

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE RHYTHM AND BLUES SAXOPHONE STYLE:
AN ANALYTICAL AND PERFORMANCE BASED STUDY

by

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(Under the Direction of KENNETH FISCHER)

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this document is to provide an historical and performance based guide for the rhythm and blues saxophone style. Localized technical and stylistic innovations in Chicago, New Orleans, Memphis, New York, Cincinnati, and the West Coast area contributed to the development and codification of a standard R&B saxophone style. The intent of this document is to function as a guide to important R&B saxophonists, their respective contributions to the style, and to present annotated transcriptions completed by the author.

Eighteen of the artists and transcriptions were selected from the 1940s through the 1960s with specific performances and or works chosen based on the historical significance and usage of the specific R&B saxophone technique. Transcriptions nineteen and twenty are from 1973 and 1995 respectively and display the preservation and persistence of the R&B saxophone style.

Each transcription includes the solo for the saxophone performer. Each annotation includes, but is not limited to the title of the work, original artist and biographical information on the saxophone soloist, related dates, specific recording, theoretical analysis, extended techniques, and dramatic devices.

Chapter I is entitled "Organizational Plan and Review of Literature." Chapter II, entitled "A Performers Guide to Rhythm and Blues Saxophone," consists of the

annotated analyses of selected transcriptions. The transcriptions appear in the transposed saxophone key providing the reader with an accurate account of the techniques employed by the performer. Chapter III, entitled “Conclusion,” explores the contribution of individualized R&B saxophone innovations to the fully developed style, contains a final summary of the document, and suggests areas for further study.

INDEX WORDS: Saxophone, Rhythm and Blues, Rhythm and Blues Saxophone,
 Rock and Roll, Rock and Roll Saxophone, Saxophone
 Transcriptions, Annotated Transcriptions

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DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this document to the saxophonists whose brilliance and creativity is featured throughout. Additional consideration is extended to the serious student with the hope that the combination of scholarly study and practical application will keep this music alive.

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I would like to express my appreciation to my family for their continued love and support. Most importantly, to my wife Renee, whose patience and compassion served as a constant inspiration. I would also like to thank my major professor, Dr. Kenneth Fischer, for his guidance throughout my degree program and the completion of this document. Additional thanks are extended to my doctoral advisory committee; Ms. Angela Jones-Reus, Dr. D. Ray McClellan, Dr. Clint Taylor, Dr. Stephen Valdez, and Dr. Roger Vogel who provided invaluable advice and encouragement.

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10	<i>Flying Home</i> Illinois Jacquet, Lionel Hampton	:43	2:02	Tenor
17	<i>Too Many Women Blues</i> Eddie “Cleanhead” Vinson	:00	:42	Alto
22	<i>Corn Bread</i> Hal Singer Sextet	:00	3:00	Tenor
30	<i>The Hucklebuck</i> Paul Williams	1:00	1:30	Baritone
35	<i>The Deacon’s Hop</i> Big Jay McNeely	1:05	2:25	Tenor
41	<i>Sleep</i> Earl Bostic	2:00	2:50	Alto
49	<i>Ain’t That a Shame</i> Fats Domino	1:13	1:36	Tenor
52	<i>Rip it Up</i> Little Richard	1:10	1:30	Tenor
55	<i>Real Gone</i> Sam Taylor & His All Star Jazz	:45	1:15	Tenor
58	<i>I’m in Love Again</i> Fats Domino	:43	1:08	Tenor
61	<i>Slippin’ and Slidin’</i> Little Richard	:45	1:22	Tenor
64	<i>When You Dance</i> Turbans	1:45	2:15	Tenor
67	<i>Early in the Morning</i> Buddy Holly	1:30	1:50	Tenor
70	<i>Rebel Rouser</i> Duane Eddy	1:10	1:30	Tenor
72	<i>Beatnik Fly</i> Johnny and the Hurricanes	1:00 1:30	1:15(solo #1) 1:50(solo #2)	Tenor
76	<i>Night Train</i> James Brown	1:30	1:50	Tenor
80	<i>One Mint Julep</i> King Curtis	:00 1:48	1:15(melody) 2:15 (solo)	Tenor
86	<i>Shotgun</i> Jr. Walker and The All Stars	1:17	1:40	Tenor
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CHAPTER I

ORGANIZATIONAL PLAN AND REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Introduction

In Doug Miller's "The Moan within the Tone: African Retentions in Rhythm and Blues Saxophone Style in Afro-American Popular Music," Miller states:

In the 1940's, when changes in popular culture in the USA were elevating extremism to a new art form, a whole new set of sounds began to emerge in the music performed in the dance-halls by the big blues bands and rhythm and blues combos. A feature of dance-hall rhythm and blues was the way in which saxophone sections and soloists in particular, were used to whip up teenagers into a frenzy with repetitive riffs often played in the very upper or lower registers of the instrument. Known pejoratively as 'honking and screaming' or to some 'noisemaking,' this new style of saxophone playing was first heard in the featured tenor solos by Jean Illinois Battiste Jacquet in the Lionel Hampton Big Band in the early 1940's....In 1949, by the time *Billboard* began to use the term 'rhythm and blues' to describe 'race' recordings, the urban blues played in the clubs, bars, and dance-halls had become infused with the driving rhythms of jazz and the vocalizations of gospel. The confluence of blues, jazz, and gospel in R&B style allowed the saxophone to come into its own as a premier voice in Afro-American music.¹

Miller goes on to outline the integral aspects of the rhythm and blues (R&B) saxophone style which include; sound quality (pitch, color, texture, attack/decay), technique (honking and screaming), and delivery style (values in R&B performance, expression, and audience participation).²

While Miller's description of rhythm and blues saxophone characteristic traits are a useful starting point, this type of generalization classifies only the fully developed style and lacks an explanation of the set of congruent individualized saxophone techniques emerging all over the country. With stylistic contributions from Chicago, New Orleans,

¹ Doug Miller, "The Moan within the Tone: African Retentions in Rhythm and Blues Saxophone Style in Afro-American Popular Music," *Popular Music* 14, no. 2 (May 1995): 155.

² *Ibid.*, 159-169.

Memphis, New York, Cincinnati, and West Coast area saxophonists, the 1940s through the 1960s proved to be the birth, development, and the decline of the saxophone as a prominently featured component of many popular groups of this time period.

Purpose

The purpose of this document is to provide an historical and performance based guide for the rhythm and blues saxophone style. Localized technical and stylistic innovations in Chicago, New Orleans, Memphis, New York, Cincinnati, and the West Coast area contributed to the development and codification of a standard R&B saxophone style. The intent of this document is to function as a guide to important R&B saxophonists, their respective contributions to the style, and to present annotated transcriptions completed by the author.

Need for the Study

Currently, the research and literature devoted exclusively to the R&B saxophone style is limited. Numerous publications exist concerning R&B as an independent entity; however, few directly address the importance of the saxophone as the genre's premier solo instrument. Therefore, an historically-based study including annotated transcriptions shall provide a source for the study of the musical contributions made by R&B saxophonists to the fully developed R&B saxophone style. In addition, this document shall enhance the understanding of the overall history of the saxophone.

Delimitations

This study focuses on significant contributions to R&B saxophone technique and how differing stylistic offerings contributed to its development. Eighteen of the artists and transcriptions were selected from the 1940s through the 1960s with specific performances and/or works chosen based on the historical significance and usage of the specific R&B saxophone technique. Transcriptions nineteen and twenty are from 1973 and 1995 respectively and display the preservation and persistence of the R&B saxophone style.

Sub-Problems

Questions to be addressed in this study include:

1. What musical characteristics from blues, jazz, and gospel did R&B utilize (or omit) and why? How did this affect the role of the saxophonist?
2. What were the idiomatic technical contributions to the R&B saxophone style?
3. What is the role of a saxophonist in an R&B band?
4. Once the genre was established, what musical devices did saxophonists employ and did these devices become accepted as part of the R&B saxophone tradition?
5. Who were the historically important saxophonists who performed in the R&B style and what were their respective contributions?

Definition of Terms

Altissimo register: The range of pitches written two octaves above the treble staff.³

Articulation: In performance, the characteristics of attack and decay of single tones or groups of tones and the means by which these characteristics are produced.⁴

Extended techniques: Techniques which fall outside the realm of traditional instrument playing.⁵ In this study flutter tongue, slap tongue, and growling shall be considered to be extended techniques.

False Fingering: (Fake Fingering, Alternate Fingering) On a wind instrument, a non standard fingering. False fingerings were traditionally used to allow the rapid execution of passages that would have been difficult or impossible to play with conventional fingerings. They alter the timbre of the instrument (sometimes radically)...in jazz they are often the reason for a player's adopting false fingerings, since they add variety and nuance to a line.⁶

Flutter tonguing: The tongue is fluttered or trilled against the roof of the mouth, just behind the front teeth.⁷

Growling: A rough sounding tone achieved in different ways by brass and woodwind players and singers. On wind instruments the growl may be produced by transmitting a guttural rasp from the throat through the lips to the mouthpiece of the instrument, or by flutter tonguing....or both.⁸

³ Doug Randel, *The New Harvard Dictionary of Music* (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1986), 31.

⁴ Ibid., 55.

⁵ John Stephen Bleuel, "A Descriptive Catalog of the Solo and Chamber Saxophone Music of Lucie Robert" (D.M.A. diss., University of Georgia, 1998), 5.

⁶ Barry Kernfeld, ed., *The New Grove Dictionary of Jazz*, vol. 1 (New York, NY: Grove's Dictionaries of Music, 1988), 352-353.

⁷ Randel, 863.

⁸ Kernfeld, 455.

Meter: The pattern in which a steady succession of rhythmic pulses is organized; also termed time. Most works of Western tonal music are characterized by the regular recurrence of such patterns.⁹

Multiphonics: Two or more pitches sounded simultaneously on a single wind instrument.¹⁰

Musical Symbols Key: An arrow pointing up or down over a designated tone denotes a bend in pitch. An arched line which appears before a note denotes a scoop up to a note. An arched line which appears after a note should be performed as a fall away from the note.

Pitch Alteration: Altering the desired pitch of a note by an extreme tightening and loosening of the embouchure. This is accomplished through jaw and lip movement or by false fingerings.

Riff: A short melodic ostinato, usually two or four bars long, which may either be repeated intact (strict riff) or varied to accommodate an underlying harmonic pattern.¹¹

Rhythm: The pattern of movement in time. In the widest sense, it is set beside the terms melody and harmony. In general, rhythm covers all aspects of musical movement as ordered in time, as opposed to aspects of musical sound conceived as pitch and timbre.¹²

⁹ Randel., 489.

¹⁰ Ibid., 515.

¹¹ Kernfeld, vol. 2, 379.

¹² Randel., 700.

Slap tonguing: A percussive sounding staccatissimo produced by placing the flat of the tongue on the reed, building up the air pressure in the oral cavity and releasing the reed quickly.¹³

Style: A term used for the composer's manner of treating various elements that make up a composition-the overall form, melody, rhythm, harmony, instrumentation-as well as for the performer's manner of presenting a musical composition. The style of both composer and performer is influenced by many factors, personal and historical.¹⁴

Tempo: The speed at which music is performed, i.e., the rate per unit of time of metrical pulses in performance.¹⁵

Timbre Changes: Changes made to the timbre of a single pitch on an instrument. On the saxophone it is accomplished with alternate fingerings.¹⁶ Additionally, this effect can be created through adjustments of the oral cavity and embouchure.

Organization of Study

Chapter I is entitled "Organizational Plan and Review of Literature." Chapter II, entitled "A Performers Guide to Rhythm and Blues Saxophone," consists of the annotated analyses of selected transcriptions. The transcriptions appear in the transposed saxophone key providing the reader with an accurate account of the techniques employed by the performer, i.e. extended techniques such as false fingerings, altissimo, growling,

¹³ Ronald L. Caravan, *Paradigms I* for Alto Saxophone: 10 Graded Compositions Using Contemporary Techniques, (Dorn Publications, 1976,) ii.

¹⁴ Christine Ammer, *The Harper Collins Dictionary of Music* (New York, NY: Harper Collins Publishers, 1995,) 426.

¹⁵ Randel, 838.

¹⁶ Jennifer Lynn Turpen, "A Descriptive Catalog of the Solo and Chamber Works for the Saxophone by Jindřich Feld" (D.M.A. diss., University of Georgia, 2000), 5.

slap tongue, flutter tongue, timbre changes, and pitch alteration. These annotations examine stylistic concepts, while the analysis justifies the performer's note choices as well as rhythmic concerns. Chapter III, entitled "Conclusion," explores the contribution of individualized R&B saxophone innovations to the fully developed style, contains a final summary of the document, and suggests areas for further study.

Methodology

Each transcription includes the solo for the saxophone performer. Each entry includes, but is not limited to: (omitted information is unavailable or not pertinent.)

Title of work:

Artist: (including the specific saxophone performer, with biographical information)

Important Dates: (date recorded, dates/position on the Billboard Top 40 or R&B charts)

From: (the recording)

Theoretical Analysis:

Extended Techniques:

Dramatic Devices:

Additional Comments:

Review of Literature

The majority of literature related to the R&B saxophone style is a series of informal articles. In 1991 through 1992, the *Saxophone Journal* published a recurring column by Tower of Power and Saturday Night Live Band saxophonist Lenny Pickett. The columns

feature titles such as “How to get a job in the Rock and Roll Business”¹⁷ or advice on technical considerations. Pickett’s “About the High Notes”¹⁸ and other columns related to technique are especially helpful to the performer, but not for the historical considerations that this document will address.

“The History of Top 40 Saxophone Solos: 1955-2004” by John Laughter¹⁹ contains the name, and modest biographical information of every saxophonist who performed on any *Billboard Top 40* hit between 1955 and 2004. The book includes a yearly breakdown of hit songs and includes the song title, artist, saxophonist associated with the tune, and type of saxophone used. The biographical information and song listings are valuable in establishing the leaders in the field.

Two dissertations, “Jimmy Heath: An Analysis and Study of his Tenor Saxophone Improvised Style between 1959-1998 Through Selected Transcriptions” by James Farrell Vernon in 2005²⁰, and Gene M. Smith’s 2001 dissertation, “Elements of the Performance Style of Kenny Garrett”²¹ use a transcription analysis method focusing on the composition type, tempo, dramatic devices, key preferences and frequency, melodic patterns, and solo contour. The methodology was developed by David Baker and Jerry Coker. These complimentary resources provide an academic justification for this type of document. Additionally, the format of the transcription and analysis has been useful in establishing the most effective method to present findings.

¹⁷ Lenny Pickett, “How to Get a Job in the Rock and Roll Business,” *Saxophone Journal* (May/June 1991): 28.

¹⁸ Lenny Pickett, “About the High Notes,” *Saxophone Journal* (September/October 1992): 8.

¹⁹ John Laughter, *The History of Top 40 Saxophone Solos: 1955-2004* (Macon, GA: by the author, 2003).

²⁰ James Farrell Vernon, “Jimmy Heath: An Analysis and Study of his Tenor Saxophone Improvised Style between 1959-1998 Through Selected Transcriptions” (D.A. diss., University of Northern Colorado, 2005).

²¹ Gene M. Smith, “Elements of the Performance Style of Kenny Garrett” (D.M.A. diss., University of Miami, 2001).

“A Descriptive Catalog of the Solo and Chamber Saxophone Music of Lucie Robert” by John Stephen Bleuel,²² and “A Descriptive Catalog of the Solo and Chamber Works for the Saxophone by Jindřich Feld” by Jennifer Lynn Turpen²³ are two dissertations containing terminology associated with the saxophone. The catalogs describe saxophone techniques and act as a guide for the organizational plan of a successful document.

J. Scott Turpen’s 1999 dissertation, “An Annotated Bibliography of Selected Jazz Saxophone Etudes Published Between 1960 and 1997”²⁴ examines and compares selected jazz etudes through the use of a predetermined template. This methodology provided a useful point of reference for similar comparative research. Furthermore, the format of the “Organizational Plan and Review of Literature” has been valuable in establishing an effective prospectus and first chapter.

The history of the saxophone emphasizes the work of individuals considered to be either classical and/or jazz saxophonists while ignoring the contributions of popular music saxophonists. This important area of saxophone history includes significant advances in the technical approach to the instrument. In addition, these performers have contributed to the advancement of various performance techniques in the overall approach to saxophone performance.

²² Bleuel, (D.M.A. diss., University of Georgia, 1998).

²³ Turpen, (D.M.A. diss., University of Georgia, 2000).

²⁴ J. Scott Turpen, “An Annotated Bibliography of Selected Jazz Saxophone Etudes Published Between 1960 and 1997” (D.M.A. diss., University of Georgia, 1999).

CHAPTER II

A PERFORMERS GUIDE TO RHYTHM AND BLUES SAXOPHONE

FLYING HOME

ILLINGHAM JACQUET & LIONEL HAMPTON

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17

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2

Title of Work: *Flying Home*

Artist: Lionel Hampton

Important Dates: Released in 1943²⁵

From: *Priceless Jazz Collection: Sampler No. 5*, GRP GRD9950, 1999.

²⁵ Laughter, 296.

Saxophonist: Tenor Saxophonist Jean-Baptiste “Illinois” Jacquet (1922-2004) was born in Broussard, Louisiana but spent most of his childhood in Houston, Texas.²⁶ He began his career at age three where he performed in a tap dancing stage act with his older brothers. Jacquet learned to play the soprano and alto saxophones in high school and performed with his brothers in a group called The California Playboys. He worked with the Milt Larkin Band (1939-1940), Floyd Ray (late 1940), and became an important member of the Lionel Hampton Band (1941-1943) where he performed the now famous *Flying Home*. Jacquet went on to work with Cab Calloway (1943-1944), Count Basie (1945-1946), and numerous solo and small group ensembles including collaborations with Milt Buckner, and Wild Bill Davis. Jacquet is the definition of what is termed the “Texas Tenor” sound due to his combination of a strong colorful timbre and a musical vocabulary deeply rooted in the blues. He was known for “honking and screaming”, that is, the use of extreme registers and repetitive patterns that are accessible and entertaining to an average audience. Jacquet is thought of as the first of the rhythm and blues saxophone players, and although he utilizes the “honking” technique, his harmonic language is still very much related to the swing tradition he grew up on. He influenced other “honkers” such as Eddie “Lockjaw” Davis, King Curtis, and Scott Hamilton who followed and expanded this unique style.²⁷

Theoretical Analysis: *Flying Home* is a thirty-two bar standard song form where the phrases are divided into four eight measure groupings. The overall form is AABA, that is, the A sections share the same chord changes and the B section, also called the

²⁶ Dave Gelly ed., *Masters of Jazz Saxophone: The Story of the Players and their Music* (London: Balafon Books, 2000), 35.

²⁷ Ian Carr et al., *Jazz: The Rough Guide* (London: Rough Guides, 1995), 321.

“bridge,” is different from the A. Typically, the A section contains more chord changes than listed here for *Flying Home*, but the notated chord reflects Jacquet’s note choice, and the harmonic intent of the solo. The A sections are essentially a B-flat chord with numerous harmonic embellishments; however, Jacquet does not stray from the “tonal area” of B-flat. (The term “tonal area” is used because Jacquet utilizes the minor and major harmonies interchangeably throughout the solo.) The B section, as in many bridges, utilizes a sequence of fourths to bring the progression back to the home key. The progression of B-flat to E-flat occurs in the first four measures of the bridge, and C to F in the final four measures. C to F is up a whole step from B-flat to E-flat, but upon closer examination another relationship can be found. It is interesting to note that the successive interval of a fourth in any progression inherently produces a ii-V root motion. This is evident in the bridge of *Flying Home*. B-flat to E-flat is a ii-V root motion in A-flat, a step down from B-flat. C to F is a ii-V root motion in B-flat, the home key. This explanation is not meant to point out the context of harmonic implications, but only to acknowledge the inherent relationships that are encountered in a closed harmonic system. From a strictly harmonic standpoint, the bridge is all related to B-flat. E-flat is a fourth above B-flat, and the C to F is there to present the dominant, F, of the B-flat harmony in a contextually consistent manner. To present the F in this context it is logical to go a fourth below the F to C to keep the consistency of the fourth root motion of the bridge. Jacquet performs two choruses, meaning twice through the thirty-two bar form. Therefore, the solo is sixty-four measures long.

Jacquet’s solo in *Flying Home* centers around the use of different combinations of the B-flat major and minor pentatonic scales. The B-flat major pentatonic scale, B-flat, C, D,

F, G, contains a major third (D) and lacks a seventh scale degree. The D firmly roots the scale in B-flat major, and the lack of a seventh scale degree provides a degree of ambiguity as to the quality of a possible seventh chord. Therefore, when Jacquet wants a major sounding consonant melodic line, he utilizes this scale. The B-flat minor pentatonic scale, B-flat, D-flat, E-flat, F, A-flat, contains a minor third (D-flat) and a minor seventh (A-flat). The harmonic quality is clearly identified in this scale as a minor-minor seventh. However, there is an important connection between a minor pentatonic and its parallel blues scale. The only difference is the inclusion of the sharp four, also called raised fourth, scale degree (B-flat, D-flat, E-flat, **E**, F, A-flat) in the blues scale. Therefore, when Jacquet wants a minor or “bluesy” feel, he utilizes the minor pentatonic or blues scale. Jacquet mixes and matches the scales throughout the A sections of the solo, and provides contrast in the B sections by “playing the changes.” Measures 1-12 are major pentatonic stepwise patterns. Measure 13 and 14 introduce the minor pentatonic, which is resolved by the return of the major pentatonic in measures 15 and 16.

The first “bridge,” beginning at measure 17, is interesting due to the harmonic implications of a C in the key of B-flat. The C has a dual function. It is the second scale degree in B-flat and functions as the ninth in B-flat when it is considered a harmonic extension. As Jacquet has not even played a seventh by this time in his solo, it is unlikely that this was his thought process. However, the F chord, in measure 18 provides a clue. C is five in F. Jacquet anticipates the dominant chord by a full measure and continues in the key of F/F minor in measure 18 even though the harmony resolves to B-flat by the end of measure 18. Measures 19 and 20 are E-flat major based and feature a harmonic

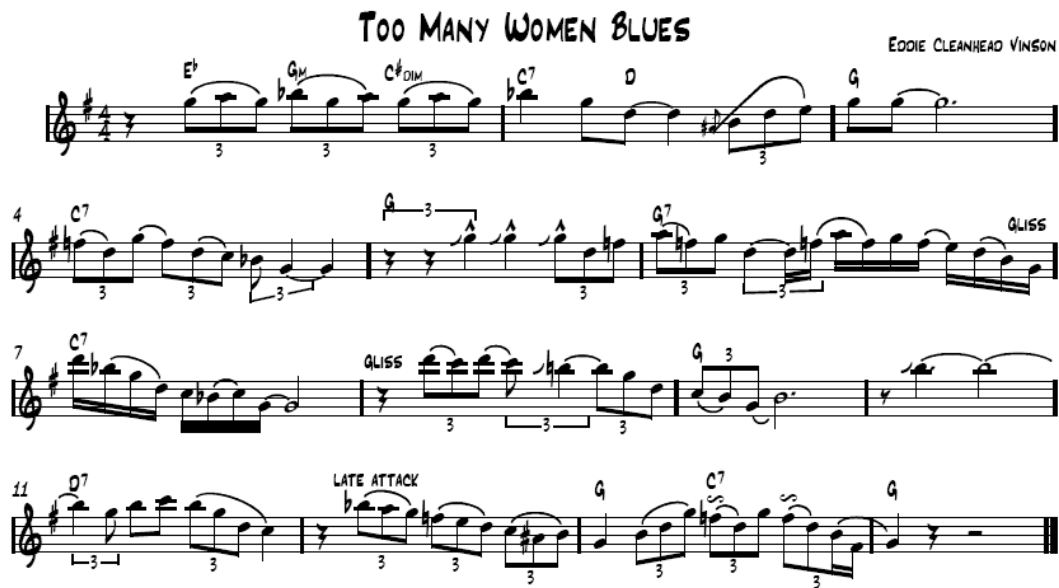
extension (D is seven in E-flat). The last four measures of the bridge, bars 21-24, are scalar with measures 23 and 24 featuring the resolution to B-flat (the last eight bars of the thirty-two bar form). Measures 25 and 26 ascend chromatically to a major pentatonic pattern, with an added D-flat, in measures 27 and 28 which evolves into a major/minor combination in measure 30. The uncertainty of the harmony is resolved by a major pentatonic in measure 31. The first chorus displays Jacquet's harmonic and melodic savvy, in that his manipulations of the aforementioned pentatonic scales resulted in a harmonically interesting and jazz related solo style. The second chorus utilizes the same pentatonic scales as harmonic and melodic material, but only after the introduction of some "honking." Jacquet syncopates a repeated B-flat for essentially sixteen measures. The bridge and last A section are similar in style and construction as the first chorus except for the addition of the mixolydian mode in measures 49-50 and 57-61. These sections sound more diatonic and are missing the inherent intervallic minor third leaps that are present in the pentatonic scale. Finally, in measure 61-64, Jacquet gives the listener a taste of what his whole solo was fundamentally constructed from, the blues. Although it is not a full statement of the scale, and includes a G which is not in the blues scale, the fourth and sharp-four scale degrees are present and the last two measures are a series of minor thirds which fit into the B-flat blues/minor pentatonic harmony.

Extended Techniques: Jacquet uses bends, falls, growls, and a steady quick vibrato. His reputation as a "honker" has more to do with his delivery and style than his note choice, which is more jazz than rock and roll or rhythm and blues.

Dramatic Devices: Jacquet builds his solo with jazzy interjections to a climax of repeated high notes, descending in range and intensity, until the conclusion of the solo. However, upon closer examination, there is much more to Jacquet's organizational plan. The first chorus stays around the major pentatonic. The second chorus begins with a simple harmonic idea, the syncopated and repeated B-flat. The B section of the second chorus becomes increasingly harmonically complex due to the use of the mixolydian mode. The harmonic complexity/tension is resolved with the use of the blues. Jacquet must have been thinking on many different musical levels to produce this type of tension and release.

Additional Comments: *Flying Home* is more jazz than R&B, but as Shaw states, "the *Flying Home* solo served to launch a school of booming, demonstrative and, erotic tenor sax stylists."²⁸

²⁸ Arnold Shaw, *Honkers and Shouters: The Golden Years of Rhythm and Blues* (New York: Collier Books, 1978), 173.



Title of Work: *Too Many Women Blues*

Artist: Eddie “Cleanhead” Vinson

Important Dates: Released between 1945-1947.²⁹

From: *Cleanhead Blues (1945-1947)*, Acrobat ACRC128, 2006.

Saxophonist: Eddie “Cleanhead” Vinson (1917-1988), so named due to his shaved head, played alto saxophone and was an outstanding blues vocalist. He was born in Houston, Texas in 1917. He learned to play the saxophone in school and in 1935 joined Arnett Cobb, Illinois Jacquet, and T-Bone Walker in the Chester Boone Band. In 1936 Milt Larkin took over the group and Vinson was free to explore his vocal talents. By 1941

²⁹ Cleanhead Blues (1945-1947), Acrobat ACRC128, 2006.

Larkin had left the band and Vinson was performing with blues artists Lil Green and Big Bill. In 1942 Vinson moved to New York and joined Cootie Williams' Big Band. The group had a hit in 1944 called *Cherry Red*. The success encouraged Vinson to form his own blues band based on Louis Jordan's small group approach. Vinson had a series of hits through the 1940s, but by the 1950s his fame was waning.³⁰ Perhaps it was his subject matter. With titles such as *Juice Head Baby*, *Some Women Do*, *Oil Man Blues*, *Ever-Ready Blues*, *I'm Gonna Wind Your Clock*, and *I'm Weak but Willing*, "...many of these songs were too blatant in their erotic imagery to obtain much airplay..."³¹ however, "...Vinson's alto, punctuating his predictably wheezy vocals, ensured that his live shows were entertaining, to say the very least."³² Vinson rejoined Cootie Williams and recorded with members of Count Basie's orchestra during the 1950s. Vinson was "rediscovered" by Cannonball Adderley in 1961 and released *Back Door Blues* with Adderley's group the same year. Vinson performed at the Monterey Jazz Festival in 1970 with Johnny Otis and continued to perform regularly through the 1970s and 1980s until his death in 1988.³³

Theoretical Analysis: Vinson's solo occurs at the beginning of the piece. There is a four measure introduction, the last two of which feature the beginning of Vinson's solo. (This is where the transcription starts.) Therefore, the solo is a modified twelve bar blues progression in G plus two measures (see the 12 bar form below).

³⁰ Keith Shadwick, *The Encyclopedia of Jazz and Blues* (Ann Arbor, MI: Borders Group, 2001), 660.

³¹ Hugh Gregory, *The Real Rhythm and Blues* (London: Blandford, 1998), 92.

³² Ibid.

³³ Ibid.

I	IV	I	I
IV	IV	I	I
V	V	I/IV	I

The first two measures of the solo are a turnaround, that is, a series of harmonies which lead the chord progression back to the home key. In this case, the turnaround acts as a preface to the solo and the solo functions as an introduction to the whole piece.

Vinson's note choice is simple in that he bases most of his solo on derivatives of the G scale or arpeggio (see table 1).

Table 1. Eddie Vinson's Harmonic Language in *Too Many Women Blues*

<u>Device</u>	<u>Spelling</u>	<u>Measures</u>
G minor pentatonic	(G, B-flat, C, D, F)	4,5,7
G dorian (G-)	(G, A, B-flat, C, D, E, F)	1,12
G mixolydian (G7)	(G, A, B, C, D, E, F)	6,8,9,10,11,13,14

In cases where a minor arpeggio appears, the application is considered dorian due to the inherent minor chord in the arpeggiation of the dorian mode. Major arpeggios are considered mixolydian due to the arpeggiation of the mode being major. Another interesting consideration is the application of the dorian and mixolydian modes. Vinson divides the scales into smaller useable portions. Essentially, the scales are broken into two three note segments. Vinson uses the scale degrees 1, 2, 3, and 5, 6, 7. The fourth scale degree is noticeably absent. (See Jr. Walker, *Shotgun* transcription for additional analysis of the missing fourth scale degree.) Note that the arpeggio notes are separated by a step between each chord tone. This technique yields a simple harmonic concept which Vinson exploits in measures 1, 6, and 12.

Vinson is utilizing various permutations of the "G" tonal realm which fit his harmonic needs. This point can be reinforced by looking at all tones that Vinson holds a quarter-note or longer. The list is short and there is a recurring theme (see table 2).

Table 2. Tones Held a Quarter-Note or Longer in *Too Many Women Blues*

<u>Measure</u>	<u>Note</u>
1	none
2	B-flat, D
3	G
4	G
5	G
6	D
7	G
8	B
9	B
10	B
11	B, C
12	none
13	G
14	G

All of the notes, except the C in measure 11, fit into either the G major or G minor chord.

Interestingly, the third (B/B-flat) is absent except for measure 2, where the B-flat is a lowered third and in measures 8 through 11 where the B functions as a natural third.

Vinson seems to enjoy the harmonic ambiguity for most of the solo, but the aforementioned measures 8-11 deserve explanation. The B is indicating the use of a G major tonality, but Vinson is actually superimposing this harmony over the underlying progression. The B first appears in measure 8 where the supporting harmony is a C7. The B is a bad choice due to the fact that a C7 contains a B-flat, but upon further investigation it is clear that Vinson treats the second half of measure eight as a harmonic anticipation to the upcoming G chord in measure 9. Vinson hovers around the B until measure 11, a D7 chord, where he uses a figure related to measures 8 and 9. Here however, Vinson resolves the figure to a C, the 7th scale degree of the underlying D7 chord. Essentially, Vinson is using the mixolydian mode, but the organization of the tones dictates another interesting relationship. The notes from measure 8-11 are G, B, C, and D. The first four notes of the G minor pentatonic are G, B-flat, C, and D. Vinson

plays the notes of G major in the pattern of a G minor pentatonic scale. (G major pentatonic would be G, A, B, D, E.) As previously stated, the notes in this section can be seen as being derived from G mixolydian, however, the organization of the tones and their dual application is unique. In fact, on beat four of measure 12, Vinson plays the only presentation of both the natural and lowered third. The A#/B-flat is a chromatic approach tone to the B. When the C# on beat four of measure 12 is considered, the result is a complete half-step surround tone which resolves to the aforementioned B.

Extended Techniques: Vinson uses a series of bends and glisses.

Dramatic Devices: Vinson utilizes a lazy swung triplet subdivision on the eighth-note figures. This jazz influence is exaggerated in measures 1 and 12 where he noticeably and purposefully drags the tempo to yield a laid back, bluesy type of feel. In fact, Vinson's heavy reliance on triplets as his rhythm of choice occasionally gives the solo a twelve-eight feel while the rhythm section is clearly delineating a four-four time signature.

Additional Comments: This solo is a classic example of a soloist using scalar derivatives of a single tonal center. In this case, the use of major and minor tonalities is important due to Vinson's reliance on scales based off of one tonal center. Vinson creates harmonic interest through his use of this technique, as opposed to the more common application of actually "playing the changes." It is surprising that Vinson never employs the G blues scale as it would add another color to his parallel tonalities.

CORN BREAD

HAL SINGER SEPTET

5

OVERBLOW OCTAVE

9

13

17

21

25

29

33

37

81 B^b $v18$ E^b7 $v18$

85 B^b $v18$ C^m $v18$ F

89 B^b A

93 E^b7

97 B^b C^m F A

101 B^b A

105 A E^b A

109 B^b A $GRADUAL$ C^m

113 B^b

Title of Work: *Corn Bread*

Artist: Hal Singer Sextet

Important Dates: 1948³⁴

From: *Red Hot Blues 1948-1951: Stompin' at the Savoy CD*, Savoy SVY-17436, 2005.

Saxophonist: Tenor saxophonist and band leader Harold (Hal) Singer was born in Tulsa, Oklahoma in 1919. He played the violin, piano, and various reed instruments as a child and pursued a college education at the Hampton Institute in Virginia. He withdrew from his academic endeavors to go on the road with a territory band led by Terrence Holder which led to stints with Ernie Fields, Ed Christian, and Nat Towles. In 1942, while touring with Lloyd Hunter, Singer decided to stay in Kansas City and immerse himself in the music scene. There, he was part of the Tommy Douglas Band until he joined Jay McShann. Singer then moved to New York and spent the mid-forties collaborating with Earl Bostic, Big Sid Catlett, Don Byas, and Roy Eldridge.

Singer joined Oran “Hot Lips” Page’s band in 1947 where he was part of a two tenor feature with Texan Tom Archia. Singer and Archia then signed on to be part of the house band for King Records in 1947-1948. By 1948, Singer formed his own small combo and began to do session work for Savoy Records. He was soon signed to Savoy, and recorded *Corn Bread* which was followed by *Beef Stew* and numerous performing engagements.

³⁴ JC Marion, “Cornbread: Hal Singer,” from *Jamm Upp* [online E-zine] (accessed 6 August 2007); available from <http://www.home.earthlink.net/~v1tiger/hsinger.html>

At the start of the 1950s, Singer's combo had become a big box office draw and the group performed with numerous popular acts of the time including; The Orioles, Johnny Moore's Three Blazers featuring Charles Brown, Helen Humes, Joe Turner, Lowell Fulson, Ray Charles, Sarah Vaughn, Billie Holiday, Florence Wright, Four Buddies and Dolly Cooper, The Ravens, and Earl King. By June of 1955, Singer decided to quit touring and concentrate on studio and freelance work in New York City. He recorded *Hot Rod* which became a huge hit in 1956, and returned to the road in support of the song. In June of 1956 Singer's original version of *Corn Bread* was listed as one of the top fifteen greatest R&B instrumentals ever. In the late fifties, Singer continued to tour and appeared on many R&B, rock, and jazz package shows. After an early 1960's European tour with Earl Hines, Singer remained in Europe and settled in France. He recorded for a few French labels and completed a number of international tours. He appeared in the film "Taxi Blues" in 1990. A comprehensive discography is not available due to Singer, as well as many other musicians of the time, not being justly credited on many classic R&B recordings.³⁵

Theoretical Analysis: The transcription to *Corn Bread* is presented in its entirety as the tune presents more of a "thematic concept" than an actual melody and solo section. Typically, a performer will return to the original melody upon the statement of the theme and solo section(s). *Corn Bread* does not have this characteristic and therefore, the entire tune should be considered a premeditated, thematically-organized solo with improvisational/embellished elements.

³⁵ Ibid.

The chord progression to *Corn Bread* is a modified blues in B-flat. It is important to note that Singer may have chose this key because B-flat is the lowest note within the normal range of the saxophone. When fingering this tone, all available keys are closed and the instrument is operating as a single non-venting tube. This allows for the ease of overtones as demonstrated in the first chorus, measures 7-18, and the availability of raw sonic power as all of the performer's air is forced through the bell. (Typically, the saxophone vents through open keys, and some air/energy is wasted.) The chord progression can be seen below:

I	I	I	I
IV	IV	I	I
ii	V	I	I

Singer includes a ii-V-I progression in place of the V-V-I-I commonly heard in the last four measures of a blues progression. (See *The Hucklebuck* by Paul Williams for additional explanation concerning the use of ii-V-I progressions in the R&B genre.)

Additionally, there is a six measure introduction where Singer creates harmonic ambiguity by only playing the notes G, B-flat, and F. Theoretically, the argument could be made for G blues, the relative minor key area of B-flat major, however the ordering of the tones and actual application suggest B-flat major. More specifically, B-flat major pentatonic. [B-flat, C, D, F, G]

The “solo” as it will be referred to from here on, is very simple from a harmonic standpoint. Singer mainly uses the notes of the B-flat major and B-flat minor chords. He occasionally “plays the changes” and accentuates the chord tones of a given harmony, however, there are two instances of deliberate dissonance. Measures 91 and 95 present this feature. The occurrences accentuate the minor third sound of the blues as they are

part of a fully diminished broken arpeggio. [E, D-flat/C#, B-flat/A#, G] Additionally, Singer is executing a wide bend on these notes, perhaps he chose the dissonant E to accentuate the tension created by the bend. From a strictly theoretical perspective, the E can be justified as the sharp-eleven in B-flat (I) or the enharmonic flat-ninth, F-flat, in E-flat (IV).

With the harmonic implications being mostly tonal, the real excitement in this solo lies in the thematic material and Singer's manipulation of his motives. Therefore, an analytical methodology must be created to compare and contrast each of the nine choruses which Singer performs. Each chorus will be briefly explained and related to other material within the solo (see table 3).

Table 3. Analytical Model for Hal Singer's Solo on *Corn Bread*

- Chorus #1: Singer over blows the low B-flat to create an overtone. Therefore, the low B-flat and mid-range B-flat sound simultaneously. He repeats the same rhythm throughout the chorus.
- Chorus #2: The low B-flat and the overtone are essentially eliminated. A new repetitive rhythm is manipulated and occasional low B-flats recall material from chorus one. The arpeggiation in measures 29 and 30 anticipates the material for repetition to be used in chorus three.
- Chorus #3: Arpeggiated lines are altered according to the underlying harmony. An instance of harmonic dissonance, in the form of a passing tone, occurs in measure 37. Once again, Singer uses a repeated rhythm throughout the chorus. Interestingly, Singer includes the rhythmic motive from chorus two from the pick-up of measure 39 to measure 42 of chorus three.
- Chorus #4: This chorus features a call and response between the low and high range of Singer's saxophone. Here, the initial "question" of two low B-flat quarter notes is "answered" by a repetitive riff in the upper register.
- Chorus #5: The building of tension through the first four choruses culminates in the most diverse section of the solo. Here, there are repeated figures, but not any continuous riffs. Singer begins another series of repetitive gestures in measure 62.
- Chorus #6: This chorus features the repeated rhythm from chorus two with harmonic alterations. Singer alters his note choice to fit the underlying harmony. Additionally, two instance of harmonic dissonance, again in the form of escape tones, are presented in measures 75 and 77.

- Chorus #7: Repeated riff.
- Chorus #8: Repeated riff with the aforementioned deliberate dissonances.
- Chorus #9: Repeated riff with held note and melodic statement to complete the piece. This chorus is related to chorus six, and therefore, chorus two by default, from a rhythmic standpoint.

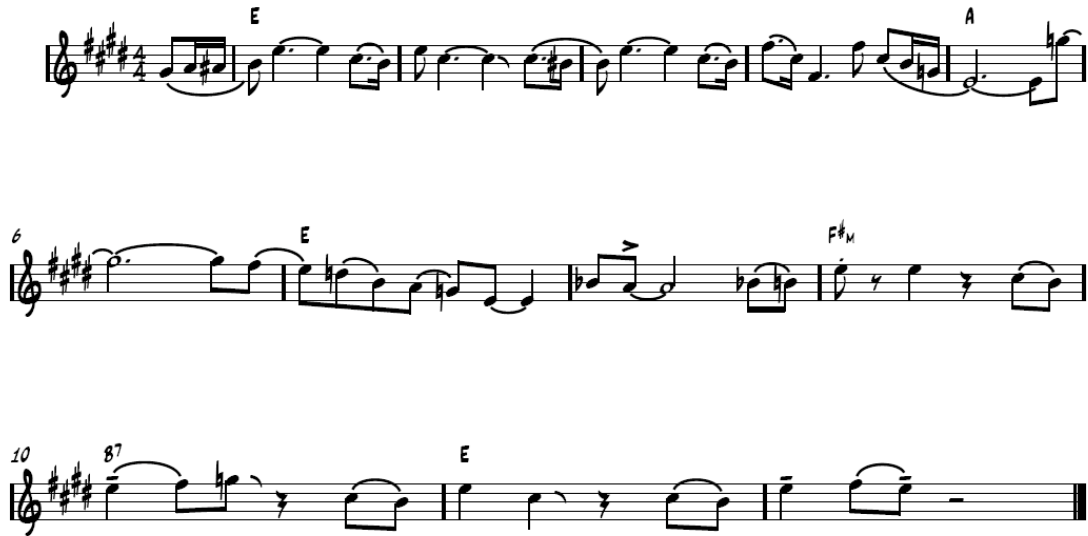
Extended Techniques: Singer uses overtones, bends, and falls throughout the solo. His use of the growl is often present in his tone.

Dramatic Devices: Singer's method of delivery is perhaps his greatest asset. His timbre and use of repeated syncopated rhythms create a hypnotic effect. He utilizes an exceptionally wide vibrato and extreme register changes to add tension to an already frenzied musical situation.

Additional Comments: From a purely theoretical perspective, this solo seems simplistic and monotonous. However, a piece like this, at least what it was created for, does not rely on typical theoretical attributes to be justified as music. This music was created for dancing and making money. The average listener at this time, or today for that matter, was not concerned with harmonic applications or rhythmic variants. The people who listened to *Corn Bread* wanted to have fun, which is exactly what Singer provided.

HUCKLEBUCK

PAUL WILLIAMS



Title of Work: *The Hucklebuck*

Artist: Paul Williams

Important Dates: Best selling R&B record of 1949.³⁶ It topped the R&B charts for 14 weeks.³⁷

From: *Savoy Chart Busters*, Savoy SVY-17198, 2003.

³⁶ Shaw, 169.

³⁷ Ron Wynn, "Paul Hucklebuck Williams," from *All Music Guide* [online database](accessed 25 July 2007); available from <http://www.allmusic.com/cg/amg.dll?p=amg&sql=ll:apfixqw5ldfe.html>

Saxophonist: Paul Williams (1915-2002), Baritone Saxophone: Williams was a prominent saxophonist and band leader from the 1940s through the 1960s. He performed with Clarence Dorsey in 1946 and made his recording debut with King Porter in 1947. Later that year, Williams formed his own band comprised of saxophonists Noble “Thin Man” Watts and Wild Bill Moore, trumpeter Phil Guilbeau, and vocalists Danny Cobb, Jimmy Brown, Joan Shaw, and Connie Allen to name a few. Williams was part of Atlantic Records’ house band in the 1960s and directed the Lloyd Price and James Brown orchestras until 1964. He opened a booking agency in New York in 1968.

Williams’ *Hucklebuck* was one of the first big hits of the R&B era. The tune was an adaptation of Charlie Parker’s *Now’s the Time* which was recorded four years earlier although song writing credit is commonly ascribed to Andy Gibson, a staff composer at Savoy Records. The song was one of three Top 10, including *35-30* and *Walking Around*, and five other Top 20 R&B instrumental hits which Williams produced for Savoy in 1948 and 1949.³⁸

“Apart from its origin, *The Hucklebuck* was significant as an R&B song and dance because it cut across color lines. It may well be the earliest instance of the crossover that became a pop phenomenon in the 1954-56 period and that spelled the end of R&B as segregated music.”³⁹

Theoretical Analysis: *The Hucklebuck* is a typical twelve bar blues progression in E with one notable exception. The last four measures of a common blues form are organized in the following manner: [V V I I]. In this case, the progression is modified to

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ Shaw, 169.

eliminate the commonly heard [V V I I] and in its place a [ii V I I] is substituted. The ii-V progression is possibly the most utilized progression in jazz, next to V-I, and therefore, this jazz influence perhaps unwittingly credits Charlie Parker's *Now's the Time* as the impetus for *The Hucklebuck*. Another interesting point to consider is that ii-V gestures were uncommon in R&B at this time, and the unlikely inclusion of such a progression points either to innovation or imitation. Due to the fact that the tune is based on a jazz staple, it is unlikely the answer is R&B innovation. The progression for *The Hucklebuck* is as follows:

I	I	I	I
IV	IV	I	I
ii	V	I	I

Williams constructs his solo in an economical and accessible manner. The harmonic basis of the first four and the last four measures is the E major pentatonic scale, and from an interpretative and more accurate standpoint, its relative minor, C# minor pentatonic. Additionally, E minor pentatonic is featured in measures 5-8 of the solo and the lowered third, G, returns in measure 10. Williams formally organizes his solo by his use of harmonic material, and as will be seen, his thematic ideas.

Both the E major pentatonic [E, F#, G#, B, C#] and C# minor pentatonic [C#, E, F#, G#, B] scales share the same tones. The only difference in the scales is the ordering of the notes. Williams exploits this commonality by reordering the set of tones to fit his harmonic needs. This explains his use of C# major pentatonic over an E chord in measures 1-4 and 9-12. Since both tonalities share the same notes, the end result is consonant from an individual note perspective, but dissonant from a purely theoretical/chordal standpoint. In practice, and since many uncommon harmonic

applications are commonly permissible in a blues progression, the end result sounds consonant. Additionally, the duality of relative scales results in the traditional “non chord tones” being heard as harmonic extensions of the original harmony. In this case, the underlying harmony is basically an E chord for measures 1-4 and 9-12. Therefore, playing in C# results in appropriate and colorful harmonic extensions (see table 4).

Table 4. Application of Harmonic Extensions by Using C# Minor Over an E Major

<u>Chord</u>					
<u>C# minor pentatonic scale:</u>	C#	E	F#	G#	B
<u>Scale degree in E Major:</u>	13	1	9	3	5

The E major arpeggio is included in the C# minor pentatonic scale. This is consonant in the key of E major, however, the additional tones are the aforementioned harmonic extensions, the 9th and the 13th. Thus, using a relative minor pentatonic over any given major tonality will result in the automatic application of these harmonic extensions. Finally, an argument could be made for the appliance of the E major pentatonic scale, but the inherent minor third, which is a staple of the blues sound, would be missing and therefore be less desirable.

From a melodic and thematic perspective, measures 1-4 and 9-12 are very similar. Williams embellishes a series of C# to E gestures which bookend the material in bars 5-8 where Williams employs the E minor pentatonic scale. (A complete presentation of the scale occurs in measure 7.) Consequently, the formal organization of the solo is contingent on Williams’ scalar and thematic applications and less on the actual underlying harmonies. The formal/harmonic organization is organized thusly (see table 5):

Table 5. Formal/Harmonic Organization of *The Hucklebuck*

<u>Measures</u>	<u>Harmonic Material Used</u>
1-4	C# minor/E major pentatonic
5-8	E minor pentatonic
9-12	C# minor/E major pentatonic

Extended Techniques: Williams uses bends and falls.

Dramatic Devices: Given the pure power and gritty sound of the baritone saxophone, Williams' tone is surprisingly an uncommon timbre heard in the R&B saxophone style. His sound is loud and raucous with a searing buzz which accentuates the musical ideals musicians such as Williams propagated.

Additional Comments: Williams' use of chromatic elements occurs in two forms. The first variety appears as a passing motion between consonant tones, as can be observed in the pick-up measure, measure 2, and beat four of measure 8. The second type is an appoggiatura type gesture on beat one of measure 8.

THE DEACON'S HOP

BIG JAY MCNEELY

5

9

13

17

21

25

29

33

37

41

F SWIRE

Title of Work: *The Deacon's Hop*

Artist: Big Jay McNeely

Important Dates: Reached #1 on the national R&B charts in February of 1949.⁴⁰

From: *Savoy 60th Anniversary: Timeless*, Savoy SVY-17133, 2002.

Saxophonist: Cecil "Big Jay" McNeely (b. 1927), Tenor Saxophone: McNeely is known as "King of the Honkers" for his wild style and outrageous showmanship. "During his act he'd leave the stage, walk across the top of the bar, and sometimes walk out the door of the club, often with a line of people following him. Once, in San Diego, during one such 'walk' he was arrested for disturbing the peace; inside the club, his band kept playing until someone could rush down to the police station, post Big Jay's bail, and bring him back to finish the song."⁴¹ He was born in Watts, California and had formed his own band with jazz legends Sonny Criss (alto saxophone) and Hampton Hawes (piano) while still in high school. In late 1948 he began recording for Savoy Records. *Deacon's Hop*, sometimes referred to as *The Deacon's Hop*, was his second release on Savoy and catapulted McNeely into a full time music career. McNeely added vocal groups such as Four Dots and Dash, The Hollywood Flames, The Penguins, and The Medallions to his act in the early to mid-fifties. McNeely and his group were also

⁴⁰ Jim Dawson, "Big Jay McNeely," from *The Doo-Wop Society of Southern California (DWS)* [online database](accessed 4 August 2007); available from <http://www.electricearl.com/dws/bigjay.html>

⁴¹ Ibid.

featured on tours with The Clovers, The Harptones, Bill Haley and His Comets, The Moonglows, and Little Richard.

In 1959 McNeely scored his biggest hit, a blues ballad entitled *There is Something on Your Mind*. The tune featured Haywood “Little Sonny” Warner on vocals and remained on the R&B charts for six months while reaching as high as #44 on the pop charts. The song was later a hit for Bobby Marchan and has been recorded by B.B. King, Etta James, Freddy Fender, The Hollywood Flames, Gene Vincent, Albert King, and Professor Longhair.

McNeely retired from full-time music for twenty years, where he worked as a postman, only to return to performing in 1983. He performed at the Grammy awards in 1987 with B.B. King, Robert Cray, Etta James, Albert King, Junior Wells, and others. The Smithsonian magazine placed McNeely’s painted saxophone next to Jimi Hendrix’s hat, Janis Joplin’s feather boa, and Eric Clapton’s Stratocaster for a memorable cover shot. Big Jay McNeely continues to perform mostly in Europe, Australia, and Japan and is recognized as an influential figure in R&B music.⁴²

Theoretical Analysis: The overall form to *The Deacon’s Hop* is what seems to be a simple AABA, thirty-two bar song form. However, there is much more going on from a formal standpoint. McNeely’s saxophone, the drums, and hand claps present the main theme in the A sections. The B section is similar but adds the bass, piano, and horns to the texture.

The chord progression to McNeely’s solo in *The Deacon’s Hop* is interesting, and unusual at first glance, in that there are two alternating eight measure blues based

⁴² Ibid.

progressions in the key of B-flat. These sections are the A and B sections from the main thirty-two bar theme, however, the A section is now harmonized and contains the aforementioned B section instrumentation in the background. The overall form of the series of solo harmonies is BABAB.

<u>B sections</u>				<u>A sections</u>			
I	I	IV	IV	I	I	IV	IV
II	II	V	V	I	I	I	I

The B section is listed first because McNeely begins his solo at the end of the last A section, from the first statement of the theme, and begins the solo proper at the beginning of a B section. This musical puzzle is constructed to end the solo on a B section, and therefore allow for the return to the A where McNeely restates the theme. It is interesting that McNeely chose this presentation. Typically, a piece in AABA thirty-two bar standard song form presents the solo progression in the same manner. That is, the soloist performs over the AABA progression and the result is an AABA, AABA, AABA, etc. formal organization. Since the A sections are harmonically unaccompanied, McNeely alters the form of the solo section thusly (see table 6):

<u>Table 6. Overall Song Form for <i>The Deacon's Hop</i></u>		
<u>Melody (Theme)</u>	<u>Solo</u>	<u>Melody (Theme)</u>
AABA	BABAB	A (coda)

McNeely plays five eight bar choruses for a total of forty measures. When the A and B sections are performed successively, as in the solo section, the resultant progression yields six B-flat chords in a row. (From the last four I chords of the A section to the first two I chords of the B section.) Additionally, of the sixteen measures performed in an A and B coupling, eight of the sixteen measures are B-flat chords. The lack of chordal

activity creates harmonic stagnation, which McNeely exploits by his use of repetitive and rhythmic riffs, or as it has come to be called, “honkin’ and screamin’.”

McNeely’s solo is harmonically simple. He embellishes the note B-flat or relies on chord tones contextually applied in a variety of rhythmic variations. Some notable harmonic applications include McNeely’s exploitation of the minor/major third interval throughout the solo, intentional harmonic dissonance in measure 21, chromatic passages in measures 22 and 23, various chromatic passing tones or approach tones, and most remarkably, his use of idiomatic jazz concepts. Although the solo is without question an R&B screamer, McNeely uses the following techniques which owe their origins to the jazz genre: 1. There is a harmonic anticipation in measure 10 where McNeely sets up the resolution to B-flat, and more accurately the E-flat chord in measure 13, and begins another series of minor third gestures. Additionally, in measure 38, the E on the and of beat four anticipates the upcoming C chord. 2. McNeely uses a series of fully diminished arpeggios in measures 7, 21, 23, 27, to supplement the obvious minor third figures throughout the solo. 3. Beat four of measure 36 to the downbeat of measure 37 is a surround tone. Here, the A-flat and the F# “surround” the G, the target of the resolution.

Extended Techniques: McNeely uses a series of growls, bends, and falls throughout the solo. Measure 25 features an altissimo A, however, the most striking extended technique appears in measures 16-17. Here, McNeely uses an alternate fingering to produce a timbre change on the B-flat. There are three common fingerings for this note, therefore, it is an easy and effective technique.

Dramatic Devices: McNeely produces most of the musical excitement through his gritty tone and rhythmic variety of repeated notes. Additionally, his use of extreme register changes adds an element of surprise to the repeated B-flats.

Additional Comments: The formal organization and mode of delivery take center stage in this solo. Additionally, the use of major II chords, creating a II-V-I root motion, is uncommon in the R&B genre.

SLEEP

EARL BOSTIC

5 4

5

9

13

17

21

25

29

33

Chords: G, G#dim, Am, D, G, G#dim, D, Em, A7, D7, G, Am, G7, C, Cm7, G, Em, Am7, D7, G.

Title of Work: *Sleep*

Artist: Earl Bostic

Important Dates: Reached #6 on the R&B charts in 1951.⁴³

From: *Magic Bostic*, EPM 160402, 2003.

Saxophonist: Eugene Earl Bostic (1913-1965), Alto Saxophone: Bostic was born in Tulsa, Oklahoma and earned a degree in music theory at Xavier University in New Orleans. He spent his younger years performing in territory bands that toured the Southwest and Midwest during the early 1930s. He moved to New York City in 1938 and began to make a name for himself by playing with Cab Calloway, Don Redman, and leading his own combos.

In 1939 Bostic recorded with a group which included Red Allen, J.C. Higginbotham, Clyde Hart, Big Sid Catlett, Charlie Christian, and the leader of the session, Lionel Hampton. Furthermore, he began what turned out to be a four year engagement at Small's Paradise in Harlem the same year. At this time, Bostic was making a name for himself in the jazz and popular music realms and he was also working as an arranger and composer. In 1941 he wrote the song *Let Me Off Uptown* for the Gene Krupa Orchestra. The hit record featured trumpeter Roy Eldridge and singer Anita O'Day. Louis Prima

⁴³ Phreddie Patterson, "Earl Bostic," from *My Space* [online resource] (accessed 6 August 2007); available from <http://profile.myspace.com/index.cfm?fuseaction=user.viewprofile&friendID=182011657>

recorded Bostic's *Brooklyn Bridge* and Alvino Rey scored a hit with a Bostic original entitled *The Major and the Minor*.

Bostic took part in the after-hours jam sessions at Monroe's Uptown House and Minton's Playhouse as the origins of be-bop began to take shape. According to unnamed witnesses, Bostic was able to hold his own at the "cutting sessions", a type of soloing contest, when facing Charlie Parker or Dizzy Gillespie. Bostic joined Lionel Hampton's Big Band in 1943. Extensive tours and recording dates followed including the recording of *Flying Home No. 2* featuring Arnett Cobb and Cat Anderson. Bostic left Hampton to join "Hot Lips" Page and recorded with tenor saxophonists Ben Webster, Don Byas, and Ike Quebec.

Bostic led his own recording session in November of 1945. He recorded four tracks for Majestic. The musicians on the session included Benny Harris (trumpet), Benny Morton (trombone), Don Byas (tenor saxophone), Tiny Grimes (guitar), and Cozy Cole (drums). In 1946, Bostic recorded with "Hot Lips" Page and moved to the Gotham label. At Gotham, Bostic recorded a series of bluesy, swinging style records which historically proved to be a transitional period between big band swing and jump blues. Titles from the Gotham years included *Tippin' In*, *Liza*, *Jumpin' Jack* (where Bostic was the featured vocalist), *That's the Groovy Thing*, *Let's Ball Tonight*, and *Cuttin' Out*. Bostic and his group also appeared in a movie entitled *I Ain't Gonna Open That Door* with ex-Duke Ellington singer Joya Sherrill.

Bostic recorded *840 Stomp* and *Temptation* in 1948. *840 Stomp* featured Bostic's superb altissimo playing, while *Temptation*, a hit for Bing Crosby in 1934, reached the Top Ten of the R&B charts. Bostic's success brought him greater fortune as King

Records bought out his contract and all original masters. King reissued all of Bostic's music. The reissues and new King releases sold well to the R&B, jazz, pop, and adult markets. Specifically, *Sleep* and *Flamingo* from 1951 were R&B chart toppers.

In the spring of 1952 tenor saxophonist John Coltrane joined Bostic's group. Coltrane was especially impressed with Bostic's technical ability and saw Bostic as teacher and mentor. Other notable musicians who went through Bostic's group included Blue Mitchell, Tommy and Stanley Turrentine, Benny Golson, Teddy Charles, Earl Palmer, Benny Carter, Barney Kessel, Teddy Edwards, Rene Hall, Roy Porter, and Ernie Freeman.

King records released more than eighty 45s, sixty-three LPs, and eleven 10-inch LPs of Bostic's music. Bostic also recorded two straight ahead jazz albums entitled *Jazz as I Feel It* and *A New Sound* in 1963. The musicians on these sessions included organist Richard "Groove" Holmes, guitarist Joe Pass, drummers Earl Palmer and Shelly Manne, and bass player Al McKibbin. These examples display Bostic at his best. The recording's expanded format allowed for a full display of his sophisticated musicianship as a few of the tracks go beyond the typical three minutes allotted for an R&B or popular music single.

Bostic had a stroke in the late fifties and later died of a heart attack while on tour in Rochester, New York in 1965. There are conflicting stories concerning the incident, with one claiming he was on stage at the time. *The Song is NOT Ended*, an album of ballads, was released posthumously about a year or so later on the Phillips label.

Bostic was referred to as a pop instrumentalist, a honker and screamer, jazz musician, and composer. The list of musicians with whom he collaborated is an amazing testament

to his versatility and talent. Additionally, his individualized tone is immediately recognizable to any serious fan of the R&B or jump blues genres.⁴⁴

Theoretical Analysis: Bostic's familiarity with the jazz and R&B genres is on full display in *Sleep*. His melodic lines feature various chromatic elements, providing a smoother sounding alternative when compared to the commonly used pentatonic patterns of the R&B style. However, Bostic does not stray far from appropriate devices idiomatic to the R&B genre. The inclusion of rhythmic repetition, recurring riffs, and Bostic's mode of delivery classify *Sleep* as an R&B creation.

The jazz elements in this solo are delineated by the context of the chord progression. Therefore, a harmonic study at this point in the analysis is warranted. Bostic plays a two measure introduction to his solo; consequently, the actual chord progression begins in measure 3. From here, Bostic solos for thirty-two measures which are divided into four eight measure segments. Typically, this type of division is related to the AABA thirty-two bar standard song form. (In this case each letter represents an eight measure segment.) Here, the overall form is an ABAC thirty-two measure harmonic structure, where again, each letter represents an eight measure unit. Bostic's construction of this harmonic enigma is intelligent and effective. Essentially, there are two active chord progressions functioning at the same time, the actual chord progression and an underlying blues-type form embedded within the surface progression. Bostic accomplishes this by utilizing harmonic modulations and tonicizations (see table 7).

⁴⁴ Ibid.

Table 7. Explanation of *Sleep* Chord Progression

Actual Progression

Underlying Progression

A. Segment #1: Tonal Center: G (I)

I

I $\frac{\text{vii}^0}{\text{ii}}$ ii ii
V V I I

B. Segment #2: Tonal Center: G (I), D is Tonicized (V)

I V

I $\frac{\text{vii}^0}{\text{ii}}$ V V
vi $\frac{\text{V}}{\text{V}}$ V⁷ V⁷

A. Segment #3: Tonal Center: G (I)

I

I $\frac{\text{vii}^0}{\text{ii}}$ ii ii
V V I I

C. Segment #4: Tonal Center C (IV), D is Tonicized (V), then G (I)

IV V I

(The chart below denotes the eight measure progression in the C section, segment four.)

		<u>Measures</u>							
		<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>8</u>
<u>Key Area</u>	C:	V	V	I	i	V-			
	G:					I-	ii-V	I	I
	D:					-ii	v-I		

The underlying key areas, as related to the surface progression, delineate a blues-type form in that the harmonic motion centers around I, IV, and V in the home key of G.

Bostic takes a harmonically vertical approach to his solo in *Sleep*. That is, he mostly performs variations and embellishments of the arpeggios. This is unlike most other R&B

performers of the time who utilize mostly horizontal, or scalar, patterns like the pentatonic scale. In fact, the first scalar pattern does not occur until measure 8 where a clear 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 in D appears beginning on the and of beat two. In many cases chromaticism is employed to either move to or from a chord tone. Bostic accomplishes this in two ways. First, he begins a whole-step above the chord tone and descends chromatically as in measures 5 to 6, 7 to 8, 9, 9 to 10, and 21 to 22. Second, Bostic begins a whole step, or half step, below the goal note and ascends to the chord tone as in measures 6 to 7, 9, 23, and 24. The sonic effect is one of weaving melodic lines which resolve neatly by half-step voice leading. This is a trait of jazz, and more specifically, be-bop. The repeated riffs and/or notes in measures 1-3, 15-18, 19-20, 26-34 are characteristically R&B. Bostic recycles measures 5 and 6 in measures 21 and 22.

From a stylistic standpoint it is important to note Bostic's use, or more accurately, manipulation, of the convergence of R&B and jazz elements. Each eight measure section contains elements of R&B and jazz, and upon further investigation, a pattern emerges (see table 8).

Table 8. The Inclusion of R&B and Jazz Elements in *Sleep*

<u>Section/Measures</u>	<u>Style Employed</u>
Intro (mm. 1-2):	R&B
Solo, Segment #1 A (mm. 3-10):	R&B/Jazz
Solo, Segment #2 B (mm. 11-18):	Jazz/R&B
Solo, Segment #3 A (mm. 19-26):	R&B/Jazz
Solo, Segment #4 C (mm. 27-34):	R&B

With the exception of the introduction and segment #4, there is a clear alternation of styles. Without asking Bostic himself, it is unclear if this phenomenon was planned. However, from a popular performance perspective, the harmonic and stylistic implications place Bostic's solo ahead of its time.

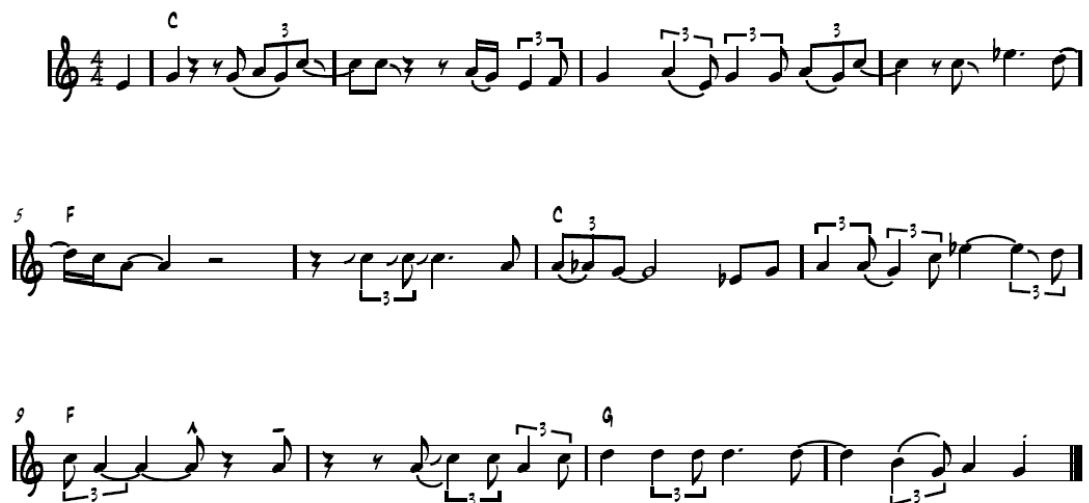
Extended Techniques: Bostic uses bends, falls, ghosted notes, and a consistent growl throughout the solo.

Dramatic Devices: Bostic's mode of delivery is consistent with his use of styles. He plays more smooth and controlled in the jazz areas and performs in a more excited style in the R&B sections.

Additional Comments: Many of the R&B saxophonists were jazzmen looking to make money. Bostic had success in both arenas, but chose R&B as his typical mode of expression. In this way, he was able to make a comfortable living and bring his music to the masses. Because of his success and the musical dichotomy which jazz and R&B provided, Bostic was often seen as an outcast by jazz musicians. At the time, this unfortunate situation ensured Bostic would never receive the musical recognition he deserved. In recent years his contributions to the saxophone and popular music have been lauded; however, historically, he has not been thought of as a mainstream jazz musician.

AIN'T THAT A SHAME

FATS DOMINO



Title of Work: *Ain't That a Shame*

Artist: Fats Domino

Important Dates: peaked at #10 in 1955⁴⁵

From: *The Fats Domino Jukebox: 20 Greatest Hits*, EMI 37600, 2002.

Saxophonist: Herb Hardesty (b. 1925), Tenor Saxophone: Hardesty was born in New Orleans, Louisiana. His musical studies began in public school, followed by private lessons, and later at Dillard University. He toured the United States with Roy Brown, performed as a studio musician, and is perhaps best known for his solos on Fats

⁴⁵ Laughter, 12.

Domino's recordings. Hardesty continued to tour with Domino until the late 1990s. His music has appeared in many movies such as *The Blues Brothers*, *Shake Rattle and Roll*, *The Girl Can't Help It*, and *Let The Good Times Roll*. Hardesty's television appearances include *The Merv Griffin Show*, *Ed Sullivan*, *David Letterman*, *Steve Allen*, *Austin City Limits*, *Starsky and Hutch*, *Andy Williams*, and *Perry Como*.⁴⁶

Theoretical Analysis: The harmonic progression is an altered blues form. The first 8 measures follow common blues usage, however, in the last four measures (mm. 9-12 of the progression) the chords are reversed and the resolution does not occur until the return to the beginning of the harmonic form. Therefore the progression is as follows:

I	I	I	I
IV	IV	I	I
IV	IV	V	V

A typical blues progression is organized thusly:

I	I	I	I
IV	IV	I	I
V	V	I	I

The change can be attributed to the emphasis that is placed on the V chord. Domino chose to place the tension (the dominant chord) at the end of the chorus to accentuate the tension and release of the dominant to tonic motion. In a typical blues progression the harmonic tension is resolved before the end of the form, and therefore creates six successive I chords. This can be confusing to the listener and the performer.

Additionally, the progression is simplified by Domino's change. The IV chords appear at

⁴⁶ Ibid., 61-62.

the beginning of the last two four bar phrases, the only change occurs when the previously heard I chord of measure 7 and 8 becomes a V chord in measures 11 and 12.

From a harmonic standpoint, Hardesty's solo work centers on the root, third, and fifth of each chord. The notes are repeated and rhythmically embellished to complement the triple subdivision which is present in the piano throughout the piece. Notes outside of the root, third, and fifth are present, but act as a vehicle toward the previously mentioned chord tones. The first four measures utilize an A, the sixth scale degree, in a typical scalar pattern. This evidence points toward the use of C Major Pentatonic. (C, D, E, G, A) Although Hardesty bases his solo on this scale, he changes his note choices to fit the actual chord changes. Three interesting points can be gleaned from this solo:

1. Hardesty almost always uses the natural third as opposed to the lowered third that occurs in the blues scale. This could be attributed to the fact that the progression is not actually a blues and the chords are major, not major-minor sevenths.
2. The solo does use the lowered third in measure 4 and measure 8. In both cases, the E-flat occurs at the end of the four bar phrase on beat three, moves down a half-step so the line is able to continue to descend in the C pentatonic scale, and resolve in the key of F. The E-flat can also be seen as anticipating the upcoming F chord. E-flat is the lowered seventh scale degree in an F major-minor seventh chord.
3. The only chromaticism, other than the previously discussed minor third E-flat, occurs in measure 7 and acts as an embellishing passing motion from A to A-flat to G.

Extended Techniques: Hardesty includes subtle bends, falls, and vibrato effects.

Title of Work: *Rip it Up*

Important Dates: Reached #17 in 1956⁴⁷

52

From: *Little Richard: Greatest Gold Hits*, MCS Records 8009, 2004.

Saxophonist: Lee Allen (1926-1994), Tenor Saxophone: Born in Pittsburg, Kansas, but schooled in New Orleans, Lee Allen's tenor style was a major factor in the sound of New Orleans R&B hits of the 1950s. He is a featured soloist on recordings by Fats Domino, Lloyd Price, Little Richard, Professor Longhair, Huey "Piano" Smith, Smiley Lewis, Shirley and Lee, Clarence Henry, Etta James, and many other undocumented performances. Allen was an important musician at Cosimo Matassa's studio where he appeared on hundreds of hit records. He quit Fats Domino's band in 1965 to move to the west coast to take a job in an aeronautics factory, but returned to Domino's group in 1975. He remained an active performer until his death in 1994. Allen's has a distinctive tone and his unique style can be attributed to his use of subtle bends and falls which add verbal like inflections to his playing.⁴⁸

Theoretical Analysis: The chord progression to *Rip it Up* is a twelve bar blues in the key of G, including a two bar introduction leading to Lee Allen's saxophone solo.

Allen is direct with his harmonic material, employing the G pentatonic scale with both the natural and lowered third. The result is a type of hybrid scale which includes the following tones; G, A, B-flat, B, D, E. The solo, with three exceptions, is a harmonic derivative of this scale. Two exceptions appear in measures 1-2, and measure 14. In each instance an F appears. Since most blues progressions are built off of seventh chords, the F is appropriate because contextually the F is the seventh scale degree in a G seventh chord (G, B, D, F). The other exception functions in a similar harmonic context.

⁴⁸ Ibid., 22-24.

In measure 12 a C appears in a D chord. The C functions as the seventh scale degree in a D7 chord (D, F#, A, C). This choice is interesting as the previous material is derived from the G major pentatonic hybrid discussed earlier. In this case it seems as though Allen is using the C to “surround” the upcoming B, in measure 13, which is a chord tone in G. C is a half step above B, and the A#/B-flat is a half step below the B, therefore, Allen “surrounds” the chord tone with half steps before resolving to the destined tone B. Since the C is harmonically functional in D, it could be that Allen wanted to play the proper chord tone over the dominant, however, the use of the G major pentatonic hybrid for the previous measure and a half discredits this theory.

Extended Techniques: Allen uses bends, falls, and growls throughout the solo.

Dramatic Devices: Allen’s aggressive articulation style and repetitive rhythms add excitement to the solo.

Additional Comments: Bill Haley and his Comets and Elvis separately recorded this song in 1956.

REAL GONE

SAM TAYLOR & HIS ALL-STAR JAZZ

The musical score for "Real Gone" is written in 4/4 time. It consists of four staves of music. The first staff begins with a "GROWL" instruction and a triplet of eighth notes. The second staff starts with a measure number of 4 and includes chords C7, F7, and V18. The third staff starts with a measure number of 8 and includes chords G7 and F7. The fourth staff starts with a measure number of 11 and includes a triplet of eighth notes. The score concludes with a double bar line.

Title of Work: *Real Gone*

Artist: Sam "The Man" Taylor

Important Dates: Recorded in 1956⁴⁹

From: *Tease! The Beat of Burlesque*, Verve B0004393-02, 2005.

⁴⁹ *Tease! The Beat of Burlesque*, Verve B0004393-02, 2005.

Saxophonist: Sam “The Man” Taylor (b. 1916), Tenor Saxophone: Taylor is a legend in this style of music. He worked with Scat Man Crothers and the Sunset Royal Orchestra in the late 1930s. In the 1940s he performed with Cootie Williams, Lucky Millinder, and Cab Calloway. His work as an R&B session player in the 1950s included recordings with Ray Charles, Louis Jordan, Buddy Johnson, and jazz singer Ella Fitzgerald. Taylor remained active into the 1960s with his own band The Blues Chasers.⁵⁰

Theoretical Analysis: *Real Gone* is a twelve bar blues derivative in C. Taylor’s harmonic material in *Real Gone* features four main harmonic elements. The minor pentatonic scale, the chromatic scale, a hybrid major/minor pentatonic scale, and to a lesser degree, implied diatonic scalar gestures all figure prominently in the construction of this solo (see table 9).

Table 9. Taylor’s Use of Harmonic Devices in *Real Gone* Solo

<u>Harmonic Device</u>	<u>Measures</u>
<u>Minor Pentatonic:</u>	6,10,11-12
<u>Chromatic:</u>	4,6,7,8
<u>Hybrid:</u>	pick-up,5
<u>Diatonic:</u>	2,4,7

The remainder of the solo consists of R&B patterns. Repeated notes in measures 1, 3, 8-9 and a recurring rhythmic figure in measures 11 and 12 emphasize the R&B influence in this solo.

Although the harmonic language consists of common elements as related to the R&B style, two characteristic traits do not. Taylor’s use of sixteenth notes is necessitated by the slow tempo; however, the prevailing subdivision is a swung triple. This creates a

⁵⁰ Laughter, 16.

polyrhythmic feel. Additionally, Taylor's smooth half-step voice leading into measures 5, 7, and 8 add a jazz influence to the solo.

Extended Techniques: The solo features long bends, falls, and a consistent growl throughout.

Dramatic Devices: Taylor's mode of delivery and tone is very aggressive. He exaggerates the bends, falls, and growling technique.

Additional Comments: This solo is an excellent example of the popular saxophone style of the time. From a technical standpoint the solo is correct harmonically and in line with idiomatic musical and stylistic considerations. However, the raw power and mode of delivery make this work exceptional. The R&B style dealt more with how a solo was played than what was played. This solo perfectly exemplifies this ideal.



Title of Work: *I'm in Love Again*

Artist: Fats Domino

Important Dates: Hit #3 in 1956⁵¹

From: *The Fats Domino Jukebox: 20 Greatest Hits*, EMI 37600, 2002.

Saxophonist: Lee Allen (1926-1994), Tenor Saxophone: (See page 53, *Rip it Up*.)

Theoretical Analysis: The chord progression to *I'm in Love Again* is a standard 12 bar blues progression in the key of E-flat.

⁵¹ Ibid., 21.

I	I	I	I
IV	IV	I	I
V	V	I	I

Allen uses a clever device as the basis for his solo. Although the progression is an E-flat blues, Allen uses the C blues scale (C, E-flat, F, F#, G, B-flat) throughout the majority of his solo. C is the relative minor of E-flat, therefore, the key signature is the same; however, the performer must make considerations to ensure playing the proper chord tones to fit the harmony of E-flat. Allen makes these considerations, but his patterns are clearly derived from the C blues scale. Sometimes he disguises the scale by ending on a B-flat, G-flat, or E-flat (mm. 2, 5, 6, 11, 13). Other figures end on the C from an E-flat above (mm. 3, 8). Allen ends one phrase on an F. It is in measure 9 where the dominant, B-flat, occurs. The F is consonant in B-flat, and it seems as though Allen wanted the listener to be sure to understand that he knew what he was doing all along. Two instances of pure diatonic motion can be found in measures 4 and 6. In both cases the A-flat is treated as a passing tone to one of the notes in the C blues scale. The lack of A-flats in the key of E-flat, coupled with the clear presentation C blues patterns establishes the use of C blues as an effective improvisational tool in an E-flat blues progression. A typical interpretation would be to use the E-flat blues scale (E-flat, G-flat, A-flat, A, B-flat, D-flat). C blues and E-flat blues have 3 tones in common (E-flat, G-flat/F#, B-flat). The tones in C blues that do not appear in E-flat blues, C, F, G, all fit in E-flat. C is six (or thirteen), F is two (or nine), and G is the major third. Allen only uses the G once, in measure 6 as a chromatic minor/major third resolution on beat four, which resolves itself to E-flat on the down beat of measure 7. It could be argued that the solo is

mostly E-flat major pentatonic, but the aforementioned reasoning, primarily the lack of a G, points toward the blues substitution explanation.

The last two beats of the solo feature the only appearance of the flat seven in E-flat, D-flat. (Along with the previously mentioned A-flats this is the only clue that points directly to E-flat.) The solo actually ends in measure 11, with measure 12 acting as a little tag. The D-flat is a minor third motion to B-flat, the fifth of E-flat. The resolution occurs on the B-flat to set Allen up for the main line leading back to the vocal at the end of measure 12.

Extended Techniques: Allen uses bends, growls, and a slight vibrato on held notes.

Dramatic Devices: Allen has a bright, almost alto saxophone-like, quality in his tone that favors the higher harmonics. The saxophone cuts through the ensemble when needed, but maintains the ability to play supporting figures in an appropriately submissive style. Allen's tone has a commanding presence.

Additional Comments: Allen's style is very smooth. Each note melds into the next with minimal space between notes in appropriately connected patterns. He does however; add a bit of a bounce/accent on the downbeats and varies note shapes/lengths based on the context of a note in a given pattern or melodic line.

SLIPPIN AND SLIDIN'

LITTLE RICHARD

7

13

16

20

23

Title of Work: *Slippin and Slidin'*

Artist: Little Richard

Important Dates: peaked at #33 in 1956⁵²

From: *Golden Legends: Little Richard Live*, Madacy Records 51881, 2006.

⁵² Ibid., 27.

Saxophonist: Lee Allen (1926-1994), Tenor Saxophone: (See page 53, *Rip it Up*.)

Theoretical Analysis: *Slippin and Slidin'* is a typical blues progression in the key of D.

I	I	I	I
IV	IV	I	I
V	IV	I	I

Allen relies heavily on the F major/D minor pentatonic scale (F, G, A, C, D) or (D, F, G, A, C) with the occasional reference to mixolydian harmony in measures 9-11 and 21-23. The solo begins with a glissando up to F, the minor third of the harmony. Allen moves up a half-step to F# in a smear that concludes on the root note D. Allen's interchangeable use of the major and minor thirds is a common improvisational tool in the blues. When the harmony moves to the IV chord in measure 5, Allen is on the ninth scale degree, A. (Allen also does this on *I'm in Love Again* in measure 5.) He is anticipating the D chord two measures later and therefore stays in D for the first eight measures of the solo. Measures 9-10 and 21-22 can be considered the top half of a D mixolydian or dorian scale (D, E, F/F#, (G,) **A, B, C**) or the first half of A dorian. Either way, the note choices fit the chord changes and resolve to D. There is an appearance of a C# in measures 12 and 24, but it is a chromatic color tone to approach the root D by a half-step instead of the previously heard whole-step (C-D). Finally, the G# in measure 18 over the G chord is used for harmonic color and as a part of a greater chromatic gesture which began in measure 17. Theoretically, when the G# is respelled as A-flat, the tone can be analyzed as the flat ninth scale degree in G. The dissonance is later resolved down by a half-step to G. Other than the style of delivery, this is the only true characteristic of "honking" in this solo. The previous harmonic language and typical pentatonic usage make the

dissonance stand out prominently as the highest point of tension in the solo. Allen then returns to D and repeats a theme he has already played (measures 10-12 and 22-24).

Extended Techniques: Allen uses bends, growls, and a slight vibrato on held notes.

Dramatic Devices: Allen has a bright, almost alto saxophone-like, quality in his tone that favors the higher harmonics. The saxophone cuts through the ensemble when needed, but maintains the ability to play supporting figures in an appropriately submissive style. Allen's tone has a commanding presence.

Additional Comments: The similarities between Allen's solos on *Slippin' and Slidin'* and *I'm in Love Again* are valuable in noting that improvisers have a common language and various individual musical "habits" that they return to and use in unique ways depending on the context. Allen likes to use relative pentatonic/blues scales as his harmonic material and various extended techniques as the basis for many of his solos. He utilizes other techniques; however, many are derivations or embellishments of these two main musical ideals.

WHEN YOU DANCE

TURBANS

Title of Work: *When You Dance*

Artist: Turbans

Important Dates: Reached #33 in 1956⁵³

From: *Remembering the Roots of Soul-Heralding the Hits*, RPM RPSH248, 2002.

Saxophonist: Believed to be Albert Omega “Big Al” Sears (1910-1990), Tenor

Saxophone: Sears began his professional career in the late 1920s. Through the 30s and

⁵³ Ibid., 30.

40s, he performed with Chick Webb's Orchestra, Andy Kirk and his Clouds of Joy, and Duke Ellington's Orchestra. By the 1950s Sears was working as a session musician and as a leader on his own recordings for the Coral, RCA, and Herald record labels. Sears is known for his big band work and as a major contributor to the R&B saxophone style.⁵⁴

Theoretical Analysis: The sixteen measure chord progression to *When You Dance* alternates between the tonic and dominant in the key of A. The IV, D, is included, but it acts as the V of the GM7 chord in measure 14, and therefore, can be seen as adding harmonic color to the basic tonic-dominant progression rather than a derivative of the blues progression.

Sears' solo on *When You Dance* reflects his experience as a professional musician. His harmonic material is jazz related due to his consistent use of harmonic extensions and lack of pentatonic scales. Sears molds scalar passages and arpeggios into interesting melodic lines which lead the ear away from the simplicity of the underlying progression. Conversely, Sears' style is overtly R&B due to his tone, use of extended techniques, and method of delivery.

Sears begins his solo with a short broken arpeggio followed by a chromatic ascension to the downbeat of the beginning of the form (measure 3). The introduction to the solo is effective in linking two divergent musical styles. *When You Dance* is in a rumba style throughout the verses and choruses; however, the solo section is straight ahead swing. Sears' ascending eighth note chromatic passage in measure 2 leads the listener into the solo, and away from the rumba feel. The figure in measures 3 and 4 is tonal; however, the F# on beat four of measure 4 deserves explanation. The F# can be seen as the 13 in A

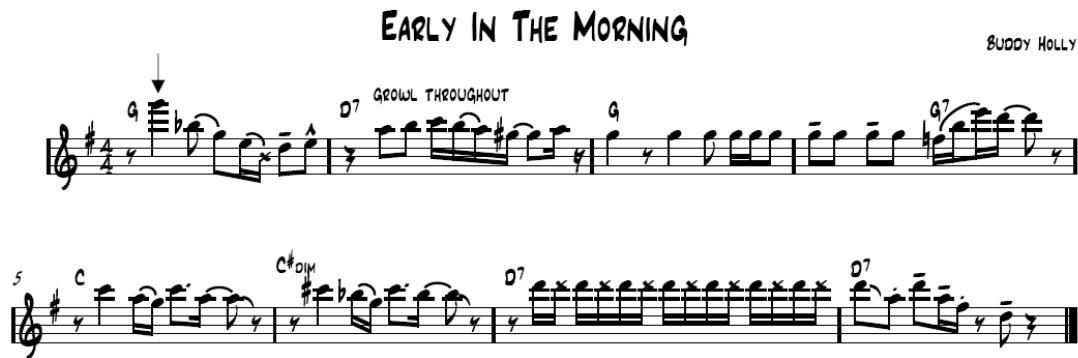
⁵⁴ Ibid.

or as an anticipation of E, as F# functions as 9 (or 2) in E. Regardless of the exact harmonic implications, the F# acts as a harmonic extension to either chord, and therefore, introduces a theme which Sears will return to throughout the solo. Examples of harmonic extensions can be seen in measure 5 where the C# is the 13 in the key of E, and in measure 7 where a B minor broken arpeggio acts as the 5th (B), 7th (D), 9th (F#), and 11th (A) scale degrees in the key of E. These extensions are significant because use of this improvisational device denotes more of a jazz influence than an R&B technique. Measures 9 and 14-16 utilize appropriate scalar patterns for the designated key and both instances employ a half-step approach tone which resolves to a chord tone. Measure 17 is an embellished first inversion arpeggio.

Extended Techniques: The high point of the solo is the altissimo A from measures 11-13. This note, and the technique used to play it, pushes Sears' solo into the R&B realm. Among all of Sears' harmonic complexity, this high overblown "honk" makes a poignant statement about his true intent for this solo. Additionally, Sears uses a consistent growl, long bends, falls, a little vibrato on held notes, and an overblown tone at times to add intensity.

Dramatic Devices: Sears' raw intensity is what makes this solo effective. He displays an enormous tone that is very clear in all registers and cuts through the thick texture of the band.

Additional Comments: Sears displays a great deal of creativity and sophistication in this solo. Many saxophonists of this time and genre would have been content to “blow the walls down,” but Sears makes the concerted effort to add a degree of musical shrewdness to the “honkin’ and screamin’.”



Title of Work: *Early in the Morning*

Artist: Buddy Holly

Important Dates: Hit #32 in 1958⁵⁵

From: *Buddy Holly: Greatest Hits*, MCA Records MCAD-11536, 1995.

Saxophonist: Sam “The Man” Taylor (b. 1916), Tenor Saxophone: (See page 56, *Real Gone.*)

⁵⁵ Ibid., 42.

Theoretical Analysis: The chord progression to *Early in the Morning* is a tonic to dominant eight measure form. A diminished passing chord is used to chromatically link the step up from the IV chord in measure 5 to the V chord in measure 7 (see progression below).

$$\begin{array}{cccc} \text{I} & \text{V} & \text{I} & \text{I} \\ \text{IV} & \frac{\text{vii}^0}{\text{V}} & \text{V} & \text{V} \end{array}$$

Taylor's solo on *Early in the Morning* consists of a few scalar passages, rhythmic repetition, brief arpeggiations, and a sequence. He begins on an altissimo G which resolves an octave below in a minor third motion from B-flat to G. Taylor then references the relative minor key, E, on beats three and four of measure 1. The first measure could also be considered a major pentatonic with a lowered third, (G, A, B-flat, D, E), as the natural and lowered third are usually considered interchangeable in the appropriate situation. The second measure is the top half of the D mixolydian scale with the G# functioning as a lower chromatic neighbor to the A. Measure 3 and 7 feature rhythmic repetition, a common R&B saxophone technique, where a single note or small group of notes are rhythmically displaced (mm. 3) or emphasized by differing articulation styles (mm. 7). A major pentatonic sequence appears in measures 5 and 6 and arpeggiations occur briefly in measures 4 and 8. The most intriguing aspects of the solo are Taylor's formal considerations. The musical devices used correspond in relation to the four bar phrase. Measures 1 and 2 utilize scalar material. Measures 5 and 6, the first two measures of the second phrase, employ a scalar sequence. Measure 3 and the corresponding measure 7 use rhythmic repetition. Finally, measures 4 and 8 feature a broken arpeggio to end each of the individual phrases (see table 10).

Table 10. Musical Device Grid for *Early in the Morning*

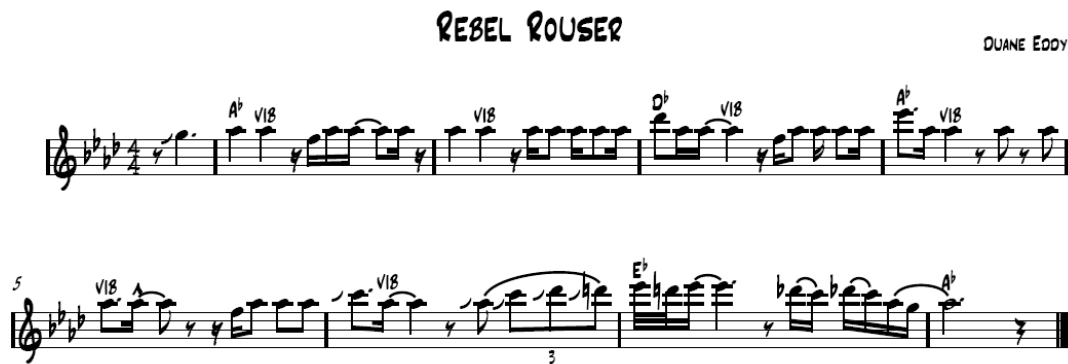
Measure:	1	2	3	4
Device:	Scalar	Scalar	Rhythmic Repetition	Arpeggio
Measure:	5	6	7	8
Device:	Scalar Sequence	Scalar Sequence	Rhythmic Repetition	Arpeggio

Taylor organized each four measure phrase in the same way. Although the solo is harmonically uncomplicated, the formal considerations add a creative element which is sophisticated and clever.

Extended Techniques: The aforementioned altissimo G makes for a bold entrance into Taylor's solo. Measure 7 contains a series of high D's where every other note is ghosted. This technique is applied by placing part of the tongue in the middle of the reed while playing. The note is able to sound; however, it is muted by the tongue on the reed. When the tongue is released the unaltered "clear" tone is heard. Alternating this process between ghosted and normal tone produces the effect Taylor employs in measure 7. This technique can also be accomplished through the use of alternate fingerings for the same note. This effect is more of a timbre change, but the sound of the same note changing is still the result.

Dramatic Devices: Taylor's raw tone and use of rhythmic repetition are the backbone of this feature. The solo is a balancing act of harmonic motion and triteness. Taylor does his best to keep the repetition interesting by rhythmic displacement, in measure 3, and timbre alteration, in measure 7.

Additional Comments: Taylor's huge tone and aggressive delivery allow him to play a simple eight measure solo and make a lasting impression. The solo's note choice is uncomplicated and effective with Taylor's emotion and raw power acting as the actual soloistic material from which he constructs this solo.



Title of Work: *Rebel Rouser*

Artist: Duane Eddy

Important Dates: Peaked at #6 in 1958⁵⁶

From: *Best of the Best of the Instrumentals*, Gusto Records Inc. GT-2010-2, 2005.

Saxophonist: Gil Bernal, Tenor Saxophone: Bernal began his professional career at 19 with Lionel Hampton, and went on to success in a variety of diverse styles. He has performed with John Lee Hooker, Spike Jones, Quincy Jones, James "Blood" Ulmer, and

⁵⁶ Ibid., 47.

Ry Cooder. He has appeared on soundtracks, most notably, *In The Heat of the Night*, *Banning*, and *An End to Violence*. Bernal plays tenor saxophone on the soundtrack to *Buena Vista Social Club*.⁵⁷

Theoretical Analysis: The chord progression is an eight measure blues in A-flat.

I	I	IV	I
I	I	V	I

The solo is not complicated from a harmonic standpoint in that Bernal repeats the root, A-flat, 31 times in this eight measure solo. Anything outside of the A-flat acts as a vehicle to return to the note. However, his use of rhythmic modulation and repetition on the A-flat provides the musical substance for the composition. The pickup to measure seven is an A-flat blues scale which leads to the highlight of the solo, a held E-flat that resolves to the root A-flat through the blues scale and chromaticism.

Extended Techniques: Bernal uses a growl throughout the solo and occasional alternate fingerings or muted notes with the tongue to achieve a different timbre on the same note.

Dramatic Devices: Bernal's many returns to the A-flat causes the listener to discount harmony, while emphasizing rhythm and the emotional delivery of the solo. This is a common technique in the R&B saxophone style.

Additional Comments: The sixteenth subdivision is more of a rock and roll type of interpretation, where true R&B usually has a triplet subdivision. As the styles developed

⁵⁷ Ibid., 48-49.

they began to become one in the same. This solo is a prime example of the mixture of these two interpretations, although, the subdivision is primarily duple/quadruple.

BEATNIK FLY

JOHNNY AND THE HURRICANES

Title of Work: *Beatnik Fly*

Artist: Johnny and the Hurricanes

Important Dates: Reached #15 in 1960⁵⁸

From: *Best of the Best of the Instrumentals*, Gusto Records Inc. GT-2010-2, 2005.

⁵⁸ Ibid., 65.

Saxophonist: John Pocisk (1940-2006) (aka Johnny Paris), Tenor Saxophone: *Johnny and the Hurricanes* performed instrumental rock versions of familiar tunes. This formula earned nine charting songs from 1959-1961. After the breakup of the Hurricanes in 1961, Paris moved to Hamburg, Germany. He started his own record label, Attila Records, in 1965. Attila was closed in 1970 and Paris formed a new *Johnny and the Hurricanes* group which toured during the 1970s and 1980s.⁵⁹

Theoretical Analysis: *Beatnik Fly* features a simple 8 measure chord progression in A-flat:

I V V I
I IV V I

The progression is a common derivative of a [I-V-I] or [I-IV-V-I] cycle where the return to the tonic is expected at the end of the four bar phrase. Paris performs three choruses total. The first chorus stands alone and is followed by a restatement of the melody. The second and third choruses are played successively, and therefore, should be considered one musical entity. In essence, Paris plays two solos with an interlude between the first and second solo. The solo itself is an embellishment of an eight measure melody which is presented in the first chorus. The two subsequent restatements are embellished variations of the original.

Paris' consonant note choice and harmonic vocabulary can be attributed to his vertical (arpeggiated), as opposed to horizontal (linear/scalar), application of harmony. While most of the R&B style saxophonists utilize scalar patterns and linear functions of harmony, Paris concentrates on the chord tones and embellishes the appropriate triad of a

⁵⁹ Ibid., 60.

given harmony. Consequently, measures 1-4, 10-13, and 18-21, each embellish a chord tone(s) from the designated triad (see table 11).

Table 11. Use of Embellished Triadic Harmony in *Beatnik Fly*

<u>Measure(s)</u>	<u>Chord</u>	<u>Scale Degree (chord tone)</u>
1,10,18	A-flat	1 (A-flat)
2,11,19	E-flat	5 (B-flat), and/or 3 (G)
3,12,20	E-flat	1 (E-flat), and/or 5 (B-flat)
4,13,21	A-flat	1 (A-flat), and/or 3 and 5

These three sets of four measures constitute the antecedent of the phrase. Any notes outside of the harmony should be considered either a passing tone or a chromatic embellishment. The consequent of the phrase, measures 5-8, 14-17, and 22-25, are virtually identical. The phrase begins with a triadic eighth note figure in A-flat in mm. 5, 14, and 22. A chromatic ascension to an elongated D-flat in measures 6, 15, and 23 further emphasizes the triadic harmonic theme by utilizing the root of the underlying D-flat harmony. A scalar passage in measures 7, 16, and 24 interrupts the triadic harmony only to see it return in the following respective measures (see table 12):

Table 12. Melodic Devices Used In *Beatnik Fly*

<u>Measures</u>	<u>Device</u>
5,14,22	Triadic Harmony (root and third)
6,15,23	Chromatic Scale
7,16,24	Scalar/Linear (top half of mixolydian)
8,17,25	Triadic Harmony (root and fifth)

Although Paris utilizes the same melodic material for each of the eight measure statements, his method of delivery varies. All of the appropriate notes are present in each statement of the melody; however, differing stylistic inflections upon each restatement keep the solo fresh and interesting.

Extended Techniques: Paris growls throughout the solo. He uses a variety of bends and falls, and plays extremely short staccato notes on ascending or descending linear passages (see measures 7, 15, 16, and 24). Additionally, Paris uses alternate fingerings on repeated ghosted notes to produce changes in timbre on the same repeated note (see measures 3, 12, and 20).

Dramatic Devices: In this solo, the effective formal construction is perhaps Paris' greatest asset. His aggressive tone and reliance on harmonically simple and repetitive melodic material is meant to be easily accessible and memorable. Paris undoubtedly accomplishes this goal.

Additional Comments: Although Paris utilizes a vertical approach to navigate the harmony at the individual chord level, it is worth noting the smooth voice leading he creates from measure to measure. The largest interval from one measure to the next is a minor-third in measures 6-7, 18-19, and 21-22. Every other transition from one measure to the next is completed by a half-step or a whole-step. Therefore, even though Paris is performing vertically at the individual chord level, his solo takes on linear characteristics by his creative use of stepwise voice leading from one chord/measure to the next.

NIGHT TRAIN

JAMES BROWN



Title of Work: *Night Train*

Artist: James Brown

Important Dates: Reached #35 in 1962⁶⁰

From: *James Brown: 20 All Time Greatest Hits!*, Polydor 314 511 326-2 , 1991.

Saxophonist: James “J.C.” Davis, Tenor Saxophone: Davis was from Burlington, N.C., but met James Brown in Columbus, Ohio. Davis joined James Brown’s road show as band director and chief soloist in October of 1958. He recorded with Brown’s group on Federal Records and as a leader on the Chess label. Davis quit Brown’s band in

⁶⁰ Ibid., 88.

February, 1961 to work in the same capacity for Etta James, with whom he stayed until May, 1962. Davis backed Jackie Wilson, Little Willie John, and Linda Jones. He settled in Columbus, Ohio in the mid 1960s where he continued to perform and record. *The Complete Mus-i-col Recordings of J.C. Davis* were released on the Cali-Tex label, CT-103.⁶¹

Theoretical Analysis: *Night Train* is a typical blues progression in B-flat:

I	IV	I	I
IV	IV	I	I
V	IV	I	I

The first four measures of the solo contain embellishments of the root (B-flat) and the fifth (F) of the home key. The remainder of the solo features Davis' exclusive use of the B-flat minor pentatonic scale as the harmonic foundation.

The solo begins with a chromatically embellished overblown fifth (F) of the B-flat harmony. Beginning on the and of beat three in measures 1 and 2, Davis exploits the close key relationship by utilizing notes that fall in both the key of B-flat (I) and upcoming E-flat (IV). Consider the following:

1. The F is 5 in B-flat, and 2 (or 9) in E-flat
2. The B-flat is 1 in B-flat, and 5 in E-flat

When Davis reaches measure 2 and the key of E-flat, he neatly resolves to the E-flat from the aforementioned F. Beat four of measure 2 features an interesting note choice. Davis plays a C, which is the sixth scale degree in E-flat and the root of the relative minor key. Although the C is a non chord tone in the strictest sense, it can be harmonically justified due to its preceding chromatic motion from C#/D-flat down to C or, to a lesser degree, by

⁶¹ Ibid., 92.

the relative minor relationship to the active harmonic function of E-flat. The last half of measure four is the first appearance of diatonic motion. It is the top half of the B-flat mixolydian scale.

Davis uses chromaticism at the end of measure four to resolve up to the third (G) of the upcoming E-flat chord. He uses the idea as a motive and it reappears at the end of the next phrase in measure 8. Measures 5 through 12, with the exception of the chromatic motive, are a series of B-flat minor pentatonic interjections which begin on the and of a beat and usually end on a down beat.

Davis' simple and effective method for this solo can best be summarized as the utilization of embellished chord tones and strict pentatonic patterns presented in short rhythmically displaced musical gestures which resolve on a chord tone on a downbeat. Davis demonstrates that of the various harmonic choices an improviser may utilize to navigate through the blues, the simplicity of triadic chord tones and pentatonic scales can be creatively and interestingly coupled with rhythmic variety.

Extended Techniques: Davis uses falls, bends, and a wide vibrato.

Dramatic Devices: Davis' overblown/raunchy tone is the star of this solo.

Additional Comments: It is important to note the consistency with which Davis delivers his melodic interjections. Every single phrase begins on the and of beat three and ends two beats later. The solo is working on two rhythmic levels, the immediate note level

and the group of notes level. The note level contains the interesting rhythmic variations and the group level is rhythmically consistent in its presentation.

ONE MINT JULEP

KING CURTIS

5

9

13

17

21

25

29

33

37

2

41 E STRAIGHT TONE A7 E

45 A7 E GRIND

49 B7 A7 E 2ND SOLO GRIND THROUGHOUT SOLO

53 G#7 G#7 G#7

57 F#7 B7

61 E A7 E

65 A7 E

69 B7 A7 E

Title of Work: *One Mint Julep*

Artist: Curtis Ousley, a.k.a. King Curtis

Important Dates: Recorded on January 24, 1964⁶²

From: *The Best of King Curtis*, Capitol CDP 7243 8 36504 2 2, 1996.

Saxophonist: King Curtis (1934-1971), Tenor Saxophone: Curtis was born in Fort Worth, Texas and began playing the alto saxophone at the age of twelve. At the time, the first generation of the big, bluesy, and expressive “Texas Tenor” sound was making its mark through performances by Buster Smith and Red Connor. Curtis was a member of the second generation of this style along with David “Fathead” Newman, Ornette Coleman, and Prince Lasha.

Curtis made his way to New York by the early 1950s and worked the club circuit. He initially performed on RCA sessions, but by the late 50s Curtis’ local reputation earned him a regular spot on many Atlantic recordings. His performances with The Coasters made him famous with the public and the recording industry. Curtis also recorded several straight-ahead jazz albums for the Prestige label, under his own name with sidemen Nat Adderley and Wynton Kelly.

Curtis moved to Capitol Records in 1962 where he scored a hit with *Soul Serenade*. He also recorded a variety of tunes including blues classics by Joe Liggins and Freddie King, jazz pieces with Horace Silver and Oliver Nelson, and funk based originals. Curtis

⁶² *The Best of King Curtis*, Capitol CDP 7243 8 36504 2 2, 1996.

returned to Atlantic in 1965 and he and his band (Cornell Dupree, Paul Griffin, Chuck Rainey, and Ray Lucas) became the house band for many of the label's R&B hits. Additionally, the band had success as King Curtis and The Kingpins and as Aretha Franklin's back-up band.

In August of 1971 Curtis was stabbed to death by a drug addict when he asked the loiterer to move away from his brownstone in Manhattan. Curtis was one of the most loved men in the recording industry. Michael Cuscuna, who wrote the liner notes to *The Best of King Curtis*, explains, "The void he left as a person was as great as the one he left as an artist."⁶³

Theoretical Analysis: The overall form of *One Mint Julep* is presented in measures 9 through 52. (Measures 1 through 8 are an introduction.) This section is the melody of the tune and is presented for formal clarification. Additionally, the melody itself is an outstanding display of the R&B saxophone style. (Only the solo will be analyzed for the purposes of this document.) The overall form of this piece is AABA, where the A sections are a twelve bar blues derivative in E, and the B section functions as an eight measure bridge. Therefore, the form is related to the AABA thirty-two bar standard song form, however, this progression is forty-four measures long. The eight measure bridge, measures 33 through 39, moves from the natural third of E, G#7 in this case, to the lowered third, G7, and is completed by a ii-V root motion. The F#7 to B7 ii-V type progression acts as a turnaround leading back to the home key of E. This progression is not actually a typical ii-V in that the ii, F#7 in this case, would normally be a F#m7. It is most likely a dominant chord due to the fact that in the blues all of the chords are

⁶³ Michael Cuscuna, *The Best of King Curtis*, liner notes, Capitol CDP 7243 8 36504 2 2, 1996.

sevenths, and Curtis wanted to maintain consistency. Also, dominant seventh chords are inherently unstable harmonies, due to the tritone built into the chord. (In F7; F, A, C, E-flat, the A and E-flat are a tritone/augmented fourth/diminished fifth apart.) The inherent instability allows for the performer to play almost anything from a harmonic standpoint as long as the solo material resolves to a chord tone. This allows for many harmonic colors and note choices.

The formal organization is significant because the guitarist solos over the first two A sections with Curtis entering in the B section and continuing to solo through the last A section. The saxophone solo begins in measure 53.

Curtis employs a variety of harmonic devices which produce a creative and interesting solo. The primary harmonic structures include the mixolydian mode, the minor pentatonic scale, the major pentatonic scale, and the chromatic scale (see table 13).

Table 13. Curtis' use of Harmonic Devices in *One Mint Julep*

<u>Device</u>	<u>Measures</u>
Mixolydian Mode:	53-54, 62, 64-66, 69
Minor Pentatonic:	55-56
Major Pentatonic:	57-58, 71
Chromatic Scale:	59-60, 70

The scales are used over appropriate chord symbols and in a standard application; however, Curtis favors harmonically interesting tones when resolving his solo lines. Curtis employs the 7th scale degree in measures 54, 66, and 69. (The D on the and of four in measure 66 should be seen as an anticipation to the upcoming E chord.) He also ends on the third scale degree in measure 62, and finally, the harmonic extension in measure 72 features the 6th/13th scale degree, C#, of the E chord. These harmonic choices add color and interest in comparison to the more common resolutions to the root or fifth which appear in measures 56, 58, 61, and 70.

Extended Techniques: Curtis uses a variety of bends, falls, and smears.

Dramatic Devices: Curtis' mode of delivery, his searing tone, and jazz like inflections make this solo a masterpiece of R&B music. Additionally, his use of space is extremely sophisticated. He plays a phrase and then allows the music to breathe. It is worth mentioning that the majority of the solo is presented in two bar statements and then the band fills the space. The majority of solos studied for this document showcase the saxophone pushed to its limits; here however, Curtis allows the music to make a statement, not just the saxophone.

Additional Comments: One important section worth noting is the chromatic ascending figure which begins on the and of four in measure 58. The band changes the feel to accommodate Curtis' ascending figure. The bass player plays straight eighth notes while the rest of the group accents Curtis' rhythmic figure simultaneously to emphasize the line. This must have been rehearsed, or Curtis did this a lot. Either way, the figure again focuses the solo on the music as a whole and not necessarily just the saxophonist. This is effective as the line propels the solo into "overdrive" and heightens the level of excitement.



Title of Work: *Shotgun*

Artist: Jr. Walker and The All-Stars

Important Dates: Reached #4 in 1965⁶⁴

From: *Malcolm X (Soundtrack from the Motion Picture)*, Warner Brothers 45130, 1992.

Saxophonist: Junior Walker (1931-1995), Tenor Saxophone: Walker was born Oscar G. Mixon and later changed his name to Autry DeWalt Walker. He grew up in South Bend, Indiana and began playing the saxophone in high school. He performed in some local groups including; The Jumpin Jacks (which Walker started) and Billy “Stix” Nicks and

⁶⁴ Laughter, 121.

the Rhythm Rockers (which later became another incarnation of The Jumpin Jacks). Walker moved to Battle Creek, Michigan where he started The Junior Walker All Stars. The group began recording for Motown in 1963. He appeared on many Motown releases and some of his hits included; *Do the Boomerang*, *Shake and Fingerpop*, *I'm a Roadrunner*, *Come See About Me*, *These Eyes*, and *Walk in the Night*. Walker continued to record into the 1970s, and provided the saxophone solo for Foreigner's 1981 hit *Urgent*. He resigned from Motown in 1983. Junior Walker and The All-Stars toured into the 1990s.⁶⁵

Theoretical Analysis: *Shotgun* is a vamp in B-flat. Walker plays a twelve measure solo and uses the B-flat dorian mode organized as a minor pentatonic as the harmonic material. The notes to the B-flat dorian mode are as follows: B-flat, (C), D-flat, E-flat, F, (G), A-flat. The notes in parenthesis are omitted when the scale is performed as B-flat minor pentatonic. Walker occasionally includes the C and G in the frame work of the B-flat minor pentatonic, creating the dorian mode. It is also important to note that the relative minor pentatonic, blues scale, and dorian mode essentially contain the same notes. Therefore, an improviser can use three similarly related scales to get three different sounds when soloing (see table 14).

⁶⁵ Ibid., 121-122.

Table 14. Comparative Scale Chart for *Shotgun Solo*

<u>Scale Degree:</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	(#4)	<u>5</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>7</u>
<u>B-flat Dorian:</u>	B-flat,	C,	D-flat,	E-flat,		F,	G,	A-flat
<u>B-flat Minor Pentatonic:</u>	B-flat,		D-flat,	E-flat,		F,		A-flat
<u>B-flat Blues:</u>	B-flat,		D-flat,	E-flat,	(E)	F,		A-flat

*The (E), #4, is the only difference between the minor pentatonic and the blues scale.

Additionally, a soloist may use the natural third (D) against the lowered third (D-flat), as in measure 8, to utilize the major and minor sounds of a designated key. Walker mutates derivatives of the minor dorian and minor pentatonic keys into five harmonic devices which he mixes and matches to take advantage of the underlying monotone B-flat vamp (see table 15).

Table 15. Junior Walker's Harmonic Devices in *Shotgun Solo*

1. B-flat Dorian
2. B-flat Minor Pentatonic
3. B-flat Blues (not used, no E present)
4. Use of minor third (D-flat)
5. Use of major third (D)

These choices are just a few of the improvisational tools available for this type of single chord vamp, however, Walker's economic usage of these concepts proves to be the crux of his solo's construction.

The solo begins with a heavy emphasis on the minor third interval. Walker alternates between a G and B-flat, a minor third, for the first two measures. The tension created by these alternating notes is resolved by playing the minor third in the key (D-flat) on the downbeats of measures 2 and 3. Measure 5 is interesting in that Walker holds an E-flat for an extended period. In the key of B-flat, E-flat is not the most desirable note to use as a held tone. (Although it is present in B-flat dorian, B-flat minor pentatonic, and B-flat blues.) E-flat is the fourth scale degree in B-flat. When the bass player is playing the

root of the chord, B-flat in this case, a soloist playing an E-flat sounds like a 4th/5th interval against the bass, and therefore, can make the harmony sound incorrect. The B-flat chord will be played by the guitar or piano, while the soloist and bass player will sound as though they are in E-flat with a missing third (G). Additionally, the fourth scale degree E-flat is only a half-step away from the third of B-flat (D) and a step away from the fifth in B-flat (F). This creates a lot of harmonic ambiguity and tension. This led to many jazz and popular musicians referring to the use of the fourth scale degree in a major or dominant seventh harmony as the “magnetic fourth.”⁶⁶ Many young improvisers continually return to this note as it is in the scale, but not a consonant note from a purely harmonic standpoint. (The major pentatonic scale automatically eliminates the fourth scale degree, see table 16.)

Table 16. The B-flat Major Pentatonic Scale

<u>Scale Degree:</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>6</u>
<u>B-flat Major Pentatonic:</u>	B-flat	C	D	F	G

Walker could have used the B-flat major pentatonic, to yield six harmonic devices, but he clearly places an emphasis on the minor chord quality throughout his solo. The harmonic justification of the E-flat in measure 5 lies in its being a part of the B-flat minor pentatonic scale. In a vamp or blues progression it is accepted practice that all notes in the related pentatonic or blues scale are consonant. Some have more harmonic tension than others, and popular music styles adopted this blues characteristic as the progressions, scales, and even the style itself, owe a great deal of its idiomatic musical characteristics to the blues. Finally, the choice of the E-flat ends up being harmonically inconsequential due to the extreme flutter tongue and bend which Walker imparts on the note. The pitch

⁶⁶ Shelton Berg, *Jazz Improvisation: The Goal Note Method* (Evergreen, CO: Lou Fischer Music Publishing, 1990), 19.

quality is a secondary concern when related to the exciting effect. The remainder of the solo utilizes the aforementioned techniques and harmonic conception coupled with syncopated rhythms, gratuitous bends, and a forceful delivery.

Extended Techniques: Walker uses bends, falls, and flutter tonguing/growling.

Dramatic Devices: Walker's intense, bright, and overblown sound compliments his rhythmically syncopated lines. His use of extended techniques in key areas of the solo builds excitement and creates a feeling of anticipation as to what will happen next.

Additional Comments: Walker performs a derivative of this solo for the first eight measures of the tune. Additionally, he adds a tag onto the end of the piece based on the same material he uses in this solo. The music fades out as Walker continues to solo. The argument can be made that Walker considered his instrumental interludes as more of a part of the song than a solo since the separate "solos" are so similar. The repetition of thematic elements in each interlude effectively links these sections together and contributes greatly to the whole.

MONEY PINK FLOYD

FLUTTER TONGUE
C[#]_M OVERFLOW FLAT, BEND UP

GROWL

5

3

TRILL TO RSK 3

9

F[#]_M

GROWL

OVERFLOW FLAT, BEND UP

12

C[#]_M

3

15

3

G[#]

F[#]_M

TRILL TO RSK3 + FADE OUT

17

C[#]

6/4

Title of Work: *Money*

Artist: Pink Floyd

Important Dates: Reached #13 in 1973⁶⁷

From: *Dark Side of the Moon*, Capitol CDP 0777 7 46001 2 5, remaster 1992.

⁶⁷ Laughter, 154.

Saxophonist: Dick Parry (b. 1942), Tenor Saxophone: Parry was born in Kentford, England. His most recognizable accomplishments have been as a studio and live musician for the band Pink Floyd. He played the solos on *Us and Them*, and *Shine on you Crazy Diamond*. He toured with Pink Floyd in the 1970s, stopped playing for several years, toured with Pink Floyd in 1994, and still performs today.⁶⁸

Theoretical Analysis: The twenty-one measure chord progression to *Money* is based on typical tonic, sub-dominant, and dominant harmonies. Here however, the progression is in C# minor, and the progression is as follows:

i	i	i	i
i	i	i	i
iv	iv	iv	iv
i	i	i	i
V	V	iv	iv/i

It is important to note that the majority of *Money* is in a 7/4 time signature, and the solo follows suit. The first sixteen measures are in 7/4, and the last five measures feature four measures of 4/4 and one measure of 6/4. Alternatively, the last five measures may also be explained as two measures of 4/4, one measure of 6/4, and two measures of 4/4.

Parry's solo features the exclusive use of the C# minor pentatonic scale for eighteen measures. He navigates through the chord progression with one scale by emphasizing the tones of the C# minor pentatonic that fit the underlying harmony. Since the progression is based off of a common i, iv, V motion, the keys are related and therefore, this technique is effective as many common tones result (see table 17).

⁶⁸ Ibid., 155.

Table 17. Harmonic Implications of Single Scale Use Over a i, iv, V Based Progression

[All numbers indicate scale degrees in related key]					
Scale:	<u>C#</u>	<u>E</u>	<u>F#</u>	<u>G#</u>	<u>B</u> (C# minor pentatonic)
<u>Chord:</u> c#(i):	1	3	4	5	7
f#(iv):	5	7	1	2/9	4/11
G#(V):	4/11	6/13	7	1	#9/flat 3

The idea is the same as a soloist using the C# blues scale over the C# blues progression.

The soloist may not be “making the changes,” but the notes of blues scale can be uniquely justified in relation to each of the accompanying chords. The last three measures of the solo demonstrate Parry’s willingness to follow the rules as he uses an F# minor pentatonic over an F# minor chord and resolves appropriately to C#. Parry’s melodic lines are linear with few skips. He has a tendency to begin on a high note and descend diatonically.

Extended Techniques: Parry uses a series of bends, growls, and overblown notes to evoke a series of wails and groans from the instrument. The effect is more emotional than tonal. Parry’s use of RSK 3 (right side key 3) for trilling is an easy and effective way to “trill” any note above high A. In this case, the effect is that of a whole-step. (C#-D#) Again, the desired result is more emotional than tonal. Parry also includes an altissimo high G# in measures 5 and 17.

Dramatic Devices: Parry’s embellishment of simple harmonic vocabulary comes in the form of extended techniques. This solo is a prime example of the direction of the saxophone in popular music. It has almost become a sound effect machine in this instance, as the vocal quality Parry exhibits outshines any tonal applications. Parry’s

tone has a rough edge which compliments his reliance on creating interest in terms of “non-harmonic” concepts.

Additional Comments: Parry’s tone has a lot of reverb on the recording. This effect smears Parry’s note choices and it sounds as though some notes run together.

HONKY TONK

BILL DOGGETT

4

8

11

15

18

22

Title of Work: *Honky Tonk, Part I*

Artist: Bill Doggett, writing credited to B. Doggett, S. Shepherd, C. Scott, and B. Butler⁶⁹

Important Dates: Recorded March 4th and 5th, 1995.⁷⁰ Originally recorded June 16, 1956⁷¹

From: *Bluesiana Hurricane*, Shanachie 5014, 1995.

Saxophonist: Bobby Watson (b. 1953), Alto Saxophone: Watson began playing the piano at ten, the clarinet at eleven, and the saxophone in the eighth grade. He played R&B while at school and organized the first school dance band. In 1970 he started private clarinet lessons with Carlo Minnetti, and in 1975 graduated with a degree in theory and composition from the University of Miami. Watson moved to New York in the mid-1970s and performed with Art Blakey's Jazz Messengers, where he served as musical director. He left Blakey and began associations with George Coleman, Charli Persip, Louis Hayes, Sam Rivers, Philly Joe Jones, Panama Francis, and co-founded the 29th Street Saxophone Quartet. He has co-led groups with Curtis Lundy since 1973 and with Victor Lewis in the 1990s and served as a leader on numerous dates since the 1980s. He helped Max Roach arrange music for *Shephard Sets*, a play by Sam Shephard, which

⁶⁹ Ibid., 21.

⁷⁰ *Bluesiana Hurricane*, Shanachie 5014, 1995.

⁷¹ Laughter, 20.

won accolades for the year's best music in an off-Broadway play. His style is characterized as highly original and fluid with a powerful feeling.⁷²

The original saxophonist was Clifford Scott (1928-1993), Tenor Saxophone. His information is included here due to Watson's preservation of Scott's solistic style. Additionally, Watson plays many of the same solo lines which Scott performed on the original *Honky Tonk, Part I*. Scott was born in San Antonio, Texas. He worked with Lionel Hampton from 1948-1950 and performed in the R&B bands of Roy Milton and Roy Brown until 1953. He then rejoined Hampton, went to study music in New York in 1954, and joined Bill Doggett's group in 1956. In 1961 he moved to Los Angeles to perform at the Parisian Room. He returned to San Antonio in 1976 and continued to perform until his death.⁷³

Theoretical Analysis: *Honky Tonk* is a 12 bar blues form in D with the inclusion of two familiar modifications. The first variation is in measure 2 of the sequence where the IV chord is substituted for the commonly used I. The second change in the chord progression occurs on beat three of measure 12. In this instance, the V chord acts as a turnaround to direct the progression back to I.

Bobby Watson's 2 chorus solo on *Honky Tonk* is harmonically thematic in that there is repetitive emphasis on the minor third interval and extensive ornamental chromaticism. From a rhythmic standpoint, stylistically appropriate duple and triple patterns are a dominant feature as they normally are in a shuffle. The articulation and performance

⁷² Carr, 675.

⁷³ Laughter, 20.

style are characteristically R&B, however, numerous jazz elements are also present throughout the solo.

For most of the solo, Watson relies heavily on diatonic goal note (chord tone) choices. He also features the minor third interval prominently. In an effort to maintain the recurrence of the minor third interval, Watson's note choices may be in direct opposition against the underlying harmony and common harmonic usage. The various treatments of chromaticism add to the adventurous harmonic palate. The first melodic statement, up to measure 4, acts a microcosm of these concepts. Watson begins with a minor third triplet pattern (D/F) which lands on a D in the first full measure. This is effective in establishing the home key of D, and the minor third motion implies some type of blues or minor key progression. The duple pattern on the first two beats of the first full measure is also a minor third (D/B). Here however, Watson is using a note outside of the appropriate chord tones for this harmony (B). The B can be justified due to three factors. First, the B continues the minor third motion, which implies a blues, and second, the D/B motion could be implying the upcoming chord which is G. D/B are chord tones in the key of G. Finally, the B is the 13th in the harmonically extended chord of D7. (D, F#, A, C, E, G, B) Of these explanations, the first two are probably the most feasible due to a distinct lack of harmonic extensions in typical R&B saxophone playing. However, this could be considered a jazz related influence.

The second measure contains ornamental chromaticism. The G# acts as an upper neighbor to the G on the end of beat two. When the G returns in measure 3, it is being played over a D chord. This is an interesting choice because in common usage the fourth note (G in this example) of a scale should rarely be played over a major or dominant

seventh chord. This is due to the D being the root of the chord. In this case, a G performed over a D chord creates harmonic dissonance and ambiguity. The G will be in direct conflict with the A and F# in the D chord. The interval between a G and D is a perfect fourth/fifth depending on the inversion. Here, if the soloist or accompanist adds a B, the harmony becomes unclear with D and G chords sounding simultaneously. The justification lies in the blues scale, and the fact that many performers take extreme harmonic liberty when dealing with a blues progression due to each of the harmonies being a seventh chord. Dominant seventh chords have a tritone contained within the chord from the third to the seventh chord tones. For example, a D7 (D, F#, A, C) chord contains a tritone between the F# and the C. This harmonic instability allows for a variety of “incorrect” notes to be performed and the result will still sound agreeable. This is where the blues scale comes into play. It is common to use the blues scale over the blues progression. In this case the D blues progression would utilize the D blues scale. The formula to create a blues scale in relation to its parallel major is as follows: (1, flat-3, 4, #4, 5, flat-7, 1) therefore, the D blues scale is D, F, G, G#, A, C, D. G is a part of the D blues scale, so it is proper to use the note in a context where it might not normally appear, as in the previously mentioned measure three. This is most likely what Watson was thinking when he performed this solo and chose notes “outside” of what is normally harmonically acceptable. Finally, the motion away from the G ascends chromatically to the fifth scale degree (A) where the line descends in Watson’s first complete presentation of the blues scale from beat four of measure 3 through measure 4. The appearance of the blues scale here lends credence to the idea that Watson was thinking the blues scale since beats three and four of measure 2. He utilizes fragments of the scale, creating tension,

only to resolve the tension by providing a complete statement of the blues scale in measure 4.

The solo continues in the aforementioned manner (see table 18) with a notable exception. Watson uses a chromatic yodel imitation in measures 9-10 and 21-22.

Table 18. Honky Tonk Musical Device Grid

<u>Measures</u> (Chorus One)	[Usage of:]	<u>Minor Third</u>	<u>Chromaticism</u>	<u>Blues Scale</u>	<u>Duple/Triple</u>
mm. pickup-4		frequent	minimal	yes	combination
mm. 5-8		moderate	minimal	no	mostly duple
mm. 9-12		minimal	frequent	no	combination
(Chorus two)					
mm. 13-16		minimal	frequent	yes	mostly duple
mm. 17-20		moderate	minimal	yes	mostly triple
mm. 21-24/25		minimal	frequent	no	combination

The sound is reminiscent of a Jimmie Rodgers country song yodel from the 1920s mixed with the grit of the blues. This pattern was taken from the original Clifford Scott solo. Jazz influences can be seen in measure 7 where a chromatic “surround tone” (sometimes called encapsulation) occurs on beats three and four. Here the F# is “surrounded” by a G above and an F below. This leads to the F# resolution which is interesting because it is the natural third of the D7 harmony. This should be considered another jazz influence due to the blues typically employing a flat third, as it is part of the blues scale. Other jazz influences include the use of a harmonic extension to the ninth in measures 9 (B), 10 (A), 12 (B), 14 (A), 21 (B), and 22 (A). Finally, in measures 7, 17, and the first half of mm. 23 the outline of a blues pattern is present, but the #4 relative to the major scale is missing. These patterns are minor pentatonic. The blues scale and minor pentatonic are the same scale except the blues scale contains the previously mentioned #4 scale degree.

Extended Techniques: Watson growls throughout the solo and uses bends and falls where appropriate.

Dramatic Devices: Watson uses rhythmic repetition often and standard rock/jazz articulations.

Additional Comments: The contour of the solo is well planned. Watson begins his solo aggressively and the excitement peaks at the beginning of the second chorus. From here, the solo slowly begins to relax in intensity before moving on to a call and response section between the saxophone and the organ.

CHAPTER III

CONCLUSION

The twenty annotated saxophone transcriptions presented in this study provide an organized introduction to the role of the saxophone in popular music. Specifically, the propagation of the rhythm and blues saxophone style and the eventual acceptance of idiomatic R&B saxophone techniques which became a required ingredient in later R&B and popular compositions.

The saxophone is capable of a variety of sounds and vocal like inflections. The bends, falls, glissandi, wails, honks, and screams all contribute to the gospel influence of the rhythm and blues style, while the formative and harmonic activity should be considered derivatives of the blues. The smooth and weaving chromatic lines and “hip” chord resolutions are definitive jazz influences. The amalgamation of these characteristic traits of the gospel, blues, and jazz styles combined to form a whole new artistic language which is original, highly emotional, and inherently entertaining.

The R&B saxophone solo as an independent entity utilizes a series of appropriate devices which came to be accepted as a standardized language by the late 1940s/early 1950s. Most solos were related to either an eight or twelve measure blues or an AABA standard song form derivative. Soloists usually chose to employ the minor pentatonic scale, major pentatonic scale, or the blues scale as the main harmonic material, however, many soloists utilized jazz devices such as: the dorian and mixolydian modes, chromaticism, harmonic extensions, surround tones, hybrid major/minor pentatonic scales, and the juxtaposition of the natural and lowered third in a given key. All of these

elements are jazz/popular characteristics, however, the mode of delivery, repeated riffs, loud raucous tone, and effects such as smears, bends, falls, and glisses are what separate the music from strict theoretical concerns. The R&B/popular saxophone style uses standard harmonic progressions as a loose guide. The correct note or figure, from an R&B perspective, is the tone which elicits the desired result from the listener. Obviously it is not musically appropriate to perform a G# over a G7; however, if the soloist wants to create tension and the need for a resolution from a disturbing dissonance, then G# is the correct tone. Honking on a low B-flat for twenty-four measures can become harmonically tiresome, but the rhythmic variety and trance like state the gesture creates is appropriate for the desired result.

The rhythm and blues/popular saxophone style has been maligned since its inception. This writer believes this stance is unwarranted and indefensible. One only needs to consider the reason the music was created. That reason is fun. (The money came later, because of the fun.) Rhythm and blues is exactly what it claims to be: *rhythm* and *blues*. That is, a blues based form with highly accentuated rhythmic activity. R&B never claimed to be anything more or less. Critics' opinions are usually justifiable from a scholarly western music perspective; however, the main ingredient of this style is emotion. Emotion is impossible to quantify and equally difficult to rationalize. The frenetic sounds which emanated from the saxophones of these men can be critiqued and studied, but one only has to listen to understand the desired result.

More research in the area of the R&B saxophone style will yield supplementary musical evidence to support current findings and discover additional saxophonists who have contributed to this popular style. A history or timeline of the important idiomatic

developments regarding saxophone technique would provide an interesting link to the saxophone's three main performance applications; classical, jazz, and popular styles. Finally, a document citing the saxophonists who perform both the R&B and jazz styles would provide information establishing the similarities of musical material employed.

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