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CF Album, Transcriptions, and Analyses

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Preface

Over two years ago, I began the Artist Studio track of Belmont University's Honors program. After focusing much of my time on enhancing my skills as a supporting musician, the Artist Studio forced me to really dive in and view myself as an artist. I knew this would culminate in the form of a large creative work that showcases my inner artist, but little did I know what this project would become. My album along with this transcription and analysis book is the final thesis project for the Artist Studio track of the Honors program, but it is so much more than an academic work. This has been a deep study of myself as an artist.

While tackling what the central idea of my music would be, I looked to my inspirations. Listening through hours upon hours of music by an extremely diverse group of musicians, I found that my music was pulled in many directions other than my own. When trying to showcase these musical directions and inspirations to my non-musician friends, I discovered a frequent disengagement between theme and the music. This is where I found my musical goal. I wanted to break down this barrier between jazz-oriented music and many common music listeners. With this central theme in mind, I began writing a vast amount of music.

Almost every morning for months I would wake up, brew a cup of coffee, throw on an old Yamaha dirt bike jersey, grab my Bourgeois Small Jumbo acoustic guitar, and write music. Writing a large amount of musical ideas, I began developing my own style and honing in on the songs that would become *CF*. Most of these musical ideas soon faded out of existence, but the seven songs that I chose out of the mass felt like a true exemplification of my central goal of

making more approachable instrumental music. These songs initially existed almost solely as solo acoustic arrangements, and I was next tasked with expanding them into full band pieces. Thankfully I have made some great friends that happen to be incredible instrumentalists in the Nashville music scene. With this group of fantastic musical friends put together, we began rehearsing the album before stepping into the studio. These rehearsals were a really incredible time as all of these musicians took my songs and arrangements and began adding their unique musical stylings that enhanced my songs beyond what I had ever imagined.

With a full weekend booked out at Oceanway Studios in Nashville, the band got together early on a Saturday morning and began the tracking process. The studio time was efficient and we made it through tracking the songs even faster than expected. With the extra time, Joshua Blaylock decided to test out the Hammond B3 organ and Leslie speaker and do one pass over each of the songs. From Blaylock's first take on organ, everyone in the control room knew that he had added the perfect touch to round out the album. Moments like this were happening throughout the entirety of the session as all of the musicians utilized their spontaneity along with extreme talent to create successful musical moments on every track. With a massive amount of homemade food, the whole group went to our lounge and rounded out the studio weekend with a family style dinner. This scene of all of us sitting around the table sharing laughs and food was the perfect culminating image of how collaborative, familial, and truly enjoyable the recording process was.

Finishing the tracking of the album felt like a huge accomplishment at the time, but all of the decisions and effort that came next were the real test of taking this "simple" project to a fully fledged commercial release. With the help of my engineer, Chris Baldani, all of the mixing and

mastering slowly came together and *CF* started to feel like a real entity. Once I had this fully completed project, I still had not named any of the pieces. Throughout the whole writing process I toyed around with a lot of different names for all of the songs. Every name felt like it added a connotation that failed to shine light on the true essence of the song. Beyond this, without lyrics there is so much more room for individual interpretation of the music. In rehearsals we called out each song by just calling it by the key. Each song was in a different key and it just felt easy to differentiate them in that way. Eventually that naming scheme stuck and it felt like a genuine identity for the songs. An easy distinguishing factor that allowed room for honest musical interpretation by the listener without the biased connotation that an interpretative title would add. Once this naming format was set in stone, I decided I did not want the album name or artwork to simply point back to me and highlight my interpretation. The simplicity of my initials added to the letter-based theme, and thus *CF* was titled.

My brother, Corey Felter, crafted the simple yet effective album art centralized around this initial theme. Through the simplicity of the logo on top of an intricate background inspired by the tolex on my Supro guitar amp, the album art was complete. With the full package together, *CF* was finished and I began the lengthy release process. Coinciding with the musical release is the transcription and analysis book. At its core, it is a description of the music that is encompassed within the album. I hope to further the approachability of this music by allowing anyone to understand and utilize the concepts presented through my music.

While I want to present this understanding to all, to understand the entirety of this thesis, a musical background is needed. I divided each song into three analytical sections to allow the curiosities of any person to be enriched more selectively, but I do employ a large amount of

musical jargon in “The Theory” and “The Solo” sections. This includes things like roman numeral harmonic analysis, the discussion of scales, and the utilization of bass clef to present my trombone transcriptions. If you are a musician and looking to further understand the things you hear in *CF*, I hope that this book will better identify and explain the concepts that I explore. No matter your current comprehension level of any of these specific analytical techniques, my wish is that any reader will be able to further their musical understanding from the exploration of this book. I thank you for diving into my musical psyche, and please continue your open minded search through music with a constant thirst for a full understanding.

G

The Writing

Long before this project was a thought in my mind, I was a high school student wasting time one summer with my friend who was also interested in music. We had a home studio in the upstairs of his house and recorded a couple of my original songs back when I was testing out the singer-songwriter path. The last of these songs was titled, “Coffee,” and while I have done a deep cleanse to remove any trace of those songs, the main acoustic guitar of that specific song has stayed deeply implanted in my muscle and musical memory. When this new project became an idea of mine, my fingers first found their way back to this guitar part from “Coffee.”

Taking what was simply a repeated one chord pattern and playing it over and over and improvising over it, “G” was finally born. This was the first song written out of the seven pieces on the album, and before the key-centered naming, “G” was titled, “Sweetgum.” Five years after writing “Coffee,” that old guitar part brought back memories of my time living in Missouri and the sweetgum trees that accompanied my yard. The repetitive nature exemplifies the simplicity of a life with the freedom to be one with the sweetgum trees, but eventually you step on the “pokey balls” that the sweetgum sheds. Throughout “G,” the cyclical patterns are interrupted by moments that may be synonymous with the temporary stun produced by stepping on a “pokey ball.”

Beyond the incidental nature of “G,” it came from more than a musical presentation of a sweetgum tree. This piece started from a past inspiration, but came to true fruition through the joy of playing my acoustic guitar. Unlike any other instrument I play, my acoustic guitar gives

me a really natural and connected feeling. I spent many mornings drinking a cup of coffee playing this song on my acoustic, and it is from those mornings that “G” found its full form. When moving this song from a solo acoustic arrangement to a full band led by trombone, I found myself continuously drawing back to its solo guitar beginnings. This is why the entirety of the front half of “G” is driven by the acoustic guitar, and the trombone does not take the melody but instead adds simple improvised interjections to the main statement made by the guitar.

After spending a large portion of the development of this song staying consistent to one main acoustic theme, I wanted to dive directly into solos that built upon one another as the song came to a close. Unlike the normal AABA form of many jazz standards, once this piece moves from the main acoustic theme it never really comes back until the final statement. It is this continuous build without self-referencing refrains that produced the desire for more at the end of this song, and that want for more is why it sits at the front of my album. The final horn statement is a nod back to the beginning section to remind the listener with what this song started and fade into an uncertainty as to what the rest of the album will entail.

♩ = 115
Free Acoustic Intro
Acoustic A Section 4X
G
Collin Felter

5
Acoustic B Section
Cmaj7(#11)
(4)

9
Acoustic A Section 2X
G
(4)

13
Acoustic B Section
Cmaj7(#11)
(4)

17
Em13 A(add9) D(add9) C(add9)
(4)

21
Am(add9) Cm6 Full Band A Section 5X
G
(8)

25
Full Band B Section
Cmaj7(#11)
(4)

29
Em13 A(add9)
(4)

FULL BAND

33 D^(add9) C^(add9) Am^(add9) Cm6 A. Guitar G

(8)

37 Am9 Cm6 G^(add9) Am9 Cm6 G^(add9)

(4)

Bone Solo 4X
41 Am9 Cm6 G^(add9) Am9 Cm6 G^(add9)

(4)

Keys Solo 4X
45 Am9 Cm6 G^(add9) Am9 Cm6 G^(add9)

(4)

Guitar Solo 4X
49 Am9 Cm6 G^(add9) Am9 Cm6 G^(add9)

(4)

53 G

The Theory

The beginning of this piece is also the introduction to the whole album, and I wanted to give the listener something that would create the proper atmosphere. The intro is a solo acoustic moment centered around inversions of a diminished seventh chord. The chords feel tense, but the solo acoustic tone feels humble; the hope is that these two attributes work together to create an inviting environment for a listener to experience instrumental music employing jazz harmony. This opening harmony is a C diminished seventh chord moving up in inversions, but inverting any diminished chord simultaneously creates a new root position diminished chord. This makes it feel as if the tension is rising and where the tension will resolve is unknown as the diminished chords come and go. This results in a rapid descending line of new diminished chords that are from the set of diminished chords a half step above the ascending inverted chords. The key feature here is that the set of descending diminished chords culminates in a C#dim that contains a G in the lowest voice to create a common tone diminished chord to I. The common tone of G creates a pivot point for the listener's ear to attach onto as the chord changes, and the lowest voice placement of this common tone gives a more direct emphasis on this transitional pitch into the new chord quality.

After the diminished focused intro, the piece reaches the main theme of the A section. Despite some movement, the harmony of the A section is all implying the tonic chord. This chord has some interesting colors that it moves around, but there is a strong presence of G in the bass, and the upper non-diatonic notes all move the chord to and from its major quality. The main added color is labeled as an Am/G moving back to G. This could be viewed as a ii-I progression, or just simply creating a suspension of the 2 and 4 over the G, but above all I feel

this progression as a weak form of a plagal cadence. IV-I is the typical plagal cadence, and Am/G has all the notes of the IV and adds what would be the 6th of the IV. The plagal cadence provides a warm feeling that is comfortable but still moving. This weaker form of the plagal cadence that “G” utilizes holds that warm resolution with less conclusion than IV-I, emphasizing the movement through the chord rather than the cadential point. All of the chromatic double stops added between this plagal cadence is really idiosyncratic to guitar and feels very natural. It adds direction to the line and is a nod to bluegrass stylings while not completely altering the harmonic function.

After a repetition of this same theme, we finally get to a different root note and harmony. This is acting as a B section, but we do not get the full B section this time; that is reserved for the final movement to the C section later in the piece. The chord that introduces the B section is a Cmaj7(#11) which is the diatonic IV chord in G major, but I really emphasize the #11 by putting it at the top of the guitar voicing to highlight the lydian nature of the chord. This moves back to the A section to open up for interjections from the trombone that showcases the major blues quality of the piece. Eventually this moves back to the B section, but this time it continues beyond the previous known Cmaj7(#11) to a new progression. The Em it reaches is a simple vi that moves by 4th but to a II rather than the diatonic, Am. The II is acting as the V/V which moves to the expected D, but rather than move from dominant to tonic, this D culminates in an arpeggiated iv6. The iv6 is the main point of interest for the last half of the piece, and it highlights the plagal nature of the Am/G from before. To refresh the song as it moves into solos, I employ modal interchange. I borrow from the parallel minor to use the ii half diminished chord,

but by putting it in first inversion it creates a iv6. This continues for the rest of the piece until the final resulting A section reprise.

G

♩ = 115

Intro w/Bone

G

f

mf

f

mf



Tenor Trombone

43 Lay Back
Am^(add9) Cm6 G^(add9) Am^(add9) Cm6 G^(add9)

f

47 Am^(add9) Cm6 G^(add9) Am^(add9) Cm6 G^(add9)

mf

The Solo

Before the true solo section of “G” begins, the trombone interjects with fills. The very beginning is derived from the major blues scale and sits in a higher range of the trombone as it creates a definite entrance after the long acoustic driven intro. While this trombone statement feels fairly forward it is still light and comes from the subtle bluegrass references found in the acoustic guitar track. Major blues is a common scale in bluegrass, and this introductory trombone statement highlights that characteristic. After the first fill, the trombone does the same thing again but up a 3rd. This puts the trombone in an even higher register, but rather than a big and brassy tone, it still stays light and playful. This second fill uses the 4-#4-5 motion from the minor blues scale, but starting on the major 3rd it sits somewhere between total major or minor blues tonality. After these two higher opening statements let the listener know that the trombone is now taking over, the energy backs down and the section begins building in a simple and melodic manner.

The repeated D statement at m.6 is in the middle register of the horn and is the 5 of G, which is a very stable tone. This simple repetition and note choice allows the idiosyncratic manipulations of a note, that the trombone is able to utilize, to be showcased and explored without adding too much distraction. These slides, accents, and bends give more character to the repetitive nature of the line, and right as it begins to seem monotonous, the line moves up to the maj7. This comes to a conclusion on the tonic at the downbeat of m.11. I then move into some more syncopation, but the note choice is still diatonic with natural extensions, such as the 9, 11, and 13, to give direction while still feeling stable. Right as the trombone approaches higher register, I leap back down in m.15 to the 3rd, resetting the build once more. This working back

up the register eventually leads to a reference to this first trombone interjection by sliding back into major blues but at half the tempo of the first lick. I keep the beginning reference going by moving up to the 3rd and using the 4-#4-5 motion again. The first time this motion happens, the higher register feels light, but this time I play it more heavily to target the top D. Placing the C# on the strong beat and holding it for an entire half-note makes it feel tense, only to resolve up to the D that is not acting as the 5 of G as it was before. This time this lick puts us into the B section with the high D acting as the 9 above the Cmaj7(#11). I work my way back down from this climax of the trombone portion of the intro until reaching the Em7 by landing on the b3, which gives the tonic of G a much darker feeling from the major quality of before. This working down is to set up space for the fast descending arpeggiation that leads to the big energetic hit to take us into the C section that dominates the near-entirety of the last half of the piece.

After this big hit, I wait before beginning my trombone solo to allow the listener a chance to digest the intensity and become comfortable with the new section. Since the song utilizes a long form introduction, I knew I wanted the solos to be fairly short, yet driven, and rewarding for the listener. This song, due to its fronting of the album, needed to leave the listener wanting more rather than a long-drawn out solo section that may tire them before diving into the body of the work. The trombone solo was meant to be simple, tasteful, and set up the next two soloists to build the song without feeling like a non-stop beration of the listeners' ears over the course of three high energy solos.

The trombone solo starts back in the lower-mid range to reset the intensity of the fills from before. The lines consist of diatonic notes that incorporate the 9 to add a touch of coloration. It is possible to analyze each of these notes as a part of the specific underlying

harmony. For example, in m.35 beat 4 could be acting as the maj7 of the iv underneath. Instead, I was actually thinking an overarching G major tonality, and that lick was simply a response to what I had played just before. Chord-scale soloing can lead to really interesting ideas, but in this case I was thinking much more globally as I tried to slowly build and connect my ideas leading into the next soloist. This broad diatonic thinking begins to change, though, as I seek to build more variance and interest as the solo progresses.

The tailend of m.39 is the first hint of non-diatonicism. The Eb that happens is both a reminder of the quirk of the iv underneath and also a part of a larger valley shaped line. This line moves down before coming right back up targeting the 11 of the Am on the downbeat of m.41. This time I anticipate the iv by driving home the Eb that the listener got a small taste of before. This all resolves neatly back to diatonicism on the 3rd of the I in m.42. The next line is a stepwise melody that adjusts as the Cm comes and goes, hitting the Eb at the top but quickly moving to the B as the G major comes back into play. I then begin a 1/16th note line that moves up in a pattern-based G major scale, but omitting the 3rd to keep from the potential blatancy of diatonicism. This line moves up to an A targeting the 9 of the I chord, adding emphasis to the 9s that are occurring underneath in the harmonic progression. I continue working my way back up, referencing the same high major to minor blues fills from before. This all culminates in a lower register line that is meant to bring the listener back down to allow the next soloist to build them back up. This final line in the trombone emphasizes the voice leading of “la” to “le” to “sol” built into the harmony. The “la” is the 6 in G, and acts as the 5 over the Am, moving down to Eb, the b3 of Cm. This all resolves to the D which is a very stable 5 over the tonic of G. This line is broken up by a C that acts as the b3 and 1 to Am and Cm respectively. This breaking up of the

line is meant to add excitement to the motion while still emphasizing the voice leading of the lower notes. This final line directly outlines the chord changes providing reference for the listener as Joshua Blaylock's synth sounds take over.

Bb

The Writing

When trying to package jazz idioms into a more easily digestible package, “Bb” became the song most related to modern popular music in my initial writing spree. As a trombonist, the key of Bb is extremely comfortable and accessible, but not nearly as natural on guitar. Because of this, I was forcing myself to try and play really organically in Bb on guitar and found myself gravitating towards the IV/5 chord and where it sat in the register of the instrument. As I listened more intently to the funk music inspiring me, I began to notice that the IV/5 chord appeared quite frequently and my piece, “Bb,” was born out of that inspiration.

When it came to writing a melody to this song, Steve Cropper was the direct motivation. Cropper is famous for his 6ths based playing, and this melody is comprised almost entirely of that signature sliding melodic interval. This was the first song that I really began to explore the sound of guitar and trombone doubling a melody, and it started with these Steve Cropper sixths. The guitar had a fairly bright tone that was slightly driven, while the trombone had a much more warm and smooth tone; when combined these two voices created a very complete sound. That timbre created by doubling the melodic line between my electric guitar and trombone became the primary exploration of this melody and allowed me to feel more invigorated through the repetition.

After this 6th induced A section, the piece goes into solos that touch on the blues before going into a blatantly blues influenced B section. Separately from the writing of the A section, I had been practicing different forms and connections between pentatonic scales and came up with a plain sounding riff that laid nicely on guitar in Bb. To excite the simplistic riff, I added chromatic passing notes based on the blues and wrote the passage that would later turn into the B section of this song. I eventually realized that the riff outlined the same chords as the A section, and I put them into the same song with all pieces eventually coming together. The riff initially feels like a stripping away of pieces, but soon all of the elements of the song come back together to build intensity and showcase the cohesiveness between the parts of this piece.

♩ = 150

Bb

Collin Felter

Guitar Intro

Bb Cm7 Eb Eb/F

(4)

Full Band Intro

5 Bb Cm7 Eb Eb/F

(8)

Guitar Melody 4X

9 Bb Cm7 Eb Eb/F

(4)

Trombone Melody 4X

13 Bb Cm7 Eb Eb/F

(4)

Bone Solo 6X

17 Bb Cm7 Eb Eb/F

(6)

Guitar Solo 6X

21 Bb Cm7 Eb Eb/F

(6)

Melody 4X

25 Bb Cm7 Eb Eb/F

(4)

Riff

29 Bb Cm7 Eb Eb/F

(4)

The Theory

As this song feels the most related to popular music on my album, it is also the most diatonic, at least in the main melody and harmony. The progression of the A section is completely diatonic and is a simple I-ii-IV-IV/5. The most interesting of these chords being the IV/5. The bass motion of this chord back to tonic creates dominant function while the chord quality of IV creates plagal function. The repetition of the IV from before gives the listener more solidity in the quality of the chord and emphasizing the plagal nature of the motion. That being said, my ear gives precedence to the bass which provides the dominant function. When combining the two together the chord can be analyzed as a V_{sus}9. This gives clear dominant emphasis while showcasing the warmth of the IV chord through suspension. Perhaps the combination of IV and V, the two most popular non-tonic chords in popular music, is what gives this chord such a comfortable cadential feeling.

When moving from harmonic to melodic analysis, the two are still closely tied together. The melody is completely diatonic and tends to outline the chord over which it is moving. The first two melodic 6th pairs are direct chord tones, and the third emphasizes the bass with an F and moves to the maj7 of the Eb chord, or the 6th over F in the bass. Both analyzations of this third melodic statement are fairly neutral colors added to the underlying chord. The final piece of the melody in the fourth bar of the A section is a simple walk down leading us back to the I chord, but it is still harmonized in 6ths to keep the Steve Cropper theme going. Beyond the solos, the riff that makes up the B section is the exploration of chromaticism in “Bb.”

The riff heavily emphasizes Bb tonality while creating modal ambiguity through chromatic notes. The most prominent of these chromatic touches is the b3, also viewed as the #9.

This b3 is a direct reference to the blues, but its common placement between the 2nd and 3rd degree of the scale showcases an implication of major blues rather than the parallel minor form. The riff then moves to Eb which coincides with the IV chord in the harmony. I favor diatonicism on the way up the IV chord portion of the riff, but as I come back down slip back into chromaticism. First done through a chromatic lower neighbor of G, which I perceive as the major 3rd of the IV chord, I eventually hit octave Fs for a strong dominant pull. The riff then concludes with a common chromatic walkup from 6 to 1.

The horns come in also playing the riff which gives it more certainty, but they also fill the space with an accented b7 to 1 motion. The b7 of the horns is the departure from major blues to the parallel minor blues. This sets up the soloists to be able to explore different forms of Bb tonality, through diatonicism, major blues, minor blues, and any other chromaticism they might see fit. All of these forms of Bb tonality eventually come back together to take the song out with the B and A sections happening simultaneously. The hope is that this ending showcases a comfortable coexistence between seemingly contrasting interpretations of a Bb tonal center.

Bb

$\text{♩} = 150$

f

4 *E♭/F* *B♭* *Cm7* *E♭* *E♭/F*

9 *B♭* *Cm7* *E♭* *E♭/F*

mf

13 *B♭* *Cm7* *E♭* *E♭/F*

17 *B♭* *Cm7* *E♭* *E♭/F* Lay Back

21 *B♭* *Cm7* *E♭* *E♭/F*

f

25 *B♭* *Cm7* *E♭* *E♭/F* *B♭*

fff

The Solo

Unlike the preceding track, “G,” I do not wait around for this solo section, but instead anticipate, stepping on top of the last moments of the melody. This introductory statement needed to be confident and new to the song to introduce the solo section. The opening lick is a repetitive pattern rocking back and forth between the minor and major 3rd. This is not only to imply a subtle blues flair, but it is also meant to foreshadow the riff that will soon take over the song. The next few phrases of the solo are fairly simple, being in the mid-register of the horn, diatonic, and filled with a fair amount of space. These short statements were meant to create more accent and punctuation atop the cyclical and stagnant nature of the harmony residing below. M.11 provides the first bit of chromaticism beyond the blues nature of the opening solo statement. You can read the backstory of this lick in “Ab,” but it is a common navigation of a minor ii-V chord progression. While you could analyze each note in relation to the Eb chord, I am instead superimposing a ii-V of F. The line outlines a typical minor ii-V, but resolves to F major rather than minor. The moment I reach the target note of the 3rd of F, I depart and begin a chromatic line moving upward.

I introduce the three note grouping pattern in m.12, and on the last 1/8th note of the bar, I move it to the first three notes of B major pentatonic, this moves up another half-step through C major pentatonic, which results in a chromatic enclosure of the 3rd of the tonic. This D that is enclosed on beat 4 of m.13 brings us back to the home key, and the accented F lets us know that it truly is the end of the rising chromaticism. This escape from Bb is followed up by a reference to the opening blues statement from the beginning of the solo that begins the final build of the trombone. M.25 through the end of the trombone solo, I am just thinking of an overarching 6-7-1

melodic resolution as I work my way higher up the register and open up to a more forward timbre of the horn to build intensity as the song moves into Adam McPhail's driven and melodic electric guitar solo.

F

The Writing

Modal jazz is a fairly free form of music that is loosely restricted, unlike the traditional confines of harmony found in many other genres, including other subgenres of jazz. My song, “F,” came from an inspiration found through my appreciation for modal jazz. The opening guitar motif was something I could play and move around to explore different modes and their characteristic tonal colors. This guitar motif created a platform for me to explore soloing more freely on trombone and discover melodic choices initially unnatural to me when restricted by specific underlying harmonic progressions. This modal jazz mentality was not the purpose of my album, as it could lose listeners and place the focus on the musicians rather than the music. Eventually the ethereal guitar motif became more defined and was attached to a more structured A section melody with funk steeped elements.

I still wanted the intro of “F” to retain some of the original freeness, though, and this allowed for a very conversational musical experience. The harmony and form is structured, but most of the instruments are improvising small interjections to which other musicians respond. After a building of this communicative improvisational style, the song moves into a 4/4 feel at a brighter tempo. This transition was one of the most difficult portions of the album to effectively execute in the studio. It took some math, and I eventually figured out a connecting pattern, but this movement from introduction to main melody still creates a definitive jump in pulse. The

goal was to create a jump that propelled the song while staying mathematically, and musically, cohesive enough to keep a substantial level of comfort for the listener.

The main A section is a simple and straightforward groove that comes from the funk guitarists that inspired me by utilizing tasteful rhythm playing at the front of a track. Rather than have the harmony be an underlying support for a soaring melody, the two act in tandem and create an inseparable unit. This melodic, yet harmonic, main theme set up a stable platform for soloists to build upon and something that the listener could latch onto without having to split their focus too many directions. After the repetition of the A section, I wanted the song to move back to the intro and showcase that initial connection for the final statement. I had Joshua Blaylock take the role of the guitar on the outro on his synthesized keyboard patch to further the ethereal vibe. The communicative solo of the trombone reinvigorates as the studio fade begins, bookending the piece for the closing moments.

♩ = 152
4X
Fmaj13

F

Collin Felter

(4)

5 Bbmaj7 Am7 Gm7 Gm6

7 2X
Fmaj13

11 Bbmaj7 Am7 Gm7 Gm6

13 2X
Fmaj13

17 Bbmaj7 Am7 Gm7 Gm6

19 Fmaj13

(4)

23 Fmaj13

♩ = 95

Melody 4X

26 C Dm G C7 Am Bb Gm9 F^(add9)

Bone Solo 4x

30 C Dm G C7 Am Bb Gm9 F^(add9)

(4)

Alto Solo 4x

34 C Dm G C7 Am Bb Gm9 F^(add9)

(4)

Guitar Solo 4x

38 C Dm G C7 Am Bb Gm9 F^(add9)

(4)

Melody 4X

42 C Dm G C7 Am Bb Gm9 F^(add9)

Intro Vamp Out

46 Fmaj13

The Theory

“F” begins with a three note repetitive guitar pattern that is an outlining of an Fmaj7 moving to Fadd6. The point of departure is still diatonic to F major as the guitar keeps the same arpeggiation pattern moving through Bbmaj7-Am7-Gm7-Gm6. Analyzing this as a harmonic progression does not feel appropriate, though, as it is really just a descending F ionian line that is not meant to serve as a change in harmony. This repetition sets up the trombone to explore the tonality as the instruments create new ideas and feed off of one another. After this modal intro, I wanted to move into a grounded funk feel. This transition was accomplished through a fairly math-heavy tempo change. The intro has a tempo of 152bpm with the accented notes being placed at dotted quarter points. The final statement of the intro keeps that dotted quarter pulse accented which allows it to become the new bpm of the main A section. The added complication was that the dotted quarter pulse did not begin on a downbeat, but instead was displaced by an 1/8th note. To get the click track to line up, I had to first figure out a definite connection for the tempo change. If a dotted quarter note pulse happened at the same time as a quarter note pulse, the two pulses would line up at the downbeat of every two measures. During this span of time, five dotted quarter notes would have taken place while eight quarter notes would have simultaneously occurred. This means that the tempo of a dotted quarter note pulse is $\frac{5}{8}$ of a quarter note pulse at the same tempo. To account for this, the bpm of the main section is 62.5% of 152bpm, which is 95bpm. The final element to perfecting this metronomic adjustment was creating a bar of $\frac{1}{8}$ in the old tempo on the click track to account for the displacement of the dotted quarter pulse. In the track you can hear me repeat the accented dotted quarter of the intro

eight times before the new A section. This guitar accent, along with the ride cymbal in the drums, acts as a countoff for the rest of the band to nail the pulse change.

Once through the time and feel transition, the main theme is fairly straightforward. All but one chord is diatonic. The progression begins with a V-vi deceptive cadence. The intro was so saturated with tonic that I thought the V would be a refreshing downbeat of the A section, and a deceptive cadence would move us from the commonality of the I chord of the intro. The next chord is the only non-diatonic chord of the harmony, G. This is serving the role of a V/V which then acts as expected, resolving right to V7. This time V7 moves to iii rather than I. This keeps the theme of diverting from the typical I chord, but in a slightly different way from the deceptive vi resolution from earlier. The iii chord is also often interpreted as a I chord in first inversion, and this feels somewhat applicable here, but it moves right to the IV which gives the rising bass root motion more importance. This all culminates in a ii-I in the final measure of the progression. As discussed earlier, I view ii-I as a weak plagal cadence, and that is also my motivation behind the chord choice in this instance. It gives resolution to the tonic, but keeps things from feeling fully concluded, resulting in a cyclical pattern that allows for repetition that feels less monotonous. This ii-I provides subtle added flair through neo-soul style guitar extensions. The add9 is really common in modern guitar playing and keeps the harmony from becoming stale. The melody directly reflects this added color and outlines the chords directly, justifying them and adding opportunities for the soloists to explore other stylings of the harmony.

F

Fmaj13

5

gliss.

2

mf

13

Bbmaj7 Am7 Gm7

18

Gm6 Fmaj13

2

3

25

Bbmaj7 Am7 Gm7 Gm6 Fmaj13

31

Bbmaj7 Am7 Gm7 Gm6 Fmaj13

♩ = 95

Swing Sixteenths

39

3 1 12 4

59

C Dm G C7 Am Bb

f

62

Gm F C Dm G C7

Tenor Trombone

65

Am Bb Gm F C Dm

This staff contains measures 65, 66, and 67. It features a bass clef and a key signature of one flat. The music consists of eighth-note patterns with various accents and slurs. Chord symbols are placed above the staff: Am, Bb, Gm, F, C, and Dm.

68

G C7 Am Bb Gm F

This staff contains measures 68, 69, and 70. It features a bass clef and a key signature of one flat. The music consists of eighth-note patterns with various accents and slurs. Chord symbols are placed above the staff: G, C7, Am, Bb, Gm, and F.

71

C Dm G C7 Am Bb

This staff contains measures 71, 72, and 73. It features a bass clef and a key signature of one flat. The music consists of eighth-note patterns with various accents and slurs. Chord symbols are placed above the staff: C, Dm, G, C7, Am, and Bb.

74

Gm F C

This staff contains measures 74, 75, and 76. It features a bass clef and a key signature of one flat. The music consists of eighth-note patterns with various accents and slurs. Chord symbols are placed above the staff: Gm, F, and C.

The Solo

Well before the actual solo section begins, “F” starts with an ethereal intro over which the trombone plays. The trombone opens with a response to Blaylock’s synth bend as I move from D to E adding a heavy vibrato. Again trying to outline the conversational aspect of this intro, the trombone responds to another statement from the band, this time it is Justin Berger-Davis’s harmonics on the bass. Upon arrival of the non-tonic chord changes in bar 17, I just hold an A, which acts as the maj7, root, and finally 9 over the chords it is held. The maj7 and 9 extensions were lying heavily in my ear, and I showcase this through the repeated licks around m.22. This leads into the next non-tonic changes, which I tackle through a moving statement, unlike the stagnant A from before. The notes I play are simple as I stick to the roots of the chords underneath and match the harmonic rhythm. This downward motion eventually lands on the 6 of the Gm providing the main characteristic of the dorian sound while also acting as the start of maj7 in the dotted quarter pattern at m.29. The intro statements from the trombone conclude with one final working through the non-tonic changes. Keeping true to the matching of the harmonic rhythm, I choose more rich notes the final time through. The line starts on the #11 of the Bb, to the natural 11 of the next two chords, but finally resolves sturdily on the 3rd of the F adding vibrato to vary the timbre of the final statement.

After this long and ethereal introduction, the song moves into the funk inspired main theme. The harmony and feel of the main melody is what supports the solo section, and the trombone begins this portion of the song. Similar to “G,” this solo is short and sweet after a long intro of trombone interjections to set up the listeners for the solos to come. As a departure from the diatonicism of the intro, I started the solo with a touch of chromaticism through the use of the

#5. The #9, #11, and b7 all felt too bluesy for the vibe of “F,” and the #5 was left as it felt like the right subtle departure from diatonicism. After this quick moment, I move right back to the key and begin utilizing sixteenth note syncopation. This syncopation adds energy to the simple note choices and middle register of the trombone.

While m.64 seems to add some spice, I am really just outlining the chord change by moving the 3rd of G down to the b7 of C7. This adds support to the V/V function of the G while still letting the C7 feel like it has somewhere else to go. The listener might expect the B natural to rise up to the root of the C, but instead I disrupt the leading tone, allowing it to fall and keep momentum moving forward. To further emphasize the b7 on beat 3, the B natural is also acting as the upper-neighbor in an enclosure as it moves down to the G and A to approach the Bb from below. After this moment I begin a series of small patterns that group to form a common thread of repetition. Syncopation and chromaticism both add drive and energy to a line, and I tend to utilize one or the other to keep the solo grounded while still moving forward.

These patterns beginning at m.65 utilize heavy syncopation for direction while staying simple in note choice to keep from disorienting the listener. The main motion of A to C over the Am is 1 to b3, Bb to D become 1 to 3 over its respective chord, D to F is 5 to b7, and so on goes the straightforward note choice in this syncopated line. This flips to the chromatic and non-syncopated form of energy adding in m.68. The end of this measure is a descending chromatic moment that targets the C and acts as the b3 of Am. I then move to the 3rd of Bb, but it quickly departs as the line moves down chromatically starting a slightly unconventional enclosure. The D moves down chromatically to C which hops down to an A that moves down once more before hitting the target note of Bb. Rather than descend from above and ascend from

below, I keep the line moving down and hop back up to the skipped Bb. This provides target to the note without making it the complete stopping point through a 7-1 melodic cadence. I then outline the upper structure triad, Bb major, over the Gm to move into another sixteenth based syncopated pattern. This pattern is simply a quick reference to the early moments in the solo as it quickly falls into another non-syncopated chromatically influenced line. This faster movement between diatonic and non-diatonic passages along with the utilization and removal of syncopation lets the listener know that I am moving towards the end of the solo. This conclusion comes in the form of a very simple statement that sets up Max Dvorin's alto sax solo. Rather than build to a high note or throw in a final chromatic lick, I end with something simple to add contrast to what Max will bring.

Ab

The Writing

The “jazz metronome” is not a device but instead a conceptualization of a metronome’s pulse. Rather than have the metronome relentlessly beat away four beats per 4/4 measure, jazz musicians will often set the beat to half the tempo and imagine it is beating on the 2nd and 4th beat of the bar. This idea of moving the metronomic beat by mentally placing it at a different place within the measure intrigued me. I started implementing this into my practice by conceiving the click as the swing eighth up-beat, the dotted quarter, the quarter note triplet, and a plethora of other mental music games. When doing this exercise, I really found home in the metronome existing as the up-beat pulse.

My favorite challenge involving the up-beat metronomic pulses was to only hit on the click but still feel it as the “and” of each beat. My fingers naturally found these three note upper-string voicings on guitar, and I began using these voicings for the up-beat exercise. This is how I discovered the three hits that comprise, in near-entirety, “Ab.” Eventually the three stabs moved from an exercise to a musical idea. I started using the hits as a form of self-accompaniment. I would play the three up-beats and then use the bar of silence to play a melodic fill. It became my own antiphonal (call-and-response) practice. My ears gravitated towards one specific set of pitches (C, Eb, G, Bb), and that set became the melody of the song.

After exploring three up-beat hits with a melody of four notes for what felt like an eternity, I wanted a bridge that would really juxtapose the simple diatonic nature of the A section. Every melody I wrote over the chord changes of the bridge felt either bland or pretentious. This is when I decided to have the bridge changes only appear in solos. Every soloist has their own story to tell, and I felt that the bridge was the perfect platform for them to do so. This was also a subtle homage to an impactful jazz piece in my life, “Pithecanthropus Erectus” by Charles Mingus. That track seems to completely ignore the simple AABA conventions of jazz form, and instead it creates individual moments that express different emotions. While Mingus lets his B section in “Pithecanthropus Erectus” be completely free for his soloist, I wanted to reign my B section in for the sake of approachability for the listener. A mix of creative expression and listenability dictated the bridge to “Ab.”

After all of the repetition of the three hits and the complex chord changes in the B section, I wanted to give the listener a reward for making it through the longest track on the album. This reward comes in the form of a drum solo that leads into half-step modulations that resolve back to a final chorus back in Ab. Repetitive hits felt like the right place to allow the drummer to shine; he could be free and solo but with anchor points that ground the musicians and the listeners. After the disorientation invoked by the drum solo, the whole song moves up a half-step, then another, then some chords that lead us all the way back to the home key. These modulations were inspired by gospel. The key of Ab is an extremely common key center in gospel music, and the Hammond B3 going through upward chromatic key changes felt like the perfect way to represent that side of Ab. The goal is that after the long journey on which the

listener has been, the drum solo and key changes change things just enough to make the return of the repetitive hits in Ab feel like a perfect mixture of new and comfortable to end the song.

♩ = 84

Ab

Collin Felter

Intro

Ab Bbm7 Dbmaj7

5 Ab Bbm7 Dbmaj7 Ab Bbm7 Dbmaj7

Melody 3X

9 Ab Bbm7 Dbmaj7 Ab Bbm7 Dbmaj7

Flugelhorn Solo 3X

13 Ab Bbm7 Dbmaj7 Ab Bbm7 Dbmaj7

Solo Bridge

17 Abmaj9 Abdim7 Gm7 C7/G F#maj7 F#dim7

21 Fm13 Bbm11/F Abmaj7(#11) Abaug Ammaj7(b5) A7

2X

25 Ab Bbm7 Dbmaj7 Ab Bbm7 Dbmaj7

Keys Solo 3X

29 Ab Bbm7 Dbmaj7 Ab Bbm7 Dbmaj7

Solo Bridge

33 Abmaj9 Abdim7 Gm7 C7/G F#maj7 F#dim7 (4)

37 Fm13 Bbm11/F Abmaj7(#11) Abaug Ammaj7(b5) A7

2X

41 Ab Bbm7 Dbmaj7 Ab Bbm7 Dbmaj7

Melody 3X

45 Ab Bbm7 Dbmaj7 Ab Bbm7 Dbmaj7

Bone Solo 3X

49 Ab Bbm7 Dbmaj7 Ab Bbm7 Dbmaj7

Solo Bridge

53 Abmaj9 Abdim7 Gm7 C7/G F#maj7 F#dim7 (4)

57 Fm13 Bbm11/F Abmaj7(#11) Abaug Ammaj7(b5) A7

2X

61 Ab Bbm7 Dbmaj7 Ab Bbm7 Dbmaj7

Drum Solo 3X

65 Ab Bbm7 Dbmaj7 Ab Bbm7 Dbmaj7

Drum Solo w/Bone

69 Ab Bbm7 Dbmaj7 Ab Bbm7 Dbmaj7

Key Changes

73 A Bm7 Dmaj7 A Bm7 Dmaj7

77 Bb Cm7 Ebmaj7 Bb Cm7 Ebmaj7

Melody 3X

81 Db7 E7 Ab Bbm7 Dbmaj7

85 Ab Bbm7 Dbmaj7

The Theory

As mentioned in “The Writing,” the up-beat hits were the beginning of this whole piece. Part of what keeps “Ab” interesting is the interplay of the hits being perceived as syncopated or letting your mind be tricked into thinking they are the downbeats. This dichotomy can be toyed with by the musicians, especially the drummer, choosing whether or not to play the downbeat. Throughout the repetition of the three hits, listeners will find themselves counting both “1-AND-2-AND-3-and-4-AND,” and “1-2-3-4.”

In contrast to the conceptual complexity to the rhythm, the harmony is quite simple. The first hit is a I chord in first inversion (in the primary guitar and horn voicings). The second chord is the same voicing of a ii chord. The third, and final, hit is a IVmaj7 that is actually just the ii chord’s voicing with top note up a step. This simple voice leading gave a smoothness to the chord changes, and the top voice moving up a step is akin to the neo-soul add9 guitar voicings of the modern jazz vocabulary. Along with the smooth voice leading, the bass moves from IV to I to create a plagal cadence. Quartal bass movement provides a warmth to the harmonic progress, and is another nod to the church background of music. The plagal cadence is often called the “Amen Cadence” in reference to the IV-I tag placed at the end of many hymns to sing “AMEN.”

To keep this song from becoming stale, and to introduce more jazz harmony, I wrote the solo section bridge changes with a large amount of non-diatonic chords. Non-diatonic does not mean non-functional, though. Key elements in the bridge changes include, pedal bass, upper-neighbor diminished passing chords, and secondary function. The first two chords are Abmaj9 to Abdim. This is a direct example of the pedal bass theme of the bridge. Parallel chord qualities often normalize weird and chromatic bass function. Rather than keep the quality of the

chords and change the bass, I kept the bass and changed the chord quality. This creates a chromatic sliding effect into different functions while keeping the listener grounded in the constant bass.

The different function that the Abdim provides is the next key element of the bridge changes: upper-neighbor diminished passing chords. This name seems intimidating, but it is rather straightforward. Diminished chords most often lead up by half-step, but non-diatonic upper-neighbor tones are also very common. Combine the two together and you have a diminished chord a half-step above the target chord. In this case the Abdim is the upper-neighbor diminished passing chord tonicizing Gm.

The Gm leads us nicely into the third key element: secondary function. Gm is acting as the ii chord of Fm which is the vi in Ab. While the Abdim tonicized Gm, Gm is acting as the predominant to tonicize the vi. This leads Gm to move the dominant of vi which is C7 in Ab. What happens next is an interesting delay of the vi resolution. Rather than move directly from C7 to Fm, I take a detour through the tritone substitution of the V7/vi. A dominant chord built on the root a tritone away from another dominant chord can lead to the same resolution. In this case, C7 is acting as the V7/vi, and a root a tritone away from C is F#. The next chord is not simply an F#7, though, it is an F#maj7. The root still feels like a tritone substitution leading us to vi, but the quality does not provide dominant function. This is another step of delaying the resolution to vi. Bringing both the pedal bass, and upper-diminished chromatic passing chord back into play, the next chord change is an F#dim7. This provides chromatic motion to lead the listener to the Fm in the next bar.

After all of the delaying of resolution to the vi, I wanted to give the listener a firm base. This is why the harmonic pulse slows to a full bar of Fm13. The major 13 provides a dorian sound, which is the most common scale to use over a minor chord in jazz. The next chord is a play on this, moving the D to Db creating an F aeolian tonality. The chord is labeled as a Bbm11/F in the lead sheet because I tend to use a Bbm11 voicing in guitar and allow the bass to give context through the F. Labeling it as a Bbm11/F also creates some nice minor ideas when soloing that accent the Db as the b3 of Bbm while creating the larger feeling of moving from F dorian to F aeolian.

A common cadence throughout my writing on this album is ii-I. I perceive this cadence as a variation on the plagal IV-I without the guileless fourth/fifth bass motion. When perceiving the F aeolian section at Bbm11/F, I also attribute the movement to the next chord as ii-I function. Rather than the triadic simplicity given to the I before, I give this Ab chord the major7#11 extension to imply the lydian mode. Moving back into pedal bass manipulation of chord quality, I transition into Ab+. This really just feels like a brighter version of lydian to my ears. What was once lydian moves to lydian augmented. Rather than the 4th mode of major it becomes the 3rd mode of melodic minor. This upward chromatic motion of the fifth chord tone is then applied to the bass.

The bass moves up by half-step and the fifth moves down by half-step. This provides a chromatic enclosure a of an Adim chord. Diminished chords often feel dated to me, so to create a modern flare, I added the major seventh extension. In one last contribution to the thematic development of pedal bass in the bridge, I keep the A and move from a diminished quality to a dominant chord. The A7 acts as a straightforward tritone substitution of V7 to take us all the way

back to the original three hits beginning on an Ab triad. The complexity of the bridge is only made accessible by the repetition of the A section. The listener gets bombarded with a relentless cycle of diatonicism and accepts the chromaticism of the bridge with open arms as it breaks the monotony. Not only does the B section refresh the aural experience, but it also reinvigorates the hits as they re-enter for the next soloist.

Ab

♩ = 84

Swing Sixteenths

mf *f* *mp* *f* *ff* *ff*

3 6 9 11 14 17 20

Ab Bbm7 Dbmaj7 Ab Bbm7 Dbmaj7 Ab Bbm7 Dbmaj7 Ab Bbm7 Dbmaj7 Abmaj9 Abdim7 Gm7 C7/G F#maj7 F#dim7 Fm13 Lay Back Bbm11/F Abmaj7(#11) Abaug Ammaj7(b5) A7

Tenor Trombone

22 $A\flat$ $B\flat m7$ $D\flat maj7$ $A\flat$ $B\flat m7$ $D\flat maj7$ $A\flat$ $B\flat m7$ $D\flat maj7$ $A\flat$ $B\flat m7$ $D\flat maj7$

f

26 $A\flat$ $B\flat m7$ $D\flat maj7$ $A\flat$ $B\flat m7$ $D\flat maj7$ $A\flat$ $B\flat m7$ $D\flat maj7$

The Solo

Throughout this solo, I hoped to create central motives that could create a homebase as I progress. To ease the listener into the trombone solo, I planted myself on the major third to keep things harmonious, but the sixteenth-note triplet added an element of propulsion into the downbeat of the solo chorus. In the next statement of my solo, I introduce two themes that are referenced throughout: (C, Ab, G) set, and sixteenth note syncopated phrasing.

In set theory, a set looks something like (014), where it represents intervals that can be manipulated into many possibilities. Rather than dive into true set theory, I water it down to a core concept of grouping notes and utilizing them together. I group C, Ab, and G together as a set on which I touch back throughout the solo. In measure 3 I first introduce this grouping and I do it through sixteenth syncopation. This repeated rhythmic pattern that I played has accented notes that occur on the 2nd and 4th subdivision of the beat rather than the 1st and 3rd. Similarly to the introductory motive, this rhythmic choice was made to create forward momentum.

The first non-diatonic note appears in the 5th bar, and this touch of bebop vocabulary stems from a musical joke with Chris Rymes. I was on a week-long run of shows with a Rymes, who played trumpet on my album. As we sat around at soundcheck on this tour he picked up my trombone and played an extremely stereotypical bebop lick. This lick has become a running joke in our lives, and that is what I played in the 5th bar of my trombone solo in “Ab.” Besides just being a fun inter-musician joke, this lick is minor ii-V that perfectly sets up the 3rd of the target chord. Let’s say I used this with its normal implementation in the key of Fm. I would start on G (the root of the ii chord) go up to the b9 as a chromatic upper-neighbor tone and back down and then go to F (the b7 of the ii chord). This b7 leads perfectly by half-step down to the 3rd (E) of

the V chord, which I outline up to its b7 (Bb) to fall to the target Ab, the third of Fm. What is interesting about the use of the lick in measure 5 is that I keep all of the intervallic structure the same, and it is set up to go an Ab chord, but instead stays on a Db. To keep the over-used lick exciting, I imagine the target note rather than the target chord. I wanted to make the major 7 of Db my target note. This would make C the third of the chord to which the ii-V lick leads. Making the C a major third instead of minor, Ab would be tonicized. The ii-V of Ab is Bbm-F7, which are the chords that the lick outlines which land on C emphasizing the maj7 of Db.

Another reference to that lick comes in at m.7. This time the lick ends in a chromatic enclosure of Db on the downbeat of m.8, which creates a nice half-step fall to C, the major 3rd of Ab. This all concludes in a reference to the thematic set of notes and sixteenth syncopation. The next statement is made in contrast to the moving scalar lines of before. I hammer home nine Ebs which are acting as the 9 of the Db chord (this symmetry is purely a coincidence but I think it's intriguing). Moving from the Eb up to the F, I utilize the trombone's ability to explore microtonality. Normally Eb to F would involve three half-steps (Eb, E natural, F), but I divide the interval into 4 quarter-tones. The human ear tends to hear the direction and endpoints of phrases beyond the individual notes in the line. This is why violin players in an orchestra can fly their fingers up the neck and nail a target note without people questioning the inaccuracies leading to it. The Eb to F and back down is not for the advanced note choice, but instead it is used to exploit the phenomenon that is microtonality. Again after an odd concept, I conclude with the motives on which the solo relies.

The repetition of the A section then moves into the B section for the solo section, and the chord changes get much more complex (as discussed in "The Theory" portion above). When

tackling these chord changes, I wanted to allow their complexity to shine through without forcing my vocabulary on top of them. This led me to outline the chord tones with some straightforward voice leadings. This was in the hopes that the solo might normalize the chords to the average listener. The 3rd and 7th of any chord define its quality, and I targeted these notes throughout the bridge.

I begin the first chord of the bridge on the 3rd and move to the 7th. I repeat a very similar rhythm and adjust the C to a Cb to outline the Abdim chord. Instead of moving the maj7 down to a Gbb to be the dim7, I kept it the same to create a more modern sound. As discussed in “The Theory,” diminished seventh chords tend to feel dated, but a major seventh can real modernize and excite the diminished quality. I then anticipate the Gm7 by playing the 11 just before the downbeat. The next choices outline 3rds and 7ths, and then I again utilize an anticipation. I lead into the Fm13 with a Bb minor triad. This is an upper-structure triad that is created if you stack the 9,11,b13 of an F. I chose the Db rather than D natural to draw attention to the importance of the 13th to come. I avoided the 13th once the downbeat hit to allow the rhythm section to provide context for the dorian sound. I then affirm the change to aeolian by hitting the b13 and emphasize it throughout the next bar. The last two bars of the bridge are straightforward outlining of the chords. I keep the riff moving in m.21 and adjust the 5th up by half-step as the chord moves to an augmented quality. I end the B section by driving home the 3rd of the tritone substitution, and then hitting right on the up-beat with the rhythm section as the A section comes back.

I slow down the notes-per-measure and introduce some heavy slides into notes as I close my solo. The note choice is very simple and diatonic for the first few measures of the final A

section. In m.26 I hit a D natural to imply a touch of lydian rather than ionian sound that has been emphasized throughout the A sections. Knowing a drum solo is on its way, I began to crossfade between our solos. I wanted a build in his intensity as I lowered mine, so I decided to achieve this by a repetitive middle-register lick that fades as the drums increase activity.

Am

The Writing

Quickly labeled as “the angry one” in rehearsal, “Am” is by far the heaviest of the pieces on this album. The main riff of this theme came from a guitar pedal purchase that sent me into a heavy rock induced jam. The thick distortion brought a strong sense of minor scale usage to my ears and fingers. After improvising through many loud, aggressive, and distorted riffs, I settled on the main motif of “Am.” Knowing that my album was not going to be a hard rock album, but instead a funk induced jazz-pop instrumental project, I knew I had to tone down this main theme to get “Am” to match the aesthetic of the album.

After developing a tone that felt heavy but consistent with my style, my next challenge was defining the melody and harmony to support this riff. I wanted something that felt definitively minor, but toyed with other colors and set up soloists to explore minor tonality beyond the typical rock idiom. I came up with the harmony through upper 3-string voicings on guitar and used that to fill the space left by the riff. This space also provided a use for the vibrato bar on my guitar, allowing me to add variation to the static harmony within the gap between repetitions of the riff. After defining this harmony, I came up with the melody by recording the supportive layers and playing trombone over the top. The contrast of the heavy driving power of the distorted electric guitar with the smooth timbre of the trombone created a really pleasant conglomerate sound to my ears.

After the soloists move through the main A section of “Am,” the piece takes a drastic shift to the B section that encompasses the entire latter half of the piece. This B section is heavily

influenced by the blues-funk jams of James Brown, and my soloing style in “Am” is inspired by Fred Wesley’s energetic trombone playing. When doing a deep dive into that music, I found many songs that had this groove that I employed in the B section of “Am.” Similarly to “F,” the trick was figuring out the glue that would hold the two drastically different sections of the song together. Through use of melodic similarities and direct correlations between tempos, I melded the two together to finalize “Am.”

In this B section, the horns were finally given their time to shine. Throughout much of the album, the horns are used as stabs, pads, general background ideas, and soloists, but I knew I wanted to feature them as a unit at the forefront at some point. The B section of “Am” provided just that opportunity. Moving from an intense unison melody into a group solo, the ending of this piece really showcases the power of which this horn section is capable. The initial unison horn melody lets the listener know the piece is getting more intense and further from the comfortable melodic places of before. This melody then leads into Chris Rymes opening up the group horn solo with a very “out” lick that drives home the departure from simplicity. As each of the horns enter, intensity and tension builds to a point of near cacophony. This solo works its way into large synchronized horn hits supported heavily by Joshua Blaylock’s harmonic accompaniment on the Hammond B3. These dramatic hits bring comfort from the intensity of the group horn solo, but the extreme drive of the horn stabs still bring energy. A final hard hit cuts off the song in an abrupt ending that is both surprising and welcomed.

Am

♩ = 160

Collin Felter

Drum Intro

(4)

Guitar/Bass in

5 Am7 C(add9) E7(b9) Am7 C(add9) E7

Full Band In

9 Am7 C(add9) E7(b9) Am7 C(add9) E7

Bone Melody 4X

13 Am7 C(add9) E7(b9) Am7 C(add9) E7

Melody and Horns 4X

17 Am7 C(add9) E7(b9) Am7 C(add9) E7

Bone Solo 8X

21 Am7 C(add9) E7(b9) Am7 C(add9) E7

(4)

Guitar Solo 8X

25 Am7 C(add9) E7(b9) Am7 C(add9) E7

(4)

Bone Melody 4X

29 Am7 C(add9) E7(b9) Am7 C(add9) E7

4

Am

♩ = 80

Blues Melody 3X

33 F9 Gb9 F9 Gb9 F9 Gb9 F9 Collin Felter

Horn Solo 4X

37 F9 Gb9 F9 Gb9 F9 Gb9 F9 Gb9

Horn Hits

41 F9 Gb9 F9 Gb9 F9 Gb9 F F

The Theory

Although this main riff of the first half of the piece is definitively minor, it is ambiguous as to what form of minor is being utilized. The riff only briefly touches on an F, leaving the harmonic minor, natural minor, and descending melodic minor all still possible. Once the guitar chords come in, the dominant V chord becomes certain, leaving us with an F in the melody and G# in the harmony. That augmented second interval would lead us to believe this is a harmonic minor centric piece, but the lack of both of these happening in the same voice keeps the actual augmented second from taking place in a melodic way and fogs the lens of the harmonic minor analysis. When writing the harmony and riff, the F felt as if it existed simply as a chromatic upper neighbor to the 5 and as b9 extension above the V7 chord. These purposes were not taking the harmonic minor augmented second color into much consideration. All is settled once the trombone comes into play.

For the first bit of the trombone melody, it seems to be sticking to a Latin inspired syncopation with note choice not adding much spice, yet. The D to G in the melody gives us the b7 and #9 over the V7, but when the V7 comes back around for the second half of the riff, the trombone clearly states harmonic minor with a G# to F. This conclusive 7 to b6 of Am, and 3 to b9 over E7, gives clarity to the minor, but does not necessarily provide consonance, as an augmented second is a fairly rare interval in the modern western popular music culture. This augmented second interval is the main connective tissue between the first and second halves of this piece.

The drastic change as the song enters the last half is pretty much just a one-chord vamp on F7 with a slide up a half-step and back down. This slide could be viewed as applying a tritone

substitution of the V of F7, but it is really just common practice in the funk idiom to do this side-slipping to a chromatic neighbor and back to break up the repetition of a one-chord vamp. The B section is in half-time and uses a quarter note triplet pulse. This large rhythmic change feels like a major contrast when juxtaposed with the initial feel of the piece, but it is a fairly direct transition. The half note become the new quarter note, and the chords are placed in a quarter note triplet pattern. The change from A harmonic minor to F7 is really made possible, not by the correlation between pulses, but instead by the enharmonic congruence of the augmented second and b3 blue note.

The last melody notes played in the A section of “Am” are G# to F, which produce the harmonic minor interval of 7 to b6. When enharmonically spelled, this interval becomes Ab to F, which is the first two notes of the B section. While the notes are exactly the same, their implication is quite different. The augmented second of the A section provides a harmonic minor flair that feels dissonant and foreign while the Ab to F of the B section seems to sit firmly in the new tonality. This new tonality of F is really emphasizing F blues, of which Ab to F is b3 to 1, the first two notes of the F minor blues scale. This duality in the implications of the same two notes is what connects the A and B sections and allows the horns to move into the blues.

The melody that the horns play at the beginning of the B section is really just F blues with some chromatic passing tones added in to create depth and added tension to prepare the listener for further dissonance to come. Beyond just note choice, the horns add to this unsettling feeling through rhythmic choice. An example of this is when the alto sax and bari sax drive home the root a sixteenth note after the trombone and trumpet play up the F blues scale in a dotted eighth note pattern. The overarching effect is something that feels laid back, rough, and

unsettling. This moves to the final unison line of the horn melody which is a really “out” ii-V lick. It starts with a fairly straightforward linear F blues line, but moves down to what seems to be a D major line, but this is actually acting as the outlining of the upper portion of G melodic minor, the ii of the F that is being targeted. The lick then moves down again, but this time it moves through a C altered dominant scale, which is a continuation of the melodic minor theme as it is the seventh mode of a Db melodic minor scale. This creates an altered dominant dissonance that resolves into heavy F blues steeped hits that bring things back to a grounded place. Each of the horns brings a unique level of dissonance to the group horn solo as they move through augmented, diminished, blues, and many other interpretations of F7. This extremely harmonically explorative section culminates in the grounded hits from before returning to close the piece out in a final nod to the true blues nature of the B section of “Am.”

Am

♩ = 160

Am7 C(add9) E7(b9) Am7 C(add9) E7 *mf*

5 Am7 C(add9) E7(b9) Am7 C(add9) E7

9 Am7 C(add9) E7(b9) Am7 C(add9) E7 *f*

13 Am7 C(add9) E7(b9) Am7 C(add9) E7 Am7 C(add9) *ff* *mf*

18 E7(b9) Am7 C(add9) E7 Am7 C(add9) E7(b9)

23 Am7 C(add9) E7 Am7 C(add9) E7(b9)

27 Am7 C(add9) E7 Am7 C(add9)

30 E7(b9) Am7 C(add9) E7 Am7 *fff*

The Solo

In the opening of this solo I am thinking of an A minor pentatonic. This provides emphasis to the A minor tonality along with creating interesting extensions above the E7 when it appears in the harmony below. While this A minor focus creates a #9 and b13 above the E, it really emphasizes the home key along with a somewhat blues feel. This changes at m.6 as I move into a steady 1/8th note line that utilizes some chromaticism. A lot of this line was me thinking of target notes and approaching them in different ways. The D above the E7 is the target, and to get there I walk up chromatically from C, but I then move right back down as I wanted this line to keep moving forward. Over the Am I target the C and do a similar up and right back down motion, but this time I move diatonically. I finally hit the G# over the E7 to emphasize its presence and to contrast the Am centric beginning. To keep from the bland predictability of an E7 outline, I throw in the b5 for some added tension before resolving back to Am.

After re-entering the focus on Am diatonicism, I begin to quote the main motif from John Coltrane's, "A Love Supreme." I find myself often diving back into this masterpiece by Coltrane, and the central motif of 1-b3-1-4 (if that is how you choose to analyze it) frequently comes through my playing. M.10-13 is all a reference to this main idea from Coltrane's work. Unlike most of the other songs building to a high range, I jump right up to a higher register response to the "A Love Supreme" quote. From this higher response I gradually come back down. The upper register feels almost like a shout of energy, and as I come back down I wanted to deflate the intensity of the situation. This descending line introduces more and more space and

targets fairly straightforward chord tones. This eventually works its way all the way down to the low root in m.26.

After this major downward focused line, I knew I wanted to bring things back up before Adam's overdriven-steeped, high energy guitar solo, but I did not have many measures left. To start this building of energy, I reference the A minor pentatonic theme from the beginning statements of the solo, but bring a new intensity to them. From there I start playing heavily accented down beats, that soon switch to a dotted quarter note pulse for syncopated energy, and finally culminate in a soaring high C. The note choices as I move up are mainly derived from the A minor pentatonic theme, but there is an augmented second from F to G# to both emphasize harmonic minor and build energy through the dominant function of the E7 for Adam to take into his solo. This F to G# made me want to stick to a strongly planted root note at the end, but instead I took it up to the b3 to have a subtle amount of tension while still feeling grounded, finished, and intense.

E

The Writing

Similar to “F,” this song was birthed from modal exploration. An E is the lowest pitch available on a standard tuned guitar, and it makes for an easy pedal point over which to explore different modalities. I was specifically really inspired by Bill Evans 1958 improvised composition, “Peace Piece.” As Evans adventures quite far from the diatonicism of the simple pattern, his composition slowly turns from the ionian influenced harmony into the exploration of non-diatonic modality, but the beginning creates a really approachable atmosphere that allows the listener to prepare for the journey to come. While I was taking inspiration from this compositional technique, I knew that I wanted to further establish refined and pop-oriented boundaries to provide the listeners with comfortability before exploring advanced jazz harmony.

This led to a simple three chord vamp that made up the entirety of the A section of “E.” This progression changes harmony in predictable fashion, but it is all grounded over a constant root in the bass. This gives the listener something on which to hold, but it also creates a somewhat stagnant platform that builds an atmosphere rather than a direction. Due to this somewhat stationary harmony, I wanted the melody to provide motion and separation. This idea came from another inspiration, Cory Wong. Cory Wong has a very unique style of guitar playing that involves a lot of simple note choices with light and choppy rhythms that create a signature bounce to his sound. Taking that bounce, applying the note choices to my harmonic progression, and coming up with my own singable melody, the main A section of “E” was completed.

In the recording the acoustic guitar begins the A section, but eventually a clean electric guitar and two trombone tracks are added to take over the melody. This slow stacking created more movement to the stagnant harmony and provided a refreshing timbral change to the repetition of the melody. After this repetition, I wanted to move from the extreme diatonicism into more advanced jazz harmony. As I was playing through some different progressions on guitar trying to figure out what chords I wanted to utilize to take the piece in a divergent direction, my ears gravitated towards a set of chords that felt quite familiar. It was not long before I realized that I was playing a small portion of the chord changes to the jazz standard, “There Will Never Be Another You.” Writing new melodies over existing chord progressions is a really common feature in the jazz idiom, and it is called a contrafact. Taking this idea of a contrafact, I wanted to do more than simply utilize the exact chord changes from “There Will Never Be Another You.” To do this, I only took a portion of the harmony of the piece and then drastically changed the harmonic rhythm. By varying the chords by differing their rhythmic placement, emphasis was put on new chords and “E” was given a more modern feel from the standard swing sensibility of “There Will Never Be Another You.” I also wanted these chord changes to add something interesting to separate the soloists and give them more advanced harmony to explore. This B section of “E” is a departure from the simplicity, but it also helps to bring comfort and excitement to the return of that said simplicity as the A sections return.

♩ = 82

E

Collin Felter

Intro

B/E

A/E

E

(4)

Full Band With Melody 4X

B/E

A/E

E

5

(4)

9

D#m7(b9) G#7(b13) C#m7 C7 Bm7 E7

13

Amaj7 D7(#11) Emaj7

17

B/E A/E E

(4)

Keys Solo 4X

B/E

A/E

E

21

(4)

25

D#m7(b9) G#7(b13) C#m7 C7 Bm7 E7

(4)

29

Amaj7 D7(#11) Emaj7

(8)

Melody
33 B/E A/E E (4)

Bone Solo 4X
37 B/E A/E (4)

41 D#m7(b9) G#7(b13) C#m7 C7 Bm7 E7 (4)

45 Amaj7 D7(#11) Emaj7 (8)

Melody
49 B/E A/E E (4)

Piano Solo 4X
53 B/E A/E (4)

57 D#m7(b9) G#7(b13) C#m7 C7 Bm7 E7 (4)

61 Amaj7 D7(#11) Emaj7 (8)

Melody
65 B/E A/E E (4)

69 D#m7(b9) G#7(b13) C#m7 C7 Bm7 E7

73 Amaj7 D7(#11) Emaj7

77 B/E A/E E

81 Emaj7 rit.....

The Theory

The harmonic progression of the A sections in “E” is a V-IV-I. This progression is a popular turnaround at the end of a blues song, but in those instances I feel as if the IV is a passing chord, and the dominant function of V-I is still the most prevalent. In “E” the tempo is fairly slow and the harmonic rhythm is steady, giving more emphasis to the IV-I plagal cadence. I also create separation from the blues tradition of this turnaround by making the IV chord a maj7 quality rather than dominant. The plagal nature is further emphasized by turning the I chord into a sus for a moment in the supporting guitar part. Beyond the importance of this progression, all of these chords are occurring over an E in the lowest voice. This firmly plants the root in the listener’s ear, but it also moves the quality of the V and IV chords to a more ambiguous place. The V chord over I could feel like a Imaj9 chord, and the IVmaj7 chord over I creates a I(add13add11). This feeling of the major 3rd and natural 11 is an often avoided point of tension, but placing the 11 in a lower voice gives more power to maj7 interval between the two rather than b9 dissonance when this interval is inverted.

Atop this harmony sits a fairly bright and pleasing melody between the trombone tracks and electric guitar. The first melodic segment is just an outline of the B major chord, and then I take the exact intervallic structure and move it down a whole step to outline the A major, IV chord. The final statement of the melody occurring over the I chord starts by moving up the arpeggiation of the chord, but it concludes by moving down the E major pentatonic starting on the 9 in the highest voice and harmonizing it in fourths. Thirds and fifths are common harmonizations of a melody; by using fourths a unique, but comforting sound, is created. This harmonization technique can be heard regularly in modern neo-soul guitar playing.

As discussed in “The Writing,” the harmony of the B section is a variation of a contrafact of “There Will Never Be Another You.” The opening to this section can be analyzed as a minor ii-V of vi, which then moves chromatically down through a tritone substitution of the V of the ii of IV. This resolves expectantly to a ii-V of IV. From IV, the harmony moves to a bVII, which could be analyzed as modal borrowing from minor, but the extensions keep me from fully stepping into this camp. The bVII to I progression is used quite frequently in many forms of commercial music, and it is often referred to as a backdoor dominant (again the extensions keep me from feeling complete in this analysis). Moving back to the beginning of the B section, the melody and extensions must now be factored into this skeleton of a harmonic progression. The D#m7(b5b9) is at its core a half-diminished chord diatonic to the key of C#m, which is the target chord that is being tonicized. The melody touches on the E, which informed the clarification of the b9 extension in the harmonic analysis. The melody then moves down stepwise to the 3rd of the G#7(b13), and again an upper-neighbor tone has me labelling the extension of b13 atop this dominant chord. The melody then planes the same two note pattern down chromatically as the harmony passes through the C7. Placing the C7 on the off beat created a hesitation and definite direction as it moves to the next downbeat. Once on the next downbeat, the note choices of the melody are fairly straightforward for the duration of the bar, but the next measure begins the emphasis of the G#. This begins on the IV chord, giving the maj7 importance. This G# then stays in the top voice of the chord as we move to the D7, which is the purpose of the #11 extension. This G# over the D7 is the reason why both the backdoor dominant and modal borrowing analyzations of this chord feel incomplete. Instead, I would label this as a backdoor lydian dominant. The bVII to I cadence gives the backdoor dominance importance, while a lydian

dominant quality is formed by utilizing the fourth mode of melodic minor, giving the modal borrowing camp credit. Backdoor lydian dominant feels like the most encompassing definition of this cadence at the end of the B sections in “E.”

E

♩ = 82
B/E

A/E

E

5

mf ————— f mf

B/E A/E gliss. E

Detailed description: This system contains measures 5 through 8. It begins with a bass clef, a key signature of three sharps (F#, C#, G#), and a 4/4 time signature. The tempo is marked as quarter note = 82. The music features a melodic line with eighth and sixteenth notes, often beamed together. Measure 5 starts with a B/E chord. Measure 6 has an A/E chord. Measure 7 has an A/E chord and a glissando (gliss.) over a chord. Measure 8 has an E chord. Dynamics range from mezzo-forte (mf) to forte (f).

9

B/E A/E E

Detailed description: This system contains measures 9 through 11. Measure 9 has a B/E chord. Measure 10 has an A/E chord. Measure 11 has an E chord. The melodic line continues with eighth and sixteenth notes, some with accents (>).

12

B/E

ff f

Detailed description: This system contains measures 12 and 13. Measure 12 has a B/E chord and a long, sweeping melodic line with many notes. Measure 13 has a B/E chord and a shorter melodic line. Dynamics are marked as fortissimo (ff) and forte (f).

14

A/E E

Detailed description: This system contains measures 14 and 15. Measure 14 has an A/E chord and a long, sweeping melodic line. Measure 15 has an E chord and a shorter melodic line. Dynamics are marked as fortissimo (ff) and forte (f).

16

D#m7(b9) G#7(b13)

mf mf

Detailed description: This system contains measures 16 through 18. Measure 16 has a D#m7(b9) chord. Measure 17 has a G#7(b13) chord. Measure 18 has a G#7(b13) chord. Dynamics are marked as mezzo-forte (mf).

19

C#m7 C7 Bm7 E7 Amaj7 D7(#11)

Detailed description: This system contains measures 19 through 22. Measure 19 has a C#m7 chord. Measure 20 has a C7 chord. Measure 21 has a Bm7 chord. Measure 22 has an E7 chord. Measure 23 has an Amaj7 chord. Measure 24 has a D7(#11) chord. Dynamics are marked as mezzo-forte (mf).

23

Emaj7 B/E

f

Detailed description: This system contains measures 23 and 24. Measure 23 has an Emaj7 chord. Measure 24 has a B/E chord. Dynamics are marked as forte (f).

The Solo

I begin this solo with what seems to be a staple of my soloing style on this album, a sixteenth note syncopated line. This time the line is downward in direction and follows an E major pentatonic scale in reference to the end of the A section melodies of the song. This syncopated rhythm that the E major pentatonic occupies could be seen as a 4:3 polyrhythm, where four melody pulses happen over what would take the main beat three pulses. This is complicated by the fact that the beat begins on the second 1/16th of the beat, further syncopating the polyrhythm. As the lick reaches its end, it gets all the way down to a low G# which sits in a register that is often neglected in soloistic tenor trombone playing. The next couple of bars transition from an opening motif to the actual beginning of solo development.

These first few bars are fairly simple ideas that attempt to be melodic and musical while still feeling original and organic. M.6 gives the solo its first dose of chromaticism through the #9 moving up to the major 3rd. Just as the sixteenth note syncopation seems to be a theme throughout my solos, this chromaticism between the b3 and major 3 seems to creep up often throughout my trombone improvisation on this album. As this solo reaches m.9, I begin utilizing 3 to 1 motion over the B major chord in a syncopated fashion. This eventually chromatically targets a C# which falls to A. This final C# falling to A closes the riff through the exact same 3 to 1 motion but now over the A major.

The solo then quickly moves back into the syncopated patterns of before, but this time it sticks to simple 2-3 note groupings for the pattern. This all targets a G# right at the top of m.13. This G# occurs over the B chord which would seem to feel like a 13 over the chord, but the movement from the recurring Es to the G# is meant to highlight that all of these chords are

occurring over an E. Despite the V-IV-I motion, E is still a strong root of each of these chords, and this G# is meant to act as a strong major 3rd consonance over that root rather than B major.

This then moves yet again into the syncopated patterns of before, but this time it focuses on a repeated F#. This F# is followed by a small flip to add dimension to the repeated pattern, this flip falls down to an E which moves right back up to an F#. This repetition is meant to create energy as the piece moves towards the B section. The pattern changes slightly, but it all culminates in a final F# as we enter the B section. The F# was acting as the 9 over the E, but it serves as the target b3 of the D#ø7. Since the chords of the B section are much more involved than the harmony of the A section, I wanted to create simple lines that targeted chord tones to help normalize these more complex chord changes.

M.18 sees me moving down to a C which is really just an enharmonic spelling of a B#, the major 3rd of the G#7. This theme of simplifying my solo lines to normalize more complicated changes can be heard throughout most of the album as I try to make jazz harmony more approachable to the common music listener. This can be seen yet again in m.19 as I stick right on another chord tone, this time being the 5th of the C#m7. Adding impact to the syncopated hit of the C7, I hit right with it in my solo, moving the G# down a half-step to act as the 5 of the C7. Staying true to the chord tone approach to these changes, the F# and G# of m.20 are the 5th and then 3rd of the harmony over which they are respectively sitting. This moves into something more exciting, but still very within the chord change of Amaj7. Focusing on the A to G#, I wanted to create a catchy melody that could move from the Amaj7 into the backdoor lydian dominant chord. Initially this melody acts as the 1 to 7, but it moves into the role of 5 to #11 showcasing the characteristic note of the D7(#11). To conclude the trombone solo, I finish with a

final syncopated 4:3 polyrhythm displaced by a 1/16th note. This is the same concept as the opening riff, but it moves in the opposite direction. The opening statement moves down into the solo while this closing riff moves up and outward sending the piece on into the next soloist.

Gymnopédie

The Writing

This final track of my album is the one non-original composition of the seven pieces. The melody and harmony of this track are a derivation of Erik Satie's 1888 composition, "Gymnopédie no. 1." Erik Satie was a very interesting character and really differed from the stereotypes that modern society often prescribes to the classical music tradition. Satie comes from the avant-garde and minimalist movement that was happening in the French music scene at the turn of the 20th century, and this movement was a clear departure from the formalities of the music tradition happening before. Satie was also the leading proponent of what was coined, "furniture music." This music was composed specifically to be background music. "Gymnopédie no. 1" is a perfect example of Satie's "furniture music" mentality. It is this leaning into the progression of the future and departure from tradition that has kept Satie as a constant musical inspiration of mine and many others in our modern era.

This specific piece of his is something that I find myself often playing and manipulating into different styles. It was through this process that I came up with a funk-infused reworking of Satie's composition. The original piece was a slow melancholic melody that seemed to barely float along. I paid homage to this original form in the acoustic guitar intro of my song, but I move this recognizably gloomy atmosphere into a more driving funk feel. Similar to "F," this transition between feels took some math and forethought, but once in the new funk feel, there is no turning back to the slow state of before.

The funk version of the piece keeps the Satie inspiration to simply the harmony and melody, but the feel is from a completely different musical place. Guitarists like Nile Rogers, Jimmy Nolen, and Al McKay are a few of the funk masters that set up incredible grooves over simple repetitive chords. I love the simple yet intoxicatingly interesting funk grooves that those guitarists would create. The repetition of the harmony in the main section of Erik Satie's piece was the perfect platform to explore this funk guitar inspiration of mine. It was through this combination of Satie's melody and harmony along with the unique funk guitar chords, rhythms, and tones that my derivative work, "Gymnopédie," was born.

♩ = 60

Gymnopedie No. 1

Collin Felter

Acoustic Intro 3X

Amaj7 Emaj7 Amaj7 Emaj7

Musical staff for Acoustic Intro 3X. The staff is in treble clef with a key signature of three sharps (F#, C#, G#) and a 3/4 time signature. It contains four measures of rhythmic notation represented by diagonal slashes. The first measure is marked with an Amaj7 chord, the second with Emaj7, the third with Amaj7, and the fourth with Emaj7. The staff ends with a double bar line and a repeat sign. A circled number (4) is placed below the staff.

♩ = 90

Full Band Intro

Amaj7 Emaj7 Amaj7 Emaj7

Musical staff for Full Band Intro. The staff is in treble clef with a key signature of three sharps and a 4/4 time signature. It contains four measures of rhythmic notation represented by diagonal slashes. The first measure is marked with an Amaj7 chord, the second with Emaj7, the third with Amaj7, and the fourth with Emaj7. The staff ends with a double bar line and a repeat sign. A circled number (4) is placed below the staff.

Melody 3X

Amaj7 Emaj7 Amaj7 Emaj7

Musical staff for Melody 3X. The staff is in treble clef with a key signature of three sharps and a 4/4 time signature. It contains four measures of rhythmic notation represented by diagonal slashes. The first measure is marked with an Amaj7 chord, the second with Emaj7, the third with Amaj7, and the fourth with Emaj7. The staff ends with a double bar line and a repeat sign. A circled number (4) is placed below the staff.

Guitar Solo 3X

Amaj7 Emaj7 Amaj7 Emaj7

Musical staff for Guitar Solo 3X. The staff is in treble clef with a key signature of three sharps and a 4/4 time signature. It contains four measures of rhythmic notation represented by diagonal slashes. The first measure is marked with an Amaj7 chord, the second with Emaj7, the third with Amaj7, and the fourth with Emaj7. The staff ends with a double bar line and a repeat sign. A circled number (4) is placed below the staff.

Solo Bridge

G#m7 C#m7 F#m7 B7sus4

Musical staff for Solo Bridge. The staff is in treble clef with a key signature of three sharps and a 4/4 time signature. It contains four measures of rhythmic notation represented by diagonal slashes. The first measure is marked with a G#m7 chord, the second with C#m7, the third with F#m7, and the fourth with B7sus4. The staff ends with a double bar line and a repeat sign. A circled number (4) is placed below the staff.

Bone Solo 3X

Em7 E7 Amaj7 Emaj7

Musical staff for Bone Solo 3X. The staff is in treble clef with a key signature of three sharps and a 4/4 time signature. It contains four measures of rhythmic notation represented by diagonal slashes. The first measure is marked with an Em7 chord, the second with E7, the third with Amaj7, and the fourth with Emaj7. The staff ends with a double bar line and a repeat sign.

Solo Bridge

G#m7 C#m7

Musical staff for Solo Bridge. The staff is in treble clef with a key signature of three sharps and a 4/4 time signature. It contains four measures of rhythmic notation represented by diagonal slashes. The first measure is marked with a G#m7 chord, and the second with C#m7. The staff ends with a double bar line and a repeat sign. A circled number (4) is placed below the staff.

29 F#m7

B7sus4

Em7

E7

Musical staff for Solo Bridge. The staff is in treble clef with a key signature of three sharps and a 4/4 time signature. It contains four measures of rhythmic notation represented by diagonal slashes. The first measure is marked with an F#m7 chord, the second with B7sus4, the third with Em7, and the fourth with E7. The staff ends with a double bar line and a repeat sign. A circled number (4) is placed below the staff.

BONE MELODY

33 Amaj7 Emaj7 Amaj7 Emaj7 (4)

Piano Solo 3X

37 Amaj7 Emaj7 (4)

Solo Bridge

41 G#m7 C#m7 F#m7 B7sus4 (4)

Aux Perc Solo

45 Em7 E7 Amaj7 Emaj7

Melody Out

49 Amaj7 Emaj7 Amaj7 Emaj7 (4)

53 Amaj7 1. Emaj7 2. Emaj7

The Theory

“Gymnopédie” focuses on two primary chords, Amaj7 to Emaj7. Erik Satie’s, “Gymnopédie no.1” was originally in D major, but I wanted to utilize the open strings at the bottom register of the guitar so I transposed it up a whole step, while keeping the IVmaj7 to Imaj7 relationship the exact same. The melody above these two chords stays seemingly diatonic, but it is hard to really define the tonic of this piece. I just analyzed the chords as a IVmaj7 to Imaj7, but an analysis of Imaj7 to Vmaj7 is also justifiable. The cyclical nature of the two chord vamp creates ambiguity through repetition. A IV to I plagal cadence is less strong than the V to I dominant function, but IVmaj7 to Imaj7 stays completely diatonic, while Imaj7 to Vmaj7 would call for Lydian to be accepted as the tonic mode. It is through the diatonic nature of the IV to I motion, along with my natural fondness of quartal movement that made me initially analyze the progression in this fashion.

In homage to Satie’s composition, the intro of my song is a slow 3/4 acoustic guitar portrayal of “Gymnopédie no.1” at 60bpm. To transition into a funk feel, I knew that I needed to move to a 4/4 time signature and bump up the tempo, but I did not want to lose the original feel of the melody. To accomplish this shift with a constant melody, I wanted the quarter note melodic pulse of the 3/4 melody to become the quarter note triplet in the new funk inspired 4/4. To allow for this change, the first tempo needed to be $\frac{2}{3}$ the tempo of the 4/4 section, so this placed the funk feel at 90bpm. After all of this effort to keep the melody the same as the original, I altered it in the trombone to be closer to a dotted quarter note pulse rather than a true quarter note triplet.

After this change in feel happens, the melody is played through a couple of times before moving into the solo section of the piece. The solo section is what finally brings alteration to the repetitive Amaj7 to Emaj7 harmonic pattern. At the end of each solo, a B section solo bridge comes into play, and this is also inspired by the chord changes in Satie's original composition. It is a sort of variance of the typical iii-vi-ii-V-I circle of fourths progression. The roots of the B section chord changes stay true in the progression, but the chord qualities are modified to create some new functions. The initial iii-vi-ii are all diatonic seventh chords in E major, but the B7sus4 creates the first departure from the norm. This V chord still has dominant function and resolves to tonic, but the suspension on the 4 removes some of the tension and resolution. Rather than the 3rd of the V resolving up to "do", it is replaced by the tonic being given away in the V chord removing the anticipation as it is already prominent in the listeners ear. The next surprise falls right after as the tonic chord is minor rather than major. The E already in the V chord helps to normalize this change by keeping a common tone, but the minor quality is still unexpected.

In a minor key, it is common to swap the ultimate i chord for its parallel major I. This is labeled as a Picardy third, but this is not nearly as common in its reverse form of major to minor. A Picardy third normally gives the feeling of brightening the tonality and bringing total resolution, so it is expected that this reverse form would hold opposite meaning. The Em we are given darkens the sound and lets the listener know that, despite dominant function, the progression is not yet settled. This is confirmed with the E staying constant as the chord moves from minor quality to dominant. This final tension of the E7 sets up the song to go back into the A section as it acts as the V7 of IV in the key of E. This V7 leading back to the top adds further ambiguity to the tonality, as the strong sense of resolution is on an Amaj7, giving justification to

the analyzation of an A major tonic chord. Nonetheless, this B section takes the listener through a brief but powerful aside from the repetitious pattern of the A section. The chords are not what is completely expected, and the phrase length is six measures rather than the typical four. This departure from the expected sets up the next solos with a fresh palette, just as that bite of ginger prepares the sushi eater for the next roll.

Gymnopedie

♩ = 90

mf

Amaj7 Emaj7 Amaj7

4 *f* 3

Amaj7 Emaj7 Amaj7

7 *mp*

10 Emaj7 Amaj7

12 Emaj7 G#m7 *f*

14 C#m7 F#m7 B7sus4

17 Em7 E7

The Solo

The cyclical melancholy feeling induced by the chord changes in “Gymnopédie” is meant to be held true in this trombone solo. Cole’s guitar solo is incredibly tasteful while bringing a definite energy that drives right into my solo. Knowing I needed to tame this energy in between two extremely talented soloists. This contrast from the driven electric guitar to smooth trombone timbre dictated a lot of my musical choices as I approached my improvisation. The opening of this solo begins with an upper structure seventh chord over the Amaj7. I outline a G#m7 over the Amaj7 which provides the 9, #11, and 13 extensions, giving a sense Lydian modality to the chord. Similar to my opening statement in “E,” this arpeggiation’s rhythm consists of dotted 1/8th notes that produce a 4:3 polyrhythm displaced by a 1/16th note. After this opening statement I used the next couple of measures to really create certainty in the E major tonality rather than A major. The lines are smooth but driven as the melody moves around an E major scale.

Further self-referencing, m.4 is a direct quote of the ending of the A section melody in my piece, “E.” All of the other songs on the album are in different keys (hence the names), and I wanted to showcase that unique similarity between this track and “E.” After this self-quote, I move up to the upper register and utilize simple note choices while manipulating the rhythm to add variation and momentum. This eventually fades in m.8 as I move down an E major pentatonic scale at an 1/8th note pulse that is placed on the weak 1/16th beat. This descending line concludes on a C# emphasizing the major 3rd of the Amaj rather than the constant E major exclusivity of before. This relaxed lower register reaches down even further as I hit a low G# and begin the gradual process of rebuilding the intensity. I build back up using the same syncopation

methods that can be found throughout this album, but then I move to a more straightforward constant 1/16th note line involving a two note pattern.

Knowing that the B section was coming, I wanted to create a repetitive pattern that could effectively move into the new chord changes in a normalizing, yet invigorating, fashion. The D# to C# beginning on beat 4 of m. 11 are the beginning of this pattern with the D# being the accented focus. While the pulse is a steady 1/16th, the grouping of two D#s and one C# creates a syncopated feeling through the accenting of every three notes. These two notes acts as the #11 to 3 over the A, to maj7 to 6 over the E, and finally the 5 to 11 over the G#m7. This G#m7 is the downbeat of the B section, but rather than use a lick to target the chord change, I make it a part of a repeated line from measures earlier to increase intensity into the new section. This hanging over of the pattern makes the chord change itself become the exciting moment rather than a flashy line above it. I wanted the cyclical nature of the A section chord changes to be broken by the new chord rather than force my trombone solo to break it. Satie's writing already did that job for me, and I wanted to highlight the fantastic chord changes that he had already dictated.

As the B section unfolds, I quickly move back into my syncopated rhythms of before. My note choices through this syncopation is simply arpeggiating the chords in m. 14-16. This culminates in a big b3 to 1 on the downbeat of m. 17. I wanted to really emphasize the reverse Picardy third occurring through the resolution to the i. Rather than simply resolve this up to G# on the next downbeat as the Em turns to E7, I wanted to create an upward moving line that adjusted as it moved through the chord change, but not stopping on a target of the E7. I continue moving this line up adjusting for the change to dominant function and it finally reaches its high point of F#. This F# is the 9 over the E7 giving it a feeling of completion without total

resolution. I hold this note over into the melody, adding a subtle obscurity as it is the 13 above the downbeat of the Amaj7 at the top of the melody. This final note adds a diatonic color that can be held through the dominant and its resolution without being a chord tone of either, further exploring the colors that Satie employed in his original composition.