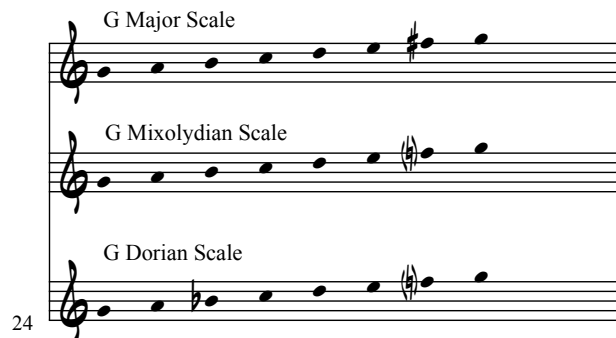
Wandering Mind Blues

Eddie “Cleanhead” Vinson—Alto Saxophone

“Wandering Mind Blues” on Eddie “Cleanhead” Vinson’s *Greatest Hits*²³ album is another twelve-bar blues in the key of G for the alto saxophone. In this incarnation of the blues progression the I chord (G7) is the underlying harmony for the first four bars followed by the IV chord (C7) for two bars, a return to the I chord for two bars, and a ii7-V7 turn around (Amin7-D7) in measures nine and ten respectively and a return to the I7 chord for the last two bars. There are no secondary dominants or other additional changes. Vinson solos for two choruses.

Vinson employs four-bar phrases and the scales of G mixolydian, G dorian, and G major to construct his solo. Please note the similarities and differences between these three scales.²⁴ G mixolydian and G dorian share all but one note; G mixolydian has a B, while G dorian has a B♭. Also, G mixolydian and G major share all but one note; G Mixolydian has an F, while G major has an F#. Vinson further obfuscates the scale selection issue by anticipating chords²⁵ and, in the case of G Mixolydian and G Dorian, uses both inflections of B (B♭ or A# and B) back-to-back.²⁶ However, it should be noted that the only time Vinson plays a B♭ that cannot be thought of as

²³ Eddie “Cleanhead” Vinson. *Greatest Hits*. Master Classics Records. CD. 2011.



²⁴ For example: Measures 6-7 and 18-20. These licks start over a C7 but clearly rhythmically and agogically emphasize the next chord of G7.

²⁶ Considering how he consistently resolves the A#s to B, theoretically the A#s are non-harmonic lower neighbors to the Bs.

some type of neighboring tone is in measure 5 over the C7 chord (the 7th of the dominant seventh chord). Furthermore, he never uses a B \flat or A \sharp without resolving to the B on a G7 chord.

Likewise, the only occurrence of an F \sharp is over the D7 chord (the 3rd of the chord). All other inflections of F are of the natural variety. These subtleties allow Vinson to sound like he is “making the changes” even though he is not emphatically outlining the chords.

This solo is an excellent study in articulation (see example A7). Vinson employs a great variety of tongued articulation. Not only does he use the stereotypical jazz legato tonguing, but he also uses a muffle-tonguing technique in measure 5 to rearticulate the D on the upbeat of one. If you listen closely, you might hear that the reed is still vibrating even though the tongue is in contact with it. He also uses a heavier articulation within a line of eighth notes to emphasize certain notes or to denote a change in direction.

Example A7



It is the combination of these types articulations along with the heavier, more abrupt, tongue-starting and stopping of notes that add another layer of variety and individuality into a person’s playing.

Helpful Accompanying Exercises:

The image displays seven musical exercises on a single staff, each beginning with a chord symbol and a scale run. The exercises are:

- G7**: A scale starting on G, moving up and then down, with a G7 chord symbol above the first measure.
- C7**: A scale starting on C, moving up and then down, with a C7 chord symbol above the first measure.
- A MIN7**: A scale starting on A, moving up and then down, with an A MIN7 chord symbol above the first measure.
- D7**: A scale starting on D, moving up and then down, with a D7 chord symbol above the first measure.
- G Major Scale**: A scale starting on G, moving up and then down, with the text "G Major Scale" above the first measure.
- G Mixolydian Scale**: A scale starting on G, moving up and then down, with the text "G Mixolydian Scale" above the first measure.
- G Dorian Scale**: A scale starting on G, moving up and then down, with the text "G Dorian Scale" above the first measure.

Improvisatory Goals:

- Improvise four-bar phrases using the G major, G Mixolydian, and G Dorian scales.
- Improvise over the chord progression of the blues
- Practice different articulations and try to interject them into your solos

"Wandering Mind Blues"

from the recording "*Greatest Hits.*"

Solo starts @ 1:12

G7

ALTO SAX.

27

G7

A MIN7

07

G7

G7

27

97

A MIN7

07

G7

My Jelly Roll Soul (Alt)

John Handy – Alto Saxophone

In 1960, jazz bassist and composer, Charles Mingus, released an album on Atlantic Records titled *Blues & Roots*.²⁷ Later in 1998, Rhino Entertainment re-released the album with additional bonus tracks.²⁸ These bonus tracks were alternate takes that did not appear on the 1960 version. This study contains one track from the original recording as well as a track from the re-release. Both of these tracks are versions of Mingus' original composition "My Jelly Roll Soul" that was dedicated to one of the first composers in the jazz idiom, Jelly Roll Morton. Also, both of these tracks feature an alto saxophone solo from John Handy. The first solo to be discussed comes from the alternate track and it be referred to as "My Jelly Roll Soul (Alt)."

The tune itself is somewhat unusual in that the form is 14 bars long. Most jazz tunes have forms that are evenly devisable by 4; i.e. 12, 16, 24, 32, and 64. Sometimes improvisers can get caught only thinking in four and eight-bar phrases. This 14 bar form can be problematic because the form, and therefore the phrasing, departs from tradition. Also, these recordings prove difficult to grasp due to the fact that the rhythm section changes the groove and also the local level harmony at the beginning of the second chorus. Notice throughout the first chorus of Handy's solo (measures 1-14) the rhythm section is playing in a "two-feel," i.e. the bass is playing half notes on beats 1 and 3. In the first four measures (measures 1-4) the overall harmony is that of a C7 (or V7). However, the rhythm section is oscillating back and fourth between a Gmin7 and a C7 (each lasting half a measure). In the second chorus (measures 15-28) the rhythm section switches to a typical swing groove and the bass player "walks" quarter

²⁷ Mingus, Charles. *Blues and Roots*. Warner Bros. 7411640. CD. 2012.

²⁸ Mingus, Charles. *Passions Of A Man*. Rhino. 8122728712. CD. 1997.

notes on all four beats. What once was Gmin7-C7 (measures 1-4) has now been simplified to just C7 (measures 15-18). All other harmonies are the same.

For the most part, Handy uses Mixolydian scales over dominant 7th chords; C7²⁹—C Mixolydian, F7—F Mixolydian, B♭7—B♭ Mixolydian. The exception is the D7 chords (measures 10 and 24). They act as secondary dominants that tonicize the Gmin7 chords. In both instances Handy employs altered 9th's. In measure 10 the E♭ is the ♭9 of the D7 and in measure 24 the F♯ (or E♯) and the E♭ are the #9 and the ♭9 respectively. In fact the #9—♭9 resolving to the 5th is a common “lick” or melodic formulae in jazz³⁰ (see example A8).

Example A8

5 4 5 5 7 #9 b9 #9 b9 5 1 5 1 5 5 5 5

²⁹ Within this tune, the Gmin7 chords always act as a ii7 that leads a V7 (or C7). They should be considered as elaborations of the C7 and therefore C Mixolydian is used. One could argue that Handy is thinking G Dorian over the Gmin7 chords. Considering G Dorian and C Mixolydian are the exact same when one considers pitch content, for simplicity's sake only the C7's will be discussed.

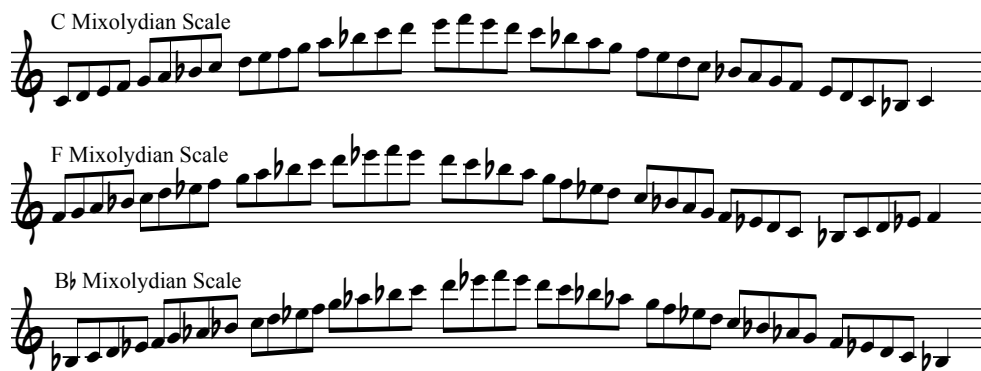
³⁰ In measure 24, Handy resolves the #9—♭9 to the 5th as one might expect, to the D of the Gmin7.

Helpful Accompanying Exercises:



Be sure to practice both D7(b9) and D7(#9) in both octaves of the saxophone.

There are scales that are typically played during these chords however to stay within the scope of this study, they should be addressed at a different time.



Improvisatory Goals:

- Improvise four-bar phrases using the C Mixolydian scale
- Improvise four-bar phrases using the F Mixolydian scale
- Improvise four-bar phrases using the Bb Mixolydian scale
- Practice using the $\sharp 9 \rightarrow \flat 9$ of the D7 resolving to the 5th of the Gmin7
- Improvise over the chord progression of “My Jelly Roll Soul.”

A transcription of **John Handy's** improvised alto saxophone solo on
"My Jelly Roll Soul-alt. take"
 from the recording *"Blues and Roots."*

Transcribed by Daniel Western

Solo starts @ 1:24

ALTO SAX.

5

9

13

17

21

25

29

Kidney Stew (2)

Eddie “Cleanhead” Vinson—Alto Saxophone

In 1962, alto saxophonists, Eddie “Cleanhead” Vinson and Julian “Cannonball” Adderley recorded an album for Riverside Records that has been aptly named “Cleanhead & Cannonball.”³¹ Due to his increasing popularity, Adderley was given creative freedom by Riverside and used this as an opportunity to rejuvenate the waning career of Vinson. This album features many of Vinson’s compositions, one of which is the twelve-bar blues, “Kidney Stew.” Vinson sings the melody and improvises two choruses on alto saxophone.

This version of “Kidney Stew” employs a harmonically more complex twelve-bar blues progression. In simpler blues, the first four bars are the same chord (in this key, G7, would be realized by the rhythm section for four measures). However, in this case, a C7 is the second chord in every chorus. Also, in the eighth measure of each chorus there is the secondary dominant, E7, that temporarily tonicizes the Amin7. Finally, this version of “Kidney Stew” employs a ii7-V7 turnaround.

Vinson constructs his solo using four-bar phrases. Please notice the rhythmic variety of starting and ending points to these phrases. He also uses higher chord extensions³² as well as passing chromaticism³³ that is typical in the jazz language. As far as scale selection is concerned, Vinson mainly uses G Mixolydian over the G7, D7, and Amin7 chords. This is slightly unusual since the F in G Mixolydian clashes with the F# in the D7³⁴ but this does not seem to be a problem due to the limited appearance of these Fs over these chords. Except for

³¹ Vinson, Eddie “Cleanhead.” *Cleanhead & Cannonball*. Landmark Records. LCD-1309-2. CD. 1998.

³² For example: the A (the 9th) over the G7 in measure 1 which gets elaborated in measure 2, C7, (the 13th).

³³ For example: B-C-C#-D in measure 3-4 and G-Gb -F in measure 4.

³⁴ Normally, it is suggested to use D Mixolydian over the Amin7 and D7 chords.

the first C7 (where he uses C Mixolydian), Vinson uses the G blues scale over the C7s. Much like Johnny Hodges solo on “Reelin’ and Rockin’,” Vinson treats the IV chord in this blues as a minor I. The upper structure of the C7 chord (5th-G, 7th-B \flat , and 9th-D) form a G minor triad. Therefore, the G blues scale, a minor oriented scale, works over a C7. However, notice not all the notes sound good and should be treated with care. For example, the D \flat is never emphasized. It is always treated as a chromatic passing tone.

Compare the three solos of Vinson that are included in this study and pay special interest to style; both “Kidney Stews” and “Wandering Mind Blues.” “Kidney Stew (1)” has a shuffle feel and is leaning more towards the blues³⁵ tradition while “Wandering Mind Blues” and “Kidney Stew (2)” are played in more of a “straight-ahead” jazz style. Notice how Vinson changes his playing to reflect these differences. He uses vibrato more (and it is wider and faster), his eighth notes are more uneven or triplet based and he employs more pitch bending effects in the bluesy “Kidney Stew (1).” Conversely, he uses vibrato less, and when he does, it is slower and more shallow, his eighth notes are straighter, and he does not affect the pitch as much in “Wandering Mind Blues” and “Kidney Stew (2).” His harmonic pallet is broader in the latter solos as well, both in the number of scales he employs as well as his use of chord extensions. This is not to say that one solo is better than the other but rather to point out that as an improviser, one should try to match the tune’s and the rhythm section’s style.

³⁵ Speaking of the genre of music, not the chord progression/form

Helpful Accompanying Exercises:



Improvisatory Goals:

- Improvise four-bar phrases using the G Mixolydian scale
- Improvise four-bar phrases using the C Mixolydian scale
- Improvise four-bar phrases using the G blues scale
- Improvise over the chord progression of the blues
- Improvise using extensions of the chords: i.e. 7th, 9th (2nd), and 13th (6th)

A transcription of Eddie "Cleanhead" Vinson's improvised alto saxophone solo on
"Kidney Stew"
 from the recording *"Cleanhead and Cannonball."*

Transcribed by Daniel Western

Solo starts @ 1:20

ALTO SAX.

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The Intimacy Of The Blues

Johnny Hodges—Alto Saxophone

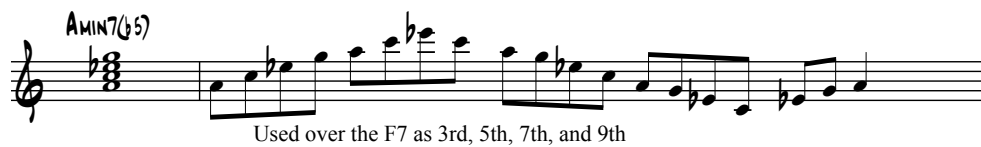
In the spring of 1967, Johnny Hodges along with a combo comprised of some of Ellington's star soloists, recorded the first half on an album titled *The Intimacy Of The Blues: The Duke Ellington Small Bands*.³⁶ The title track is a twelve-bar blues in the alto saxophone's key of C major. Hodges solos for two choruses.

This solo is remarkable because of Hodges' use of non-normative triads and seventh-chord arpeggios. In the key of C, one would expect to see a majority of C major triads (C, E, & G) or in the case of a C7 one would expect C dominant arpeggios (C, E, G, & B \flat). However Hodges consistently emphasizes scale degree 6 (A) and therefore most of his solo is generated from triads and seventh-chord arpeggios built on A. Over most of the C7 chords he plays either an A diminished triad (A, C, & E \flat), employing the "blue" or lowered 3rd (E \flat), or A minor seventh arpeggio (A, C, E, & G). Hodges uses both the A diminished triad and the A half-diminished seventh-chord over the F7 chords. Here the E \flat acts as the chordal 7th and the G is the 9th. Hodges is using the upper structures of the chords to create his solos. He employs the C blues scale over the turn-around in the first chorus and uses C Mixolydian in the second chorus.

Like in "Reelin' and Rockin,'" Hodges uses ample vibrato and pitch bending effects and uses these techniques in similar places within the phrase. Notice the longer note values in measures 8 and 12, he starts without vibrato and "warms up" the note with vibrato towards the end.

³⁶ Ellington, Duke. *Intimacy Of The Blues*. Prestige. OJCCD 624. CD. 1996.

Helpful Accompanying Exercises:





Improvisatory Goals:

- Improvise two-bar phrases using the C Mixolydian scale
- Improvise two-bar phrases using the F Mixolydian scale
- Improvise two-bar phrases using the C blues scale
- Improvise using the A diminished triad
- Improvise using the A half-diminished 7th chord Amin7(b5)
- Improvise using the chord progression of the blues.

A transcription of **Johnny Hodges'** improvised alto saxophone solo on
"The Intimacy Of The Blues"
 from the recording *"Intimacy Of The Blues: The Duke Ellington Small Bands."*

Solo starts @ 1:00

Transcribed by Daniel Western

ALTO SAX.

Chord symbols: C7, F7, C7, F7, C7, A7, DMIN7, G7, C7, F7, C7, A7, DMIN7, G7, C7, C7.

Measure numbers: 1, 5, 9, 13, 17, 21, 25.

My Jelly Roll Soul

John Handy – Alto Saxophone

The final alto saxophone solo included in this study, a transcription of John Handy's improvisation on "My Jelly Roll Soul," comes from the previously mentioned 1960 recording *Blues & Roots*³⁷ by jazz bassist and composer Charles Mingus. Since this take was recorded on the same day and by the same ensemble as "My Jelly Roll Soul (Alt)" all of the same formal and harmonic considerations apply. Even the change of groove by the rhythm section at the beginning of the second chorus (starting in measure 15) during the alto saxophone solo occurs.

Handy makes many of the same pitch/scale choices as discussed in "My Jelly Roll Soul (Alt)." Besides the surface level melodies, the main difference between these two solos is phrasing. In this version, Handy uses longer six and eight bar phrases as opposed to the two and four bar phrases that dominate the alternate version. Similarly, the phrases in "My Jelly Roll Soul" tend to be eighth note driven whereas in the alternate version Handy's melodies were an even mixture of eighth and quarter notes. The sixteenth-note passage that initiates during measure 25 should be carefully practiced. Although the fingerings are idiomatic to the saxophone, they must be played in time in order to sound correct. Using a metronome, start slowly and gradually speed up until you can play the passage with the recording. Use the bis fingering for B \flat on all of the arpeggiated passages and the side fingering for the chromatic passage, C—B—B \flat , in measure 26.

On a melodic level, these two solos have several similarities. Handy uses the same "lick" verbatim, as seen in example A8, at the same point in the form and he uses similar ideas at similar harmonic situations. Let us look at the first four bars in both solos. In "My Jelly Roll

³⁷ Mingus, Charles. *Blues and Roots*. Warner Bros. 7411640. CD. 2012.

Soul (Alt), Handy starts a melodic and rhythmic sequential pattern beginning in the first measure and ending on the downbeat of the third measure. Compare that with the sequential pattern he plays in “My Jelly Roll Soul” beginning in measure 2 and ending in measure 4. Despite their positioning within the measure, the melodies are the same (see example A9).

Example A9

My Jelly Roll Soul:



My Jelly Roll Soul (Alt):



Similarly, the triplet arpeggiation of the Gmin7 chord leading in to the C7 during measure 25-26 in alternate version can be heard beginning in measure 14 of “My Jelly Roll Soul” (see example A10).

Example A10

My Jelly Roll Soul:



My Jelly Roll Soul (Alt):



And finally, he uses the exact same “lick” in the exact same point in the form in both second choruses of his solo, measure 24 (see Example A11).

Example A11

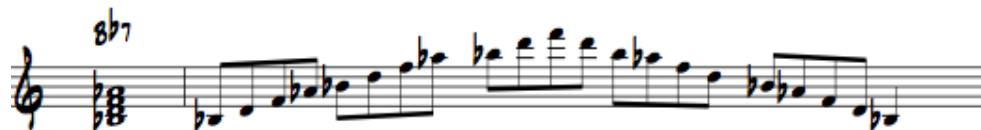
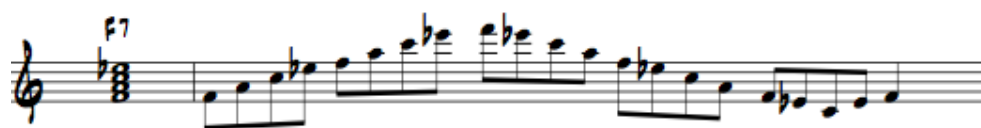
My Jelly Roll Soul:



My Jelly Roll Soul (Alt):



Helpful Accompanying Exercises:



Improvisatory Goals:

- Improvise four-bar phrases using the C Mixolydian scale
- Improvise four-bar phrases using the F Mixolydian scale
- Improvise four-bar phrases using the B \flat Mixolydian scale
- Practice using the $\sharp 9 \rightarrow \flat 9$ of the D7 resolving to the 5th of the Gmin7
- Improvise using double-time
- Improvise over the chord progression of “My Jelly Roll Soul.”

A transcription of **John Handy's** improvised alto saxophone solo on
"My Jelly Roll Soul"
 from the recording *"Blues and Roots."*

Solo starts @ 3:09

Transcribed by Daniel Western

ALTO SAX.

1

5

9

13

17

21

25

29

3. TENOR SAXOPHONE

Scald Dog

Herb Hardesty—Tenor Saxophone

“Scald Dog” is the seventeenth track on Dr. John’s 1992 release *Goin’ Back To New Orleans*.³⁸ It features a tenor saxophone solo by Herbert Hardesty. The solo form is sixteen bars long and Hardesty improvises for two choruses. Transposed for the tenor saxophone, the solo is in the key of F major and uses only three chords: F, B♭7 and C7. The chords are either triads or seventh chords; extensions and/or alterations are not used.³⁹

Hardesty constructs his solo using the F major scale over the F and C7 chords and the B♭ Mixolydian scale over the B♭7 chord. A majority of the non-diatonic pitches are chromatic neighbor tones; mm. 4 and 25-26. Notice that most of the longer notes are chord tones. The only other non-diatonic pitch, the E♭ in mm. 23, is a cliché blues lick that can be found in countless other jazz compositions and solos.⁴⁰

Hardesty uses two and four bar phrases throughout “Scald Dog.” He also builds upon an idea (see example T1) with repetition and variation to generate additional material.

Example T1

The musical notation for Example T1 consists of two staves. The first staff has two measures: the first measure contains a half note F4, and the second measure contains a half note A4. Above the first measure is a bracket labeled "F Decent of a 4th". Above the second measure is a bracket labeled "Decent of a 4th". The second staff has four measures: the first measure contains a half note F4, the second measure contains a half note A4, the third measure contains a half note B♭4, and the fourth measure contains a half note C5. Above the first measure is a bracket labeled "F Decent of a 4th". Above the third measure is a bracket labeled "B♭7 Decent of a 4th".

³⁸ Dr. John. *Goin’ Back To New Orleans*. Flashback Records. 26940. CD. 2008.

³⁹ Extensions are chord tones that exist above the 7th. Common extensions include the 9th and 13th. Alterations are chord tones that have been chromatically altered. Common alterations include the #5, #9, and ♭9.

⁴⁰ For example: Herbie Hancock’s “Chameleon” and the Meters “Cissy Strut.”

Notice the descending fourth on the downbeat of measure one. This gets fleshed out with passing tones in measures 2-3 and repeated in measure 5. This descending fourth gets sequenced down (to fit the chord changes) in measures 7-8. The second chorus (measures 17-32) is based mainly on a rhythmic iteration of the triad; scale degrees 1, 3, and 5 (see example T2). Only in measures 27-28 do we get a deviation to a seventh chord.

Example T2



As far as style is concerned, Hardesty's eighth notes are fairly straight but he uses his air stream and articulation to create rhythmic accents. Most of the notes that are a quarter note and longer in length have vibrato on them. This vibrato is fast and wide. He uses pitch bending (mostly jaw) techniques as well on only certain notes. Most notably, the As on the upbeat of count two in measure 20 and count two of measure 22.

Helpful Accompanying Exercises:

The image displays five staves of musical notation for accompanying exercises. The first three staves are in treble clef and 4/4 time. The first staff begins with an F major chord (F, A, C) and contains a melody of eighth and quarter notes. The second staff begins with a Bb7 chord (Bb, Db, F, Ab) and contains a more complex melody with many accidentals. The third staff begins with a C7 chord (C, Eb, F, G) and contains a melody with many accidentals. The fourth staff is labeled 'F Major Scale' and shows the scale ascending and descending. The fifth staff is labeled 'Bb Mixolydian Scale' and shows the scale ascending and descending.

Improvitational Goals:

- Improvise two and four-bar phrases using the F major scale
- Improvise two and four-bar phrases using the B \flat Mixolydian scale.
- Connect your phrases by using repetition.
- Improvise over the chord progression of “Scald Dog.”

A transcription of **Herb Hardesty's** improvised tenor saxophone solo on

"Scald Dog"

found on the recording "*Goin' Back to New Orleans.*"

Transcribed by Daniel Western

Solo starts @ 1:02

TENOR SAX.

5

9

13

17

21

25

29

33

Chabootie

Gene Ammons—Tenor Saxophone

In the Spring of 1950, tenor saxophonist Gene Ammons led a jazz septet into the recording studio. A twelve-bar blues contrafact titled “Chabootie” was recorded.⁴¹ This tune in the key of A major for the tenor saxophone and Ammons solos for two choruses.

Ammons takes a vertical approach to constructing his improvisation.⁴² Throughout the two choruses, most of his melodies are linked to seventh-chord arpeggios that fall within the harmonic progression. When playing linearly, Ammons employs the A Mixolydian scale during the A7s, the D Mixolydian scale during the D7s, and the E Mixolydian scale during the Bmin7-E7s. However most of his linear passages include some type of chromaticism. Ammons either uses chromatic passing tones or the melodic formulae characteristically found in bebop called “enclosure”⁴³ (see example T3). An enclosure uses a pair of notes, sometimes one is diatonic but often they are both chromatically altered, to delay the arrival of or embellish a goal note.

Example T3



⁴¹ Stitt, Sonny. *Stitt's Bits: The Bebop Recordings*. Prestige Records. PRCD3-30043-2. CD. 2006.

⁴² A vertical approach to improvisation relies heavily upon exploiting the differences between chords, often by outlining the chords via arpeggiations. This differs from a linear or horizontal approach where a single mode is employed and common tones are emphasized.

⁴³ Jerry Coker—"the preceding of an aimed-for note with two other notes, the first being a half-step above that note, the second being a half step below that note, then the aimed-for note itself, as in D \flat , B, C."

It is common within the ninth bar of the blues to have an applied ii7-V7 that temporarily tonicizes the ii7. This occurs in both choruses of Ammons' solo (measures 8 and 20). The rhythm section is generating a C#min7-F#7 that leads to Bmin7. However, Ammons' uses a chord substitution technique known as "planing" and replaces the F#7 with a Cmin7. Thus the implied harmony as outlined by Ammons' playing is C#min7-Cmin7-Bmin7.

Example T4

The image displays two staves of musical notation in G major (one sharp). The first staff represents the original harmony: A7, C#min7, F#7, and Bmin7. The second staff represents the 'planed' harmony: A7, C#min7, Cmin7, and Bmin7. The C#min7 and Cmin7 chords are shown as substitutions for the F#7 chord. Fingerings are indicated by numbers 1-5 below the notes. The notation includes eighth notes, quarter notes, and rests, with some notes beamed together in groups of three.

Stylistically, Ammons' eighth notes are rather straight. Also, notice that not all of his eighth notes are given equal weight. Within a line of eighth notes, some are softer than others. As far as articulation is concerned, he mostly employs legato tonguing and reserves his harder articulations for phrase ending "buttoned" notes. His vibrato is reserved for choice notes and is not used all of the time.

Helpful Accompanying Exercises:



A and D mixolydian scales with Enclosures on scale degrees 1, 3, and 5.



Improvisational Goals:

- Improvise two and four-bar phrases using the A7 arpeggio
- Improvise two and four-bar phrases using the D7 arpeggio
- Improvise two and four-bar phrases using the E7 arpeggio
- Improvise using the “planing” technique: Play an idea up and down by half steps.
- Improvise using enclosures.
- Improvise over the progression of the blues.

A transcription of **Gene Ammons'** improvised tenor saxophone solo on
"Chabootie"

found on the recording *"Stitt's Bits: The Bebop Recordings"*

Transcribed by Daniel Western

Solo starts @ :52

TENOR SAX.

5

9

13

17

21

25

Silks and Satins

Frank Wess—Tenor Saxophone

In October of 1957 the Count Basie Orchestra recorded an album that was originally released on the Roulette label titled *The Atomic Mr. Basie*. In 1994, this album along with additional recordings from the same sessions were released as *The Complete Atomic Basie*.⁴⁴ One of these bonus tracks is a Jimmy Mundy composition titled “Silks and Satins.” It is a twelve-bar blues contrafact that features a two-chorus, tenor saxophone solo by Frank Wess.

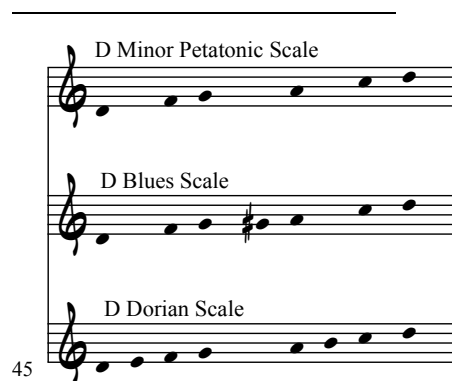
This solo is a good example of improvising within the context of a big band arrangement. Wess matches the mood and feel of the arrangement as well as allowing the backgrounds to accompany him. Notice that he ends his phrases as the backgrounds begin. He does not try to compete or play over the big band. This is especially apparent in the second chorus where the ensemble saxophones have an actual moving line along with the brass held notes and hits. Wess plays a two-bar phrase and lets the ensemble answer him.

Wess’ scale selection is quite interesting. “Silks and Satins” is a blues in the key of D major for the tenor saxophone. However, Wess, for all but three very brief occasions (measures 7, 9 and 13), avoids using the major 3rd, F#. Instead, he emphasizes F \flat . Therefore, most of the scales he uses to construct this solo are D minor flavored: D minor pentatonic, D blues, and D Dorian. He uses the D minor pentatonic and D blues scales during the D7s. Notice the

⁴⁴ Basie, “Count” William. *The Complete Atomic Basie*. Blue Note/Roulette Records #CDROU 1055, CD. 1994.

similarities between the D minor pentatonic scale and the D blues scale.⁴⁵ They share all of the same pitch classes except the D blues scale has the additional A \flat or G \sharp . In measures 5-6 and 17-18, over the G7s, Wess uses the D Dorian scale. It is common for improvisers to treat the IV chord in a blues as a minor I. Theoretically this works when you analyze the upper structure of the G7 (IV). 5, 7, and 9 are D, F, and A: a D minor triad. Therefore, the D Dorian scale, a minor oriented scale, works over a G7. During the last four bars of the blues there is some type of harmonic “turnaround” that leads back to I. In most cases, this turnaround is a ii7-V7. However it is not uncommon for the turnaround to be V7-IV7. The latter is the case for “Silks and Satins.” Wess primarily uses the D blues scales to navigate these sections.

Stylistically, Wess’ eighth notes are on the heavier side of swing and legato. He “warms” up longer note values by adding vibrato towards the end.



Helpful Accompanying Exercises:

Improvisatory Goals:

- Improvise two and four-bar phrases using the D minor pentatonic scale
- Improvise two and four-bar phrases using the D blues scale
- Improvise two and four-bar phrases using the D Dorian scale
- Improvise two-bar phrases and rest for two bars (i.e. trade with the big band)
- Improvise over the chord progression of the blues.

A transcription of **Frank Wess'** improvised tenor saxophone solo on
"Silks And Satins"
 found on the recording *"The Complete Atomic Basie"*

Transcribed by Daniel Western

Solo starts @ 2:07

TENOR SAX.

5

9

13

17

21

Parker's Pals

Scott Hamilton—Tenor Saxophone

“Parker's Pals” is a composition by baritone saxophonist, Leo Parker. It is one of hundreds of tunes based upon George Gershwin's composition, “I Got Rhythm.” It is 32 bars in length, it is an AABA form, and is typically performed in the concert key of B \flat major (tenor saxophone's C major). Tenor saxophonist, Scott Hamilton, recorded “Parker's Pals” on his 2008 Concord Jazz release *Across The Tracks*.⁴⁶ He improvises for one chorus.

Preparing to improvise over “Rhythm Changes”⁴⁷ is often a daunting task for young improvisers. Not only do they find the harmonic rhythm (a chord every two beats) to be intimidating but also the common practice of performing “Rhythm Changes” at considerably brisk tempos can thwart a positive experience for the young improviser. Luckily, Hamilton removes the latter by recording “Parker's Pals” at a reasonable 142 b.p.m. Also, the simpler variation of the “A” sections that the rhythm section generate as well as his linear improvised melodies help this solo to be obtainable for the young student.⁴⁸

The chords during the first four bars of the A sections elaborate C major. Often, young improvisers see these chords and treat them as four chords instead of one progression that has a central harmony. C-Amin7-Dmin7-G7 is I-vi7-ii7-V7 in C major. These measures can be navigated with a scale that outlines this harmony: either the C major scale or the C major pentatonic scale. Hamilton treats the first four bars during the first (measures 1-4) and the last (measures 25-28) A sections in this fashion. During the first four-bars of the second A section (measures 9-12), Hamilton's melodies are more chromatic and his thought process is difficult to

⁴⁶ Hamilton, Scott. *Across The Tracks*. Concord Jazz. CD 30388. CD. 2008. CD.

⁴⁷ Tunes that are contrafacts of “I Got Rhythm” are often called “Rhythm Changes.”

⁴⁸ Due to the popularity of the form many variants have arisen throughout the history of jazz improvisation. Jamey Aebersold's *Rhythm Changes: Vol 47* is an excellent resource for more information and further study on this common jazz form.

figure out precisely. The simplest rationale for the F# and the Eb during measure 10 is that Hamilton is substituting a D7(b9) for the Dmin7. He is basically turning a ii7 into a V7/V by raising the 3rd (the F to F#) and adding a color tone of the b9 to the chord. This hypothesis is made stronger by Hamilton's repeated use of chromatically altered pitches that can be analyzed as the b9th of a chord. Both the Bb during the Amin7 (implying an A7(b9)) and the Ab during the G7 (implying a G7(b9)) imply that Hamilton is suggesting a more complex harmony than that which is being generated by the rhythm section. Furthermore, the harmonies suggested by Hamilton's melodic ideas are not uncommon in the multiple variants of "Rhythm Changes."

Within "Rhythm Changes," the last four bars of the A sections consist of a harmonic shift to the IV chord during the first two bars and then a return to the I chord in the last two bars.⁴⁹

"Parker's Pals" is an example of this (see example T5).

Example T5



During these sections, Hamilton employs the F major scale over the chords relating to the harmonic center of F. His melodies over the last two bars of these sections, the chords relating to C major, are quite varied. During the first A section (measures 5-8) he substitutes A7(b9,#5) for the Amin7 and sequences that idea onto the G7, thus implying a G7(b9,#5) (see example T6).

Adding further complexity to the line is Hamilton's use of enclosures.

⁴⁹ There are two chords with alternate bass notes within this passage. C/E simply means that there is a C chord with an E being played in the bass. Likewise, C/G simply means that there is a C chord with a G being played in the bass. These two chords along with the passing chord, F#dim7, all have special voice leading properties that are specific and important. However the music theory that dictates the rules that govern these chords lies outside the parameters of this study. It should be noted that Hamilton's improvisation is not directly impacted by these rules.

Example T6

During the last four bars of the second A section (measures 13-16) Hamilton's melodic ideas are comparatively more simple. He uses the F major scale during the chords relative to the key of F major and he uses the C major scale (albeit with one enclosure that employs a chromatic alteration) during the chords relative to the key of C major.

Finally, during the last four bars of the last A section (measures 29-32) Hamilton begins with a bluesy cliché that one would normally find in the key of C major. This leads to a melodic and rhythm sequence of an ascending whole step idea that sequences down by halfstep (see example T7).

Example T7

“Parker’s Pals” bridge or B section begins harmonically with a ii7-V7-Imaj7 in the key of F major⁵⁰. For the most part, Hamilton navigates this progression with the F major scale. He accentuates the #5 of the C7 but those G#’s act as lower neighbors and passing tones that eventually resolve to the b5 before moving on to the Fmaj7 (see example T8).

Example T8

⁵⁰ The harmonic structure of the bridge is where “Parker’s Pals” deviates from traditional “Rhythm Changes.”

Measures 21-24 represent a common jazz harmonic formula that can be found in hundreds of tunes. It is a dominant II chord or a V7/V that becomes ii7 that leads to V7. Hamilton uses the D Lydian dominant scale over the D7 and primarily the G Mixolydian scale during the Dmin7-G7. Notice he comes back to the #5 in the last half of measure 24, using it similarly to the previous uses of the #5 in measures 7-8.

Stylistically, Hamilton's eighth notes are fairly straight and he places them on the backside of the beat. This along with his soft approach to the horn and legato articulation give him that laid back feel. His use of vibrato is quite scarce and when he does use it, it is shallow and slower. He uses a false or alternate fingering for middle C during measure 27. This is achieved by fingering low C while pressing the octave key.

Helpful Accompanying Exercises:

C

A MIN7

D MIN7

G7

C7

F MA7

F# DIM7

G MIN7

D7

C Major Pentatonic Scale

C Major Scale

F Major Scale

D Lydian Dominant Scale

G Mixolydian Scale

Improvisatory Goals:

- Improvise two and four-phrases using the C major pentatonic scale
- Improvise two and four-phrases using the C major scale
- Improvise two and four-phrases using the F major scale
- Improvise two and four-phrases using the D Lydian dominant scale
- Improvise two and four-phrases using the G Mixolydian scale
- Improvise two and four-phrases alternating between C and F major scales
- Improvise using enclosures
- Improvise and experiment with false fingerings

A transcription of **Scott Hamilton's** improvised tenor saxophone solo on
"Parker's Pals"
 found on the recording *"Across The Tracks"*

Solo starts @ 2:42

Transcribed by Daniel Western

TENOR SAX.

The musical score is written for Tenor Saxophone in 4/4 time. It consists of 33 measures, with measure numbers 5, 9, 13, 17, 21, 25, 29, and 33 marked at the beginning of their respective lines. The key signature has one flat (Bb). The score includes various chords and melodic lines with fingerings and slurs indicated.

Chords and notes shown in the score:

- Measures 1-4: C, A^{MIN}7, D^{MIN}7, G7, C, A^{MIN}7, D^{MIN}7, G7
- Measures 5-8: C, C7/E, F, F#D^{IM}7, C/G, A^{MIN}7, D^{MIN}7, G7
- Measures 9-12: C, A^{MIN}7, D^{MIN}7, G7, C, A^{MIN}7, D^{MIN}7, G7
- Measures 13-16: C, C7/E, F, F#D^{IM}7, C/G, A^{MIN}7, D^{MIN}7, G7
- Measures 17-20: G^{MIN}7, C7, F^{MA}7
- Measures 21-24: D7, D^{MIN}7, G7
- Measures 25-28: C, A^{MIN}7, D^{MIN}7, G7, C, A^{MIN}7, D^{MIN}7, G7
- Measures 29-32: C, C7/E, F, F#D^{IM}7, C/G, A^{MIN}7, D^{MIN}7, G7
- Measure 33: C

Telefunken Blues

Frank Wess—Tenor Saxophone

The album *Telefunken Blues*⁵¹ was recorded in late 1954 and early 1955 and is released on the Savoy Jazz label. The album features two different bands that were led by vibraphonist Milt Jackson and drummer Kenny Clarke. One of these bands had a horn section that was comprised of Count Basie Orchestra alumni. The title tune, “Telefunken Blues,” featured a tenor saxophone solo by Frank Wess. It is a twelve bar blues in the key of D for the tenor saxophone and Wess solos for four choruses.

This solo is an excellent example of good pacing. Wess uses musical devices such as range, note velocity, and dynamics to create a story arc that spans the four choruses of blues. The first chorus (measures 1-12) consists of shorter phrases within the lower-middle range of the tenor saxophone; all at a softer dynamic. Although the range does not change, Wess increases his phrase length, uses timbre altering fingerings, and uses shorter note values during the second chorus (measures 13-24). Within the third chorus (measures 25-36) Wess expands his range upwards as well as his dynamics. Finally, in the fourth chorus (measures 37-48) Wess employs the longest as well as the shortest note values (an intensity building juxtaposition), expands his range into the extreme high register and plays the loudest. However, he ends the solo back where he started; the same dynamic, range, and even a very similar “lick.”

Similarly to Ammons’ solo on “Chabootie,” Wess uses two-note enclosures to embellish and delay a goal note (see example T9).

⁵¹ Jackson, Milt, Kenny Clarke, and Frank Wess. *Telefunken Blues*. Savoy Jazz. SV-0106. CD. 1992.

Example T9



Also, Wess uses a three-note enclosure that is common to the jazz language. This three-note enclosure is not limited to but is most often embellishing scale degree 3. Typically, it involves a half step above the goal note as well as a whole step below that incorporates a chromatic passing tone. For example: 4-2-#2-3. The goal note can land on or off the beat (see example T10). However in this solo, Wess always lands the goal note on the beat.

Example T10



Wess employs this melodic fragment twice in the first four bars as well as in measures 6-7, 18-19, and 48-49. During measure 32 he employs this technique during a B7: A-F#-G-G# or b7, 5, #5, 6.

Stylistically, Wess' eighth notes are rather straight and laid back. Listen to measure 9, where because of Wess' laying back the last eighth note almost falls on beat four. Also take note of his articulation. It is legato and cut-offs are not clipped. This also helps give the solo a relaxed feel. His false fingerings in measures 12-14, 16, and 29-30 are all on a middle D and achieved by fingering the palm key D (high D) without the octave key. This fingering has a thinner sound and does not have the same, hard, attack.

Helpful Accompanying Exercises:

D7

G7

B7

EMIN7

A7

D Mixolydian Scale

G Mixolydian Scale

B Mixolydian Scale

D Blues Scale

D Mixolydian descending with a three-note enclosure embellishing scale degree 3

Improvisatory Goals:

- Improvise two and four-bar phrases using the D Mixolydian scale
- Improvise two and four-bar phrases using the G Mixolydian scale
- Improvise two and four-bar phrases using the B Mixolydian scale
- Improvise two and four-bar phrases using the D blues scale
- Improvise using enclosures
- Improvise over the form of the blues
- Improvise using dynamics

A transcription of **Frank Wess'** improvised tenor saxophone solo on

"Telefunken Blues"

found on the recording "*Telefunken Blues*"

Solo starts @ :57

Transcribed by Daniel Western

TENOR SAX.

5

9

13

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33

37

38

41

45

49

Chord symbols: D7, G7, D7, B7, EMIN7, A7, D7.

The musical score for 'Telefunken Blues' spans measures 37 to 49. It is written in treble clef with a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#). The notation includes various musical elements such as eighth notes, quarter notes, and rests. Chord symbols are placed above the staff: D7 at measure 37, G7 at measure 38, D7 at measure 39, B7 at measure 41, EMIN7 at measure 45, A7 at measure 46, and D7 at measure 49. The score concludes with a double bar line at the end of measure 49.

Jodi

Dexter Gordon—Tenor Saxophone

“Jodi” is the final track on Dexter Gordon’s 1965 (released in 1979) recording titled *Clubhouse*.⁵² For the tenor saxophone, it is in the key of A major. The form of the tune is very similar to a twelve-bar blues. However, the composer adds measures by including an additional ii-V7 in the tenor’s key of B minor that increases the tune’s length from twelve to sixteen bars. Gordon solos for three choruses.

This particular solo is an excellent example of the effective use of repetition in an improvisation. Each chorus starts with a two-bar antecedent phrase that is answered by a two-bar consequent phrase. These two, two-bar phrases make one four-bar phrase that then is repeated with only slight variations.

Gordon employs the A major pentatonic scale for much of his first chorus. The only exceptions are: the C \flat in measure six—the lowered 7th of the D7 chord and the passing tones of G \sharp and D which occur in measures ten and fourteen respectively. It should be noted that there were other harmonic pitches (both diatonic and nondiatonic to the key of A major) that lie outside of the A major pentatonic scale that were available due to the harmonic progression. However Gordon chose to keep his note selection in this first chorus very limited. This affords him the use of a widening pitch collection as a compositional tool to create variety and interest in his solo.

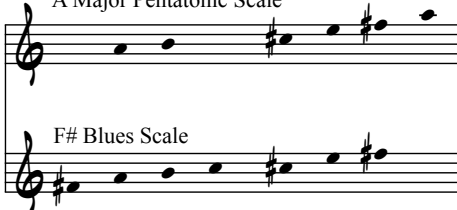
Melodically, the first eight bars of the second chorus can be reduced to the F \sharp blues scale. This affords Gordon the use of the lowered 3rd and gives his line a bluesy quality. Notice the

⁵² Gordon, Dexter. *Clubhouse*. Blue Note Records. 0946 3 74228 2 3. CD. 2007.

similarities between the A major pentatonic scale and the F# blues scale.⁵³ They share all of the same pitch classes except the F# blues scale has the additional C# or B#. In measure 28, Gordon addresses the F#7 chord with both an A# (the 3rd) and the G# (the b9th).

One of the hallmarks of Gordon's playing is his distinctive rhythmic placement or "laid back" feel. His improvisation on "Jodi" exemplifies this quality. Listen carefully to the relationship between Gordon's melodic lines and the time that is given by the rhythm section. Hopefully after a few times of critical listening, you should notice how Gordon seems to float on top of the time. He is not dragging but he is definitely not playing exactly on the beat either.

A Major Pentatonic Scale



F# Blues Scale

53

The image shows two staves of music. The top staff is labeled 'A Major Pentatonic Scale' and contains five notes: A, C#, E, G#, and A. The bottom staff is labeled 'F# Blues Scale' and contains seven notes: F#, A, C#, E, G#, A, and C#. Both staves are in treble clef and have a key signature of one sharp (F#).

Helpful Accompanying Exercises:

Eight musical staves, each containing a sequence of eighth and sixteenth notes. The staves are labeled with chords: A, D7, F#MIN7, BMIN7, Cdim7, C#MIN7, F#7, and E7. The key signature is A major (three sharps: F#, C#, G#). The exercises are designed to be played over these chords.

A Major Pentatonic Scale

A musical staff showing the A Major Pentatonic Scale, which consists of the notes A, B, C#, D, E, and F#.

F# Blues Scale

A musical staff showing the F# Blues Scale, which consists of the notes F#, G, A, B, C#, and D.

Improvisational Goals:

- Improvise two and four-bar phrases using the A major pentatonic scale
- Improvise two and four-bar phrases using the F# blues scale
- Improvise two-bar phrases employing the antecedent/consequent phrase notion.
- Improvise using an expanding number of pitches as a compositional and intensity building tool.
- Experiment with changing your rhythmic placement. (Use a metronome!)
 - Practice arpeggios and scales “on the beat” and “laid back.”
 - Improvise with rhythmic placement as your focus.

A transcription of **Dexter Gordon's** improvised tenor saxophone solo on

"Jodi"

found on the recording "*Clubhouse*"

Solo starts @ :45

Transcribed by Daniel Western

TENOR SAX.

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37

41

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49

53

57

61

Handwritten musical score for the piece "Jodi". The score is written in treble clef with a key signature of two sharps (D major). It consists of four staves of music, with measure numbers 37, 41, 45, and 49 marked at the beginning of each staff. Chord symbols are written above the notes.

Staff 1 (Measures 37-40):
Measure 37: D7
Measure 38: A7
Measure 39: A7
Measure 40: A7

Staff 2 (Measures 41-44):
Measure 41: B MIN7
Measure 42: C DIM7
Measure 43: C# MIN7
Measure 44: F#7

Staff 3 (Measures 45-48):
Measure 45: B MIN7
Measure 46: E7
Measure 47: A7
Measure 48: A7

Staff 4 (Measure 49):
Measure 49: A7

Green's Greenery

Yusef Lateef—Tenor Saxophone

In 1961, guitarist Grant Green recorded and released an album for Blue Note Records titled *Grantstand*.⁵⁴ The ensemble on this album consisted of an organ trio (organ, guitar, and drums) along with tenor saxophonist, Yusef Lateef. The 1961 release contained four tunes, two standards and two originals by Green. When *Grantstand* was reissued to CD in 1987 a previously unreleased bonus track was added. This fifth tune, “Green’s Greenery,” is an up-tempo blues in the key of C major for the tenor saxophone and Lateef improvises for four choruses.

Throughout this solo, Lateef primarily uses three scales. He uses the C Mixolydian scales over the C7’s during the first two choruses. He uses the C minor pentatonic scales during most of F7’s and the C7’s in the fourth chorus. Finally, he uses the G Mixolydian scale during the Dmin7-G7’s. There are chromatic passing tones and lower neighbors as well as enclosures that color and obfuscate these scales. Practicing these three scales, nonetheless, will prepare the student for most of the scalar challenges presented by Lateef in “Green’s Greenery.”

To further complicate the task of analyzing this solo, Lateef ignores, anticipates and substitutes chords while he is improvising. It is quite common for the second bar of the blues form to be a IV7 chord. In “Green’s Greenery” the rhythm section is generating this. However, in all four choruses Lateef ignores the F7 all together and instead treats the first four bars of each chorus as having the root of C. Many of Lateef’s phrases start during the second half of a measure and lead to the downbeat of the next measure. These anticipations help propel Lateef’s lines forward but can also create vertical dissonances. These dissonances are not necessarily

⁵⁴ Green, Grant. *Grantstand*. Blue Note Records. 5917232. CD. 2003.

objectionable to the ear but they can complicate analysis. Example T11 shows these anticipations and where and when they resolve.

Example T11 Measures 4-8



Measures 29-31



It is quite common for jazz improvisers to treat the IV chord of a blues as a minor I chord.

Theoretically this works when you analyze the upper structure of the F7 (IV): 5, 7, and 9 are C, Eb, and G—a C minor triad. In this tune, Lateef treats the F7 chords as Cmin7 chords. During

the first seven measures of the fourth chorus (measures 37-43), Lateef employs the C minor pentatonic scale, which in turn, implies a Cmin7 instead of the existing C7 and F7 harmonies.

During measure 16, he implies a C7(#9, #5) and during measure 30 a F#dim7. Both of these substitutions are not uncommon to the blues progression but they do cause Lateef to deviate from the four scales as outlined above.

Another interesting component to this solo is Lateef's use of a ii7-V7-I lick. If he had just played it once, one might consider it a truly improvised line. However, he plays the exact same lick, at the same point in the form, and with the same rhythmic placement (see example T12). This suggests that he has practiced this lick, many times, and worked on how to weave it in and out of his melodic ideas. Most jazz improvisers have a whole arsenal of ii7-V7-I licks at their disposal; to perform at will when an appropriate situation arises.

Example T12 Measures 20-23



During the third chorus, Lateef quotes the Utrera & Menendez composition “Green Eyes” (see example T13) This tune was popular in the 1930s and 40s. Quoting is a popular melodic/compositional technique used by many jazz improvisors.

Example T13 Measures 24-27 of Lateef's Solo



Aquellos Ojos Verdes (Green Eyes)

Music by Nilo Menendez. Spanish Words by Adolfo Utrera

English Words by E. Rivera and E. Woods

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Stylistically, Lateef's playing on this solo is one of the more aggressive approaches within this study. Lateef's playing here, however, should not be construed as outside the norms of jazz saxophone playing as a whole. He articulates more, tongues more notes, and articulates harder. His eighth notes are fairly straight and his vibrato, when used, is on the wide and fast side.

Helpful Accompanying Exercises:

The image displays seven musical staves, each representing a different accompaniment exercise. Each staff begins with a chord symbol above the first measure, followed by a melodic line in the treble clef. The exercises are as follows:

- C7:** The first staff starts with a C7 chord (F major with a flat 9) and features a melodic line with eighth and sixteenth notes.
- F7:** The second staff starts with an F7 chord (C major with a flat 9) and features a melodic line with eighth and sixteenth notes.
- A7:** The third staff starts with an A7 chord (D major with a flat 9) and features a melodic line with eighth and sixteenth notes.
- Dmin7:** The fourth staff starts with a Dmin7 chord (F major) and features a melodic line with eighth and sixteenth notes.
- G7:** The fifth staff starts with a G7 chord (B major with a flat 9) and features a melodic line with eighth and sixteenth notes.
- C Mixolydian Scale:** The sixth staff is labeled "C Mixolydian Scale" and features a scale run in the treble clef.
- C Minor Pentatonic Scale:** The seventh staff is labeled "C Minor Pentatonic Scale" and features a scale run in the treble clef.

Improvisatory Goals:

- Improvise two and four-bar phrases using the C Mixolydian scale
- Improvise two and four-bar phrases using the C minor pentatonic scale
- Improvise two and four-bar phrases using the G Mixolydian scale
- Improvise over the form of the blues
- Improvise over the form of the blues while trying to anticipate chords

A transcription of **Yusef Lateef's** improvised tenor saxophone solo on
"Green's Greenery"
 found on the recording *"Grantstand"*

Solo starts @ 1:50

Transcribed by Daniel Western

TENOR SAX.

5

9

13

17

21

25

29

33

Green's Greenery

37 41 45 49

C7 F7 C7 F7 C7 A7 DMIN7 G7 C7 C7

Flying Home

Illinois Jacquet—Tenor Saxophone

Since the 1940's, the tune "Flying Home" has been quite popular. It has been recorded and performed by the likes of Benny Goodman, Glenn Miller, Duke Ellington, and Harry James. However, probably the most influential recording of this tune is the 1943 Decca release from the vibraphonist Lionel Hampton and his big band.⁵⁵ This recording features an improvised tenor saxophone solo by Illinois Jacquet. This solo has almost become as much an integral part of the tune's performance as the melody and/chord progression. Many of the more recent recordings/arrangements of "Flying Home" reference this solo either in an individual's improvisations or the arrangement lifts whole sections of the solo and orchestrates it for the large ensemble.⁵⁶

"Flying Home" has an AABA form and is typically performed in the key of B \flat major for the tenor saxophone. The A sections are eight bars long and prolong the tonic harmony of B \flat major. Jacquet uses three scales to navigate all of the A sections within these two choruses of solo. He predominantly uses a non-normative pentatonic scale. The two most common pentatonic scales used by jazz improvisers are called the major and minor pentatonic scales. Using B \flat as the root and using the B \flat major scale as a starting point, the major pentatonic is 1, 2, 3, 5, and 6 or B \flat , C, D, F, and G. The minor pentatonic is 1, \flat 3, 4, 5, and \flat 7 or B \flat , D \flat , E \flat , F, and A \flat . However, most of Jacquet's lines during the A sections employ B \flat , D, E \flat , F, and G or 1, 3, 4,

⁵⁵ Hampton, Lionel. *The Jukebox Hits*. Acrobat. ACMCD4012. CD. 2004.

⁵⁶ Fitzgerald, Ella. *Ella's Goodies*. Jazzwave. CD. 2013.

Severinsen, Doc. *The Very Best of Doc Severinsen*. Amherst Records. CD. 1998.

Ellington, Duke. *Dancin' with Duke, Vol 2*. WNTS. CD. 2011.

5, and 6. For purposes of this discussion, this pentatonic scale will be called the B \flat “1182”⁵⁷ pentatonic scale. During measures 29 and 39 Jacquet employs the B \flat minor pentatonic scale. He nests it within lines that are constructed with the “1182.” The use of the B \flat minor pentatonic scale adds a bluesy quality to these lines. During the last A section (measures 57-64) of his solo Jacquet employs the B \flat Mixolydian scale.

The bridge or B section is harmonically similar to “Parker’s Pals.” The first four bars are in the key of the IV chord. The B \flat , that was once tonic, becomes a V7/IV with the addition of the dominant seventh, A \flat . The B \flat 7 resolves normally to E \flat , which last for two bars. The last four bars of the bridge consists of a V7/V, C7, that resolves to F7. During both B sections of his solo, Jacquet employs the E \flat major scale during the B \flat 7-E \flat ’s, uses the C Mixolydian scale during the C7s, and the F Mixolydian scale during the F7s.

Jacquet’s improvised lines reflect the change in sections; i.e. he treats the A sections differently than he treats the B sections. During the A sections he is repetitive and builds upon previous ideas. The B sections are through-composed and contain ideas that are different from the A sections. This may seem like an obvious point but it is an important one to make. Harmony is not the only aspect that makes a different section sound differently. The improviser can change his or her approach during the different section so that it seems to be new and fresh as well as helping to create a sense of arrival when returning to the A sections.

It has been said this solo marks the beginning of the R&B saxophone sound. Jacquet’s aggressive approach to both dynamics and articulation as well as his fast and wide vibrato influenced many saxophonists. “It was a celebrated solo that was a tour de force in honking and

⁵⁷ “1182” is the number used by Nicolas Slonimsky in his *Thesaurus of Scales and Melodic Patterns* to identify a pentatonic scale that uses 1, 3, 4, 5, and 6.

wailing and served as the template for almost every R&B saxophonist that followed in his footsteps.”⁵⁸

⁵⁸ Rickert, David. *Lionel Hampton: “Flying Home.”* Allaboutjazz.com, <http://www.allaboutjazz.com/php/article.php?id=18777&pg=1&page=1#.UfqNaxbVneY>, Online Article. 2005.

Helpful Accompanying Exercises:



Improvisatory Goals:

- Improvise two and four-bar phrases using the B \flat “1182” pentatonic scale
- Improvise two and four-bar phrases using the B \flat minor pentatonic scale
- Improvise two and four-bar phrases using the B \flat Mixolydian scale
- Improvise two and four-bar phrases using the E \flat major scale
- Improvise two and four-bar phrases using the C Mixolydian scale
- Improvise two and four-bar phrases using the F Mixolydian scale
- Improvise over the form of “Flying Home”
- Improvise using repetition

A transcription of **Illinois Jacquet's** improvised tenor saxophone solo on
"Flying Home"
 found on the recording *"The Juke Box Hits"*

Solo starts @ :43

Transcribed by Daniel Western

TENOR SAX.

8b6

5

8b6

9

8b6

13

8b7 Eb

17

C7 F7

21

8b6

25

8b6

29

2 ^{8b6} Flying Home

The musical score for 'Flying Home' is written in treble clef with a key signature of two flats (Bb and Eb). The piece consists of eight staves of music. The first staff begins with a measure number of 33. The second staff begins with a measure number of 37. The third staff begins with a measure number of 41. The fourth staff begins with a measure number of 45. The fifth staff begins with a measure number of 49 and includes a ^{8b7} chord marking above the first measure and an ^{Eb} chord marking above the eighth measure. The sixth staff begins with a measure number of 53 and includes a ^{C7} chord marking above the first measure and an ^{F7} chord marking above the fifth measure. The seventh staff begins with a measure number of 57 and includes a ^{8b6} chord marking above the first measure. The eighth staff begins with a measure number of 61 and includes a ^{8b6} chord marking above the first measure. The score concludes with a double bar line at the end of the eighth staff.

Jumpin' Leo

Bill Swindell—Tenor Saxophone

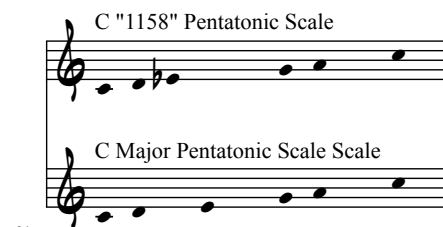
Baritone saxophonist Leo Parker's recording, *Rollin' With Leo*,⁵⁹ was recorded in 1961 but was not released until 1980. This album not only features the headlining artist but also gives solo space to the other instrumentalists. The fifth track, "Jumpin' Leo," is a riff-based contrafact on a twelve-bar blues progression. Tenor saxophonist, Bill Swindell, solos for three choruses.

For the most part, Swindell constructs his solo using three pentatonic scales in four-bar phrases. He uses the C major pentatonic scale over the C7 chords. Notice in the first chorus he deviates from this pentatonic scale in the fourth bar by employing the B \flat . This B \flat brings out the dominant quality of the C7 chord and leads the ear to the F7 chord in bar five. The A \flat /G \sharp 's in measures 13-14 are chromatic passing tones that connect scale degree 5 and 6.

Over the F7 chords, Swindell uses C "1158"⁶⁰ and C minor pentatonic scales. Notice the pitch content similarities between C Major Pentatonic (C, D, E, G, A) and C "1158" (C, D, E \flat , G, A) scales⁶¹. Swindell uses pitch content, as well as range and contour, similarities to create two, four-bar phrases in the first eight measures of his solo.

⁵⁹ Parker, Leo. *Rollin' With Leo*. Blue Note Records. TOCJ-8578. CD. 2009.

⁶⁰ "1158" is the number used by Nicolas Slonimsky in his *Thesaurus of Scales and Melodic Patterns* to identify a major pentatonic scale with a lowered scale degree 3, i.e. 1, 2, \flat 3, 5, 6. Ramon Ricker calls this same scale an "Altered Third" pentatonic in his *Pentatonic Scales for Jazz Improvisation*. A bit of ambiguity arises because Ricker does not indicate the direction of alteration in the name "Altered Third." For the purpose of this dissertation, I will use "1158" to avoid confusion.



In measure 18, he implies the C blues scale over the F7 but quickly moves back to the C major pentatonic in measure 19 to fit the chord, C7. Due to its limited use in this solo, there is not much to discuss about the blues scale other than its identification. Over the Dmin7-G7 progression, Swindell either sticks to chord tones like in measures 9-10 or he uses the C minor pentatonic scale (m.m. 21-22).

The use of range as a compositional tool links all three choruses of Swindell's solo. The first two, four-bar phrases in the first two choruses stay in the middle range of the horn. The last four measures of these two choruses move to the upper register. Compare this to the last chorus where almost all of the solo is in the upper register. There is a registral build from the beginning to the end.

The last four-bars of this solo employs the non-traditional, saxophone technique of false fingerings. Here Swindell is fingering an "A" with his left hand while pressing the right hand keys down. This changes the timbre (and sometimes the pitch) of the saxophone. Not all pitches on the saxophone have false fingerings. This is typically notated with a "+" for the altered fingering and an "o" for the regular fingering. This specific false fingering only works on A and B \flat (middle and upper octaves.)

Helpful Accompanying Exercises:

The image displays seven musical staves in treble clef, each with a key signature of one flat (Bb). The first four staves are accompanied by chord symbols: C7, F7, G7, and Dmin7. Each staff contains a sequence of eighth and quarter notes, primarily using the notes of the respective pentatonic scale. The fifth staff is labeled 'C Major Pentatonic Scale'. The sixth staff is labeled 'C "1158" Pentatonic Scale'. The seventh staff is labeled 'C Minor Pentatonic Scale'. All scales are written in a two-octave ascending and descending pattern.

Improvisational Goals:

- Improvise two and four-bar phrases using the C major pentatonic scale
- Improvise two and four-bar phrases using the C “1158” pentatonic scale
- Improvise two and four-bar phrases using the C minor pentatonic scale
- Improvise using range as a compositional and intensity building tool.
- Explore alternate/false fingerings and try to incorporate them into your improvisations.

A transcription of **Bill Swindell's** improvised tenor saxophone solo on

"Jumpin' Leo"

found on the recording *"Rollin' With Leo"*

Solo starts @ 2:10

Transcribed by Daniel Western

TENOR SAX.

5

9

13

17

21

25

29

33

37

Way, Way Back

Paul Gonsalves—Tenor Saxophone

It has been quite common for a star soloist or a group of soloists from a big band to record and release an album. These records typically distill the larger ensemble's style and mood as well as amplifying the soloist by giving them even more solo space so that they can "stretch out." *Ellingtonia Moods and Blues*,⁶² originally released on the RCA Records label in 1960, is an example of this phenomena. The ensemble on this album consists of a septet of star soloists from the Duke Ellington Orchestra (like Johnny Hodges and Ray Nance) led by tenor saxophonist, Paul Gonsalves. From this album, "Way, Way Back" is a Gonsalves composition that's form is 16 bars long and is in the key of G major for the tenor saxophone. Gonsalves improvises for two choruses.

Probably the most striking and difficult to perform aspect of this solo is that Gonsalves improvises primarily in the lower to low register of the tenor saxophone all the while employing the technique of "sub-tone." This timbre altering effect is difficult to achieve and there is no "one way" to do it because everyone's oral cavity, dental structure, and lip musculature are different, not to mention the variables that arise from an individual's mouthpiece and reed combinations. It will require experimentation and practice to become proficient. Some preliminary actions might include: dropping the jaw, sometimes pulling the jaw back towards the neck, slightly modifying the embouchure, and manipulating the air stream.

On a global level, one can analyze "Way, Way Back" as being a 16 bar variant of the blues. One way to think of the blues is three four-bar phrases: the first is in I, the second is IV leading back to I, and the third is V (in many cases ii7-V7) resolving back to I. Now look at the harmony to "Way, Way Back." Its structure is similar on this global level. The only difference

⁶² Gonsalves, Paul. *Ellingtonia Moods and Blues*. RCA Records. CD. 1999

is that the initial I chord lasts for eight bars instead of the traditional four. Remember, for the purpose of this study, G/B is a G triad with a B in the bass. Furthermore, the A7(b9)-D7 progression in measures 2 and 6 of the form act as embellishing chords to the G chords that surround it. Thus the first eight bars of the form can be thought of as in G. Gonzalves' playing suggests that he is thinking this way. He avoids the C#s and the Bbs that one would expect to hear during an A7(b9) and primarily uses the G major scale to navigate this passage. True, there are three Dbs or C#s but they can be thought and heard as passing tones (or references to the G blues scale) connecting nearby Ds and Cs. Gonsalves goes on to use the G major scale during all G chords.

Due to the brevity of these chords and the fact they only occur twice, it is difficult to determine Gonzalves' scale selection during the C and Cmin7 chords (the 9th and 10th bars of the form). But there is nothing there to suggests that he is thinking anything other than the normative scales one would might play during those chords, the C major pentatonic and the C Dorian scales.

In the 13th and 14th bars of the form the A7(b9)-D7 progression has true harmonic function (instead of an embellishing function as it did before in the form). Despite the harmonic rhythm generated by the rhythm section (a chord every two beats), Gonzalves only resolves to the D7 after six beats of the A7(b9). He uses the A diminished/whole tone scale during the A7(b9). This is the seventh mode of the ascending melodic minor scale and is a common scale that jazz improvisers use.

Helpful Accompanying Exercises:



Improvisatory Goals:

- Improvise two and four-bar phrases using the C major pentatonic scale
- Improvise two and four-bar phrases using the C Dorian scale
- Improvise two and four-bar phrases using the A diminished/whole tone scale
- Improvise over the form of “Way, Way Back”
- Improvise and experiment with the technique known as “sub-tone”

A transcription of **Paul Gonsalves'** improvised tenor saxophone solo on

"Way, Way Back"

found on the recording *"Ellingtonia Moods and Blues"*

Solo starts @ 3:23

Transcribed by Daniel Western

TENOR SAX.

5 9 13 17 21 25 29

4. BARITONE SAXOPHONE

Preface

The first thing that a young baritone saxophonist must come to grips with when starting to study jazz baritone saxophone transcriptions is the upper register of the instrument. Most band literature and even jazz ensemble charts treat the baritone saxophone as a bass instrument. As a result, most young baritone saxophonists become more proficient with the lower register and often do not fully master the fingerings nor the voicings required to play in the upper register. Unfortunately for these students learning a jazz transcription has a steep learning curve because not only are they trying to master a new musical language and style but they are also struggling with mastering the saxophone. This is further compounded by the tendencies of jazz baritone saxophonists to improvise in this upper register. On average, they improvise using this register more than their alto and tenor counterparts. The solos within this study exemplify this phenomena. Therefore, the student should practice the Helpful Accompanying Exercises and the transcription itself so that the upper register becomes fluid in both fingerings as well as response.

In A Mellow Tone

Joe Temperley—Baritone Saxophone

“In A Mellow Tone” is a jazz standard composed by Duke Ellington and has been recorded by dozens of jazz artists. It has an ABAC form that is 32 measures in length and is typically in the key of F for the baritone saxophone. Baritone saxophonist, Joe Temperley, a member of such premiere jazz groups as the Duke Ellington, Woody Herman, Thad Jones-Mel Lewis, and Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestras, recorded “In A Mellow Tone” on his 2007 release *Cocktails For Two*⁶³ and solos for one chorus.

When studying any tune, it is important to identify key centers. Often times these key centers dictate the scales that the improviser employs. The “A” sections of this tune have two related key centers, F and B \flat , consisting of a ii7-V7-I harmonic progression that spans a four-bar period.⁶⁴ For the most part, Temperley uses the major scales associated with these key centers (F major and B \flat major scales) to navigate these passages. However these scales are not without some chromatic alterations. The G \sharp s are lower neighbors to the As. In fact, throughout the entire solo, every non-chordal G \sharp (or A \flat) resolves to an A except for the A \flat on the fourth beat of measure 12 which will be discussed later. The B \natural s in measures 6 and 22 act as chromatic passing tones from C- B \natural -B \flat . The only other B \natural s in the “A” sections (measures 21-22) are

⁶³ Temperley, Joe. *Cocktails For Two*. Sackville. 3071. CD. 2007.

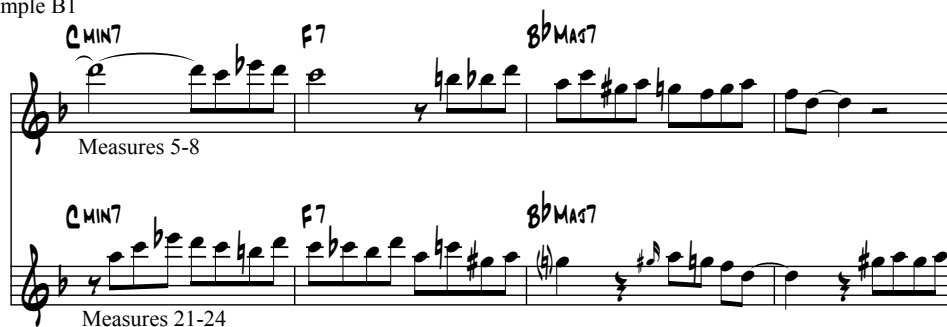
⁶⁴ In a typical ii7-V7-I progression the ii7 is a minor seventh chord. However, in the first four bars of “In A Mellow Tone” the ii7 (Gmin7) is replaced by a dominant seven chord (G7) thus creating a V7/V. It is interesting that Temperley avoids this issue all together by not addressing the B/B \flat in either “A” section.

lower neighbors to the C. In measure 18 the E \flat is the #9 and the D \flat is the \flat 9 of the C7 chord.

The #9— \flat 9 resolving to the 5th is a common “lick” or melodic formulae in jazz.⁶⁵

Also in both “A” sections Temperley uses the same “lick” over the ii7-V7-I in the key of B \flat (measures 5-8 and 21-24). He alters the rhythm slightly, both the lick’s position in the measure as well as some of the durational values, and adds a few notes (see example B1). These variations mask the repetition.

Example B1



The “B” and “C” sections (measures 9-16 and 25-32) are more harmonically diverse than the “A” sections. Temperley uses common tones and arpeggios to navigate much of these sections.

This solo is filled with characteristic language that one finds in bebop. One element or melodic formulae that should be addressed is the topic of enclosure.⁶⁶ Temperley uses a pair of notes, sometimes one is diatonic but often they are both chromatically altered, to delay the arrival of or embellish a goal note (see example B2).

⁶⁵ The D \flat (\flat 9) is resolved to the 5th of the F6.

⁶⁶ Jerry Coker—“the preceding of an aimed-for note with two other notes, the first being a half step above that note, the second being a half step below that note, then the aimed-for note itself, as in D \flat , B, C.”

Example B2

Measures 2-3

Measures 12-13

Measures 27-28

Notice that Temperley uses mostly a legato articulation throughout his solo. He does use a more pronounced and more staccato, articulation at during measure 24. His use of vibrato is quite liberal and it is fast and wide. When playing along with the recording, make sure to match Temperley's eighth-note placement within the measure. Sometimes his eighth notes swing quite hard where other times they are rather straight. Also, sometimes he plays on the beat and sometimes he "lays back" or plays behind the beat. Furthermore, he changes this placement as the line develops (see example B3).

Example B3

Laid Back

More On The Beat

Vibrato

Vibrato

Straighter eighth-notes

Heavier Swing

No Vibrato

Vibrato

Vibrato

Heavier Swing

Straighter eighth-notes

Helpful Accompanying Exercises:

Eight musical staves, each showing an arpeggiated chord exercise in treble clef. The chords and their corresponding notes are:

- G7:** G4, B4, D5, F5, G5, F5, E5, D5, C5, B4, A4, G4
- C7:** C4, E4, G4, Bb4, C5, Bb4, A4, G4, F4, E4, D4, C4
- F6:** F4, A4, C5, E5, F5, E5, D5, C5, B4, A4, G4, F4
- Cmin7:** C4, Eb4, Gb4, Bb4, C5, Bb4, A4, G4, F4, Eb4, C4, C4
- F7:** F4, A4, C5, Eb5, F5, Eb5, D5, C5, B4, A4, G4, F4
- Bbmaj7:** Bb4, D5, F5, Ab5, Bb5, Ab5, G5, F5, Eb5, D5, C5, Bb4
- Eb7:** Eb4, Gb4, Bb4, Db5, Eb5, Db5, C5, Bb4, Ab4, Gb4, F4, Eb4
- D7:** D4, F#4, A4, C#5, D5, C#5, B4, A4, G#4, F#4, E4, D4
- Bbm7:** Bb4, D5, F5, Ab5, Bb5, Ab5, G5, F5, Eb5, D5, C5, Bb4

F Major Scale

Musical staff showing the F Major Scale (F4 to F5) in treble clef.

Bb Major Scale

Musical staff showing the Bb Major Scale (Bb4 to Bb5) in treble clef.

F and Bb Major Scales With Enclosers on Scale Degrees 5, 3, and 1

Musical staff showing the F and Bb Major Scales with enclosures on scale degrees 5, 3, and 1. The first part shows the F Major scale with enclosures on G4, B4, and D5. The second part shows the Bb Major scale with enclosures on Ab4, Bb4, and C5.

Improvisatory Goals:

- Improvise two and four-bar phrases using the F major scale
- Improvise two and four-bar phrases using the B \flat major scale
- Improvise two and four-bar phrases using the arpeggios.
- Improvise using enclosures
- Improvise over the chord progression of “In A Mellow Tone.”

A transcription of **Joe Temperley's** improvised baritone saxophone solo on

"In A Mellow Tone"

from the recording *"Cocktails For Two."*

Transcribed by Daniel Western

Solo starts @ 4:46

BARITONE SAX.

The musical score is written for baritone saxophone in B-flat major (two flats) and 4/4 time. It consists of 29 measures, with measure numbers 1, 5, 9, 13, 17, 21, 25, and 29 marked at the beginning of their respective lines. The key signature has two flats (B-flat and E-flat). The solo begins with a half rest in measure 1, followed by a series of eighth and quarter notes. Chords are indicated above the staff: G7 (measures 1-2), C7 (measures 3-4), F6 (measures 5-6), Cmin7 (measures 7-8), F7 (measures 9-10), Bbmaj7 (measures 11-12), Eb7 (measures 13-14), F6 (measures 15-16), D7 (measures 17-18), G7 (measures 19-20), C7 (measures 21-22), F6 (measures 23-24), Bbmaj7 (measures 25-26), Bdim7 (measures 27-28), F6/C (measures 29-30), and G7 (measures 31-32). The solo ends with a double bar line at measure 29.

Little Rabbit Blues

Harry Carney—Baritone Saxophone

In 1957, alto saxophonist Johnny Hodges led a recording session that featured an ensemble consisting of many of the star soloists from Duke Ellington's orchestra. One of the compositions recorded during this session was Hodges' own "Little Rabbit Blues."⁶⁷ This tune is a twelve-bar blues contrafact and is in the key of E major for the baritone saxophone. Harry Carney, considered to be "father of the jazz baritone saxophone,"⁶⁸ solos for two choruses.

Carney primarily uses the E major pentatonic, E blues, and E major scales to construct his solo. He uses the E major pentatonic and the E blues scales during the E7 and C#min7 chords. It is quite common for jazz improvisers to treat the IV chord of a blues as a minor I chord. Theoretically this works when you analyze the upper structure of the A7 (IV): 5, 7, and 9 are E, G, and B—an E minor triad. In this tune, Carney treats the A7 chords as Emin7 chords. Notice he never plays a C# (the 3rd) over an A7. Instead he employs a minor oriented scale, the E blues scale, over the A7 chords. Finally, Carney uses the E major scale over the ii7-V7 progressions (F#min7-B7) during measures 9-10 and 21-22. With this being said, Carney does not limit himself to just these scales. He uses chromatic lower neighbor and passing tones to add color to his lines. In fact, he uses these non-chord tones as a compositional tool (see example B4). During measure 5, he sets up a line that moves from A to B with a chromatic passing tone, A#. Then he elaborates upon that melody during measures 6-7. The overall movement is still from A to B with a chromatic passing tone, A#. However, the durational values have been augmented and now the once static A as well as the A# get chromatic lower neighbors.

⁶⁷ Hodges, Johnny. *Jazz Masters 35*. Verve/Polygram/Universal. 5218572. CD. 1994.

⁶⁸ *Jazz Styles: History and Analysis*, 9th ed. by Mark Gridley (New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 2006), 12.

Example B4

Carney's Solo

Carney's Solo Simplified

Carney also employs most of the chromatic scale from G# to E (omitting the C) during measures 11-13 (see example B5). Again, he embellishes this simple line with chromatic lower neighbors.

Example B5

Carney's Solo

Carney's Solo Simplified

Stylistically, Carney is employing a rather heavy, triplet oriented, sense of swing. This not only matches the rhythm section's realization of the eighth notes but it is also a typical feel that one should expect from Carney and his contemporaries. Notice, too, his overall piano dynamic. Even when his lines become more active, he still maintains a softer dynamic. Because of this, he is able to really accentuate certain notes and create interest using dynamics.

Helpful Accompanying Exercises:



Improvisational Goals:

- Improvise two and four-bar phrases using the E major pentatonic scale
- Improvise two and four-bar phrases using the E blues scale
- Improvise two and four-bar phrases using the E major scale
- Improvise using chromatic passing tones
- Improvise using lower neighbors
- Improvise using dynamics as an intensity building tool
- Improvise over the E Blues progression

A transcription of **Harry Carney's** improvised baritone saxophone solo on
"Little Rabbit Blues"
 from the recording *"Jazz Masters: Vol. 35."*

Transcribed by Daniel Western

Solo starts @ 2:50

BARITONE SAX.

5

9

13

17

21

Baggin' The Blues

Charlie Fowlkes—Baritone Saxophone

The album *Telefunken Blues*⁶⁹ was recorded in late 1954 and early 1955 and is released on the Savoy Jazz label. The album features two different bands that were led by vibraphonist Milt Jackson and drummer Kenny Clarke. One of these bands had a horn section that was comprised of Count Basie Orchestra alumni. This ensemble recorded the tune, “Baggin’ the Blues,” that featured a baritone saxophone solo by Charlie Fowlkes. The tune is a twelve bar blues in the key of C for the baritone saxophone and Fowlkes solos for two choruses.

At first glance, it might be difficult to discern how Fowlkes is approaching this solo as far as scales are concerned. The blues progression employs primarily dominant seventh chords. Normally Mixolydian scales are played over this quality of chord. For the most part, Fowlkes is using the Mixolydian scale while he is soloing. However, Fowlkes obscures this by also using chromatic passing tones and neighboring notes. For example see measures 21-25 (example B6), all chromatic passing tones are marked with an “*.”

Example B6



Fowlkes is using the normative Mixolydian scales (G Mixolydian over the Dmin7-G7 and the C Mixolydian scale over the C7) along with chromatic passing tones to navigate this section.

Fowlkes uses two different false fingerings to not only alter the timbre of his horn but also to build intensity to his solo. In a jazz setting, the “o” is the notation used to designate the regular fingering while the “+” designates an alternate or false fingering. In measure 9, he

⁶⁹ Jackson, Milt, Kenny Clarke, and Frank Wess. *Telefunken Blues*. Savoy Jazz. SV-0106. CD. 1992.

employs a false fingering on the A on beat four. He achieves this by fingering A normally and putting the right hand keys down.⁷⁰ Starting in measure 12 and continuing through measure 16, Fowlkes uses a false fingering on several middle Cs. He is alternating between the regular fingering as well as the “long” fingering C, which is the same fingering for low C but with the addition of the octave key.⁷¹

Another interesting aspect of this solo is attacks that initiate a phrase. Fowlkes is very percussive and explosive when he is starting almost every phrase. These attacks include an aggressive tongue and a forceful air-stream and tend to be heavier in the lower register. This is not characteristic of all baritone saxophone solos nor is it a staple of Fowlkes’ playing but it is one aspect that makes this solo unique.

⁷⁰ This false fingering only works for A and bis B \flat in the middle and upper registers.

⁷¹ This concept works on B \flat , B, C, and C#.

Helpful Accompanying Exercises:

The image displays a series of musical exercises for guitar accompaniment, organized into two columns of staves. Each staff begins with a chord symbol in the key signature, followed by a melodic line. The exercises are as follows:

- C7**: Melodic line starting on C4, moving up and then down the scale.
- F7**: Melodic line starting on F4, moving up and then down the scale.
- A7**: Melodic line starting on A4, moving up and then down the scale.
- Dmin7**: Melodic line starting on D4, moving up and then down the scale.
- G7**: Melodic line starting on G4, moving up and then down the scale.
- C Mixolydian Scale**: A full octave scale starting on C4, moving up and then down.
- F Mixolydian Scale**: A full octave scale starting on F4, moving up and then down.
- G Mixolydian Scale**: A full octave scale starting on G4, moving up and then down.
- The Chromatic Scale**: A full octave chromatic scale starting on C4, moving up and then down.

Improvisatory Goals:

- Improvise two and four-bar phrases using the C Mixolydian scale
- Improvise two and four-bar phrases using the F Mixolydian scale
- Improvise two and four-bar phrases using the G Mixolydian scale
- Improvise using chromatic passing tones
- Improvise using false-fingerings
- Improvise using different articulations
- Improvise over the blues progression

A transcription of **Charlie Fowlkes'** improvised baritone saxophone solo on
"Baggin' The Blues"
 from the recording *"Telefunken Blues."*

Transcribed by Daniel Western

Solo starts @ :56

BARITONE SAX.

5

9

13

17

21

25

Rolling With Parker (1)

Leo Parker—Baritone Saxophone

In the winter of 1950 baritone saxophonist Leo Parker recorded several jazz standards as well as his composition “Rolling With Parker.” This study includes both the released version of this tune, “Rolling With Parker (1),” as well as an alternate take “Rolling With Parker (2).”⁷² The tune is a twelve-bar blues in the key of D for the baritone saxophone and in both versions Parker solos for four choruses.

For the most part, Parker constructs his solo using four-bar phrases. During most D7 chords he either uses the D blues scale, D major pentatonic, or the D Mixolydian scale, sometimes switching back and forth during a phrase. Only during measures 35-36 does he use the D major scale.⁷³ During the G7’s Parker uses a D minor pentatonic scale. Similarly to Harry Carney’s solo on “Little Rabbit Blues” it is common for improvisers to treat the IV chord in a blues as a minor I. Theoretically this works when you analyze the upper structure of the G7 (IV): 5, 7, and 9 are D, F, and A—a D minor triad. Therefore, the D minor pentatonic scale, a minor oriented scale, works over a G7. Of the four ii7-V7’s, that represent the ninth and tenth measures of each chorus (measures 9-10, 21-22, 33-34, and 45-46), during the first two Parker uses the E Dorian scale during Emin7 and implies a Eb7 during the A7. He is using a technique known as tritone substitution. He is substituting a dominant chord (in this instance A7) with another dominant chord (Eb7) whose root is a tritone away. During the last two ii7-V7’s Parker uses the D Dorian scale and D minor pentatonic scales.

⁷² Parker, Leo. *Back To Back Baritones*. Collectables. CDL-5329. CD. 1990.

⁷³ D major is not the suggested scale to play during a D7. The C# in the D major scale would normally clash with the C natural in the D7 chord but because of the C#’s brevity and the upward direction of the line, the D major scale works in this context.

In measures 37-39 Parker alternates between the regular fingering for middle D and an alternate fingering. This alternate fingering is achieved by pressing the D palm key that one normally presses when playing high D but without the octave key. Its timbre is thinner and more nasal than that of the regular fingering for middle D. Parker uses this technique to build intensity within his solo.

Stylistically, Parker's eighth-notes are straight (rhythmically even). His rhythmic swing is contradictory to the swinging (uneven) eighth-notes that are being generated by the drummer. However, Parker achieves a swing feel by his use of breath accents to emphasize certain notes and his use of legato tongued articulations. Parker's vibrato is relatively fast but narrow and is used liberally but is not always present. Generally, he uses it on durations lasting longer than a quarter-note that occur both internally and at the end of a phrase. Longer durations such as whole-notes tend to have no vibrato. Finally, Parker employs jaw scoops to affect his pitch on the high D that starts during measure 42.

Helpful Accompanying Exercises:

The image displays ten musical staves, each representing a different accompaniment exercise. Each staff begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The exercises are as follows:

- D7**: A sequence of eighth and quarter notes, starting on D4 and ascending to D5, then descending back to D4.
- G7**: A sequence of eighth and quarter notes, starting on G4 and ascending to G5, then descending back to G4.
- E MIN7**: A sequence of eighth and quarter notes, starting on E4 and ascending to E5, then descending back to E4.
- A7**: A sequence of eighth and quarter notes, starting on A4 and ascending to A5, then descending back to A4.
- E^b7**: A sequence of eighth and quarter notes, starting on E^b4 and ascending to E^b5, then descending back to E^b4. Below the staff, it is noted: (The Tritone Substitution for A7).
- D Mixolydian Scale**: A scale exercise starting on D4, ascending to D5, and then descending back to D4, using the Mixolydian mode (F#).
- D Major Scale**: A scale exercise starting on D4, ascending to D5, and then descending back to D4, using the major mode (F#).
- D Major Pentatonic Scale**: A scale exercise starting on D4, ascending to D5, and then descending back to D4, using the major pentatonic mode (F#).
- D Minor Pentatonic Scale**: A scale exercise starting on D4, ascending to D5, and then descending back to D4, using the minor pentatonic mode (F).
- D Blues Scale**: A scale exercise starting on D4, ascending to D5, and then descending back to D4, using the blues mode (F, F#).
- E Dorian Scale**: A scale exercise starting on E4, ascending to E5, and then descending back to E4, using the Dorian mode (F, F#).

Improvisational Goals:

- Improvise two and four-bar phrases using the D Mixolydian scale
- Improvise two and four-bar phrases using the D major scale
- Improvise two and four-bar phrases using the D major pentatonic scale
- Improvise two and four-bar phrases using the D blues scale
- Improvise two and four-bar phrases using the E Dorian scale
- Improvise over the form of the blues

A transcription of **Leo Parker's** improvised baritone saxophone solo on
"Rolling With Parker (1)"
 from the recording *"Back To Back Baritones."*

Transcribed by Daniel Western

Solo starts @ :36 **D7**

BARITONE SAX.

The musical score is written for baritone saxophone in G major (one sharp). It consists of ten staves of music, each containing a melodic line and a chord symbol. The chords are: **D7**, **G7**, **E MIN7**, **A7**, and **D7**. The melody is written in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The score includes various musical notations such as eighth notes, quarter notes, half notes, and rests. There are also some specific markings like '5' and '9' below the staff, and '15', '17', '21', '25', '29', and '35' below the staff, which likely indicate measure numbers or specific notes. The score ends with a double bar line.

37

D7

41

G7

D7

45

E MIN7

A7

D7

Detailed description: This musical score is for the piece 'Rolling With Parker (1)' in D major. It consists of three staves of music. The first staff, starting at measure 37, features a melodic line with eighth-note runs and a D7 chord. The second staff, starting at measure 41, continues the melody with a G7 chord and a D7 chord. The third staff, starting at measure 45, includes an E MIN7 chord, an A7 chord, and a D7 chord. The piece concludes with a double bar line.

Rolling With Parker (2)

Leo Parker—Baritone Saxophone

Studying multiple solos from one artist can be a valuable tool for the young improviser. As they listen, they should begin to hear similarities such as phrasing and vocabulary that make a soloist's musical voice consistent and identifiable. Then, with diligent practice these nuances become an internalized part of the student's own voice as a soloist. It is for these reasons that "Rolling With Parker (2)"⁷⁴ is included within this study.

Both of these solos share many compositional and stylistic similarities. These similarities exist both at the global level as well as the local level. Globally speaking, they are both four choruses long and each chorus has its own identity. Both first choruses (measures 1-12) stay within the mid to upper register of the saxophone. They both start with a bluesy lick during the D7 chord and treat the G7 as a Dmin7 (in fact, using almost the same melody—see example B7).

Example B7

The image displays two staves of music in treble clef, both in the key of D major (indicated by two sharps). The top staff is labeled 'Rolling With Parker (1): Measures 5-7' and the bottom staff is labeled 'Rolling With Parker (2): Measures 5-7'. Both staves show a sequence of notes with a triplet of eighth notes in the first measure. Above the first measure of each staff is a 'G7' chord symbol, and above the final measure is a 'D7' chord symbol. The notation for both staves is nearly identical, illustrating the similarity between the two solos.

The second choruses to each of these solos open on high D's that move down to the middle of the horn in a stepwise motion during the D7. Again, the G7 is treated as Dmin7. The ii7-V7-I7 in both choruses employ the tritone substitution. Both the third choruses open using the high register but in "Rolling With Parker (2)," Parker's repetitive lines keep returning back to the high Ds. Finally, both of the fourth choruses start with a repetitive melody on middle D and the G7 is treated as a Dmin7. However, despite these global similarities, each solo sounds unique and

⁷⁴ Parker, Leo. *Back To Back Baritones*. Collectables. CDL-5329. CD. 1990.

fresh. The variety of different melodic ideas as well as the variations upon similar melodic ideas keep these solos from sounding the same. Hopefully after listening to and practicing these two transcriptions, the student will be able to hear a style that can be identified as Leo Parker's. Furthermore, the student should begin to hear these characteristics in other Parker solos that may or may not be blues in D at this tempo.

Helpful Accompanying Exercises:

The image displays ten musical staves, each containing a sequence of notes and rests. The first five staves are for chords: D7, G7, E MIN7, A7, and Eb7 (labeled as the Tritone Substitution for A7). The remaining five staves are for scales: D Mixolydian Scale, D Major Scale, D Major Pentatonic Scale, D Minor Pentatonic Scale, D Blues Scale, and E Dorian Scale. Each staff begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The notes are written in a sequence that typically covers two octaves, starting from the root of the chord or scale.

D7

G7

E MIN7

A7

E^b7
(The Tritone Substitution for A7)

D Mixolydian Scale

D Major Scale

D Major Pentatonic Scale

D Minor Pentatonic Scale

D Blues Scale

E Dorian Scale

Improvisational Goals:

- Improvise two and four-bar phrases using the D Mixolydian scale
- Improvise two and four-bar phrases using the D major scale
- Improvise two and four-bar phrases using the D major pentatonic scale
- Improvise two and four-bar phrases using the D blues scale
- Improvise two and four-bar phrases using the E Dorian scale
- Improvise over the form of the blues
- Create a global plan that spans several choruses. Improvise different solos that share this plan.

A transcription of **Leo Parker's** improvised baritone saxophone solo on
"Rolling With Parker (2)"
 from the recording *"Back To Back Baritones."*

Transcribed by Daniel Western

Solo starts @ :33

D7

BARITONE SAX.

33

37

41

45

49

53

57

61

65

69

Sheet music for "Rolling With Parker (2)" in G major, featuring three staves of music with chord markings.

Staff 1: Treble clef, key signature of one sharp (F#). Chord marking: D7. Measure numbers 37 and 38 are indicated below the staff.

Staff 2: Treble clef, key signature of one sharp (F#). Chord markings: G7 and D7. Measure numbers 41 and 42 are indicated below the staff.

Staff 3: Treble clef, key signature of one sharp (F#). Chord markings: E MIN7, A7, and D7. Measure numbers 45 and 46 are indicated below the staff.

Summer Evening

Cecil Payne—Baritone Saxophone

“Summer Evening” is another track from the album *Telefunken Blues*.⁷⁵ It features a baritone saxophone solo by Cecil Payne. “Summer Evening” is formally similar to the previously discussed jazz standard “In A Mellow Tone.” It is a 32 bar, ABAC, form. “Summer Evening,” however, is in the key of B \flat major for the baritone saxophone. The “A” sections (measures 1-8 and 17-24) consist of diatonic chords in the key of B \flat major. Although, Payne uses the B \flat major scale as the basis for his improvisation during these sections, he does not limit himself to just diatonic pitches. He uses chromatic neighbor as well as passing tones to add color to his lines.

The “B” section (measures 9-16) consists of two key centers, C minor and B \flat major. During the measures that are in C minor, Payne uses the C harmonic minor scale. Notice he reserves the B \natural and the A \flat for the G7 chords. Using these pitches only during the G7(\flat 9) reinforces the harmonic change from Cmin7 to G7(\flat 9) and back again. The B \natural is the 3rd and the A \flat is the \flat 9 of the G7. When the harmony shifts back to the key of B \flat major (Cmin7-F7-B \flat Maj7), Payne employs the B \flat major scale.

The “C” section (measures 25-32) is harmonically more diverse than both the “A” and “B” sections in that it has a greater number of changes and a greater variety of chords. Payne uses the E \flat 6 arpeggio over both the E \flat 6 and the Edim7. One would think that the E \flat would clash over the Edim7. But, due to the repetition of the melodic line as well as the voice-leading subordination of the E to the super-ordinate E \flat and F in the bass movement, this dissonance is hardly

⁷⁵ Jackson, Milt, Kenny Clarke, and Frank Wess. *Telefunken Blues*. Savoy Jazz. SV-0106. CD. 1992.

noticed. The last four bars of the form are a ii7-V7-Imaj7 in the home key of B \flat major and Payne employs the B \flat major scale.

Like the previously discussed Joe Temperley solo on “In A Mellow Tone,” this solo is filled with enclosures.⁷⁶ Payne uses a pair of notes, sometimes one is diatonic but often they are both chromatically altered, to delay the arrival of or embellish a goal note (see example B8).

Example B8

Measures 2-4

Measures 7-8

Measures 13-15

Measures 20-21

Measures 28-30

The musical notation for Example B8 consists of five staves of music in B \flat major. The first staff (Measures 2-4) shows a sequence of notes with a B \flat MAJ7 chord indicated above the final measure. The second staff (Measures 7-8) features a C $\text{MIN}7$ chord above the first measure and an F7 chord above the eighth measure. The third staff (Measures 13-15) includes a C $\text{MIN}7$ chord above the first measure, an F7 chord above the third measure, and a B \flat MAJ7 chord above the fifth measure. The fourth staff (Measures 20-21) shows a B \flat MAJ7 chord above the first measure. The fifth staff (Measures 28-30) features a G7 chord above the first measure, a C $\text{MIN}7$ chord above the second measure, and an F7 chord above the third measure. The notation includes various enclosures and chromatic alterations throughout the solo.

An interesting component to this solo is Payne’s sense of swing. We have looked at solos where the saxophonist had a rather heavy sense of swing like Harry Carney’s solo on “Little Rabbit Blues.” Also, we have looked at solos where the eighth notes were relatively straight like Charlie Fowlkes’ solo on “Baggin’ the Blues.” There were many variables that went into these solos that influenced the soloist’s sense of swing; i.e. tempo, style, time period,

⁷⁶ Jerry Coker-“the preceding of an aimed-for note with two other notes, the first being a half step above that note, the second being a half step below that note, then the aimed-for note itself, as in D \flat , B, C.”

groove, etc. Once the sense of swing was established it did not deviate much within the solo itself. However when one listens and studies this particular solo of Cecil Payne, we find that he changes back and forth between a heavy swing to a straighter swing as the solo progresses—similarly to Joe Temperley’s solo on “In A Mellow Tone (example B3). The first six bars of the solo is an example of Payne’s “straighter” playing. The lines swing in a jazz sense but the eighth notes are relatively durationally equal. Compare that to measures 7-8. Payne’s eighth notes are heavily swung and are approaching a dotted eighth-sixteenth note feel (see example B9). When learning this transcription, be sure to try to emulate these phenomena.

Example B9
Measures 1-8

Straighter Eighth-Notes

Heavier "Swung" Eighth-Notes

Helpful Accompanying Exercises:

B \flat MA7

Dmin7

Gmin7

Cmin7

F7

G7

B \flat 7

E \flat 6

Edim7

B \flat Major Scale

C Harmonic Minor Scale

B \flat Major Scale with Enclosures on Scale Degrees 1, 3, and 5

Improvisational Goals:

- Improvise two and four-bar phrases using the B \flat major scale
- Improvise two and four-bar phrases using the C harmonic minor scale
- Improvise over the chord progression of “Summer Evening”
- Improvise using enclosures.

A transcription of Cecil Payne's improvised baritone saxophone solo on
"Summer Evening"
 from the recording "Telefunken Blues."

Solo starts @ 2:31

Transcribed by Daniel Western

BARITONE SAX.

Handwritten chord annotations above the staffs:

- Staff 1: $BbMA7$
- Staff 2: $BbMA7$, $DMIN7$, $GMIN7$, $CMIN7$, $F7$
- Staff 3: $CMIN$, $G7(b9)$, $CMIN7$, $G7(b9)$
- Staff 4: $CMIN7$, $F7$, $BbMA7$
- Staff 5: $BbMA7$
- Staff 6: $BbMA7$, $Bb7$, $Eb6$
- Staff 7: $Eb6$, $EDIM7$, $BbMA7/F$, $G7$
- Staff 8: $CMIN7$, $F7$, $BbMA7$, $CMIN7$, $F7$
- Staff 9: $BbMA7$
- Staff 10: $BbMA7$

Measure numbers are indicated at the start of some staves: 5, 9, 13, 17, 21, 25, 29, 33.

Seven Eleven

Sonny Stitt—Baritone Saxophone

Primarily known for his work on the alto and tenor saxophones, Sonny Stitt was quite adept at creating quality solos on the baritone saxophone. In July of 1950, he took his baritone into the studio and recorded several tunes as a member of a jazz septet. “Seven Eleven” is one of these recorded tunes.⁷⁷ It is a twelve bar blues in the key of B♭ major for the baritone saxophone. Stitt solos for two choruses.

For most of this solo, Stitt uses four bar phrases and his ideas are constructed mainly using eighth-note lines. On multiple occasions Stitt implies chords that the rhythm section is not generating. In these instances his playing suggests that he is thinking of either an additional chord during a static harmony or substituting one harmony for another. In many tunes that are contrafacts of the blues form, the tonic harmony represents the first four measures.⁷⁸ However, it is quite common to have the second chord of the blues form be a IV chord;⁷⁹ in this context, an E♭ chord. During these sections within this solo (measures 1-4 and 13-16), Stitt is implying an E♭ while the rhythm section is generating a B♭7 (see example B10). It is also important to notice that Stitt implies this extra harmony while still employing the B♭ Mixolydian scale.

⁷⁷ Stitt, Sonny. *Stitt's Bits: The Bebop Recordings*. Prestige Records. PRCD3-30043-2. CD. 2006.

⁷⁸ Look at both “Rolling With Parker” solos. The tonic harmony lasts throughout the first four-bars of the form.

⁷⁹ Look at “Little Rabbit Blues” and “Baggin’ The Blues.” The harmony in the first four bars is I7-IV7-I7-I7.

Example B10

Measures 1-4

Measures 13-16

Furthermore, it is also common within the ninth bar of the blues to have an applied ii7-V7 that temporarily tonicizes the ii7. This does occur in both choruses of Stitt's solo (measures 8 and 20). The rhythm section is generating a Dmin7-G7 that leads to Cmin7. However, Stitt uses a chord substitution technique known as "planing" and replaces the G7 with a C#min7 (see example B11). Thus the implied harmony as outlined by Stitt's playing is Dmin7-C#min7-Cmin7.

Example B11

Measures 7-9

Measures 19-21

Stitt's eighth notes are rather straight and he uses a legato articulation to create the sense of swing. His vibrato is on the faster side but not as wide as Carney's or Fowlkes'. There are not many bends, scoops, or other pitch/timbre altering effects employed in this solo.

Helpful Accompanying Exercises:

The image displays ten musical exercises, each on a single staff in treble clef. Each exercise begins with a specific chord or scale label above the staff, followed by a melodic line. The exercises are as follows:

- B \flat 7**: A melodic line starting on B \flat 4, moving in eighth notes across the staff.
- E \flat 7**: A melodic line starting on E \flat 4, moving in eighth notes across the staff.
- D^{MIN}7**: A melodic line starting on D4, moving in eighth notes across the staff.
- G7**: A melodic line starting on G4, moving in eighth notes across the staff.
- C^{MIN}7**: A melodic line starting on C4, moving in eighth notes across the staff.
- F7**: A melodic line starting on F4, moving in eighth notes across the staff.
- C \sharp ^{MIN}7**: A melodic line starting on C \sharp 4, moving in eighth notes across the staff.
- B \flat Mixolydian Scale**: A scale starting on B \flat 4, ascending and then descending in eighth notes.
- E \flat Mixolydian Scale**: A scale starting on E \flat 4, ascending and then descending in eighth notes.
- F Mixolydian Scale**: A scale starting on F4, ascending and then descending in eighth notes.
- E \flat Major Pentatonic Scale**: A pentatonic scale starting on E \flat 4, ascending and then descending in eighth notes.

Improvisatory Goals:

- Improvise two and four-bar phrases using the B \flat Mixolydian scale
- Improvise two and four-bar phrases using the E \flat Mixolydian scale
- Improvise two and four-bar phrases using the F Mixolydian scale
- Improvise over the form of the blues
- Improvise experimenting with planing

A transcription of **Sonny Stitt's** improvised baritone saxophone solo on

"Seven Eleven"

from the recording *"Stitt's Bits: The Bebop Recordings."*

Solo starts @ 1:29

Transcribed by Daniel Western

BARITONE SAX.

The musical score is written for baritone saxophone in B-flat major, 4/4 time. It consists of seven staves of music. The first staff begins with a treble clef, a key signature of two flats (B-flat major), and a common time signature. The melody is written in a single line. Above the first staff, the chord $Bb7$ is written. Above the second staff, the chords $Eb7$, $Bb7$, $Dmin7$, and $G7$ are written. Above the third staff, the chords $Cmin7$, $F7$, and $Bb7$ are written. Above the fourth staff, the chord $Bb7$ is written. Above the fifth staff, the chords $Eb7$, $Bb7$, $Dmin7$, and $G7$ are written. Above the sixth staff, the chords $Cmin7$, $F7$, and $Bb7$ are written. Above the seventh staff, the chord $Bb7$ is written. The score includes various musical notations such as eighth notes, quarter notes, half notes, and rests. There are also some handwritten annotations, including a '3' over a triplet of eighth notes in the first staff and a '3' over a triplet of eighth notes in the sixth staff. The score ends with a double bar line and repeat dots.

Walking Shoes

Ronnie Cuber—Baritone Saxophone

In May of 1997, three contemporary baritone saxophonists—Ronnie Cuber, Gary Smulyan, and Nick Brignola, went into the recording studio to pay homage to the late baritone saxophone champion, Gerry Mulligan. The result of this session is an album that features the baritone soloists as well as many of Mulligan’s compositions.⁸⁰ “Walking Shoes” is one of these compositions. It is a 32 bar AABA form in the key of C major for the baritone saxophone and Ronnie Cuber improvises for one chorus.

This solo is remarkable for several reasons. First, most of Cuber’s ideas are derived from arpeggios. There is very little scalar or linear movement. Hopefully, this solo shows that practicing arpeggios and applying them within a solo can have musically successful results. Also, this solo is an excellent example of thematic development throughout an improvised solo. Cuber uses similar ideas that link the A sections together which in turn helps the B section to stand out as different. Notice that each A section starts with an arpeggiation of a C triad or C6 starting on an E (the 3rd). Then he plays a similar idea that employs common tones and only varies to fit the chord (see example B12).

⁸⁰ The Three Baritone Saxophone Band. *Plays Mulligan*. Dreyfus Records. 36588. CD. 1998.

Example B12

Measures 1-3

Measures 9-11

Measures 25-27

Like the previously discussed solos by Joe Temperly, “In A Mellow Tone,” and Cecil Payne, “Summer Evening,” this solo is filled with enclosures.⁸¹ Cuber incorporates them within his ideas as well as stringing a series of enclosures together (see example B13).

Example B13

Measures 4-5

Measures 7-8

Measures 12-13

Measures 16-17

Measures 24-25

⁸¹ Jerry Coker-“the preceding of an aimed-for note with two other notes, the first being a half step above that note, the second being a half step below that note, then the aimed-for note itself, as in D^b, B, C.”

Another common melodic formulae that is found in Cuber's solo is that of the “#9—b9 lick” (see example B14). This is a lick that occurs over dominant chords that has the #9 followed by the b9 and this typically resolves to the 5th of the resolution (assuming that the dominant chord resolves as one might expect). In this solo, Cuber only uses it over certain A7s and even embellishes the lick with an internal enclosure in measures 4 and 12.

Example B14

Example B14 displays three measures of a melodic lick in treble clef, key of A major. The lick consists of a sequence of notes: A4 (quarter), B4 (quarter), C#4 (quarter), D4 (quarter), E4 (quarter), F#4 (quarter), G4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), B4 (quarter), C#4 (quarter), D4 (quarter), E4 (quarter), F#4 (quarter), G4 (quarter), A4 (quarter). The lick is divided into three measures: Measures 4-5, Measures 12-13, and Measures 15-16. The chords are A7, DMIN7, and G7. The notes are labeled with #9, b9, and 5. The lick is embellished with an internal enclosure in measures 4 and 12.

Similarly to Sonny Stitt's solo on “Seven Eleven,” Cuber employs the technique of “planing” in measures 31-32. One could analyze this passage as Cuber implying chords with altered extensions and that may have been what Cuber was initially thinking/hearing. However, it is simpler to understand and probably more accurate to the actual thought process to analyze this passage as planning half-diminished seventh chords descending by half steps.

Example B15

Example B15 displays a melodic passage in treble clef, key of A major. The passage consists of a sequence of notes: A4 (quarter), B4 (quarter), C#4 (quarter), D4 (quarter), E4 (quarter), F#4 (quarter), G4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), B4 (quarter), C#4 (quarter), D4 (quarter), E4 (quarter), F#4 (quarter), G4 (quarter), A4 (quarter). The passage is divided into four measures: EMIN7, A7, DMIN7, and G7. The notes are labeled with 7, 5, b9, and 1. The chords are EMIN7, A7, DMIN7, and G7. The passage is analyzed as planning half-diminished seventh chords descending by half steps: Gø, F#ø, Fø, and C.

Cuber is a modern player and his sound reflects that. Pay close attention to his timbre. Compare it to the timbre of older players such as Carney and Fowlkes. One sound is not necessarily better than the other but improvisers spend a great deal of time working on and refining their sound. It is important that young improvisers try to get a strong timbral concept so that they can work on sounding stylistically correct.

Helpful Accompanying Exercises:

The image displays 12 musical staves, each with a specific chord and a corresponding melodic exercise. The exercises are written in treble clef and are designed for guitar accompaniment. The chords and their corresponding exercises are as follows:

- Staff 1: **G⁶** (G major, 6th)
- Staff 2: **F⁷** (F major, 7th)
- Staff 3: **E^{M7(b5)}** (E minor, 7th, flat 5)
- Staff 4: **A⁷** (A major, 7th)
- Staff 5: **D^{MIN7}** (D minor, 7th)
- Staff 6: **F[#]MIN7** (F# minor, 7th)
- Staff 7: **B⁷** (B major, 7th)
- Staff 8: **E^{MIN7}** (E minor, 7th)
- Staff 9: **G⁷** (G major, 7th)
- Staff 10: **B^{MIN7}** (B minor, 7th)
- Staff 11: **E⁷** (E major, 7th)
- Staff 12: **A^{MIN7}** (A minor, 7th)
- Staff 13: **D⁷** (D major, 7th)

We can glean some good sequential ii7-V7 ideas from the last half of the A sections.

Practice these so that they are internalized and mix and match them to navigate similar passages.

The image displays three musical staves, each representing a different sequential ii7-V7 progression. Above each staff are the chord names: F#MIN7, B7, EMIN7, A7, DMIN7, G7, and C. The staves show the corresponding notes and fingerings (numbers 1-5) for each chord. Asterisks (*) indicate non-chord tones used to complete the enclosure. The first staff shows a progression with enclosures on the 5th and 7th degrees. The second staff shows a progression with enclosures on the 5th and 7th degrees, with a different fingering for the 7th degree. The third staff shows a progression with enclosures on the 5th and 7th degrees, with a different fingering for the 7th degree.

*- Denotes a non-chord tone used to complete the enclosure

Improvisatory Goals:

- Improvise only using arpeggios.
- Improvise lines that traverse multiple chords and try to keep common tones.
- Try to weave enclosures into your lines
- Improvise over the chord progression to “Walkin’ Shoes”

A transcription of **Ronnie Cuber's** improvised baritone saxophone solo on
"Walkin' Shoes"
 from the recording *"Plays Mulligan."*

Transcribed by Daniel Western

Solo starts @ 1:32

BARITONE SAX.

Chords: C6, F7, C6, A7, DMIN7, F#MIN7, B7, EMIN7, A7, DMIN7, G7, C6, F7, C6, A7, DMIN7, FMIN7, B7, EMIN7, A7, DMIN7, G7, BMIN7, E7, AMIN7, BMIN7, E7, AMIN7, D7, DMIN7, G7, C6, F7, C6, A7, DMIN7, F#MIN7, B7, EMIN7, A7, DMIN7, G7, C6.

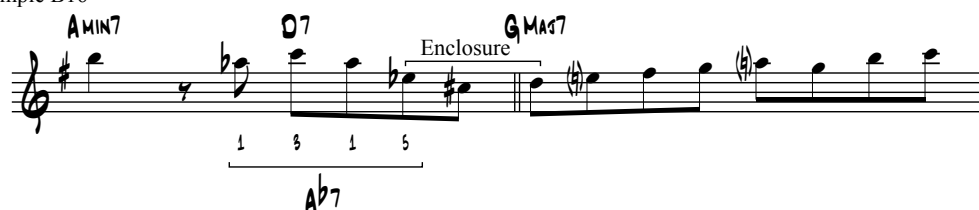
Falling In Love With Love

Lars Gullen—Baritone Saxophone

Be careful when searching for the recording from which this transcription comes. The trumpeter, Clifford Brown, recorded two albums with very similar names, each recorded on a different label in 1953. His *Memorial Album*⁸² was released on the Blue Note record label in 1956. His *Memorial*⁸³ was originally released on the Prestige record label also in 1956. It is the latter, *Memorial*, that is discussed in this study. It is an album that consists of two recording dates with two different bands. “Falling In Love With Love” was recorded in Stockholm with a band called the Swedish All-Stars. The baritone saxophonist, Lars Gullen, solos for one chorus on this 32 bar ABAC tune in the key of G major for the baritone saxophone.

The A sections contain chords that are diatonic and function normatively in the key of G major, all except for the E7 (bar 2 of the form: bar 4 of the transcription) which serves as a secondary dominant, V7/ii, that leads to the Amin7 or ii7. In the first A section (bars 3-10), Gullen mainly employs the G major scale. He only deviates from the G major scale during the E7 where he plays a F \flat and a G \sharp (the $\flat 9$ and 3rd of the E7), a chromatic passing tone E \flat in measure 8, and he employs a tritone substitution with an enclosure in measure 10, during the D7, that uses A \flat , E \flat , and C \sharp .

Example B16



⁸² Brown, Clifford. *Memorial Album*. Blue Note Records. BLP 1526. CD. 2004

⁸³ Brown, Clifford. *Memorial*. Toshiba EMI. 7071. CD. 2008

The B section (measures 11-18) begins in the key of G major but quickly moves to E minor by way of F#min7(b5)-B7(b9). During this measure (12), Gullen uses the E harmonic minor scale. Using a harmonic minor scale over minor ii7-V7 is quite common in the jazz language. In this case the C \sharp acts as the \flat 5 of the F#min7(b5) and/or the \flat 9 of the B7(b9). The D# is the 3rd of the B7(b9) and typically leads to the root of the Emin7. The second half of this 8 bar section, starts on an A7 and Gullen uses the A Mixolydian scale with chromatic passing tones and an enclosure (see example B17).

Example B17



The last two bars of this section lead back to G major via an Amin7-D7 (ii7-V7). For the most part, Gullen uses the D Mixolydian scale (see example B18). However, during the D7 he substitutes an E \flat for the normative E \sharp . Here Gullen is implying a D7(b9).

Example B18



Gullen uses increasing chromaticism to build his solo. The second A section (measures 19-26) is harmonically the same as the first A section. Gullen again uses the G major scale along with chromatic passing and lower neighbor tones. However, the chromatic scale is used more prominently and for extended periods of time during this second A section.

Harmonically, the C section is similar to the B section. They start the same but differ in the last four bars. The B section ends harmonically open with a D7 where the C section ends

harmonically closed with a Gmaj7. It is difficult to determine what scale/chord Gullen is thinking of during the first three bars considering he plays four notes (E, B, F#, and an inflection of D; either D \flat or D#). However, he does make the changes with these common tones. The D, E, and B are 5, 6, and 3 during the Gmaj7. The E during the F#min7(b5) is the 7th and acts as the upper note in an enclosure, the lower note being the D, that moves to D# and B which are the 3rd and root of the B7. The oscillation between the F# and E (the 9th and root) during the Emin7 gives way to Gullen implying an E7(b9) in measure 30. Using his pitch selection (the A \flat Lydian-dominant scale) as a guide, one can infer that Gullen uses the tritone substitution in measure 32, replacing the D7 with an A \flat 7.

Stylistically, Gullen has a similar approach to the baritone saxophone as Gerry Mulligan. He plays on the lighter, softer side. His articulation, if present, is extremely legato. His eighth notes are almost straight. He uses very little vibrato.

Helpful Accompanying Exercises:

The following table summarizes the exercises shown in the image:

Exercise	Chord / Scale
1	G Major 7
2	E7
3	A minor 7
4	D7
5	F# minor 7(b5)
6	B7
7	E minor 7
8	A7
9	G Major Scale
10	E Harmonic Minor Scale
11	A Mixolydian Scale
12	Ab Lydian-Dominant Scale Used over Ab7 (Tritone Substitution for D7)

Improvisatory Goals:

- Improvise two and four-bar phrases using the G major scale
- Improvise two and four-bar phrases using the E harmonic minor scale
- Improvise two and four-bar phrases using the A Mixolydian scale
- Improvise over the form of “Falling In Love With Love”

"Falling In Love With Love"

from the recording "*Memorial*."

Solo starts @ :57

BARITONE SAX.

Walking Shoes

Gerry Mulligan—Baritone Saxophone

Gerry Mulligan has been “credited as being the first great soloist on the baritone saxophone, an instrument that up to this point in time [1948] has had only one major player, Harry Carney of the Ellington band.”⁸⁴ In 1994, he recorded a quartet album titled *Dream A Little Dream*⁸⁵ that consisted of jazz standards as well as Mulligan originals. “Walking Shoes” is one of these originals and it is the same tune that was discussed when studying the previous Ronnie Cuber solo. It is often a good practice to study several different artists soloing over the same tune so that comparisons can be made and alternate possibilities can be discovered. Over the course of the recording, Mulligan solos several times. He splits a chorus with the pianist as well as “trades 4’s” with the drummer. But, it is the complete chorus of uninterrupted baritone saxophone solo that is of interest to this study. This solo is 32 bars in length, has an AABA’ form, and is in the key of C major for the baritone saxophone.

The two beat lead-in into this solo is the A blues scale with a chromatic passing tone. When the actual form starts, Mulligan uses the C major scale to navigate the first three bars. Notice that he sequences the material in the C6 so that it has the similar rhythmic, melodic and harmonic relationships in the F7 (see example B19).

Example B19

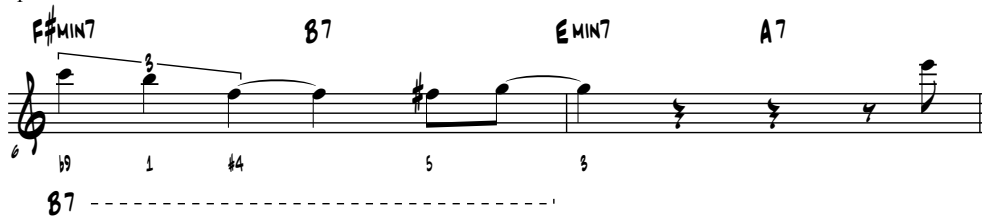


⁸⁴ Larson, Thomas E. *History and Tradition of Jazz*. Iowa: Kendall/Hunt Publishing Company, 2002. 158.

⁸⁵ Mulligan, Gerry. *Dream A Little Dream*. Telarc. CD 83364. CD. 1994.

In measure four, Mulligan uses the D harmonic minor scale during an A7. This is similar to Lars Gullen's use of the harmonic minor scale over a ii7-V7 in minor. The C# is the 3rd and the Bb is the b9 of A7. The A7(b9) resolves normatively to Dmin7 where Mulligan uses the D Dorian scale (same pitch content as the C major scale). Measures 6-8 contains a sequence of ii7-V7's descending by whole steps. Often, a ii7-V7 is thought of as simply a V7. The improviser simplifies the progression of two chords down to one chord. In measure 6, Mulligan treats the F#min7-B7 as a B7 and uses the "lick" in example B20 to navigate this harmonic progression:

Example B20



Although on the surface the second A section is quite different from the first, they are similar on a structural level. Like the first A section, the second opens with a C major idea during the C6 that is mapped on to the F7 (see example B21).

Example B21

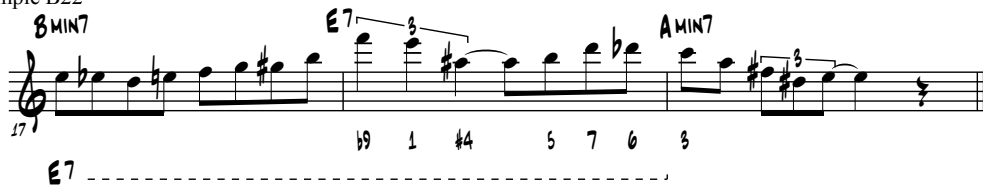


The first real digression away from the use of the C major scale comes at the A7(b9) where Mulligan uses the half-whole diminished scale. The half-whole diminished is a symmetrical scale that has the intervallic pattern of HWHWHWHW.⁸⁶ Many jazz improvisers use this scale over dominant seventh chords that also have a b9.

⁸⁶ H=Half Step. W=Whole Step

The first four bars of the B section is in A minor. Like he did before, Mulligan is treating the ii7-V7 as two bars of E7. During the first bar he uses the E Mixolydian scale but in the second bar he uses the $\flat 9-1-\#4-5$ lick as he did before in example B20. He even resolves it similarly to the next chord's 3rd (see example B22)

Example B22



The last four bars of the B section employs two, ii7-V7; one that tonicizes G major and one that tonicizes C major. Mulligan uses the A ascending melodic minor over the Amin7. Normally this would not be the first choice of usable scales⁸⁷ but because of the clear direction of the line and the rhythmic diminution on the potentially dissonant notes most listeners would not find this unpleasant. Mulligan uses sequences again during both dominant chords (see example B23).

Example B23



The last A section is similar to the previous two. However instead of the sequence of ii7-V7's descending by whole steps the third A section ends on a C6. During this last A section, Mulligan mainly uses the C major scale and only slightly deviates to fit the underlying chords.

Stylistically, Mulligan's eighth-notes are fairly straight but he achieves a sense of swing through articulation and breath accents. He almost "ghosts"⁸⁸ many notes within his lines of

⁸⁷ The G# in the A ascending melodic minor scale could potentially create a unwanted dissonance between the G in the Amin7.

⁸⁸ De-emphasis via a lessened airstream of certain pitches with in a line

continuous eighth-notes. His sound is lighter than many of the other baritone saxophonists included in this study. Also, his vibrato is very shallow and he uses it sparsely.

Helpful Accompanying Exercises:

The image displays ten musical staves, each representing a different chord and its corresponding eighth-note accompaniment exercise. The chords are: C6, F7, A7, DMIN7, F#MIN7, B7, EMIN7, G7, BMIN7, E7, AMIN7, and D7. Each staff shows a sequence of eighth notes with accidentals that correspond to the notes in the chord. The exercises are arranged in a single column, with each staff starting on a new line of music.

C Major Scale



D Harmonic Minor Scale



D Dorian Scale



E Mixolydian Scale



A Ascending Melodic Minor Scale



A Half-Whole Diminished Scale




Improvisatory Goals:

- Improvise two and four-bar phrases using the C major scale
- Improvise two and four-bar phrases using the D harmonic minor scale
- Improvise two and four-bar phrases using the D Dorian scale
- Improvise two and four-bar phrases using the A half-whole diminished scale
- Improvise two and four-bar phrases using the E Mixolydian scale
- Improvise two and four-bar phrases using the A ascending melodic minor scale
- Improvise over the form of “Walking Shoes”

from the recording "*Dream A Little Dream.*"

Solo starts @ :53

5. CONCLUSION

Jazz, unlike some other music, is sonically well documented. There is a plethora of recorded information that allows a newcomer to the music to actually hear it being created and performed. Jazz educators and pedagogues can direct their students to multiple locations (schools, concert halls, festivals, clubs, as well as libraries, record stores, and even the internet) to find educational resources. In some ways this availability might actually hinder the learning process as far as improvisation and style is concerned. The novice jazz student can become inundated with both musical and theoretical information if they lack direction and guidance. The improvised jazz solos, the transcriptions, and the accompanying analyses contained within this study have been selected to avoid such an informational onslaught. They are simple, both musically as well as saxophonistically, so that an intermediate level player can master them with a reasonable amount of time and effort. Once the notes and rhythms have been learned, the student should focus on nuance and stylistic elements.

It is important to state that studying these improvised jazz solos is just one step towards learning how to improvise convincingly within the jazz idiom. Learning these solos alone will not lead to complete mastery. However, beginning to learn how to listen and prioritize melodic and harmonic information, beginning to learn theoretical approaches to chord changes, beginning to learn how to sound like a jazz improviser, and finally beginning to learn how to blend these concepts into one's own personal voice is a realistic goal of this study. To continue this path towards jazz proficiency, one must seek out and transcribe more solos, listen to more recordings, practice, and actually improvise.

GLOSSARY

Blue Note—typically a note that does not fit the given harmony but can be attributed to the blues scale. The most common blue notes are the $\flat 3$, $\flat 5$, and $\flat 7$. Often blue notes are also scooped or bent.

Bluesy—a way of playing that invokes the Blues style. Common elements include scoops, bends, and the use of the blues scale.

Buttoned—an abrupt stopping of a note. For saxophonists, this involves supporting the air stream through the end of the note which then is quickly stopped by an aggressive tongue on the reed.

Changes—the chord progression of a tune that guides the rhythm section players and the soloist. These are either written out in jazz nomenclature or memorized.

Ghost Note or Ghosting—the de-emphasis of a note by suddenly reducing the air stream and/or partially dampening the reed with the tongue. Usually occurring on eighth notes on the upbeat.

Groove or Feel—the overall texture being generated by the rhythm section and or ensemble. The groove suggests rhythms, sense of swing (or lack thereof), and roles to both the rhythm section as well as to the soloists.

Growling—a timbre altering technique that can be achieved by humming while playing the saxophone.

Laid-back—a relaxed way of playing where the performer places their notes slightly behind the established beat without actually reducing the tempo. Usually the performer is also employing a heavier sense of swing and a legato articulation but this is not always the case.

Lick—slang for phrase or thematic idea in jazz terminology.

Making The Changes—creating phrases that fit within the harmonic progression—focussing on highlighting the notes that are different in each chord.

Phrase—as a noun: a series of pitches (and sometimes rests) that unfold through time and can be thought of as one melodic unit or idea. As a verb it is sometimes used to refer to a performer's use of articulation and/or sense of swing.

Quote or Quoting—is a compositional technique where an improviser interjects a pre-existing melody into an improvisation.

Shuffle—a groove that has its roots in 12/8 time signature and swings hard.

Swing—the unevenness of eighth notes. Usually this unevenness is caused by the note on the downbeat being rhythmically longer than the note on the up beat. However in some cases the unevenness is created by articulation and breath accents. There are many factors that determine a performer's sense of swing including tempo, time period [time in jazz history], groove or feel, and personal taste. Swing is a continuum that can change during an improvised line depending on the whims of the performer. Most modern jazz ensemble charts and transcription books use straight eighth notes to represent swung eighth notes. Below is a chart that plots a few points along this continuum and tries to notate common swing feels with traditional rhythmic notation.



Sub-tone—a timbre altering technique that makes the saxophone sound airy, muffled, and diffuse.

Turn-Around— a harmonic formula, typically occurring at the end of a section or form, and leading back to the tonic.

Two-Feel—the groove that is most commonly associated with the bass playing half notes on beats 1 and 3. The bass player typically plays scale degree 1 on beat 1 and scale degree 5 on beat 3.

Walk or Walking Bass Line—the melodic and harmonic line that is created when the bass plays quarter notes on the downbeats.

Warm Up A Note—adding vibrato at the end of a note.

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