

Jazz Guitarist Charlie Christian's Influence on Wes Montgomery's Improvisational Style

Using Imitation to Develop Innovation

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The Pursuit For Originality

- Paul Berliner writes in his book, *Thinking in Jazz*, that the pursuit of originality is a highly valued goal.
- Originality often corresponds to how well the artist moves through the stages of:

Imitation, Assimilation, and Innovation

- Only a few elite artists actually pass from the imitation stage to innovator.
- Many remain sounding like the artist they choose to model themselves after.

Paul F. Berliner, *Thinking In Jazz: The Infinite Art of Improvisation*, (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press), 1994.

The Need for a Model

“Every musician, until he has mastered himself and his instrument, needs a model...No artist creates in a vacuum, totally isolated from all influences, he must recognize his *dependence upon his surroundings and upon his heritage*; he must study the styles of accepted masters... Young musicians play records of their favorite musicians in order to *absorb techniques and personal expressions*... I wore out parts of Charlie Christian recordings.”

- Wes Montgomery from the introduction to the book *Wes Montgomery: Jazz Guitar Method* (1968)

Wes Montgomery's Impact on Jazz

- Pat Metheny heard Wes Montgomery's playing going beyond jazz. It left a “sonic residue that has pervaded all of music, not just jazz.”
- Jazz critic Ralph Gleason wrote that Wes was “the best thing that has happened to the guitar since Charlie Christian.”
- Jim Hall called Wes Montgomery “the rarest of all musicians, an innovator.”

Richard Niles, *The Pat Metheny Interviews: The Inner Workings of His Creativity Revealed*, ed. Ronny S. Schiff. Milwaukee (WI: Hal Leonard Books, 2009), 14.

Imitation, Assimilation, Innovation

How Does Imitation-Assimilation Help Creativity?

- Imitation helps artists learn traditions of jazz
- Traditions include stylistic traits like vocabulary, phrasing, tone, articulations, and technique
- Absorb (Assimilate) elusive musical attributes and experience periodic breakthroughs of self-awareness
- Begin to deliberately vary from ideas learned from imitating
- Develop the ability to choose alternatives
- Begin to cultivate the ability to precisely imagine ideas and immediately recreate them

Purpose and Process

- What unique characteristics in Wes Montgomery's approach to dominant harmony can be traced back to his imitation of Charlie Christian
- Identify similarities in both guitarists' melodic and harmonic treatment of dominant harmonies (V7, V7/__, ii-V, diminished)
- Compare usage of vocabulary, harmonic approach, and melodic content
- Examine ways Montgomery varied from Christian's foundation

Five Main Aspects Compared

1. Scale Choices
2. Arpeggio Usage
3. Use of Chromatic Pitches
4. Formulas and Patterns
5. Harmonic Resolutions

Charlie Christian



- Born, July 29, 1916, raised in Oklahoma City, OK
- Family was all musical, father was a guitarist and blind
- Was playing professionally 1934 age of 18, began experimenting with electric amplification
- 1937 purchased first electric guitar, Gibson ES-150
- August 1939, hired by Benny Goodman. Played and recorded extensively with the Goodman Sextet and some with the big band
- Died of complications with tuberculosis and pneumonia on March 2, 1942 at age of 26
- Total time performing and recording for mass audience was only about 18 months

Wes Montgomery



- Born John Leslie Montgomery, March 6, 1923, Indianapolis, IN
- Musical family, was bought a tenor guitar (4-strings) when he was 12.
- Bought first six-string guitar age of 20 after hearing Christian's recording of "Solo Flight"
- Began learning Christian solos from recordings was playing solos in Club 440
- 1948-1950 works in the Lionel Hampton Big Band
- 1950-1957 returns to Indianapolis
- Dec. 30, 1957 records with brothers for first official session
- 1959 signs with Riverside, works professionally as guitarist
- 1964-1968 records more commercial music with Verve and A&M Records
- Dies June 15, 1968 of heart attack at the age of 45

Why Did Montgomery Choose Charlie Christian?

- It was Christian's playing that inspired Montgomery to become a jazz guitarist. He listened to Les Paul and Django Reinhardt, but they were not playing anything new, "just guitar."
- Was not interested in jazz guitar until hearing Christian play at the age of 20 (1943)
- "[Christian] said so much on the records I don't care what instrument a cat played, if he didn't understand and didn't feel, and really didn't get with the things that Charlie Christian was doing, he was a pretty poor musician...[Christian] was so far ahead." – Wes Montgomery
- Montgomery stated that a guitarist needs someone to help him learn the guitar because "it's hard to get something on your own."
- Wes Montgomery could not read music
- Admits that "[he did not] know the chords from seeing their names on paper." It was only after hearing them that he was able to "get the idea."

Ralph J. Gleason, "DB Archives: July 20, 1961: Wes Montgomery," *Down Beat* (February 2009), 44-45.

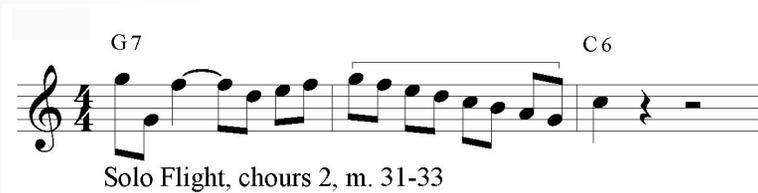
Scales

Favored arpeggios to scales. Both favored the Mixolydian Mode, but Montgomery used other scales to increase chromatic tension.

- **Christian** favored Mixolydian and often descended from root or ends on the root
- Did not favor ascending the scale



Two musical staves in 4/4 time. The first staff, for "Breakfast Feud, chorus 1, m. 7", features a B-flat major chord (Bb7) and a descending eighth-note scale: B4, A4, G4, F4, E4, D4, C4. The second staff, for "Shivers, chorus 1, m. 7", features an A-flat major chord (Ab7) and a descending eighth-note scale: Ab4, Gb4, F4, Eb4, D4, C4.



A musical staff in 4/4 time for "Solo Flight, chours 2, m. 31-33". It shows an ascending eighth-note scale from G3 to G4, followed by a descending eighth-note scale from G4 to G3. The first measure is marked with a G7 chord, and the final measure is marked with a C6 chord.



A musical staff in 4/4 time for "Honeysuckle Rose, m.3-4". It features an ascending eighth-note scale from Ab4 to Ab5, marked with an A-flat major chord (Ab7).



A musical staff in 4/4 time for "Guy's Got to Go, chorus 1, m.18-19". It features a descending eighth-note scale from D5 to D3, marked with D7 and G7 chords.

Scales

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- Did not favor ascending the scale

B^b7
Breakfast Feud, chorus 1, m. 7

A^b7
Shivers, chorus 1, m. 7

- **Montgomery** used Mixolydian, but rarely started on the root and would ascend and descend

G7
Airegin, chorus 3, m. 46-47

G7 C6
Solo Flight, chorus 2, m. 31-33

B^b7 Bm7
West Coast Blues, chorus 1, m. 5-7

- Use Mixolydian over ii-V progressions (harmonic generalization)

A^b7
Honeysuckle Rose, m. 3-4

E7 B^bm7 E^b7 Am7
Missile Blues, chorus 2, m. 20

D7 G7
Guy's Got to Go, chorus 1, m. 18-19

Other Scales Used By Wes Montgomery

Melodic, Harmonic Minor, Diminished, Pentatonic

- Looked ways to create greater tension and more altered upper extensions
- Would ascend the scale, but leave one note out

Billie's Bounce, chorus 1, m. 10 Billie's Bounce, chorus 2, m. 21-22

Four on Six, chorus 3, m. 39

- Harmonic Minor

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Four on Six, chorus 3, m. 39

- Harmonic Minor

Yesterdays, chorus 1, m. 13-16

- Used **Altered Scale** (seventh mode of melodic minor)

Ecaroh, chorus 1, m. 18-19

Missile Blues, chorus 2, m. 22-23

- **Half-Whole Diminished Scale**

Airegin, chorus 2, m. 66-67

- **Lydian Dominant** (fourth mode of melodic minor)

D-Natural Blues, chorus 2, m. 17

Other Scales Used By Wes

Pentatonic and Blues

- Pentatonic scales not as strongly rooted in Christian's playing. Wes would use a minor pentatonic with added chromatic passing tones (blue notes) natural-3rd and flat-5th regularly.

D^bm7 A7 A^b7 D^bm7 A7 A^b7 D^bm7

Bock to Bock, chorus 1, m. 1-6

D^bm7 A7 A^b7 D^bm7 A7 A^b7 D^bm7

Bock to Bock, chorus 2, m. 33-37

F7 B^b7 F7

Billie's Bounce, chorus 1, m. 1-2

B^b7 F7

Billie's Bounce, chorus 2, m. 17-19

B^b7 F7

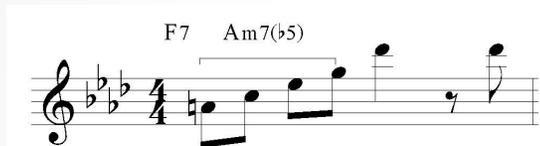
Billie's Bounce, chorus 1, m. 5-7

Arpeggios

Arpeggios widely used by both Christian and Montgomery
Both share strong resemblances in use of arpeggios.

Charlie Christian

- Arpeggiate up diminished triad or half-diminished seventh chord from the third of the dominant



Seven Come Eleven, chorus 1, m. 22



Solo Flight, chorus 4, m. 73-74

- Favored resolving into the third via half step (7-3 resolution)

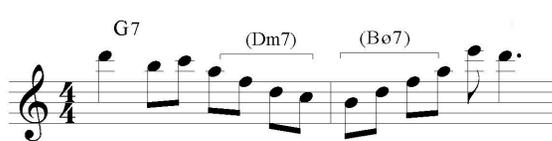


Gone With "What" Wind, chorus 1, m. 4-5 Chorus 2, m. 17-18

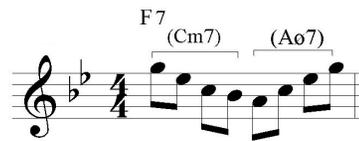


Honeysuckle Rose, chorus 1, m. 22-23

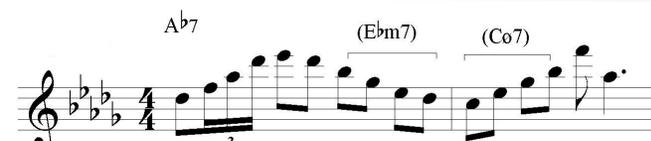
- Outlined the ii chord, descending, to lead into 7-3 resolution



Solo Flight, chorus 2, m. 25-26



Benny's Bugle, chorus 1, m. 21



Lips Flips, chorus 2, m. 45-46

Arpeggios

Wes Montgomery

- Also favored diminished and half-diminished arpeggiating up from the 3rd of dominant

Montgomeryland Funk, chorus 1, m. 3-5

- Fully diminished seventh arpeggio from the 3rd to accent flat-9th of the chord

Ecaroh, chorus 1, m. 17

Airegin, chorus 2, m. 39-40

Airegin, chorus 1, m. 24-26

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Montgomeryland Funk, chorus 1, m. 3-5

- Fully diminished seventh arpeggio from the 3rd to accent flat-9th of the chord

Ecaroh, chorus 1, m. 17 Airegin, chorus 2, m. 39-40 Airegin, chorus 1, m. 24-26

- Would also outline the ii chord and favored 7-3 resolution, Wes favored arpeggiating up the ii chord

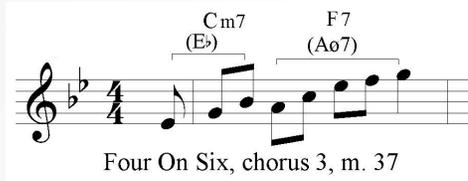
Four On Six, chorus 5, m. 73

Four on Six, chorus 2, m. 24

Arpeggios

Wes Montgomery

- Would play up a major triad based on the third of the minor chord



Musical notation for "Four On Six, chorus 3, m. 37". The notation is in 4/4 time with a key signature of two flats (Bb and Eb). The melody consists of the notes G4, A4, Bb4, C5, D5, E5, F5, G5. Brackets above the notes indicate the underlying chords: Cm7 (with Eb) for the first four notes and F7 (with Ab) for the last four notes.

Four On Six, chorus 3, m. 37



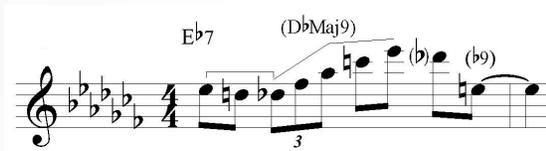
Musical notation for "Missile Blues, chorus 1, m. 8". The notation is in 4/4 time with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The melody consists of the notes Bb4, C5, D5, Eb5, F5, G5, Ab5, Bb5. Brackets above the notes indicate the underlying chords: Bbm7 for the first four notes and Eb7 (with Gm7(b5)) for the last four notes.

Missile Blues, chorus 1, m. 8

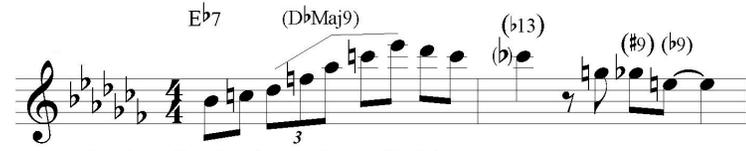
Arpeggios

Wes Montgomery

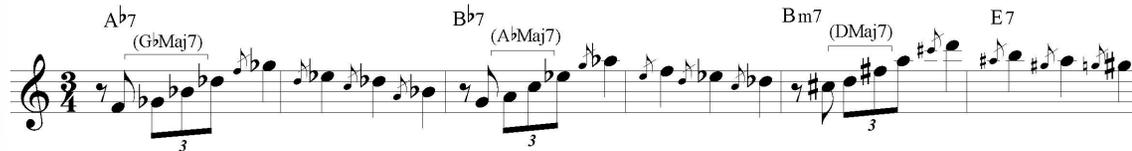
- Played major 7th and 9th arpeggios built off the flat-7th of the dominant (as if a ii chord was present)



Bock to Bock, chorus 1, m. 21



Bock to Bock, chorus 2, m. 53-54

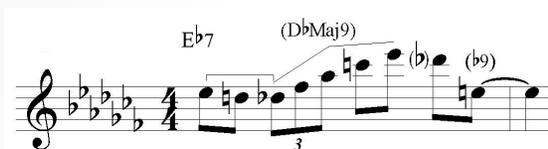


West Coast Blues, chorus 2, m. 27-32

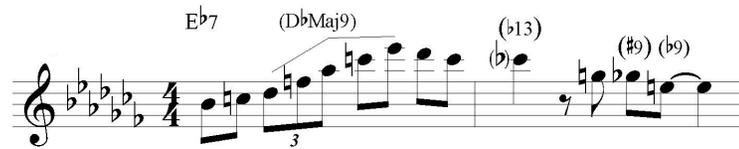
Arpeggios

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- Played major 7th and 9th arpeggios built off the flat-7th of the dominant (as if a ii chord was present)



Bock to Bock, chorus 1, m. 21



Bock to Bock, chorus 2, m. 53-54

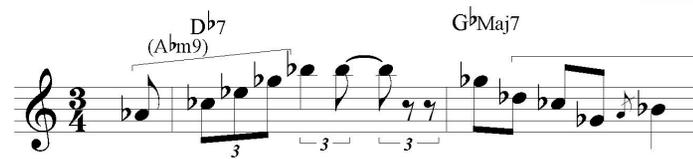


West Coast Blues, chorus 2, m. 27-32

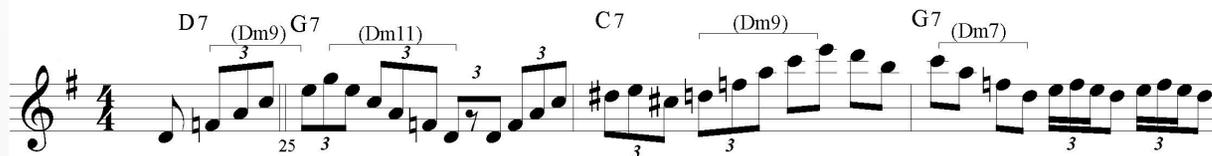
- Played the supertonic (ii chord) arpeggio over the V7 chord to create a suspension over the dominant chord



D-Natural Blues, chorus 2, m. 12-13



West Coast Blues, chorus 1, m. 22-23



Missile Blues, chorus 3, m. 25-27

Use of Chromatic Pitches

Both favored chromatic pitches as passing tones, but Wes also favored chromatic pitches for color tones

Charlie Christian

- Favored use of natural-7th (Dominant Bebop), flat-5th, and flat-9th (♭ 2) as passing tones, often jumped from the flat-7th to new note

- Flat-7th



Use of Chromatic Pitches

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Charlie Christian

- Favored use of natural-7th (Dominant Bebop), flat-5th, and flat-9th (b 2) as passing tones, often jumped from the flat-7th to new note

- Flat-7th

Flying Home, chorus 1, m. 17-19

Solo Flight, chorus 1, m. 15-16

- Flat-5th

Solo Flight, chorus 3, m. 37-38

- Combination

Grand Slam, chorus 2, m. 15-19


Wholly Cats, chorus 2, m. 15-16

Solo Flight, chorus 1, m. 5-6

Use of Chromatic Pitches

Wes Montgomery

- Would use the natural-7th (Bebop) similarly to Christian, rare that Wes would continue scale past flat-7th

D^b7

Bock to Bock, chorus 1, m. 17

Detailed description: A single staff of music in 4/4 time, key of B-flat major. The melody starts with a quarter rest, followed by a quarter note B-flat, a quarter note A-flat, and a quarter note G. A bracket groups the last three notes, with a D^b7 chord symbol above. The melody continues with a quarter note F, a quarter note E-flat, and a quarter note D.

G7 C7

Missile Blues, chorus 1, m. 4-5

Detailed description: A single staff of music in 4/4 time, key of D major. The melody starts with a quarter rest, followed by a quarter note D, a quarter note E, and a quarter note F-sharp. A bracket groups the last three notes, with G7 and C7 chord symbols above. The melody continues with a quarter note G, a quarter note A, and a quarter note B.

Am7 D7 G7

Missile Blues, chorus 6, m. 70-71

7 3

Detailed description: A single staff of music in 4/4 time, key of D major. The melody starts with a quarter note D, a quarter note E, and a quarter note F-sharp. A bracket groups the last three notes, with Am7, D7, and G7 chord symbols above. The melody continues with a quarter note G, a quarter note A, and a quarter note B. Below the staff, the numbers '7' and '3' are written under the notes G and B respectively.

Am7 D7

Missile Blues, chorus 1, m. 9-10

Detailed description: A single staff of music in 4/4 time, key of D major. The melody starts with a quarter note D, a quarter note E, and a quarter note F-sharp. A bracket groups the last three notes, with Am7 and D7 chord symbols above. The melody continues with a quarter note G, a quarter note A, and a quarter note B.

Use of Chromatic Pitches

Wes Montgomery

- Play the dominant bebop over minor 7th chords

Musical notation for "Bock to Bock, chorus 1, m. 27". The notation shows a melodic line in 3/4 time with a key signature of three flats. Above the staff are the chords $D^{\flat}m7$, $(G^{\flat}7)$, and $A7$. The melody consists of eighth and quarter notes, including a chromatic passing tone between the $(G^{\flat}7)$ and $A7$ chords.

Bock to Bock, chorus 1, m. 27

Musical notation for "West Coast Blues, chorus 2, m. 37". The notation shows a melodic line in 3/4 time with a key signature of one flat. Above the staff is the chord $Dm7$. The melody consists of eighth and quarter notes, including a chromatic passing tone.

West Coast Blues, chorus 2, m. 37

Musical notation for "West Coast Blues, chorus 2, m. 37". The notation shows a melodic line in 3/4 time with a key signature of one flat. Above the staff is the chord $Dm7$. The melody consists of eighth and quarter notes, including a chromatic passing tone.

West Coast Blues, chorus 2, m. 37

- Also used $\flat 2$ as a passing tone

Musical notation for "West Coast Blues, chorus 1, m. 8-9". The notation shows a melodic line in 3/4 time with a key signature of three flats. Above the staff are the chords $E7$ and $B^{\flat}m7$. The melody includes a $\flat 2$ passing tone over the $B^{\flat}m7$ chord.

West Coast Blues, chorus 1, m. 8-9

Musical notation for "Billie's Bounce, chorus 23, m. 18". The notation shows a melodic line in 4/4 time with a key signature of one flat. Above the staff is the chord $B^{\flat}7$. The melody includes a $\flat 2$ passing tone.

Billie's Bounce, chorus 23, m. 18

Musical notation for "Billie's Bounce, chorus 1, m. 5". The notation shows a melodic line in 4/4 time with a key signature of one flat. Above the staff is the chord $B^{\flat}7$. The melody includes a $\flat 2$ passing tone.

Billie's Bounce, chorus 1, m. 5

- Also began to use the altered second and other chromatic pitches as the melody

Musical notation for "Bock to Bock, chorus 1, m. 10". The notation shows a melodic line in 4/4 time with a key signature of three flats. Above the staff are the chords $A7$ and $A^{\flat}7$. The melody includes an altered second ($\flat 2$) over the $A7$ chord.

Bock to Bock, chorus 1, m. 10

Musical notation for "Airegin, chorus 1, m. 32". The notation shows a melodic line in 4/4 time with a key signature of three flats. Above the staff are the chords $F7$ and $A^{\flat}7$. The melody includes an altered second ($\flat 2$) over the $F7$ chord.

Airegin, chorus 1, m. 32

Musical notation for "Airegin, chorus 2, m. 44". The notation shows a melodic line in 4/4 time with a key signature of three flats. Above the staff are the chords $B^{\flat}7$ and $A^{\flat}7$. The melody includes an altered second ($\flat 2$) over the $B^{\flat}7$ chord.

Airegin, chorus 2, m. 44

Use of Chromatic Pitches

- **Charlie Christian** did not extensively use the #11, but there are a few examples

Solo Flight, chorus 1, m. 8-10

Solo Flight, chorus 4, m.61-62

- **Wes Montgomery** would use the #11 more in solos and compositions

Four on Six, melody, m. 5-8

Four on Six, chorus 5, m. 69-72

Formulas and Patterns

Christian heavily relied on several patterns in his solos

Two patterns that were very prominent in Christian's and Montgomery's playing

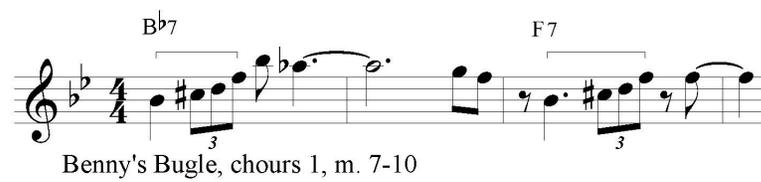
- R-b3-3-5 (Second Tonic Formula) mostly favored over tonic chords, as well as over dominant



C7

Gone With "What" Wind, chorus 1, m. 1-4

The image shows a musical staff in 4/4 time with a C7 chord indicated above. The melody consists of four measures: a half note G4, a quarter note A4, a quarter note B4, a quarter rest, a quarter note C5, a quarter note D5, a quarter note E5, a quarter note F5, a quarter note G5, a quarter note F5, a quarter note E5, a quarter note D5, and a quarter note C5. A bracket groups the first four notes (G, A, B, C) and another bracket groups the last four notes (C, D, E, F), illustrating the R-b3-3-5 formula.



Bb7 F7

Benny's Bugle, chorus 1, m. 7-10

The image shows a musical staff in 4/4 time with Bb7 and F7 chords indicated above. The melody consists of four measures: a quarter note Bb4, a quarter note C5, a quarter note D5, a quarter note Eb5, a quarter note Bb4, a quarter note C5, a quarter note D5, a quarter note Eb5, a quarter note Bb4, a quarter note C5, a quarter note D5, a quarter note Eb5, a quarter note Bb4, a quarter note C5, a quarter note D5, and a quarter note Eb5. Brackets and the number '3' indicate triplet groupings over the first and third measures.

Howard Spring, "The Improvisational Style of Charlie Christian," *Master's of Fine Arts thesis, York University, 1980.*

Formulas and Patterns

Christian heavily relied on several patterns in his solos

Two patterns that were very prominent in Christian's and Montgomery's playing

- R-b3-3-5 (Second Tonic Formula) mostly favored over tonic chords, as well as over dominant

Two musical examples of the R-b3-3-5 formula. The first is in C major, 4/4 time, with a C7 chord indicated above the staff. The second is in B-flat major, 4/4 time, with Bb7 and F7 chords indicated above the staff. Both examples show a melodic line with a triplet of eighth notes and a dotted quarter note.

Gone With "What" Wind, chorus 1, m. 1-4

Benny's Bugle, chours 1, m. 7-10

- **Wes Montgomery** added or used the formula in new ways. Theme and Variation

Two musical examples of the R-b3-3-5 formula used by Wes Montgomery. The first is in D major, 4/4 time, with chords G7, D7, F#m7(b5), B7, Em7, A7, D7, and G7 indicated above the staff. The second is in F major, 4/4 time, with an F7 chord indicated above the staff. Both examples show a melodic line with a triplet of eighth notes and a dotted quarter note.

D-Natural Blues, chorus 2, m. 18-25

Montgomeryland Funk, chorus 3, m.35

Howard Spring, "The Improvisational Style of Charlie Christian," Master's of Fine Arts thesis, York University, 1980.

Enclosure

5-4-b3-3 (First Tonic Formula)

- 5-4-b3-3 formula could also be labeled an enclosure. Jerry Coker defines an enclosure as a “linear or melodic device in which an object note is approached by both the upper and lower leading tones.”
- Christian regularly used enclosures to connect phrases and momentarily delay resolutions



Benny's Bugle, chorus 1, m. 1-3



Flying Home, chorus 1, m. 7-8

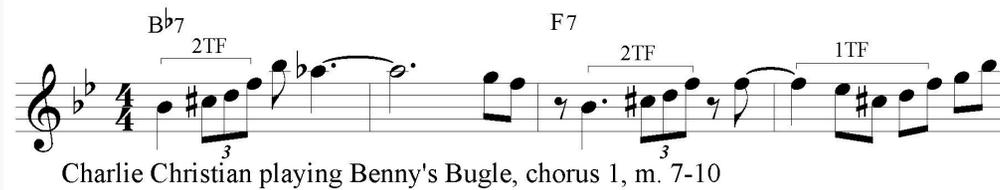
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- Christian would combine 1st and 2nd Formulas



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Enclosure

- **Wes Montgomery** would use both “first” and “second” tonic formulas similarly to Christian’s usage. Often combining the two as Christian modeled

West Coast Blues, chorus 4, m. 72-74

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West Coast Blues, chorus 4, m. 72-74

- **Wes Montgomery** combines both formulas in conjunction with quoting the melody of “Air Mail Special” in the second chorus of his solo in “Missile Blues”

Air Mail Special, melody, m. 1-4

Missile Blues, chorus 2, m. 13-17

Enclosure

Wes Montgomery

- Montgomery changed Christian's pattern by one note
- Montgomery's Enclosure Pattern 5-4-2-b3-3-5



Musical notation for Montgomeryland Funk, chorus 2, m. 17. The notation is in 4/4 time, key of Bb major. The chord is Bb7. The melody consists of the notes G4, Ab4, Bb4, C5, Bb4, Ab4, G4, with an enclosure over the last three notes (Bb4, Ab4, G4).

Montgomeryland Funk, chorus 2, m. 17



Musical notation for Montgomeryland Funk, chorus 1, m. 3. The notation is in 4/4 time, key of Bb major. The chord is F7. The melody consists of the notes G4, Ab4, Bb4, C5, Bb4, Ab4, G4, with an enclosure over the last three notes (Bb4, Ab4, G4).

Montgomeryland Funk, chorus 1, m. 3



Musical notation for Airegin, chorus 1, m. 12. The notation is in 4/4 time, key of Bb major. The chords are Dbm7 and F#7. The melody consists of the notes G4, Ab4, Bb4, C5, Bb4, Ab4, G4, with an enclosure over the last three notes (Bb4, Ab4, G4).

Airegin, chorus 1, m. 12

Enclosure

Wes Montgomery

- Montgomery changed Christian's pattern by one note
- Montgomery's Enclosure Pattern 5-4-2-b3-3-5

B \flat 7

Montgomeryland Funk, chorus 2, m. 17

F7

Montgomeryland Funk, chorus 1, m. 3

D \flat m7 F \sharp 7

Airegin, chorus 1, m. 12

- Enclose other notes besides the 3rd and use them in extended sequences

G7

West Coast Blues, chorus 2, m. 38

D \flat 7 G \flat Maj7

Bock to Bock, chorus 2, m. 49-52

A7 A \flat 7 D \flat m7 A7 A \flat 7 D \flat m7

Bock to Bock, chorus 2, m. 58-61

Harmonic Resolutions

Montgomery appears to have been influenced by Christian's strong usage of resolving by a half-step into the 3rd on a strong beat. (7-3)

Charlie Christian

Benny's Bugle, chorus 1, m. 21

Chords: F7 (Cm7), (Aø7)

Notes: G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4, F4

Outlines ii chord exactly the same

Honeysuckle Rose, chorus 1, m. 23-24

Chords: A^b7 (E^bm7), (Cø7)

Notes: G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4, F4

Honeysuckle Rose, chorus 1, m. 22-23

Chords: E^b7, A^b7

Notes: G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4, F4

Wes Montgomery

Montgomeryland Funk, chorus 3, m. 28-29

Chords: Cm7, F7, B^b7

Notes: G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4, F4

Satin Doll, chorus 1, m. 32

Chords: E^m7(b5), A7

Notes: G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4, F4

Bock to Bock, chorus 1, m. 23

Chords: E^m7, A7

Notes: G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4, F4

Bock to Bock, chorus 1, m. 7

Chords: A7, A^b7, D^bm7

Notes: G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4, F4

Wes with Lionel Hampton (1948)

Adam Blew His Hat

Musical notation for the piece "Adam Blew His Hat" by Wes Montgomery with the Lionel Hampton Jazz Orchestra. The notation is in 4/4 time and consists of two staves. The first staff shows measures 1 through 5 with chords Cm7, F7, B^b6, and G[#]m7. The second staff shows measures 6 through 9 with chords C[#]7, F[#]7, B7, E7, A7, and D7. The notation includes various rhythmic figures, including triplets and sixteenth notes, and some notes are marked with an 'x'.

Adam Blew His Hat, Wes Montgomery with the Lionel Hampton Jazz Orchestra, Recorded July 1, 1948

- Begins by arpeggiating an EbMaj7 over the Cm7 in m.1
- Over the few dominant harmonies Wes seems to favor descending with a scale (m. 2 and 6)
- The flat-2nd on a strong beat in m. 3 as a passing tone
- M. 7 he arpeggiates up an EMaj7 over the F#7-B7
- Anticipates the D7 in m. 8 and plays the b3-3-5 motive, hints at second tonic formula

[Video](#)

Wes with Lionel Hampton (1948)

Brant Inn Boogie

(:32) C7 G7

D7 G7

(:42) G7 C7 G7

C7 G7

D7 G7

Brant Inn Boogie, Wes Montgomery with the Lionel Hampton Jazz Orchestra, Recorded July 21, 1948

- Raised b3-3 in m. 3, 4 and 14 (anticipation)
- Natural 7th as a passing tone in m. 4 (dominant bebop scale) played in descending order
- Surrounds the root m. 7 and 14, surrounds the 7th (C) in m. 17
- Makes strong use of the G minor pentatonic scale (m.9-13), use of rhythmic sequence
- Arpeggiates up at C7 over the D7 (possible V - IV harmonic substitution or suspending the D7)

[Video](#)

Innovation-Reshaping Traditions

- Paul Rinzer writes that jazz traditions are the foundation meant to provide a repository for possibilities yet to be discovered by the improviser
- Imitation allowed Montgomery to learn the traditions of jazz and jazz guitar
- Montgomery did not let traditions finalize him as a guitarist
- Then able to assimilate them with his own insights, personality, and experiences
- Wes states that as the period of imitation progresses “the beginning player will hear a little difference in his [or her] playing, and that little inspiration is enough to go further.”
- Montgomery’s innovations were “little differences” to the traditions he was assimilating from Christian
- Small changes lead to more choices for more alternatives and possibilities
- These alternatives would become new traditions for others to imitate, assimilate, and innovate upon

Paul Rinzier, *Contradictions in Jazz, Studies in Jazz, No. 57*, (Toronto: The Scarecrow Press, Inc., 2008), 132.

Chronological List of Recordings Used for Study

Charlie Christian

- “Seven Come Eleven” with The Benny Goodman Sextet, recorded November 22, 1939
- “Honeysuckle Rose” with The Benny Goodman Orchestra, recorded November 22, 1939
- “Flying Home” with The Benny Goodman Sextet, recorded October 2, 1939
- “Shivers” with the Benny Goodman Sextet, recorded December 20, 1939
- “Gone With ‘What’ Wind” with The Benny Goodman Sextet, recorded February 7, 1940
- “Grand Slam (Boy Meets Goy)” with The Benny Goodman Sextet, recorded April 14, 1940
- “Wholly Cats” with The Benny Goodman Septet, recorded November 7, 1940
- “Benny’s Bugle” with The Benny Goodman Septet, recorded November 7, 1940
- “Breakfast Feud” with The Benny Goodman Septet, recorded January 15, 1941
- “Solo Flight” with The Benny Goodman Orchestra, recorded March 4, 1941
- “Guy’s Got to Go” recorded live at Minton’s Playhouse May 1941
- “Lips Flips” recorded live at Minton’s Playhouse May 1941

Chronological List of Recordings Used for Study

Wes Montgomery

- “Adam Blew His Hat” with The Lionel Hampton Orchestra, recorded July 1, 1948
- “Brant Inn Boogie” with The Lionel Hampton Orchestra, recorded June 21, 1948
- “Bock to Bock” and “Billie’s Bounce” recorded December 30, 1957

Originally released on the album *The Montgomery Brothers and Five Others* (World Pacific WP 1240).

- “Montgomeryland Funk” recorded April 18, 1958

Originally release on the album *The Montgomery Brothers- Wes, Buddy, and Monk Montgomery* (Pacific Jazz PJ 17)

- “Missile Blues” and “Satin Doll” recoded October 5, 1959

Originally released on the album *The Wes Montgomery Trio: A Dynamic New Sound* (Riverside OJCCD-034-2).

- “Yesterdays” and “Ecaroh” recorded October 6, 1959

Originally released on the album *The Wes Montgomery Trio: A Dynamic New Sound* (Riverside OJCCD-034-2).

- “Airegin,” “D-Natural Blues,” and “Four on Six” recorded January 26, 1960

Originally released on the album *The Incredible Jazz Guitar of Wes Montgomery* (Riverside OJCCD-036-2).

- “West Coast Blues” recorded January 28

Originally released on the album *The Incredible Jazz Guitar of Wes Montgomery* (Riverside OJCCD-036-2).

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- Niles, Richard. *The Pat Metheny Interviews: The Inner Workings of His Creativity Revealed*. Edited by Ronny S. Schiff. Milwaukee, WI: Hal Leonard Books, 2009.
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