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COMPARING TRADITIONAL AND MODERN TRENDS IN JAZZ IMPROVISATION

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COMPARING TRADITIONAL AND MODERN TRENDS IN JAZZ
IMPROVISATION

By

RYAN JOHNSON

Bachelor of Music

Master's Thesis

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IMPROVISATION

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ABSTRACT

This thesis compares traditional and modern jazz improvisation through analysis. These analyses discuss various musical techniques and ideas specific to each differing era. The case studies focus on three traditional jazz standards: "Autumn Leaves," "Someday My Prince Will Come," and "Cantaloupe Island." Two solo transcriptions (one traditional and one modern) represent each tune, including performances by Bill Evans, Miles Davis, Paul Desmond, Herbie Hancock, Yohan Kim, and Cory Henry. The older transcriptions showcase classic chord-scale relations, diatonic chord harmony, consistent rhythms with spacious phrasing, and recalled material. The newer transcriptions consist more of dense harmony, scales independent from the composed material, unpredictable, complex rhythms, and continuous new material. Note-worthy discussion points will include arpeggiation, chord-scale and modal theory, reharmonization in chord substitution, and varying rhythm in phrasing.

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INTRODUCTION

The ever-changing nature of jazz has resulted in a plethora of improvisation techniques. The earlier jazz eras encompassed styles such as Dixieland, swing, American songbook, be-bop, and contemporary, which were prevalent between the 1920s and late 1960s. In its earliest form, improvisation typically followed the composed melody quite closely. In other words, a reinterpretation of the melody would often be the bulk of a solo section at that time. Notes in improvisation that deviated from the melody were almost always tones within the given chord at that specific time resulting in contextualized melody.

The role of improvisation in the 1920s-60s was not the same as in modern jazz. Soloing was not intended for displaying playing ability or originality as much as it was a tool for elongating songs, thus giving the bandleader time to rest and the crowd spaces to dance.¹ However, as early mid-century styles such as bebop and contemporary emerged, the use of more abstract melodies in composition led to modal and scalar playing. In this soloing approach, the melody did not necessarily outline the chord harmony. The focus of improvisation was beginning to shift from complementary to attention-seeking. Although

1. Eric Blom, "Jazz," *Grove's Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, 5th ed. Vol. 4. (New York: St. Martin's Press Inc., 1966), 600-604.

the main melody of a song was still important, audiences were now captivated by the virtuosity of the performers.

Modern jazz genres, spanning from the early 1980s to current day, developed styles such as free, avant-garde, fusion, smooth jazz, and many others.² As a result, improvisation trends began to shape into longer, harmonic and rhythmically abstract creations that diverged from the original melody. Modal playing and chord-scale methods focused outside of traditional functioning harmony. Musicians were now pushing the boundaries of tonality and harmonic relationships, and these evolutions in sound have now become widely used for improvisatory styles. Therefore, because of the wide range of techniques used throughout jazz history, this thesis compares improvisational trends from early to modern jazz eras.

Comparing traditional and modern jazz solo trends raises several questions. What are the primary elements that shaped the style? What makes the modern sound so different from the traditional jazz improvisations? How are new artists implementing traditional techniques in their solos? Various methods and techniques have been used over the last century in jazz. Modern jazz performers such as Cory Henry and Yohan Kim have become influences in modern soloing approaches that incorporate traditional techniques. Thus through analysis this thesis will compare the various elements of improvisation in their soloing choices.

2. Scott DeVeaux, *Jazz* (New York: W.W. Norton & Co. Inc., 2009), 402.

This thesis illustrates the divide between old and new improvisational trends through three representative case studies. Chapter one is an introduction and comparison of traditional and modern jazz improvisation through articles focused on jazz methodology and philosophy. Each following analytic chapter considers two contrasting improvisations by different artists on the same well-known tune: one traditional and one modern. Chapter two compares two solos over the jazz standard “Autumn leaves”: one performed by Bill Evans, and the second by Yohan Kim. Chapter three compares two solos over the tune “Someday My Prince Will Come”: one performed by Paul Desmond and the other by Miles Davis. Finally, chapter four also compares two solos, one performed by Herbie Hancock and the other by Cory Henry, over the tune “Cantaloupe Island.” Jazz music and its corresponding improvisation is an ever-changing continuum of ideas and thoughts. Each era in jazz is unique and defined through specific traits that vary and overlap from the previous one. Therefore, the following analyses exemplify the musical differences, in harmony, rhythm, and phrasing in traditional and modern trends in jazz improvisation.

CHAPTER 1: OLD VERSUS NEW JAZZ SOLO CONCEPTS

Jazz is notorious for proposing particularly challenging improvisatory situations. Most jazz performances are based on pre-existing compositions.³ To preserve the integrity of a composition while also contributing an original or improvised section is a difficult goal. Furthermore, each time period in jazz involved its own unique sound and improvisatory style. Attached to each era in jazz are differing trends involving soloing style, particularly regarding harmonic and rhythmic choices. The social changes involving various cultures resulted in changing opinions on what jazz was and how it should be performed.⁴ These discrepancies led to sub-genres of jazz not only in earlier styles but later forms as well.

Traditional jazz includes genres such as 1920s Dixieland or 1930s Swing and Vocal Jazz as well as early 1940-1950s “be-bop.” Modern jazz styles such as “post-bop,” modal jazz, free, avant-garde, and fusion (including numerous genres) took over the scene from the 1960s until now.⁵ Since the result is a plethora of sub-genres, rather than refer to them as such, this chapter compares only two groups: traditional and modern. Therefore a practical approach to discussing these two groups of jazz involves comparing and contrasting harmony, rhythm, and motivic development. This chapter focuses on

3. Phillip Alperson, “On Musical Improvisation,” *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 43, no. 1 (Fall 1984): 17-18.

4. Alessandro Duranti, Kenny Burrell, *A Search for Hidden Harmonies and Unique Self* (CA: University of California Press, 1990), 72-73.

5. Scott DeVeaux, *Jazz* (New York, NY: W.W. Norton & Co. Inc., 2009), 90, 439.

these three categories that differentiate traditional from modern jazz improvisation: harmony, rhythm, and phrasing.

Harmony

The harmonic choices involved in jazz improvisation are perhaps the most recognizable traits of the genre. A unique characteristic of jazz harmony is the commonality of extension tones found in the chord progressions and composed melody.⁶ Chord extensions, such as sevenths, ninths, elevenths, and thirteenths, recur frequently in the upcoming analyses. Additionally, it is regular practice to use chord substitutions (tritone, minor 3rd, major 6th) that go beyond these already advanced harmonies. Therefore, realizing that these extension tones are responsible for creating color and texture unique to jazz is imperative when analyzing solos.⁷ Additionally, jazz harmony ordinarily employs scales as the primary concept in melody creation. Although more modern techniques involve altered or dissonant scales such as half-whole/whole-half diminished, be-bop dominant, super Locrian, etc, a majority of jazz improvisation surrounds the seven modes of the major scale: Ionian (I), Dorian (ii), Phrygian (iii), Lydian (IV), Mixolydian (V), Aeolian (vi), and Locrian (vii).

6. Jerry Coker, *The Jazz Idiom*, (Berkeley CA: Prentice Hall, 1975), iv.

7. Craig Fraedrich, *Practical Jazz Theory for Improvisation: Chords and Scales* (Winchester, VA: National Jazz Workshop Press, 2017), 25.

The following analyses highlight the use of modes and scales. Beyond their basic harmonic functions, the most recognized aspects of jazz improvisation are the player's ability to use scales with intervallic leaps, arpeggiation, and chromatic modulation.⁸ Therefore, chord-scale theory (using a scale that a written chord diatonically fits into) becomes a significant, and arguably the most important, structural element in shaping jazz improvisation.

Traditional jazz chord voicings commonly center on sevenths and ninths, whereas modern voicings tend to use dense elevenths and thirteenths. This variation in extension or "color" tones makes a significant impact on the resulting sound. Moreover, hearing non-traditional chord tones affects a player's scalar and voice leading choices during improvisation. The evolution of jazz improvisation has deviated in regards to chord-scale relationships and scalar uses. Modal chord relations particularly motivated traditional approaches to scales in jazz. Although arpeggiation and leaps can be found in all eras of jazz, traditional styles such as bebop and swing often highlight chord tones and/or the composed melody. Modern jazz improvisation is known for pushing the boundaries of tonality by pivoting on non-chord tones, using clashing harmony for chord substitutions, and omitting any resolution to tonic. Understanding these basic concepts of jazz harmony will serve as a guide in the upcoming analyses.

8. Jamey Aebersold, *Volume 1: How to Play Jazz and Improvise* (New Albany, IN: Aebersold Jazz Inc., 1967), 4.

Rhythm

Even more than harmony, the role of rhythm in motif and phrasing highlights the primary differences between traditional and modern jazz soloing. Additionally, rhythmic choice is perhaps the most complex characteristic of jazz improvisation. Since jazz rhythm derives from African roots, the use of complex beat division and polyrhythms are some of the many attributes that naturally appear.⁹ Some of the most important concepts in the following analyses are three-against-four rhythm, the use of eighth and sixteenth notes, and choice of beat division in phrasing.

Traditional jazz styles such as bebop and swing are known for using three against four techniques; however, more often than not this type of phrasing is seen in modern practice as well.¹⁰ A commonality between old and new improvisation styles is their utilization of eighth and sixteenth notes, although the placement and length of the runs vary substantially. Traditional improvisation uses eighth and sixteenth notes but typically implements them in short bursts or interleaved with other lines with variable rhythm. As jazz progressed from older to newer styles, specific rhythmic ideas in phrasing also evolved. Modern soloing ideas tend to be long-winded with fewer rests, resulting in a virtuosic or flashy sound. Newer styles of improvisation have now become rhythmically

9. DeVaux, *Jazz*, 15.

10. Dave Liebman, "Jazz Rhythm," Dave Liebman Official Website.
http://daveliebman.com/home/ed_articles/jazz-rhythm/.

-Three against four rhythm is a term used to describe three note or triplet phrases in a 4/4 meter. When soloists choose to create these types of lines there becomes a sense or feeling of "swing" within the measure(s). Additionally, starting or ending lines on the off-beat creates anticipation and a feeling of unexpectedness as landing directly on the beat is many times presumed.

unpredictable. This includes switching from lengthy sixteenth-note lines lasting multiple measures, to bars that consisted almost completely of rest. Mimicking of the composed melody, to lines that did not resemble the written melody at all. This independence includes disjunct rhythm unusual to the meter and melodies that did not fit any of the written or accompanying harmony making it aurally difficult to pinpoint meter and key signature. Although rhythm and harmonic choice in phrasing became more difficult to follow in newer soloing practices, these same decisions from the performer are what arguably give modern jazz its appeal.

Motif

Motif is perhaps the most crucial element that sets the differing jazz styles apart. Motivic development transforms a solo into more than just a series of sequences and scales that fit a chord. Further, the development of motifs through melodic and rhythmic variation tends to be the largest difference between modern jazz improvisations.

Traditional styles of improvisation often encompassed simpler motifs. The rhythmic choices in lines tended to stay the same (or highly similar) throughout a solo in order to create consistency within phrases. Memorable melodies were popular in early jazz genres such as Dixieland and swing. Even in later traditional styles, such as the beginnings of bebop, the creation of melodic lines was shown in soloing. Therefore the motifs in traditional improvisation are seemingly more focused on memorable lines and

recalling or rephrasing material previously stated in either the solo or composed melody. Additionally, the use of call-and-response type motifs, especially in Dixieland jazz, allowed for crowd interaction and interplay between band members. This group involvement in early improvisation gave these types of styles their uniqueness.¹¹

The musical narrative changed motivically as modern styles of jazz began to emerge. Rather than trying to produce a memorable motif from the composed material, improvisers were now leaning towards unexpectedness and surprise. This new direction consisted of complex rhythms that typically worked against the meter rather than flow with it. New approaches also encompassed continuous or through-composed solos that constantly introduced new melodic ideas. The harmonic qualities of improvisation transformed as melodic aspects of the solos deviated further from the composed harmony. Modern jazz improvisers are now gravitating towards a virtuosic sound with a focus on technical abilities and using the element of surprise to engage listeners. Although their motifs are comprised of different variables and stem from varying methodology, both traditional and modern jazz improvisation result in the formation of a cohesive solo.

Aside from motif, phrasing during soloing excerpts is a crucial component in jazz improvisation, for there are specific traits native to each genre. Similar to the motivic development, phrasing choices during improvisation differ immensely between

11. DeVaux, *Jazz*, 18.

traditional and modern soloing styles. Older methods of improvisation commonly displayed consistent rhythms that many times aligned with the written melody or were a close to the composed music. For example, Dixieland and swing eras were dominated by rhythmically spaced out melodies common in vocal lead writing. Thus, older improvisation ideas called for solos that matched that setting. However, bebop and early modal styles in the later years of traditional jazz, composed melodies that were fast-paced, complex, and sounded similar to a solo. Therefore, the phrasing differences between old and new improvisation can many times be clearly identified.

Conclusion

Harmony, rhythm, motif, and phrasing are crucial elements in understanding jazz improvisation. The following analyses highlight the harmonic and rhythmic elements involved in old and new jazz improvisation. They also discuss the differences in the ways that these elements are implemented in old and new improvisation. Finally, the analyses discuss the similarities that these styles share and how they relate. Subsequent chapters examine a traditional and modern artist's solo transcription for each of the following three songs: *Autumn Leaves* (J. Kosma), *Someday My Prince Will Come* (F. Churchill), and *Cantaloupe Island* (H. Hancock).

CHAPTER 2: “AUTUMN LEAVES”

In 1945, a brilliant Hungarian composer by the name of Joseph Kosma wrote a song entitled “Autumn Leaves.” Originally recorded in 1946 by Yves Montand and Irene Joachim for the film *Les Portes de la Nuit* (Gates of the Night), Kosma’s song would reach worldwide popularity.¹² Although “Autumn Leaves” was originally recorded in studio as a vocal piece with a runtime of just over two and a half minutes, there have since been many nationally-distributed instrumental versions. Some of the earliest “jazzers” such as Louis Armstrong, Ella Fitzgerald, and Chet Baker have recorded studio renditions (some vocal, some instrumental) of this timeless song, establishing it as a standard. Since its release in 1950, its popularity, especially in the jazz community, has continued to grow. Familiarity and abundance of recordings make “Autumn Leaves” an ideal case study for analyzing improvisation. This analysis will explore two solo transcriptions of Kosma’s classic: one from Bill Evans and another from Yohan Kim. In doing so, this chapter will distinguish the different ways these two artists implement chord-scale theory, mode choice, chord substitution, and phrasing.

12. Ted Gioia, *The Jazz Standards: A Guide to the Repertoire* (New York, NY: Oxford Press, 2012), 114.

AUTUMN LEAVES

(MEDIUM JAZZ) -JOHNNY MERCER

The score consists of six staves of music. The first staff is the melody, and the subsequent five staves are the bass line. The key signature is G minor (two flats). The time signature is 3/4. The score is divided into three sections: A (measures 1-11), B (measures 12-15), and C (measures 16-25). The chords and figured bass notation are as follows:

- Staff 1 (Melody): Gm7, F7, Bb7
- Staff 2 (Bass): Eb7, Bb: (ii), Am7(9), V7, Gm7
- Staff 3 (Bass): IV, g: (ii), V7, Gm7
- Staff 4 (Bass): G7, V/II, Am7(9), D7(9), Gm7
- Staff 5 (Bass): (ii), V7, Gm7
- Staff 6 (Bass): C7 (Fm7 Bb7)
- Staff 7 (Bass): Bb: (ii), Am7(9), D7(9), Gm7
- Staff 8 (Bass): g: (ii), Eb7, Am7(9), D7, Gm7
- Staff 9 (Bass): Eb: V7/bvii, bvii, III, V7/ii, ii, V7
- Staff 10 (Bass): VI, g: (ii), V7, Gm7

The score ends with "FINE" at the end of the final staff.

Figure 1.1: Form and Harmony of "Autumn Leaves" (Joseph Kosma).¹³

13. Chuck Sher Ed., *The New Real Book*, Vol. 1 (Petaluma, CA: Sher Music Co., 1988), 14.

The handwritten chords in mm. 22-25 are the harmonies that are commonly used in the performance of "Autumn Leaves." Specifically, this harmony is close to the one found in *The New Real Book* (Sher 1988). Some mistakenly credit Johnny Mercer as the writer of the song. However, his single role was in translating the lyrics to English; thus Mercer had no part in composing the tune.

Harmony

Figure 1.1 shows the form and harmony of one version of the “Autumn Leaves” chart.¹⁴ While the form of many early jazz tunes is AABA, the form of “Autumn Leaves” is AABC. Since the B section usually introduces a new motive and harmonic idea, a return to the A section provides familiarity and resolution. Therefore, because this song lacks a final A section and ends with a new motive (C section), the conclusion brings an interesting motivic contrast and is somewhat unexpected in 1940s pop music. One possible analysis of this song may conclude that it begins in the key of Bb major and eventually resolves in the relative key of G minor. However, since both the first and second ending (along with the concluding phrase) functions in G minor, it could be argued that G minor functions as the tonic key. Thus any additional harmonies outside of the key are “color chords” used to expand a new melodic idea before returning to the tonic harmony.

Harmonically, the song is a series of ii-V-I progressions (found in parentheses throughout Figure 1.1) that modulate between two keys. In this edition, they are the keys of Bb major and its relative G minor. In Figure 1.1 the A section contains a ii-V-I progression in the key of Bb major followed by a IV chord in Bb (Ebmaj7) that quickly becomes a ii-V-I in G minor (relative minor). However, in the B section the song begins to change shape as it starts at m. 11 with a ii-V-I progression in G minor and proceeds to

14. Sher, *The New Real Book*, 14. The majority of scored versions of this song are written in G major/E minor. However, since both transcriptions are in the less common key of Bb major/G minor, found on pg. 14 of *The New Real Book* (Sher Music, 1988), the figures for discussion will reflect this key.

a ii-V-I harmony in Bb major at m. 16. At m. 20 the tune reaches its final harmony with a ii-V-I progression in G minor. Interestingly, mm. 22-24 use an unexpected, quick array of chords, (C7-Fmin7-Bb7-Ebmaj7), leading to the final ii-V-i in mm. 25-26 in the key of G minor. This series of leading chords in the concluding phrase could be read as (V7/bVII-bvii-III-VI-ii-V-i). This G minor reading of the chord progression sensibly draws attention to an extended circle of fifths movement. However, since it is common for harmony to modulate in jazz, reading mm. 22-24 as a V/ii-ii-V-I in Eb major is a viable alternative for connecting the two keys. In mm. 25-26 the song concludes with a ii-V-I in G minor. Importantly, in popular editions of *The Real Book* such as the fourth and fifth (which are in G major/E minor),¹⁵ mm. 22-24 go through a chromatic descending harmony in the bassline before concluding to tonic in m. 26.¹⁶ However, these two versions are adaptations that neither Evans nor Kim uses.

When analyzing an improvisation over “Autumn Leaves,” there are two approaches pertaining to the key of the song. One is a single-tonic approach, where there is one tonic key while subsidiary keys are touched upon. In this case, the key of G minor would be the single tonic. In taking this route, one idea would be to use chord-scale theory to create an original harmonization of any given section of the chord progression. A second idea is that of a double-tonic, which could be considered the majority of the song’s harmony as there are two main tonal centers that encompass the primary harmony: the keys of Bb major and G minor. Since the song begins and ends in a different key, this

15. Hal Leonard, *The Real Book*, Vol 2, 2nd Ed. (Milwaukee, WI: Hal Leonard Co., 2004), 14.

16. Hal Leonard, *The Real Book*, 6th Ed. (Milwaukee, WI: Hal Leonard Co., 2007), 14.

modulation may perhaps provide a strong support to the idea of a double-tonic approach during improvisation.¹⁷ In different passes, Evans and Kim utilize both single and multiple tonal centers in constructing their improvisations. Although exceedingly different, both performers demonstrate traditional arpeggiation and chord-scale relationships, as well as modern modal harmony, intervallic leaps, and chord substitutions.

Bill Evans

The innovations of American pianist Bill Evans (1929-1980) include chord re-harmonization and modal lines.¹⁸ Interestingly, Evans was a classically-trained musician who studied at South-Eastern Louisiana University and Mannes School of Music. After graduating with a degree in composition, Evans joined the Miles Davis sextet, which exponentially elevated his career as the sextet went on to record the best selling jazz album of all time: *Kind of Blue*.¹⁹ However, despite the mass recognition and fame that encompassed Miles' band, a few years later Evans departed from the group. Following his decision to leave the band, Evans would release close to a dozen records, receive seven Grammys (with thirty-one nominations), publish globally renowned jazz standards

17. Dariusz Terefenko, *Jazz Theory: From Basic to Advanced Study* (United Kingdom: Routledge Press, 2014), 323-343.

18. Keith Shadwick, *Bill Evans: Everything Happens To Me: A Music Bibliography* (Guilford, CT: Back Beat Books, 2002).

19. Scott DeVeaux, *Jazz*, 377.

“Waltz for Debbie,” and “Time Remembered” as well as be inducted into the Jazz Hall of Fame before his abrupt passing in 1980 at the age of fifty.²⁰

The following analysis focuses on the rendition of “Autumn Leaves” from the 1959 album *Portrait in Jazz*, which Evans recorded when he was just thirty.²¹ This album became one of his best-known records, establishing him as a force to be reckoned with in the jazz world.²² The following analysis will demonstrate Evans’ mastery of modal improvisation, choice of rhythm in phrasing, and melodic variation in scale use.

The opening of Evans’ solo incorporates classic contemporary techniques such as arpeggiated chord lines, various intervallic leaps, chromaticism, and rhythmic fluency in his phrasing. Figure 1.2 demonstrates Evans’ use of modes, which were indicative of

The image shows a musical score for the piano solo of "Autumn Leaves" by Bill Evans, starting at 2:00. The score is in 4/4 time and B-flat major. The key signature has two flats (Bb and Eb). The tempo is marked "PIANO (2:00)". The score is annotated with various modes and chord types above the notes. The first staff shows the beginning of the solo with a Bb: or G: chord. The second staff continues the solo with various modes and chord types: E^bMAJ⁷, A^{MIN}7(b5) Loerian (ii), D⁷ Mixolydian, G^{MIN}7 C Lydian (w/b3), and B^bMAJ⁷ Ionian. The score also includes a trill (tr) and a grace note (b3) in the second staff.

Figure 1.2: “Autumn Leaves” Bill Evans’ Solo mm. 1-10, (Trans. Corey Kendrick) [begins at 2:00].²³

earlier improvisation ideas. He shows a traditional, modal jazz approach by beginning his solo with scale choices such as Dorian or Locrian mode over the minor 7ths(b5), Lydian

20. Shadwick, *Bill Evans*, 184-186.

21. Bill Evans Trio, *Portrait in Jazz*, Riverside Records 2008, compact disc.

22. Shadwick, *Bill Evans*, 85-88.

23. Corey Kendrick, “Bill Evans- Autumn Leaves Solo Transcription,” *CKendrick Music*. Detroit, MI: Wordpress Co., 2012, Ckendrickmusic.wordpress.com/2012/03/04/.

or Mixolydian over the dominant 7ths, and Ionian over the major 7ths. The peculiarity of his beginning phrases comes from his use of extension tones such as the b5 in m. 7 and the b3 in m. 10. Mm. 2-6 and mm. 8-11 also exemplify his phrasing techniques such as arpeggiation, leaps in thirds and fourths, as well as eighth-note runs.

The image shows a musical score for the solo in 'Autumn Leaves' by Bill Evans, measures 11-18. It is written in treble clef with a key signature of two flats (Bb and Eb). The score is divided into two systems. The first system covers measures 11-14. Measure 11 starts with a Cmin7 chord and a (ii) fingering. Measure 12 has an F7 chord with a V fingering and a PT (passing tone) circled. Measure 13 has a Bbmaj7 chord with a I) fingering and is labeled 'Bb Ionian'. Measure 14 has an Ebmaj7 chord and is labeled 'Ionian'. The second system covers measures 15-18. Measure 15 has an Amin7(b5) chord with a (ii) fingering and is labeled 'Dorian'. Measure 16 has a D7 chord with a V fingering and is labeled 'Mixolydian'. Measure 17 has a Gmin7 chord with a I) fingering and is labeled 'Dorian (add #7)'. Measure 18 continues the Gmin7 chord. The score includes various phrasing techniques such as eighth-note runs, triplets, and chromatic passing tones.

Figure 1.3: “Autumn Leaves” Bill Evans Solo mm. 11-18, (Trans. Corey Kendrick) [begins at 2:12].²⁴

However, in Figure 1.3, as the progression comes back around at m.11, Evans’ initial ideas in mm. 1-10 begin to take new shape. In mm. 11-18 Evans begins introducing sixteenth-note lines as well as more variation in his rhythmic phrasing. Additionally the solo utilizes chromatic passing tones to link together his eighth- or sixteenth-note lines (m.12, 14, 16-17). In Figure 1.4 (mm. 19-22) he begins by using an unusual mode choice over the written harmonic progression Amin7(b5)-D7-Gmin7 (Figure 1.1). Rather than switching through modes in a chord-scale relation, Evans utilizes A Dorian throughout the entire four-bar progression. In general, Dorian is commonly used to harmonize minor chords, especially minor 7ths.²⁵ His continuation of

24. Corey Kendrick, *Bill Evans*.

25. Jamey Aebersold, *Volume 1: How to Play Jazz and Improvise* (New Albany, IN: Aebersold Jazz Inc., 1967), 17.

the A Dorian scale is logical since there are enough common tones linking the chords to form a cohesive melody. To elaborate, the F#, A, and C notes played in the improvised line are all tones in the A Dorian scale. The construction of a D7 chord shares the F#, A, and C tones which are included in the A Dorian scale. However, in m. 20 and mm. 21-22, he sustains a Db note (b4 of A Dorian) for longer than a single beat, clashing with both the D7 and Gmin7 chords. Emphasizing non-chord tones (NCTs) like the Db in m. 20-24 to purposefully clash with the written harmony, is a known characteristic of Evans' style.²⁶

Figure 1.4: “Autumn Leaves” Bill Evans Solo mm. 19-26, (Trans. Corey Kendrick) [begins at 2:22].²⁷

Although clashing tones in harmony were frequent in later forms of jazz (mid 1960's and beyond), it was unusual for a NCT to be extended over four measures of changing harmony.²⁸ The use of NCTs, extension chords, modal playing, chord arpeggiation, and connecting chromatic passing tones were techniques that Evans brought to his 1959 “Autumn Leaves” solo.

26. Shadwick, *Bill Evans*, 9.

27. Corey Kendrick, *Bill Evans*.

28. Patricia Julien, “The Function of Non-Functional Harmony,” *International Jazz Educators Journal* 1, no. 1 (Spring 2001): 6.

Yohan Kim

The rise of virtual media has created platforms for independent, unknown musicians to gain recognition. Yohan Kim is a piano virtuoso from Seoul South Korea. Born in 2002, he began taking formal lessons at the age of three. By the age of ten, he was being filmed and publicized online. His cover of Michael Jackson’s “BAD” went viral on YouTube, bringing him international acknowledgment. Kim’s performance of “Autumn Leaves” is from a private, in-studio video shot in 2019 when he was seventeen.²⁹ Although Kim is young, he is a strong, respected performer. Many have claimed his playing contains traits comparable to many great jazz pianists before him. Kim departs from Evans' improvisatory approach in regards to chord choice, mode/scale use, and rhythmic phrasing in lines.

The image shows a piano transcription of the 'Autumn Leaves' solo by Yohan Kim, measures 43-50. The score is written in G minor (one flat) and features a key signature change to C major (no sharps or flats) at measure 46, indicated by a circled 'C' and an arrow labeled '(1:11)'. The score is annotated with various modes and scales: Dorian (Gm7), Mixolydian (Cm7, F7, A7, D7), and Ionian (Bbmaj7, Ebmaj7). Roman numerals (ii, V, I, II7, V) are used to denote chord functions. The score includes a time signature change to 3/4 at measure 45 and a key signature change to C major at measure 46. The score is annotated with Roman numerals (ii, V, I, II7, V) and a circled 'C' indicating a key signature change.

Figure 1.5: “Autumn Leaves” Yohan Kim Solo mm. 43-50, (Trans. Cornelius Tsen) [begins at 1:11].³⁰

29. Yohan Kim, “About,” Yohan Kim Music, www.YohanKimmusic-global.com (accessed September 2019), <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b-cmd2-Q6w0>.

30. Cornelius Tsen, “Autumn Leaves (New) Piano Transcription- Yohan Kim,” published July 18, 2019, video, 4:06, www.youtube.com/watch?v=rWvoRrIUL68.

Figure 1.5 shows the beginning of Kim’s solo, which features typical be-bop scalar movement such as leaps in 5ths or 7ths. In addition, he uses chromatic passing tones in a different soloing idea played in mm. 45-46, 51-54, and 56-57. In Figure 1.6, Kim varies his first soloing idea played in mm. 45-46 at mm. 53-54 by using almost the same bass-line movement as well as arpeggiated eighth note phrasing over the F7. It is interesting that he decides to elaborate on a prior motive so close to the beginning of his solo. However, Kim’s use of arpeggiation and be-bop style jumps is a classic jazz technique and is commonly used over a functional ii-V-I progression.³¹

Figure 1.6: “Autumn Leaves” Yohan Kim’s Solo mm. 51-58, (Trans. Cornelius Tsen) [begins at 1:18].³²

In Figure 1.7, Kim’s use of scale takes a different form. Rather than using Dorian or Aeolian mode over Cmin7, he plays a line leading up from m. 60 carried through m. 61 that hints at D Phrygian dominant harmonization. Since D Phrygian dominant is the

31. Mark Levine, *The Jazz Piano Book* (Petaluma, CA: Sher Music Co., 1989), 15.

32. Cornelius Tsen, video, 1:18.

Phrygian scale based on the fifth mode of G melodic minor, the lines played by Kim in m. 59-61 over Gmin7 work harmonically. Note that in m. 62 the F# (which is the b9) is in the lower voice of the F13(b9) chord substitution for F7.

Figure 1.7: “Autumn Leaves” Yohan Kim’s Solo mm. 59-66, (Trans. Cornelius Tsen) [begins at 1:27].³³

The inclusion of F# and Bb in his phrases provide a smooth transition as the proceeding measures involve chords rooted on these tones. Beyond this quick chord substitution for F7, mm. 63-64 contain arpeggiations of the Bbmaj7 and Ebmaj7 chords. However, in mm. 65-66, Kim uses a large chromatic ascent from Db (and consequent descent) in the melody. During this chromatic movement, Kim plays the root and 7th of the A7 chord (m. 65) as well as a D7 chord (m. 66). This is peculiar, as the Db major scale as well as the chromatic steps in his ascent do not harmonize A7 or D7. Although

33. Cornelius Tsen, video, 1:27.

chord substitution is not always necessary, this solo demonstrates a modern, practical use of this technique as a means to bring unexpectedness and color.³⁴ As a whole, Kim's improvisation provides insight to newer techniques implemented in contemporary jazz. His choice of arpeggiation, chromatic passing tones, connecting phrases, and substitute harmony mirror some of the traditional ideas in improvisation.

Conclusion

Comparing artists such as Bill Evans and Yohan Kim demonstrates that similar tools can shape contrasting solos. Both Evans and Kim have structured their solos to showcase various melodic ideas, which are many times fused with chord-scale relationships. However, Evan's solo suggests a more traditional use of modes on a chord-scale basis. Whereas Kim used the same mode/scale over multiple chords, which involved non-functional, dense harmony, tone clusters, and chromaticism, Evans used modal harmony over each chord change as well as arpeggiation to outline a chord's core harmony. Conclusively, these two improvisations have differing characteristics stemming from the use of similar tools such as arpeggiation, chromatic passing tones connecting phrases, and substitute harmony in their improvisations. However, through analysis of each individual's soloing approaches, it becomes clear which techniques are favored and implemented by which artist. The result is two brilliant, but deviating approaches to improvisation over Kosma's classic "Autumn Leaves."

34. Mark Levine, *The Jazz Piano Book*, (Petaluma, CA: Sher Music Co., 1989), 15.

CHAPTER 3: “SOMEDAY MY PRINCE WILL COME”

The 1930's were a time of significant change for jazz music. Swing jazz had become a dominant form in American culture resulting in the new style of Big Band music. Big Band called for bandleaders to direct a large ensemble, which consequently produced some of the jazz greats such as Count Basie, Louis Armstrong, Duke Ellington, Benny Goodman, and many more.³⁵ Big Bands sometimes backed jazz vocalists, which added fullness and new texture to vocal jazz music. This exciting new texture was being reproduced live in clubs, played on radio, and featured in motion pictures. With cinema quickly increasing in popularity, film writers began collaborating with composers to devise scores that would compliment their stories. Consequently, jazz composers also began creating renditions of popular film scores that later became jazz standards.³⁶

In 1937, the Walt Disney Corporation, acclaimed for their creation of animated films, released one of their most iconic animated movies of all time: *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*. The music written for this film includes the song “Someday My Prince Will Come.” It was written in 1937 by lyricist Larry Morey and composer Frank

35. Ted Goia, *The Jazz Standards: A Guide to the Repertoire* (New York, NY: Oxford Press, 2012), 381.

36. John Rockwell, *When The Soundtrack Makes The Film* (New York, NY: The New York Times, 1978).

Churchill, and sung by Adriana Caselotti.³⁷ The chord progression that underpins the song, along with its atypical melody at that time, are the significant factors that brought Churchill's tune into the spotlight in the jazz community. In fact, years following the movie's success, many popular jazz artists began recording their own takes on the tune.³⁸ Therefore, this chapter will use two jazz renditions of Churchill's classic song in comparing two different transcribed improvisations varying in use of chord-scale theory, and rhythmic and harmonic phrasing: one by Paul Desmond and the other by Miles Davis.

Harmony

This song's use of applied chords force improvisers to think outside of common melodic parameters. Figure 2.1 contains the chart of "Someday My Prince Will Come." This thirty two-measure song encompasses a single tonic key of Bb major. This piece contains an interesting chord progression accompanying the melody. In the 1930's, most popular tunes followed functional harmony with predictable voice leading. In particular, standards were known to primarily entail a series of ii-V-I progressions or similar variants.³⁹ The first two notes of the melody, beginning in m. 1, are F and Bb. Using a \wedge^5 - \wedge^1 movement is a relatively common approach if the primary melody begins on a pick-

37. Daniel Alef, *Walt Disney: The Man Behind The Mouse* (New York, NY: Titans of Fortune Publishing, 2009), 5.

38. Lilian Pizzichini, "The Life Of A Song: Someday My Prince Will Come," *The Financial Times*, no. 1 (July 2016).

39. Michael McClimon, "Transformations in Tonal Jazz: ii-V Space," *Music Theory Online* 23, no. 1 (March 2017). mtosmt.org/issues/mt0.17.23.1/mt0.17.23.1.mcclimon.html.

up, which this does not. Interestingly, the initial tone, Bb (^1) in m. 2, is harmonized with a secondary dominant instead of the expected tonic.

(MED. JAZZ) 388. **SOMEDAY MY PRINCE WILL COME** - CHURCHILL

(WALTZ)

The image shows a musical score for the song "Someday My Prince Will Come" by Frank Churchill. It consists of two systems of music, each with a vocal line and a piano accompaniment line. The key signature is B-flat major (Bb) and the time signature is 2/4. The score includes various chord progressions and annotations. A red double-headed arrow points to two chords, D7 and Db7, with the text "Same chord different harmonic spelling". The score is annotated with Roman numerals and specific chord names like Bb, I, V7/vi, IV, V7/ii, ii, V7/V, V7, iii, V5/iii (#ii), ii, V7, ii/IV, V7/IV, IV, vii9V, ii, ii(add4), V7, and I. The score ends with a cadence and the text "Miles Davis - 'Somewhere, H.P. ...'".

Figure 2.1: Form and Harmony of “Someday My Prince Will Come” (Frank Churchill).⁴⁰

The following overview of the song’s harmonic qualities will encompass chromatic chordal movement, unexpected chord progression (in jazz), and the

40. Hal Leonard, *The Real Book*, 6th Ed. (Milwaukee, WI: Hal Leonard Co., 2007), 388.

significance of its phrasing using cadence recognition. In the first ending, the harmony moves chromatically from the iii chord to the ii chord. This consists of Dmin7-C#dim-Cmin7 which is followed by a ii-V (Cmin7-F7) indicating a coming resolution. However, rather than resolve to I at the end of m. 12, the last four measures repeat. The second time at m. 16, the phrase ends on the F7 (V chord) harmony. At the second ending, this half cadence proceeds to a new phrase. When the second ending occurs at m. 17, the chord progression leads in a quite different direction. The secondary chords used in mm. 17-20 provide an interesting harmonization of the melody before concluding in mm. 21-24. Although the entire piece is analyzed in Bb major, mm. 17-19 could be read as a ii-V-I in Eb major as many solo ideas revolve around the ii-V-I progression. The cad 6/4 (I6/4)-ii-V-I gives resolution to the accompanying harmony and a PAC (perfect authentic cadence) at m. 23 to conclude the piece.

Paul Desmond

Paul Desmond (1924-1977) is an iconic American jazz saxophonist whose unique tone and laid-back soloing style caught worldwide attention in the 1950-60s. After his freshman year at San Francisco State College, Desmond was drafted into the army where he joined the army band. It was during his time in the army when he met Dave Brubeck in 1944. This marked the start of a musical collaboration that put Desmond on the

national music map.⁴¹ After leaving the Army, Desmond joined the Dave Brubeck Quartet that went on to win multiple Grammys and produce one of the best-selling jazz records entitled *Time Out* in 1959. This record included the legendary jazz standards “Blue Rondo A La Turk” and “Take Five,” both written by Dave Brubeck. Consequently, Paul Desmond’s solos acquired mass popularity.⁴² Another popular record featuring Brubeck and Desmond was the *Dave Digs Disney* album. Released in 1957, this studio record includes “Someday My Prince Will Come.” Even after his death in 1977, Desmond’s smooth tone and melodic improvisation style continue to be studied. The solo that Desmond creates on this record has laid down a standard of improvisatory technique that has been studied and emulated many times over.⁴³ Therefore the following analysis illuminates Desmond’s use of traditional jazz techniques to exemplify that style.

Improvisation methods used with single-line instruments to imply harmonies include arpeggiation, held chord tones, scales that bridge chord tones, and rhythmically varying phrases per the performer’s discretion.⁴⁴ Paul Desmond’s solo in “Someday My Prince Will Come” exemplifies these traditional techniques. In Figure 2.2 Desmond begins his solo with a single pedal tone spanning the first two measures (mm. 33-34). This F# is a common tone between the Dmaj7 and F#7 chords that began the harmony.

41. Doug Ramsey, *Take Five: The Public and Private Lives of Paul Desmond* (Seattle, WA: Parkside Publications Inc., 2005).

42. Thomas Owens, *Bebop: The Music and Its Players* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1995), 68.

43. Gene Lees, *Cats of any Color: Jazz Black and White* (Cambridge, MA: De Capo Press, 2001), 55-57.

44. Craig Fraedrich, *Practical Jazz Theory for Improvisation: Chords and Scales* (Winchester, VA: National Jazz Workshop Press, 2017).

Figure 2.2: “Someday My Prince Will Come” Paul Desmond Solo mm. 33-40, (Trans. Colin Campbell), *Dave Digs Disney* [begins at 1:07].⁴⁵

Desmond’s incorporation of this classic Dixieland technique is a recurring trait of his legendary sound.⁴⁶ His use of harmony is highlighted in his choice of scale in mm. 35-40. For example, although there is a cycle between four chords (B7, Em7, A7, F#7), Desmond chooses to use the E Dorian scale over the entire seven-bar phrase. Since Dorian is a minor scale typically used over minor 7th chords, the choice to use E Dorian is sensible as all four of those chords are related to E minor. Mm. 36-37 contains a walk up of the E Dorian scale with an end on an E natural note on the third beat of m. 37. Consequently, Desmond answers his first ascending phrase with a descending E Dorian scalar movement in mm. 38-40. The choice to end on the tonic note of a chord harmony is an idea of traditional, functional harmony as it gives the assumed sense of conclusion

45. Colin Campbell, “Someday My Prince Will Come p Deb,” Denton, TX: Colin Campbell Music, 2014. www.scribd.com/document/221169316.

46. DeVaux, *Jazz*, 90-96. Earlier influences such as Louis Armstrong were known for holding common tone pitches for multiple measures at a time.

and context to a phrase's end.⁴⁷ Noticeably, Desmond implements this idea in various sections of his solo, specifically in mm. 34, 37, 39, and 42-43, 46 (Figure 2.3), which all end on the root of that measure's chord.

(1:13) F#m7 E Dorian F#m7 E Phrygian Em7 Phrygian A7 E Phrygian

B Dim. Arpeggio

F#m7 E Dorian F#m7 E Phrygian Em7 First and only rest longer than 2 beats A7 Chromatic walk up from F nat. to A nat in m. 49

Figure 2.3: “Someday My Prince Will Come” Paul Desmond Solo mm. 41-48, (Trans. Colin Campbell), *Dave Digs Disney* [begins at 1:13].⁴⁸

The rhythm is repetitive, consisting of two pairs of eighth notes in mm. 36, 38, and 40-41. All of these omit beat one except for m. 41, which omits beat three. The creation of space allows for a listener's rest between lines. Interestingly, Desmond only uses arpeggiation twice in the first half of his solo (as shown in Figure 2.3): both m. 42 and m. 46 feature a B diminished arpeggio.

47. Richard A. Helzer, Cultivating the Art of Jazz Composition, *Jazz Education Journals* 36, no. 6 (May 2004): 12-13.

48. Colin Campbell, *Someday My Prince*.

(1:22) Dm7 Ionian F#7 D Ionian Gm7 Ionian B7 Ionian

49 Bmin Arpeggio

53 Em7 Dorian B7 Ionian Em7 Dorian A7 E Dorian PT

Figure 2.4: “Someday My Prince Will Come” Paul Desmond Solo mm. 49-61, (Trans. Colin Campbell), *Dave Digs Disney* [begins at 1:22].⁴⁹

However, beginning in m. 48, Desmond’s phrasing (although still harmonically cohesive) begins to deviate rhythmically. As shown in Figure 2.4, mm. 49-52 resemble mm. 33-36 in use of modal harmony. Again, he elongates the F# tone, which works well as a starting tone (3rd) of the Dmaj7 harmony. Just as the same modal scale of E Dorian was used throughout mm. 36-41, D Ionian mode is introduced in mm. 49-52. Eighth notes make up the majority of his rhythmic phrasing. As illustrated in mm. 49-54, and again in mm. 57-60, eighth rests segment many of his phrases, bringing a more abrupt and spontaneous sound. In addition to rhythmic variation, the solo demonstrates modal and scalar approaches. For instance, rather than playing E Dorian over the B7 harmony, B Ionian replaces that idea which consequently adds a pronounced D# (chord tone) to the line.

49. Colin Campbell, *Someday My Prince*.

Figure 2.5: “Someday My Prince Will Come” Paul Desmond Solo mm. 57-64, (Trans. Colin Campbell), *Dave Digs Disney* [begins at 1:28].⁵⁰

In Figure 2.5, the most noticeable change in scale use is his implementation of D Locrian throughout mm. 61-64. In general, mm. 60-64 are the only times Desmond applies a chromatic note outside the presumed scale. In this case, Ab and F natural stand out in this long-winded eighth-note phrase. In this solo, Desmond implements traditional ideas in improvisation such as highlighting chord tones, arpeggiation, and functional modal harmony. Since his soloing techniques were not overly complex, he proved that creating a captivating and cohesive jazz sound could be done through musical simplicity.

Miles Davis

Miles Davis is considered to be one of the most prolific, innovative jazz figures in music history. Born in 1926 and passing away in 1991, Davis was an American trumpeter whose passion for music started early. At the young age of nine Davis began taking private lessons, which continued throughout his years in high school until finally

50. Colin Campbell, *Someday My Prince*.

attending Julliard in 1944. However, after just three semesters Davis dropped out and joined the Charlie Parker Sextet; this was the kick-start of his tremendous career.⁵¹ Throughout the duration of his career Davis would win over eight Grammys, have a filmed created about his life, be inducted into the jazz and Rock N' Roll Hall of Fame, and write the best selling jazz album of all time: *Kind of Blue*. The *Kind of Blue* album quickly established Davis as a role model in fusion and modal jazz, as the solos he produced were like nothing anyone had heard at the time.⁵²

Davis' 1978 album entitled *Someday My Prince Will Come*, named after Churchill's 1937 hit, quickly became a staple recording in mid-twentieth-century music.⁵³ His studio-published version of the tune in 1978 is well known, appreciated, and displays much more of his progressive soloing techniques similar to modern improvisation approaches.⁵⁴ Therefore Davis' 1978 solo over Churchill's classic, incorporates NCT placement, large spaces for rest, and a different spin on harmony through modal scalar use.

Jazz artists in the 1960's and 1970's were not emphasizing their ability to play as many notes necessarily as much as they were trying to use rests and motivic development to introduce new sounds and ideas to their solos.⁵⁵ Solos were shifting from a focus on

51. Ian Carr, *Miles Davis: The Definitive Biography*, (New York, NY: Thunder's Mouth Press, 1998), 107.

52. Scott DeVeaux, *Jazz*, 371-373.

53. Ted Goia, *The Jazz Standards*, 381.

54. Miles Davis, *Someday My Prince Will Come*, Columbia Records 1978, compact disc.

55. Scott DeVeaux, *Jazz*, 399.

traditional counterpoint and expected melodies to peculiar rhythmic phrasing and unexpected harmony. In this discipline, pioneers like Miles Davis were leading the way.⁵⁶

In Figure 2.6, the beginning few phrases set the tone for Davis' solo. Since he was known for his spacious, modal improvisation methods, rests spanning more than two beats were not an unusual occurrence.⁵⁷ After a C-major arpeggio, the phrase is continued two and a half beats later. The phrase then proceeds to another measure where two out of three beats in the bar are rests. This line then concludes in m. 4 where nothing is played at all. Especially apparent in Davis' style is his creation of contrast. The dramatization and surprise that he could produce throughout his solos was one of the key reasons he became a pioneer in jazz.⁵⁸ As shown in mm. 1-4 of Figure 2.6, Davis uses Ionian mode over the Cmaj7, E7(#5), and Fmaj7.

Figure 2.6: “Someday My Prince Will Come” Miles Davis Solo mm. 1-8, (Trans. C. Margarit), *Someday My Prince Will Come* [begins at 1:16].⁵⁹

56. Hans Weisethaunet, “Is There Such a Thing as the Blue Note?” *Popular Music* 20, no. 1 (January 2001): 111.

57. DeVeaux, *Jazz*, 399.

58. Ashley Kahn, *Miles Davis: The Complete Illustrated History* (Beverly, MA: Voyager Press, 2012), 5.

59. Carles Margarit, “Someday My Prince Will Come. Miles Davis’ (Bb) Solo,” published October 27, 2014, video, 2:16, youtube.com/watch?v=S3Jt6rBzmC0.

In mm. 5-8 there is a contrast between his beginning lines in mm. 1-4. Although his use of D Dorian is not out of the ordinary, his use of rhythm in mm. 5-8 is almost opposite of mm. 1-4. His eighth note runs in mm. 5-6 ending in a triplet line, primarily outline the chord harmony taking place. However, after m. 7, Davis' choice to continue using typical harmony comes to a halt. A common trait of modern jazz improvisers like Miles was the act of pivoting on or elongating non-chord tones (NCT).⁶⁰ Measure 8 is his first example of a held NCT as he plays an E natural half note over a G7 chord, giving an unexpected sound.

Figure 2.7: “Someday My Prince Will Come” Miles Davis Solo mm. 9-16, (Trans. C. Margarit), *Someday My Prince Will Come* [begins at 1:26].⁶¹

A clash appears again in m. 12 (Figure 2.7) where he holds an A over a G7 chord. The use of a 9th is natural in jazz music. Using a tone cluster creates tension that causes a more effective emotional response or release to the listener when that tension finally

60. Ian Carr, *Miles Davis: The Definitive Biography*, (New York, NY: Thunder’s Mouth Press, 1998).

61. Carles Margarit, video, 1:26.

resolves.⁶² Specifically, the pitch does not resolve by step, but the dissonant harmony resolves in the next chord. In Figure 2.8, the A section comes back around beginning in mm. 17-20. However, this time instead of using rests, Davis fills the space with long tones. These long tones in mm. 17-20 are chord tones.

Figure 2.8: “Someday My Prince Will Come” Miles Davis Solo mm. 17-24, (Trans. C. Margarit), *Someday My Prince Will Come* [begins at 1:35].⁶³

An exception appears in m. 21 where there is a D# half note on the first beat of the bar which clashes with the Dmin7 chord. Nevertheless, Miles returns to a functional D Dorian line in m. 22 and proceeds to another long (three-and-a-half beat) rest beginning on the second beat of m. 23. In a more traditional rather than modern improvisatory manner, Davis constructs a lengthy (four-measure) line in Figure 2.9 mm. 25-28. Within the line, he produces an eighth-note run consisting of arpeggiated leaps over Gmin7 (m. 25) followed by a pedal tone on the 5th of the C7 chord (m. 26) and finally a C major arpeggio ending on the 5th (C) of the Fmaj7. Since the 3rd and 7th chord tones are commonly elongated in jazz, his emphasis on the 5th of the chord is a nice

62. Jamey Aebersold, *Volume 1: How to Play Jazz and Improvise* (New Albany, IN: Aebersold Jazz Inc., 1967).

63. Carles Margarit, video, 1:35.

variant. Further this concluding C note, highlighting the dominant harmony of Fmaj, is expanded into the beginning of m. 28. This is yet again another clashing tone in the bar's F#7 harmony. In using these ideas, Davis shows that traditional techniques such as arpeggiation and held tones (which Desmond used) are not obsolete in newer jazz styles. Rather, an embellishment and transformation of these ideas came into play.

Figure 2.9: “Someday My Prince Will Come” Miles Davis Solo mm. 25-32, (Trans. C. Margarit), *Someday My Prince Will Come* [begins at 1:43].⁶⁴

Despite the build up of tension in m. 28, the final four measures of the form (mm. 29-32) create a slow, stable, primarily quarter-note melody that outlines the chord harmony before the final E natural in m. 32. The choice to end on a NCT (the added 6th) in the final measure of this example (m. 32), is another unique characteristic of Davis’ playing. This dissonance is a way of setting a tone of incompleteness and in traditional jazz improvisation would have been an unexpected end to a solo.

Miles Davis’ innovations to the jazz world have become historically preserved through countless recordings and transcriptions of his works. In this solo, Davis implements rhythmic space and highlights NCTs while still using traditional arpeggiation

64. Carles Margarit, video, 1:43.

and modal harmony in sections. Although some of his ideas are affiliated with classic jazz, Davis's solo over "Someday My Prince Will Come" blends traditional and modern improvisation techniques into one cohesive sound.

Conclusion

These solos by Paul Desmond and Miles Davis use similar techniques such as arpeggiation, highlighting chord tones, and modal chord-scale relations. However, their solos differ primarily in rhythmic phrasing and overall choice of note placement in respect to chordal harmony. Desmond followed a much more traditional "be-bop" sound with his fluent use of eighth notes and occasional chromatic runs. Davis often uses longer notes and rests for emphasis. His elongation of NCTs as well as large spaces in phrasing, allowed for a motivic and emotional build-up. These types of "build ups," melodic lines, tone clusters, and clashing harmonic statements later became a popular route in modern improvisation.⁶⁵ Therefore, these two solos, although similar in spots, differ in use of rhythm, harmony, and phrasing.

65. Scott DeVeaux, *Jazz* (New York, NY: W.W. Norton & Co. Inc., 2009), 514-516.

CHAPTER 4: “CANTALOUPE ISLAND”

The 1960s-70s involved cultural and social change in the United States. Consequently, the shape of twentieth-century music, such as jazz, adapted to these changes. Modal jazz and be-bop of the 1950s-60s began to transform as performers were taking jazz in a freer direction.⁶⁶ The idea of a set meter and consistent, repetitive rhythm throughout an entire piece was being put aside. Even certain concepts such as chord-scale theory in modal playing were getting dismissed as non-functional harmony surfaced in soloing. The significance of these changes is the freedoms given to players in composition and performance. This resulted in the fusing of multiple outside genres such as Latin, Afro-Cuban and soul music into jazz.⁶⁷ Rhythmic variation is the main component in differentiating these specific sub-genres in jazz. Latin and Afro-Cuban pulse inspired jazz musicians to create interesting subdivisions or metric placement of melody in phrasing during improvisation.⁶⁸ This “Fusion Jazz” style brought certain innovators to the forefront of the genre such as Herbie Hancock and Cory Henry. The following analyses highlight differing progressive approaches to jazz improvisation.

66. Joachim Berendt, *The Jazz Book*, (Chicago, IL: Chicago Review Press, 1981), 21.

67. Robert Palmer, “Jazz Festival- A Study of Folk Jazz Fusion,” *The NY Times* (New York, NY: June 1982).

68. Larry Bornbaum, *Salsiology: Afro-Cuban Music and the Evolution of Salsa in NYC*, (New York, NY: Greenwood Press, 1992), 297-298.

Herbie Hancock

Herbie Jeffrey Hancock (born 1940) is an influential American jazz pianist whose combination of modal and bebop styles with Afro-Cuban, Latin, and Soul music redefined jazz rhythm. Hancock is often considered one of the main influences of the post-bop sound.⁶⁹ Hancock studied with Chris Anderson and soon after began working with Donald Byrd and Coleman Hawkins, which quickly earned him a reputation.⁷⁰ This led to his first solo album through Blue Note Records in 1962 entitled *Takin' Off*. The track "Watermelon Man" on this album became a hit, catching the eye of Miles Davis who was forming a new band. Hancock's entrance to Miles' band in 1963 would put him on the road to becoming one of the greats.⁷¹ Like many others, after leaving Miles' band in 1968, Hancock went on to have a tremendous career in music. He released hit singles that became jazz standards such as "Watermelon Man," "Dolphin Dance," "Cantaloupe Island," "Chameleon," and many more. Some of his accolades include over thirteen Grammy awards, BMI Film Music awards, NEA Jazz Masters Award, and an induction into the Jazz Music Hall of Fame.⁷² Hancock's use of diverse jazz rhythm, modal and diatonic harmony, and recurring motives in phrasing, has continued to inspire improvisers.

69. Bill Dobbins, Barry Kernfeld, "Herbie Hancock," (United Kingdom: Oxford University Press, 2001), <https://doi.org/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.41292>.

70. Dobbins, Kernfeld, *Herbie Hancock*, 2001.

71. John Fordham, "50 Great Moments in Jazz: How Miles Davis' Second Quintet Changed Jazz," *The Guardian Journal* (October 2010), 1-2.

72. Dan Oullette, "Hancock Goes Beyond Jazz," *Billboard Magazine* 43, no. 27 (Spring 2005), 43.

Harmony

In 1964, Herbie Hancock released his fourth album through Blue Note Records entitled *Empyrean Isles*. Out of the four originally-released tracks, “Cantaloupe Island” achieved additional recognition, eventually making the jazz billboards and being entered into the *Real Book*.⁷³ Hancock is known for his laid-back Latin jazz rhythm in conjunction with major and minor (blues) pentatonic harmony. What makes this piece interesting is its use of unusual voice leading, and minimal harmonic progressions, in conjunction with a somewhat static diatonic melody.

Perhaps one of the most interesting traits of “Cantaloupe Island” is its harmonic simplicity consisting of just three chords. A compositional trend of the emerging 1950s-60s modal jazz era was to compose playable melodies that were diatonic or modal and still relatively independent of simplistic accompaniment chord progressions.⁷⁴ However, the few notes and chords used in this piece are unorthodox and therefore remarkable.

73. Richard Cook, Morton Brian, *The Penguin Guide to Jazz Recordings*, 9th ed. (London, United Kingdom: Penguin Books, 1992), 643. *[Also references] Hal Leonard, *The Real Jazz Book* (Milwaukee, WI: Hal Leonard Co., 1998), 69.

74. Devaux, *Jazz*, 371.

Figure 3.1 displays the form and harmony of “Cantaloupe Island” according to *The Real Jazz Book*, whose form is the normative AABA, (A, A1, B, A2 in respect to motive), totaling thirty-two measures after taking the repeat at the end of the sixteen-bar written form.⁷⁵ In the key of F minor, the melody barely deviates in rhythm or motive throughout the entire piece. In Figure 3.1 mm. 1-4, the melody employs the F minor pentatonic scale. Interestingly, as the chord harmony changes to Db7 in mm. 5-8, rather than compose a line in Db Mixolydian, the melody in mm. 5-6 is identical to mm. 1-2. Surprisingly, the melody adds a D and C natural during the B section in mm. 9-12, implying a D Dorian line to match the Dm11 harmony. Finally the tune comes back around to its home key and harmony of F minor in mm. 13-16.

CANTALOPE ISLAND

Copyright © 1964 (Renewed) by Hancock Music Co. By HERBIE HANCOCK

Moderate Rock

Figure 3.1: Form and Harmony of “Cantaloupe Island” (Herbie Hancock).⁷⁶

75. Hal Leonard, *The Real Jazz Book* (Milwaukee, WI: Hal Leonard Co., 1998), 69

76. Leonard, *Real Jazz Book*, 69.

Even as a relatively short, straightforward chart with a manageable melody, the chord structure is peculiar. In Blues and Jazz music a I-IV-V or i-iv-V-I progression is quite common. However, in this case it is a i-bVI-vi-i harmony implying modal mixture. An advantage to reading this passage with mixture implications is that the soloist is set up for modal scale implementation. Further, using scales that encompass tones outside of the chord harmony, in passing, not only sound interesting but leave open interpretation of what key(s) are being implied. What is unique about the tune is the lack of development in the melody, in this case, the same line harmonized by different chords, thus putting an emphasis on reharmonization rather than the development of melody. This is demonstrated in mm. 1-2 and 5-6 as well as the last two melodies (mm. 8-9 and mm. 10-11), which are also rhythmically and melodically the same.

The laid-back Latin jazz rhythm and diatonic harmony that “Cantaloupe Island” encompasses are what make it remarkable. Further, the solo that Hancock produced on the 1964 recording displays his ability to use modal mixture, unexpected motives, and rhythmic interplay. Therefore, the following analysis will discuss melodic and rhythmic counterpoint, chord scale relations, and phrasing by focusing on Hancock’s specific solo from the album *Empyrean Isles*.

Hancock's Solo

During the 1960-70s, traditional techniques became fused with new approaches to soloing that incorporated anticipated rhythms, non-functional harmonies, and mixed meters. Herbie Hancock is considered a jazz innovator and founder of 'post-bop' style, as well as the composer of "Cantaloupe Island." Therefore, the following analysis of Hancock's solo over the song will display off-beat rhythms in comping, modal and diatonic scale interplay, and other techniques showing transitions in traditional jazz.

In traditional jazz improvisation, solo pianists typically utilize their left hand by providing a consistent, flowing bass-line. However, though this solo is played with an ensemble, this improvisation contains a relatively consistent left hand bass support, making it additionally interesting. In Figure 3.2, Hancock's left hand bass line provides a spacious, flowing accompaniment. This includes a harmony encompassing scale degrees 1, 5, and 7, off-beat, anticipated rhythm in mm. 13-15 (indicative of Latin Jazz), and a minimal number of notes. This is significant as harmonic and rhythmic space provides freedom and a means to highlight the main solo melody. Measures 13-20 are based on a single F minor seventh chord, thus restricting the scalar options for functional harmony. In this case, Hancock comps in mm. 13-15 over an F Dorian scale leading to an improvised melody beginning in the second half of m. 16. The solo begins with an F minor pentatonic triplet on the fourth beat of m. 16. In m. 17 he continues the use of F minor pentatonic and once again begins his phrase on the offbeat.

Figure 3.2: “Cantaloupe Island” Herbie Hancock Solo mm. 13-20, (Trans. MJ Jazz Piano Inc.) *Empyrean Isles* [begins at 3:22].⁷⁷

Harmonic space and anticipated rhythm during improvisation allows a solo the option of contrasting textures and a build up of tension. Thus the following phrase’s release of tension brings a sense of satisfaction or resolution to the listener.⁷⁸ The solo’s response to this tension created in m. 17-18 is a melodic and rhythmic change in mm. 19-20. This consists primarily of a sixteenth-note run using Eb harmonic major scale in the first three beats of m. 19, followed by the F Dorian scale on the fourth beat of m. 19 and first three beats of m. 20.

77. MJ Jazz, “Herbie Hancock- Cantaloupe Island (Piano solo transcription),” published May 30, 2018, video, 1:50, [youtube.com/watch?v=xh1O7t3Tnk4](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xh1O7t3Tnk4).

78. Devaux, *Jazz*, 113.

In Figure 3.3 mm.21-23 the solo's left-hand melody persists with an ostinato bass line, however, now the harmony changes to a Db7 chord. Noticeably, the solo decreases in melodic complexity and reverts to a comping line (mm. 21-23) before beginning another pronounced solo melody. Measures 21-24 are essentially the same motive as the prior idea in mm. 13-16. This is remarkable, as Hancock was known for his sequential, motivic playing style.⁷⁹ However, although mm. 21-24 contain the same $\hat{1}-\hat{5}-\hat{7}-\hat{1}$ bass line and almost identical right-hand comping phrase, rather than use Dorian over a minor seventh, the solo now uses Db Mixolydian over the Db7 chord.

The image shows a musical score for the piano accompaniment of "Cantaloupe Island" by Herbie Hancock. It consists of two systems of music. The first system, starting at measure 21, is marked with a 3:37 time signature. It features a steady bass line in the left hand and a right-hand comping line. Annotations above the staff indicate the key signature (Db7), the mode (Db Mixolydian), and the scale (D Dorian). A circled section in measure 24 highlights a specific melodic phrase. The second system, starting at measure 25, continues the piano accompaniment with a Dm7 chord and a D Dorian scale (mm. 25-28) annotation.

Figure 3.3: "Cantaloupe Island" Herbie Hancock Solo mm. 21-28, (Trans. MJ Jazz Piano Inc.) *Empyrean Isles* [begins at 3:37].⁸⁰

Interestingly, Hancock does not solo over the Db7 change; instead he plays the composed comping line seen in mm. 13-16 in the key of Db. In m. 24, the solo again

79. Dobbins, Kernfield, *Herbie*, 6.

80. MJ Jazz, *Cantaloupe Island*.

begins on the off-beat (and of three) similar to m. 16 (Figure 3.2); this time starting with D Dorian. Using D Dorian over the Db7 bass line constructed in mm. 21-24 results in clashing tones (Ab and A natural). This clash continues in m. 24 as an Ab is held in the bass over beats three and four as the A natural in the D Dorian line begins on beat three.

It was common for traditional jazz soloists with polyphonic instruments, such as piano or guitar, to make a point of including chord-melody or chord solos during improvisation.⁸¹ Thus, m. 25 is an example of Hancock implementing traditional chordal improvisation, specifically with homophony. Measures 25-28 stay within the harmonic confines of D Dorian mode (minus the Eb PT in m. 28) while notably, this is the first deviation in bass line since the beginning of the improvisation. Further, the solo concludes this new chord phrase on beat two of m. 28 leading into m. 29 with a broken sixteenth-note line.

As the form comes to a close in mm. 29-32 (Figure 3.4), in usual fashion Hancock returns to his original motive including a fluent $\hat{1}-\hat{5}-\hat{7}-\hat{1}$ bass line in F minor and right-hand comping in F Dorian. So far, the solo has shown this same repeated motive and comping line in mm. 13-16, mm. 21-24, and now in mm. 29-32. The result has been a consistent bass line harmony and rhythm leaving the solo melody open to change as displayed each time around.

81. Devaux, *Jazz*, 25-27.

Figure 3.4: Figure 3.3: “Cantaloupe Island” Herbie Hancock Solo mm. 29-35, (Trans. MJ Jazz Piano Inc.) *Empyrean Isles* [begins at 3:54].⁸²

One of the most interesting portions of this solo excerpt occurs in mm. 33-35. Similar to mm. 17-19 (Figure 3.2), the constant, fluent bass-line continues as the solo has now taken a different shape. In Figure 3.4 mm. 33-35, the use of odd metric emphasis (accentuating rests and off-beats) is prominent. Groupings of lines with three-note clusters on anticipated (off) beats, brings forward a metric feel of 3/4 over 4/4 time (commonly found in traditional be-bop-style improvisation). In addition to traditional rhythmic phrasing, many of the melodic statements in this solo are comprised of two-note (polyphonic) harmonies in the top voices. Although within the F Dorian scale (over Fm7 harmony), the addition of three-against-four and sixteenth-note rhythm, makes this final passage in the excerpt stand out.

⁸². MJ Jazz, *Cantaloupe Island*.

Herbie Hancock is known for his incredible use of motive, modal scale choice, and jazz rhythm. His use of strictly modal scales over basic chordal harmony, with minimal (one or two) modes per chord, is a perfect demonstration of how limited melodic or scalar options can still produce a captivating solo. In addition to harmony, rhythmic choices in the lead and accompaniment lines play a crucial role in creating a cohesive and interesting solo. These aspects of Hancock's playing have made him an innovator in progressing traditional jazz improvisation. This analysis has displayed Hancock's ability to carefully craft and develop an interesting improvisation. Including traits such as jazz rhythm, fluent, repetitive bass lines, and motivic development.

Cory Henry

Contemporary gospel music has evolved in recent years, producing brilliant musicians with a well-rounded playing ability. Fusing jazz, blues, and funk aspects with traditional chorale and hymnal scores has transformed the gospel sound as well as demanded a high caliber of performer. Cory Henry (b. 1987) is an American pianist and organist from Brooklyn, NY that began playing at the age of three. Henry began touring in 2006 with mainstream acts including Kirk Franklin, Israel Houghton, Bruce Springsteen, and many others.⁸³ His biggest break occurred in 2014 with his collaboration with Michael League and Snarky Puppy. The live studio video of Snarky Puppy performing "Linus (We Like it Here)" featured Corey Henry and achieved over ten

83. Steve Leggett, *Corey Henry Biography* (Los Angeles, CA: All Music Press, 2016).

million plays that year, thus changing his career.⁸⁴ The world saw the virtuosity in Henry's playing and fusion of various genres, specifically jazz and gospel.

Since Henry's success with Snarky Puppy, he has released three albums with two reaching the top gospel charts. The heavy jazz influence in Henry's playing has given his sound substantial recognition in the jazz world as he performs worldwide in various festivals. Henry's style includes characteristics typical of modern improvisation such as chromaticism, chord substitution, non-functional harmony, and incredibly fast lines. The following transcription is of his performance on YouTube of "Cantaloupe Island" live at the 2018 Montreux Jazz Festival. This is my own original transcription of this solo, which is not currently published. His techniques, and ideas shown here exemplify dense, non-related harmonic movement, and complex rhythm typical in modern jazz improvisation.

Henry's Solo

While Hancock's recording featured an ensemble, Henry's recording includes only solo piano. Thus, there are greater margins for rhythmic and metric freedom without negatively impacting the solo. Figure 3.5 is an introductory line consisting primarily of sixteenth notes that introduce three distinct scale types: major pentatonic, Ionian, and melodic minor. Each of the first six measures, minus m. 4, encompass one of these scales

84. Joe Incollingo, "Snarky Puppy's Cory Henry on Five Organ Essentials," *The Boston Globe* 1, no. 1 (March 2016).

using F# as the root. The lack of chords or bass line gives minimal implication of an intended harmony and is even further puzzling, as the given scales have no relation except for the F# common tone. This is one of the freedoms, but also challenges, in interpreting solo jazz improvisation. Implications of alternate scales such as the B# in the second beat of m. 2 (Lydian) and the A natural (b3 blues) sound in the first beat of m. 3, are also remarkable.

Performed Freely around 130 bpm

Piano

5:07 F#

F# Ionian

F# Major Pentatonic

D Ionian

Blues b3

F# Melodic Minor (Ascending)

PT

Upper NT

#4 Hints at F# Lydian

Figure 3.5: “Cantaloupe Island” Cory Henry Solo mm. 1-6, (Trans. Ryan Johnson) *Live at Montreux 2018* [Begins at 5:07].⁸⁵

Chord progressions in modern practice have become difficult to analyze in tonal harmony. Many new voicings are dense with five, six, and sometimes seven tones

85. Montreux Jazz Festival, “Cory Henry Live session| Montreux Jazz Festival 2018,” published July 25, 2018, video, 10:27, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gEEph4GBXF0>.

clustered, as well as inverted and/or doubled.⁸⁶ In figure 3.6 m.7, as well as the last beat in m. 6, the solo introduces its first chord harmonies. This simultaneously occurs while establishing a new phrase, m. 7 into the first half of m. 8, which is a continuation of the F# centered beginning run. This line at the end of m. 7 going into m. 8 is rhythmically complex as the descending scalar run in F# Dorian is segmented by unrelated, descending left-hand quartal chords every half of a beat. The notes in these quartal harmonies: (B-E-A) on the “and of” four in m. 7, (G#-C#-F#) on the “and of” one in m. 8, (F#-B-E) on the “and of” two, and (C#-F#-B) on beat four. The phrase continues in m. 9, though a line hinting at tonicizing F# Lydian begins on the fourth beat of the measure.

Figure 3.6: “Cantaloupe Island” Cory Henry Solo mm. 7-14, (Trans. Ryan Johnson) *Live at Montreux 2018* [Begins at 5:18].⁸⁷

86. Julien, *The Function of Non-Functional Harmony*, 116-122.

87. Montreux Jazz Festival, video, 5:18.

As the solo continues forward, the harmonic direction is still not pronounced. In m. 9, beginning on beat four, the solo completes the m. 8 run by changing from an F# Dorian to an F# Lydian descending run where it continues with this harmony in mm. 11-14. As measures 11-14 unravel, the overall harmonic direction becomes unclear. These four measures consist of dense, unrelated chord voicings with large register jumps between the bass and top voices. Thus, these clustered harmonies are so distant from the original changes that the entire phrase (mm. 11-14), based solely on the octave E/E# and F/F# pedal tones in the bass, comes off as ambiguous.

The register leaps found in mm. 11-14 continue in mm. 15-20 seen in Figure 3.7. Leaps in pitch register are a common modern practice technique, however it is usually intertwined with octave solos, arpeggiation, or used in modulation.⁸⁸ The octave bass line reference that occurs periodically starting in m. 10, becomes an ongoing harmony appearing often from m. 15 through the remainder of the solo. Although mm. 15-20 have a similar motive to mm. 11-14, the chordal ambiguity has ceased. The F#/F1 in the bass line supports the F# major chords in mm. 14-15. Measure 15 is the first return to tonic harmony (F#) since m. 10 in which an F# major chord is played in three different inversions with the inclusion of a 13th and b5 extension. The repeated 7th (E#) common tone used in the three voicings highlights the core major 7th chord quality, bringing about a familiar jazz sound. Additionally, voicings in mm. 18-19 are also common and typical in jazz comping methods such as the clustered chord (maj 7th#11) on the first beat of m.

88. Aebersold, *How to Play Jazz*, 35.

18. Finally, in m. 20, there is a return to the original F# major harmony starting on beat one with an F#maj7(b5) chord; consequently providing harmonic context to the F# Lydian run on beats two through four.

15 F#maj13(b5) F#maj7(add4)/C# F#maj7/E# D#(sus2)/F# F#maj7(#11)/C# A#m/C#

5:32

19 E#5/F# F#maj7(b5) A#(sus2) Large Register Leaps

ALL F# Lydian

Figure 3.7: “Cantaloupe Island” Cory Henry Solo mm. 15-20, (Trans. Ryan Johnson) *Live at Montreux 2018* [Begins at 5:32].⁸⁹

Although traditional jazz styles such as be-bop typically consisted of fast, rhythmically complex eighth-note or triplet lines, improvisers’ note choices related to the underlying chord structure, thus allowing for harmonic realization. One of the difficulties previously stated (shown in Figure 3.5) is the inability to analyze long passages of notes with no bass-line harmonic context.⁹⁰ Specifically, in traditional jazz genres, making a musical phrase intelligible without a metric or tonal basis is problematic. However, in

89. Montreux Jazz Festival, video, 5:32.

90. Devaux, *Jazz*, 410.

Henry’s solo, tonal harmony is somewhat unidentifiable. In Figure 3.8, mm. 21-25 encompass a single melodic idea that fluently moves in primarily sixteenth notes with occasional triplet (anticipated) phrasing. This similar motive was seen in Figure 3.5 throughout mm. 1-6. This time however, there is the consistent half step, octave bass-line reference (first seen in m. 10) in mm. 21, 23, and 25.

Figure 3.8: “Cantaloupe Island” Cory Henry Solo mm. 21-25, (Trans. Ryan Johnson) *Live at Montreux 2018* [Begins at 5:39].⁹¹

The significant aspects in Figure 3.8 surround melodic choice rather than rhythmic. Each measure uses a specific scale type, which are as follows: F# Ionian (m. 21), F# Mixolydian add b13 (m. 22), F# Lydian (mm. 23-25). Given that the harmony in mm. 21-25 is solely based on the occasional F# and F pedal tones, it is difficult to determine a traditional harmonic purpose; perhaps they serve to just sound interesting. This phrase highlights scales built on an F# note (tonic of the key signature). In planting

91. Montreux Jazz Festival, video, 5:44.

an F# as the root note of each scale, there is at least a slight indication of a tonic key. All three of the scales are vastly different in function and purpose.

In regards to chord-scale theory, the scales played in mm. 21-25 share common tones of A#, B#, F#, and G# but are otherwise harmonically unrelated. Although similar chord types can be implemented in Ionian and Lydian modes, there are few connective traits. In chord-scale theory, Mixolydian is harmonized and typically paired with dominant 7ths, Ionian with major triads, and Lydian with major 6ths, 7ths, and 9ths.⁹² The lack of a declared chord harmony in this passage allows each scale to stand out without a glaring clash or recognizable mistake. Context is one of the most crucial variables for comprehension in any topic matter. In jazz, improvisation is based on core harmonic progressions. Given that most of Figure 3.8 lacks this support; the solo is focused on the element of surprise, common in modern improvisation. The unrelated scalar movement in conjunction with scant underlying harmony in this figure is what brings excitement and unexpectedness.

Solo jazz improvisation has always encompassed numerous approaches to performance since an ensemble does not dictate the performer's decisions. Many modern jazz soloists have taken the route of non-functional or distantly related harmony when creating improvisation material. The virtuosic elements of speed and rhythmic

92. Levine, *The Jazz Piano Book*.

complexity have accompanied these tonal ideas.⁹³ Although there are occasional hints, this solo is not confined by any particular rhythmic, metric, or tonal center. Thus, this style of improvisation is considered to be in the vein of “Free” or “Avant-garde” jazz. Figure 3.9 concludes the introductory material and leads into the intended rhythm and chord structure of the original song. In m. 28 (Figure 3.9) there is a return to the original key of F# major beginning with an F#maj7 chord. Immediately following m. 28, in m. 29 the solo implements large register leaps as it did previously in mm. 12-20. By m. 27, F# Lydian has been clearly established in the sixteenth-note run on beats three and four. Additionally, the F#maj9 chord is clarified at the beginning of the measure (28) with a strong voicing in the right-hand on beat two.

Figure 3.9: “Cantaloupe Island” Cory Henry Solo mm. 26-32, (Trans. Ryan Johnson) *Live at Montreux 2018* [Begins at 5:46].⁹⁴

93. Devaux, *Jazz*, 400-420.

94. Montreux Jazz Festival, video, 5:46.

The final introductory material in Henry’s solo comes to a halt in m. 35 (Figure 3.9.1) as he jokingly slams on the keys in the right hand C4-C5 register to signify his transition into composed material. The end of measure 35 going into m. 36 demonstrate the first orchestrated bass line and right hand voicings, which are a play on Hancock’s four-bar comping section before introducing the main melody. Measures 38-40 clearly conclude Henry’s introduction improvisation. This solo exemplifies some of the common modern improvisation techniques, such as non-functional harmony, dense chord-structure voicings, and incredibly fast, lengthy runs.

The image displays a musical score for the piece "Cantaloupe Island" by Cory Henry, specifically measures 35 through 40. The score is written for piano and is in the key of F# major (three sharps). Measure 35 is marked with a time signature of 6:01. A circled section in measure 35 is labeled "Quick descending cluster". The right hand in measure 35 plays a descending cluster of notes, while the left hand plays a bass line. The chord for measure 35 is F#5(add2add4) and D#7(#5omit3)/B. Measure 36 continues the bass line and right hand voicings. Measure 38 features chords A#7(omit5)/B# and G#(sus2). The score concludes with a final chord of G#(sus2) in measure 40.

Figure 3.9.1: “Cantaloupe Island” Cory Henry Solo mm. 35-40, (Trans. Ryan Johnson) *Live at Montreux 2018* [Begins at 6:01].⁹⁵

95. Montreux Jazz Festival, video, 6:01

Conclusion

Herbie Hancock and Cory Henry are both pioneers in progressive jazz genres. Artists like Hancock heavily influenced the traditional jazz styles that were beginning to take new form in the 1960s-70s. Further, modern and new jazz genres are expanding and are aided by new age virtuosos like Henry. These two solos share similarities such as major, minor, and blues pentatonic scales, and three-against-four rhythm in phrasing. However, their core elements such as chord-scale relations, rhythmic lines, and harmonic spacing differ immensely. Overall, Hancock sticks to pentatonic and minor modes while Henry uses many unrelated scales in addition to a lack of underlying harmony. Henry often plays around the chord tones with lengthy chromatic runs ending in non-functional harmony. Meanwhile, Hancock, although occasionally outside the chord harmony, often uses minor diatonic harmony resulting in a bluesy sound. Additionally, Hancock chose a slow-building, motivic approach in developing his solo, while Henry's lines accelerated quickly in tempo, rhythmic and melodic complexity. Further, there were many times where it was difficult to distinguish a tonal resolution. Therefore, although these two solos differ, they highlight the primary differences in rhythm, harmony, and phrasing between traditional and modern jazz.

CHAPTER 5: TRADITIONAL VERSUS MODERN JAZZ IMPROVISATION

The art of jazz improvisation is a constantly evolving area of performance. Previous chapters analyzed past and present trends in jazz soloing, highlighting features of harmony, rhythm, and phrasing that differentiate traditional from modern improvisation. The evolution of jazz improvisation was not instantaneous and is still an unfinished work. Although each continuing era presents new ideas in soloing concepts, there are still significant similarities from the previous era. Therefore, these outlined features show how jazz music has continually transformed throughout the years.

The analyses were specifically chosen stylistically to represent the gradual differences in improvisatory trends over the eras. The “Autumn Leaves” transcriptions differed slightly whereas the “Someday My Prince Will Come” transcriptions showed an obvious difference in soloing ideas, and finally the “Cantaloupe Island” transcriptions displayed almost polar opposite musical identities. The analyses demonstrate the elements that traditional and modern jazz eras share regarding improvisatory approaches. These include arpeggiation of chord tones, the use of rhythmic values featuring eighth and sixteenth notes, and chord extensions such as 7ths, 9ths, 11ths, b5s, 9ths, etc. Both include scale types such as the seven modes of the major scale, traditional minor scales (harmonic, natural, melodic), and jazz-specific scales such as whole-half diminished, bebop dominant, super Locrian, and more. These similar traits in both traditional and

modern improvisatory styles surround rudimentary elements in jazz. Differentiating improvisatory styles and jazz genres involves the realization of more complex variables, which are perhaps even more significant than their commonalities.

The main features that differentiate traditional from modern jazz trends are harmonic choice, rhythmic phrasing, and motif. The performer's choice of harmony during improvisation is imperative in creating a cohesive solo. Thus, harmonic choice is perhaps one of the most apparent differences between old and new soloing approaches. My analyses show that older jazz soloing trends tend to follow straightforward chord scale theory concepts, especially, modal relationships. Additionally, classic harmonic extensions in chord voicings such as 7ths, 9ths, 11ths, 13ths, b5s, #9s, etc., commonly accompanied solos. In contrast, many modern jazz approaches could tend to lack reference to the composed chord harmony in conventional ways. This involved using scales and creating melodies that entailed little to no relation to the written harmony. Further, many phrases might present as lengthy, with the soloist purposefully inserting dense, clashing melodies in defiance of harmonic normality.

Rhythmic choices were beginning to transform between traditional and modern improvisation. Older styles often emphasized the melodic relationship to the written harmony by intentionally implementing rests in between lines or phrases. Specifically, rhythms using dotted quarter and off-beat notes are implemented to induce anticipation and lively rhythmic interplay around the written meter. Modern methods in jazz soloing often took the latter approach by omitting rest and space. This includes consistent sets of

repetitive rhythms such as eighth and sixteenth-note groupings, which could frequently last multiple measures. As shown in these transcriptions, differences in harmonic and rhythmic phrasing are crucial elements in the creation of large-scale soloing ideas and memorable motifs.

Traditionally, motivic development in jazz improvisation constructed motifs that continually built on the previous ones in an attempt to tell a complete musical story.⁹⁶ The analyses show a variety of traditional methods such as modal scales, repetitive rhythms, and syncopation, all striving for the same goal, which is a means to spontaneously create a cohesive, working composition. Modern jazz soloing tends to produce unclear motivic direction whereas traditional improvisation many times appears to encompass the creation of motif. The newer analyses show multiple lines that avoid organized or easily distinguishable patterns in rhythmic and harmonic choice. Many times these unexpected, complex lines translate more as a slew of notes that sometimes correlate with the chord harmony, rather than a cohesive idea. However, although tonal harmony is not always clear in every section of modern jazz improvisation, there are still enough traditional harmonic relationships present to be relatable. Traditional motifs tend to be catchy melodies, whereas modern phrasing supplies an unexpectedness that is not necessarily memorable. The ways in which motifs are used and conceptualized play an important role in differentiating traditional and modern jazz improvisation.

96. Jerry Coker, *The Jazz Idiom*, (Berkeley CA: Prentice Hall, 1975), 12.

This thesis has supplied significant research into the technical differences in trends between traditional and modern jazz improvisation. A significant amount of overlap in soloing techniques throughout the eras is higher than may be expected. Thus showing that although each era embodies specific, defined characteristics, the overall changes that have occurred in jazz did not appear overnight. However, these analyses do clearly identifying the key factors that are necessary in understanding the differences between older and newer jazz improvisation styles. The analyses of solo transcriptions from different eras, in addition to the written explanations comparing similar and variant findings in old and new soloing techniques, contribute to research in jazz studies. Aspects of jazz theory such as harmony, rhythm, and motif still merit further study. As music continues to evolve, elements of jazz music and improvisation will follow in similar form.

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VITA

Ryan Johnson received his Bachelor's in Music degree from Empire State University in 2018. During his undergraduate studies he built his professional resume by partaking in industry-level work. His original bands "The Ryan Johnson Project" and "Escape Terrain" have performed in multiple national festivals such as the Rochester International Jazz Festival, Buffalo Music Festival, and the NY Park Avenue Festival. Johnson has shared the stage with the internationally acclaimed jazz-fusion group Cabo Frio and Dirk Quinn Band. He also released multiple original jazz-fusion and indie rock albums with matching scores including *Broken Notes* (2009), *Days of Old* (2011), and *Mama's Place* (2016). Godin Guitars and Curt Mangan Strings are instrument endorsements that he holds and have supported him in his musical journey. Additionally, Ryan has performed in multiple musical theatre pits playing guitar, bass, and mandolin in shows such as *Next to Normal*, *Bonnie and Clyde*, *The Wiz*, *Thoroughly Modern Millie*, and *The Adams Family*.

Johnson entered the Graduate School at Stephen F. Austin University in 2018 and received his Master's Degree in Music Theory in 2020. Ryan teaches as a formal and private general/instrumental music teacher in the Rochester City and charter school districts. He has also been a presenter at the national *Musician's Workshop* (WI, 2019) with his paper "Jazz Improvisation: Chord-Scale Theory," and at seminars on "The Music Industry" at colleges such as Finger Lakes Community College (2019). He is still teaching music formally and intends on continuing to participate in the music industry as

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Style guide for this thesis

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This thesis was typed by Ryan M Johnson.