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AN ANALYSIS OF SELECTED BALLADS OF COLEMAN HAWKINS, 1939-1945

By

Michael E. Zsoldos

A MASTERS THESIS

Submitted to
Michigan State University
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ABSTRACT

AN ANALYSIS OF SELECTED BALLADS OF COLEMAN HAWKINS, 1939-1945

By

Michael E. Zsoldos

Coleman Hawkins is widely regarded as the first important tenor saxophonist in jazz. Although many historians remember him primarily as a "harmonic" or "vertical" player, Hawkins relied on both written melody as well as the guide-tone lines, that are the product of voice-leading, to generate his improvisations. The analysis here shows that Hawkins used the same melodic fragments and guide-tone lines in successive choruses as a means of unifying his solos.

I have transcribed and analyzed selected ballads recorded between 1939 and 1945 including *Body and Soul, Rainbow Mist, How Deep is the Ocean, April in Paris,* and *Stardust.* The transcriptions have been notated in B-flat concert for tenor saxophone, and therefore sound down a major ninth from the notation. To facilitate reference, the solos are accompanied by their respective melodies that appear on a separate staff below.

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2000

This thesis is dedicated to my family.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This thesis is the culmination of four years of immersion in the great tenor saxophone artistry of Coleman Hawkins, Lester Young, and Chu Berry. Many thanks to Andrew Speight and Branford Marsalis for setting such a high standard and providing the inspiration and encouragement in the study of these great players. It has transformed the way I improvise and listen to music. I would also like to thank Gordon Sly for his patience and guidance in helping me through the most laborious phase of formulating the thesis statement. Thank you, Gordon, for sacrificing most of your summer to work with me, and to Charles Ruggiero and Anna Celenza for your valuable input. And finally, I cannot begin to thank my mother, father, and sister enough for their constant love, support, and understanding during this long journey.

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I. Introduction

In 1940, the young alto saxophonist Charlie Parker paid homage to Coleman Hawkins by quoting a phrase from Hawkins's famous 1939 *Body and Soul* solo.[1] Pianist Sir Charles Thompson remembered: "It was through *Body and Soul* that everybody recognized that Coleman Hawkins was a leader of jazz saxophonists and musicians, with a modern sense. Now it was through this that these people...like Dizzy Gillespie, Charles Parker, who were just starting out on their own, they were inspired by him."[2] However, despite numerous testimonials and musical tributes such as these made to Hawkins by famous jazz musicians, most of the focus in jazz analysis, pedagogy, and scholarship has been on the music of Hawkins's descendents, especially Charlie Parker and other figures of the bebop era, rather than on Hawkins's music itself. This is understandable, given the importance of Parker's contribution to the evolution of jazz. The influence of Parker's work and that of the bebop school of playing, which included "Dizzy" Gillespie, Thelonious Monk, and Bud Powell, to name but a few, informs how most jazz is played today. But Parker's way of improvising is not the only way, as the analysis of Hawkins's work will show.

One of the most prominent features of bebop was that the solos frequently strayed from the melody of the song on which they were based, relying instead on the work's harmonic motion, out of which inevitably fell melodic patterns, or formulas.

A prominent feature of Parker's playing was his use of such "formulas"—short, melodic figures or patterns that occur two or more times in the same solo, or in multiple

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[1] Charlie Parker, *Body and Soul*. Recorded 11/30/1940. In mm. 11-12 of Parker's solo, he quotes mm. 26-27 of Hawkins's *Body and Soul* solo.

[2] Scott DeVeaux, *The Birth of Bebop*. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), p. 110.

solos. In his dissertation on Parker, Thomas Owens catalogued the appearance of certain formulas in multiple recordings, and in a variety of harmonic contexts, showing how prevalent they were in Parker's improvisational vocabulary.[3]

Though Owens's work was among the first of many scholarly works that addressed the remarkable contributions of Charlie Parker, jazz musicians had responded to Parker's music almost immediately, and have been transcribing and appropriating Parker's formulas into their own vocabularies for years. Since formulas are relatively easy to isolate and transcribe, players thought that they could sound just like Parker by learning them. Consequently, Parker's playing inspired scores of imitators. Hawkins's solos lacked these formulas, which made his improvisational vocabulary much more difficult to imitate than Parker's.

On the surface, Hawkins's approach to improvisation is more elusive than Parker's because he did not use these formulas; in jazz parlance, he was not the "lick player" that Parker was. Early in his career, Hawkins developed a number of other strategies as his style matured. Some of these strategies have been noted in Hawkins's recordings from as early as 1932-34, but still are not widely recognized today.[4] Many historians have called Hawkins a vertical, or harmonic player, perhaps because of the number of the arpeggiations his solos contain.[5] However, close examination of ballads recorded between 1939-1945 reveal that this is an oversimplification; Hawkins's solos are so well organized that they almost sound composed.

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[3] Thomas Owens, "Charlie Parker: Techniques of Improvisation" (Ph. D. dissertation, University of California, Los Angeles, 1974), vol. I, pp. 17, 35.
[4] Alan Henderson, "Improvisation in the Recorded Works of Coleman Hawkins 1932-34" (Masters thesis, York University, Toronto, 1981).
[5] Mark Gridley, *Jazz Styles, History and Analysis.* (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall, 1994), p. 95.

Compositional elements have been observed in jazz improvisation. In his 1958 article, Gunther Schuller observed evidence of motivic development in Sonny Rollins's solo, *Blue Seven*.[6] Schuller regarded Rollins's solo as a breakthrough and a sign that jazz had "finally matured" and taken on the more intellectually rigorous challenge of motivic development. The appearance of compositional elements in Coleman Hawkins's improvisations supports Schuller's view that jazz musicians are capable of producing sophisticated, unified solos, but suggests that intellectual rigor was not a quality possessed solely by Rollins.

Though his recordings show that he could solo brilliantly at all tempi, Hawkins is best remembered for his ballads. For this reason, I have transcribed and analyzed selected ballads recorded between 1939 and 1945, including *Body and Soul, Rainbow Mist, How Deep is the Ocean, April in Paris*, and *Stardust*.[7]

The transcriptions appear in the appendix. They have been notated in B-flat concert, "in tenor key," and therefore sound down a major ninth from the notation. Though articulations, accents, attacks, decays, and ghosted notes are crucial in distinguishing Coleman Hawkins's sound and style, standard Western notation cannot adequately convey these subtleties. To avoid cluttering the transcriptions with non-standard articulation symbols, they have been omitted for the sake of legibility. Because the focus of this thesis centers on Hawkins's approach to solo ballad improvisation, no

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[6] Gunther Schuller, *Musings: the Musical Worlds of Gunther Schuller.* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986), p. 94.

[7] *Body and Soul*, Bluebird B10523, recorded11 October 1939, New York; *Rainbow Mist*, Capitol 15853, recorded 23 February, 1945, Los Angeles; *How Deep is the Ocean*, recorded 8 December, 1943, New York; *April in Paris*, Capitol 15853, recorded 23 February, 1945, Los Angeles; *Stardust*, Capitol 15854, recorded 23 February, 1945, Los Angeles. All recorded by Coleman Hawkins and His Orchestra.

reference is made to articulations in the body of the paper. I hope that the reader will rely on the recordings themselves for this information.

II. Improvisation Strategies

The jazz ballad is regarded as one of the most challenging forms over which to construct an improvised solo. This is due to the length of the form; ballad solos are difficult to pace, and the accompaniment is often quite sparse, making the soloist more exposed than in an up-tempo tune. This added exposure makes it all the more desirable for the soloist to approach the tune with a plan, so that the solo has a sense of balance–a beginning, a middle, and an end—just as a composed piece would have.

Like music from the European tonal tradition, jazz has its own set of aesthetic values and expectations, or performance practice, which continues to evolve. One of those expectations is that a solo should "tell a story," or build to an emotional climax.[8] Hawkins began to develop a reputation for his climactic ballad playing while he was working with the Fletcher Henderson orchestra. Prior to 1933, Hawkins would solo for no more than 16-bars in a ballad; after 1934, he was soloing much longer, usually taking up to two choruses.[9] In Hawkins's music, it rarely happens that the highest pitch can be isolated as the climactic moment of the piece. Typically, in an AABA' format, Hawkins's solos would peak in volume, rhythmic density and range by the last A-section of the second chorus.

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[8] Paul Berliner, *Thinking in Jazz: The Infinite Art of Improvisation.* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1994), p. 201.
[9] Henderson, p. 31.

Coleman Hawkins applied a distinct approach to his ballad construction, often beginning a solo with a slightly embellished version of the melody, similar to the way a classic theme and variations begins. Usually, at some point during the first chorus, he would move away from the theme, in effect weaning his listener from the melody. For the remainder of the solo, Hawkins relied on the following improvisational techniques:

1) *Embellished melodic fragments.* This is the incorporation of a motive (three consecutive notes or longer) from the song's melodic line into an improvised line. Hawkins returned to these melodic fragments and varied the rhythm of the improvised line in which they were placed, generating new ideas from a given set of pitches. By doing this, Hawkins was able to relate A-sections motivically and create an overall sense of unity within his solos. Scholars have observed this technique in Hawkins's solos from as early as 1932.[10] During this period, Hawkins would solo over the A-sections (in an AABA' form) while the ensemble or another soloist would play over the B-section, or bridge. Hawkins's solution for unifying his solos was in relating the last A' section to the previous two through the use of melodic fragments.[11] The analyses of *Body and Soul* and *Rainbow Mist* contain many examples of this technique.
2) *Melodic undergirding.* This is also a form of melodic embellishment that uses the song's melodic line and can be considered a subcategory of the above. What distinguishes this technique from *melodic fragments* is that, rather than using motives, here Hawkins extracted single tones from the song's melodic line and inserted them in the improvised line, frequently in the same metric position. For example, when

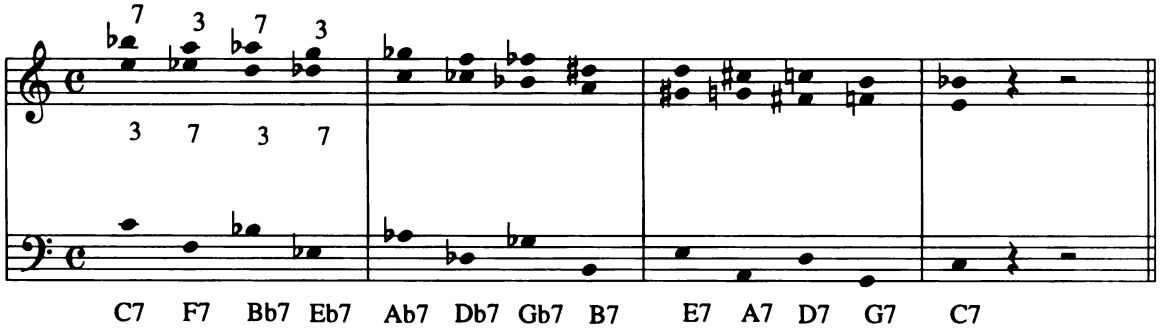
[10] Henderson, p. 19.
[11] Henderson, p. 17.

Hawkins soloed in a part of the form where the melody descends by step, he would often retain the same contour as the melody, extracting single notes from the melodic line to frame the beginning and end of his phrases. When listening to these ballads, these single notes stand out as guideposts, as though Hawkins is checking back with the listener as if to say, "are you still with me?"

Whether Hawkins deployed melodic fragments or undergirding seemed to depend on the melody of the song upon which his improvisation was based. He tended to use melodic fragments when the melody was descending by step or by larger intervals. Undergirding was used particularly in melodies that contained a high number of repeated notes, such as in *April in Paris*.

3) *Guide-tone lines.* I first heard the term "guide-tone line" used in an improvisation class given by Bill Dobbins in 1991 at the Eastman School of Music. He used it to refer to the stepwise melodic lines that arise from a succession of chords—that is, what theorists refer to as lines of voice-leading. Though the term "guide-tone line" has been in general use by jazz educators and musicians, I was able to locate only one text, by Scott Reeves, that makes use of it. Reeves defines a guide-tone line as "a melody that starts on the 3rd or the 7th of a chord and moves to the 3rd or the 7th of the following chord, whichever is closer."[12] Reeves's definition of guide-tones is best illustrated by writing a series of dominant seventh chords moving through the cycle of fifths.

[12] Scott D. Reeves, *Creative Beginnings.* (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1997), p. 85.



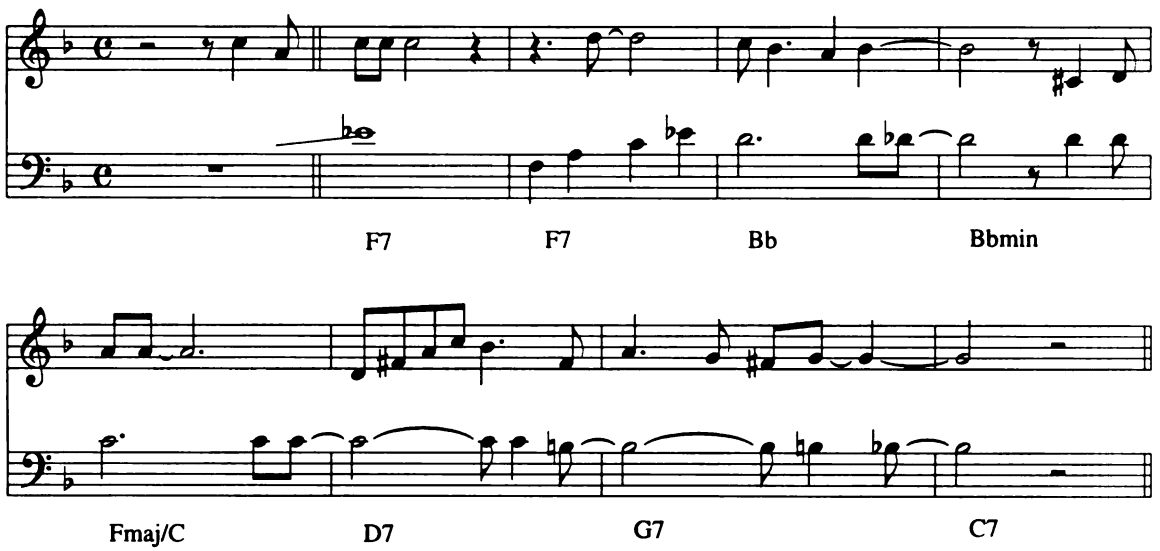
As the example shows, the 7th of the C7 resolves into the 3rd of the F7. In passages with root motion by fifth, the motion of the 3rd and 7th will be descending and stepwise. While Reeves's definition of guide tones is limited to the melodic motion of 3rds and 7ths, Dobbins's definition was more inclusive.

For the purposes of this thesis, I offer the following general definition:
A 'guide-tone line' is a descending, stepwise melody that is made up of chord tones. Jazz soloists can incorporate these lines into an improvisation to give it harmonic coherence. Some of the earliest and clearest examples of guide-tone lines in jazz can be found in traditional New Orleans trombone accompaniments, such as the one below found in *Big Butter and Egg Man from the West.*[13]

Although the early jazz music of New Orleans was collectively improvised, the roles of each instrumentalist were clear. A typical early jazz band consisted of cornet, clarinet, trombone, tuba or double bass, percussion, banjo, piano, and occasionally saxophone. The melody, or "head," was played on cornet, obligatos were usually played on clarinet, bass lines were played by the tuba and double bass, and sustained harmonies supplied by trombone and saxophone.

[13] *Big Butter and Egg Man from the West,* Okeh 8423, recorded 16 November 1926, Chicago by Louis Armstrong and His Hot Five. Available on the Smithsonian Collection of Classic Jazz.

The musical example below is taken from the 1926 Louis Armstrong and His Hot Five recording of *Big Butter and Egg Man from the West.* The melody as played by Armstrong is written on the top staff, and Edward "Kid" Ory's trombone accompaniment appears beneath. This stepwise, descending mostly chromatic line is typical of trombone playing of that era.



Like "Kid" Ory's trombone accompaniment, Coleman Hawkins's guide-tone lines are typically step-wise, often chromatic, and occur in two different harmonic scenarios. The first is in passages descending by fifth. Often in these passages, Hawkins would use a tritone substitution in place of the dominant 7th.[14] The second is in areas where the local harmony is being expanded. Hawkins frequently embellishes these lines, emphasizing the guide-tones themselves through the use of varied accent, and metric and registral placement.

[14] Tritone substitution involves the following: Each dominant seventh chord root shares its tritone with another root, which itself lies a tritone away. The reason for this is the tritone is the only interval whose inversion is enharmonically identical. For example, D and A♭ form the third and seventh, respectively of B♭7. Invert them—G♯ (A♭) and D—and they form the third and seventh of E7. The tritone's unique symmetry allowed Hawkins to use an E7 in place of a B♭7. So in a II-V7-I progression in E♭ that would move Fmin-B♭7-E♭, Hawkins would play Fmin-E7-E♭, or II-♭II7-I, giving him a more dissonant alternative. Tritone substitution is discussed in a number of jazz theory workbooks. See, for example, Richard J. Lawn, *Jazz Theory and Practice* (Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing Co., 1993), p. 114.

The analysis that follows contains examples of Hawkins's use of melodic fragments, undergirding, and guide tones, showing how Hawkins retained his roots as a melodic improviser while he broke new ground in harmonic improvisation.

II.1 Melodic Embellishment

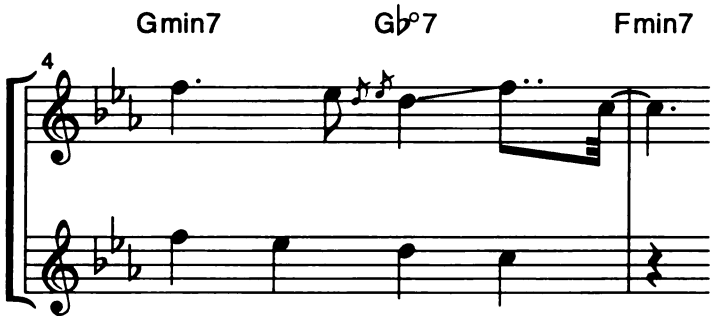
Written by Johnny Green in 1930, *Body and Soul* is a popular song written in 32-bar AABA form. It has a 16-measure verse that is scarcely ever recorded, although the refrain has traditionally been a vehicle for jazz improvisation. Though Green wrote the tune in C major, Hawkins recorded the song in the difficult key of D flat, which set him apart from his contemporaries. Following the enormous commercial success of the October 11, 1939 recording by Hawkins, the song became known as Hawkins's signature tune, and he was expected to play it at every performance. Because of Hawkins's stature as a tenor saxophonist, *Body and Soul* has become associated with the instrument, and for this reason, most jazz tenor saxophonists today consider it an essential part of the repertoire.

As was mentioned above, Hawkins derived improvisational material from the melody in two different ways. One was through the use of embellished melodic fragments in which a short portion of the song's melody is incorporated into a line of improvisation. These fragments always appear in a later metric position in relation to the melody and recur in successive strophes or choruses. The other way Hawkins used the existing melody was through melodic undergirding. With this technique, Hawkins would take one note from the song's melody, and use it as the starting note of his improvised phrase. He would then conclude this phrase with a different melody note. This shows

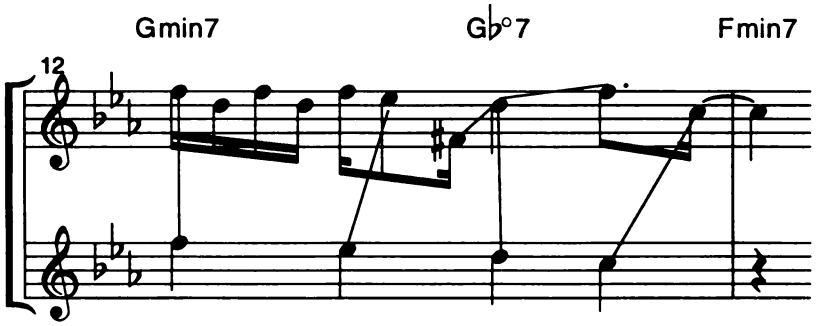
that Hawkins was aware of where he was, both melodically and harmonically, making it possible for him to draw from the existing melody at will.

These first examples from *Body and Soul* show how consistent Hawkins was in using the same melodic fragment. Examples 1-5 (shown below) contain the melodic fragment F-E^{b}-D-C. Lines are drawn from the melody staff below to the solo staff above, where needed, to indicate where this melodic fragment is found in the original song.

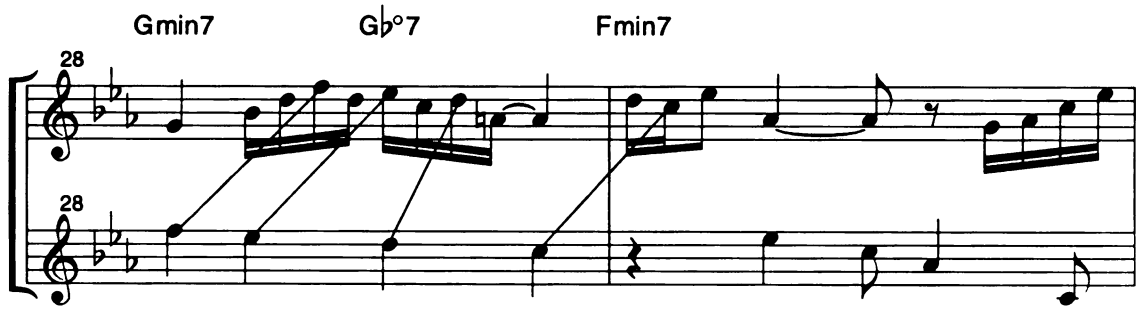
Ex. 1: Mm. 4-5



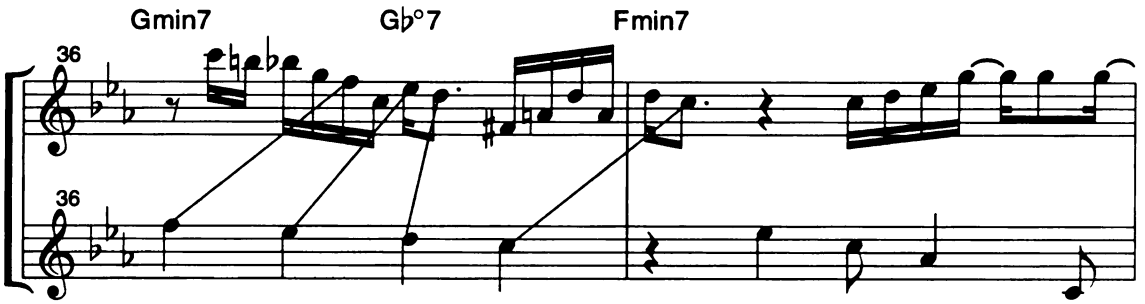
Ex. 2: Mm. 12-13



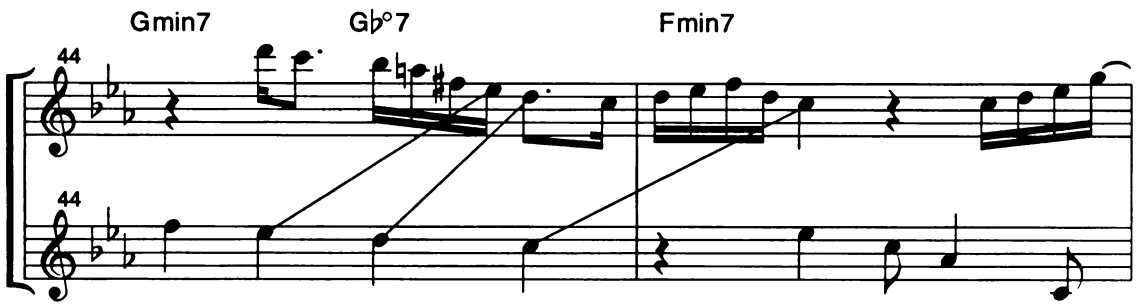
Ex. 3: Mm. 28-29



Ex. 4: Mm. 36-37



Ex. 5: Mm. 44-45

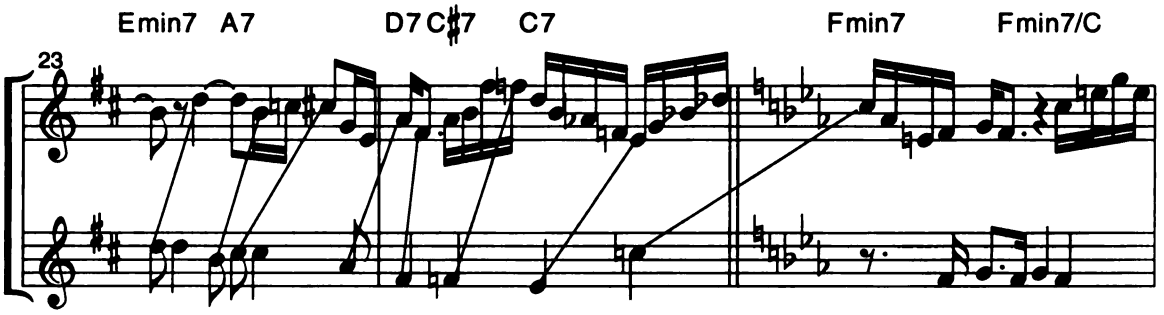


Note the increase in range and rhythmic complexity with each successive appearance of this fragment. The F-E^{b}-D-C fragment appears in five of the six A-sections of this AABA form. That Hawkins is able to generate such varied descending phrases based on the same melodic fragment is a testament to his creativity.

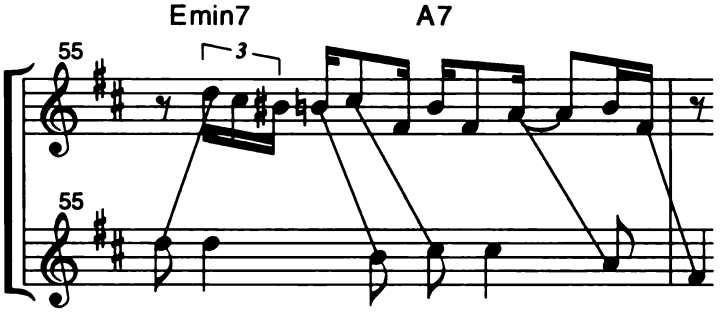
Body and Soul is the most diverse of the solos analyzed here as it follows a theme and variations model and contains examples of melodic fragmentation, undergirding and

guide-tone lines. No other Hawkins solo analyzed here does this. Examples 6 and 7 are taken from the last two measures of each bridge.

Ex. 6: Mm. 23-25



Ex. 7: Mm. 55-56



Rainbow Mist

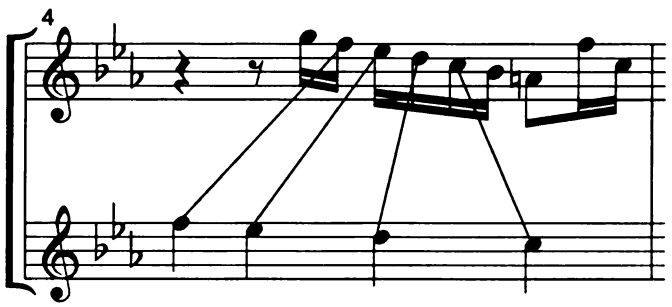
Although *Rainbow Mist* was recorded in 1944, nearly five years after *Body and Soul*, it shares many of the same melodic fragments. Both songs make use of the *Body and Soul* harmonic progression, and it was Hawkins's hope that fans of his 1939 hit would recognize the similarities between the two and respond with the same level of enthusiasm. Victor records—which owned the rights to the 1939 Bluebird recording of *Body and Soul* —had allowed the record to go out of print.[15] Hawkins changed the name because he believed that by not making overt statements of the original melody, he could

[15] DeVeaux, p. 309.

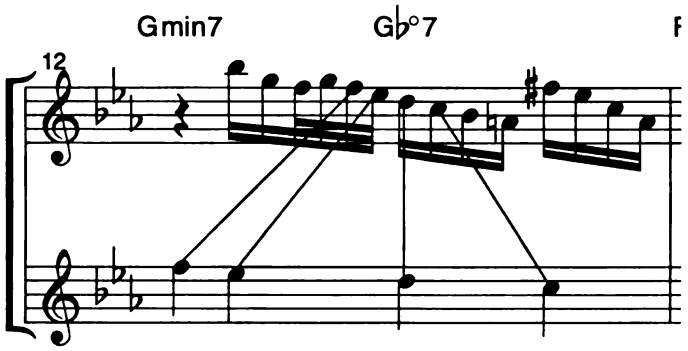
claim the performance as his own composition, thereby laying claim to the composer royalties. This tactic was not entirely successful, as subsequent reissues of the recording listed *Rainbow Mist* as *Body and Soul.*[16]

Though *Rainbow Mist* has no composed melody of its own, similarities between it and *Body and Soul* abound, as in the appearance of the F-E^{b}-D-C fragment. As in the earlier *Body and Soul* recording, Hawkins employs the fragment (examples 8-12) in five of the six A-sections of *Rainbow Mist*, each time varying the rhythm and placement.

Ex. 8: Mm. 4

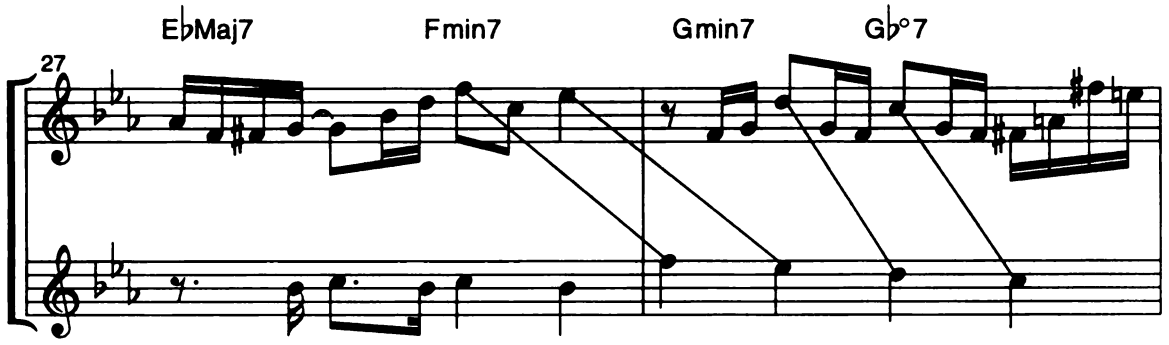


Ex. 9: Mm. 12

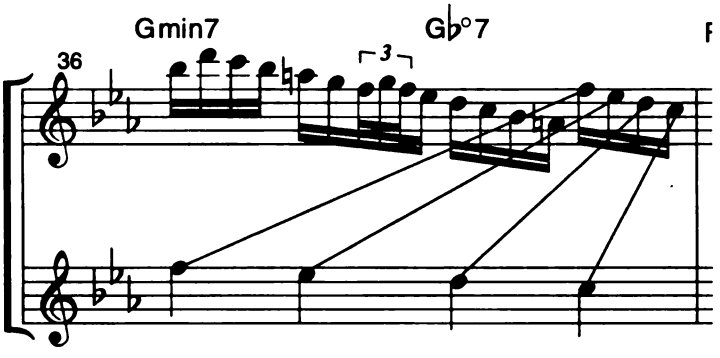


[16] John Chilton, *Song of the Hawk.* (London: Quartet Books Limited, 1990), p. 211.

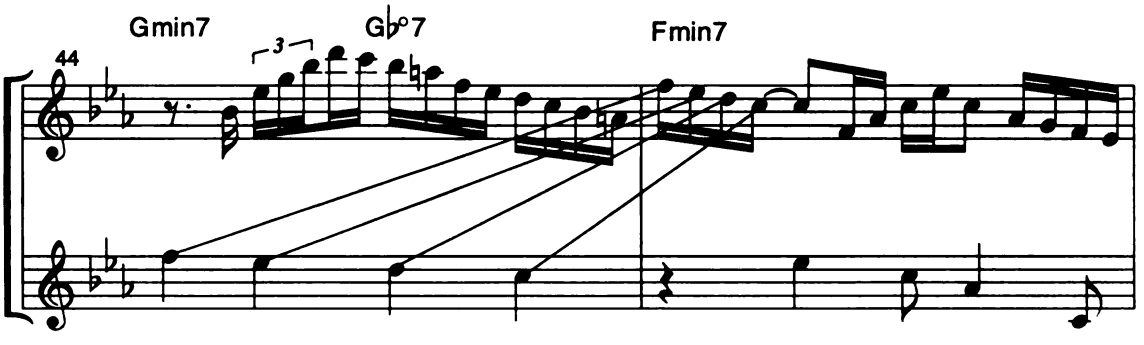
Ex. 10: Mm. 25-28



Ex. 11: Mm. 36

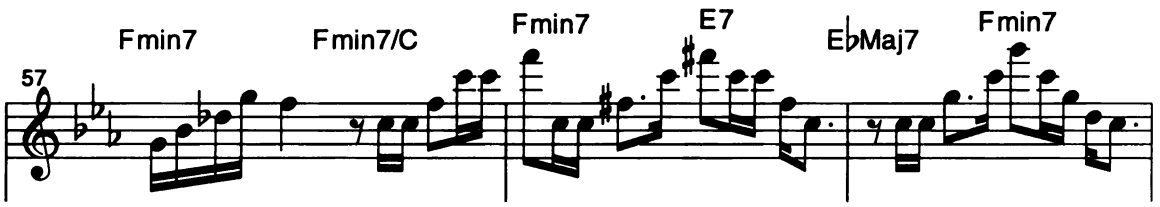


Ex. 12: Mm. 44-45

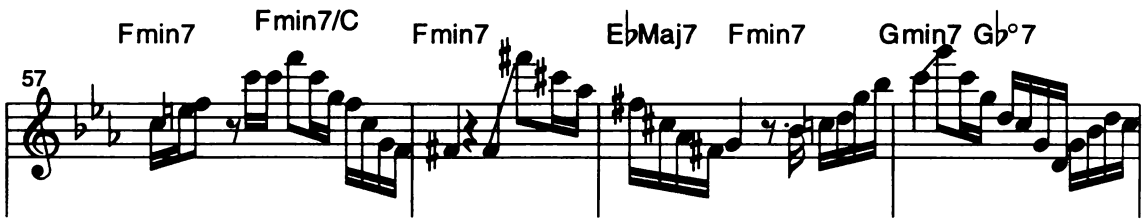


With the similarities between the last stanzas so deliberate, it is easy to understand how *Body and Soul* could be mistaken for *Rainbow Mist;* Hawkins is quoting his own solo in example 14. Note the chromatic ascent—F-F#-G—in mm. 58-59 of *Body and Soul* (ex. 13). That ascent can be found in mm. 57-60 of *Rainbow Mist* (ex. 14).

Ex. 13: Mm. 57-59



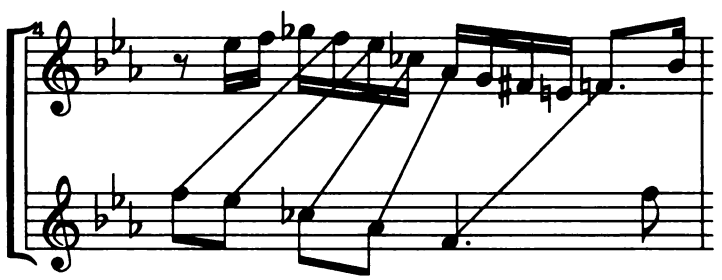
Ex. 14: Mm. 57-60



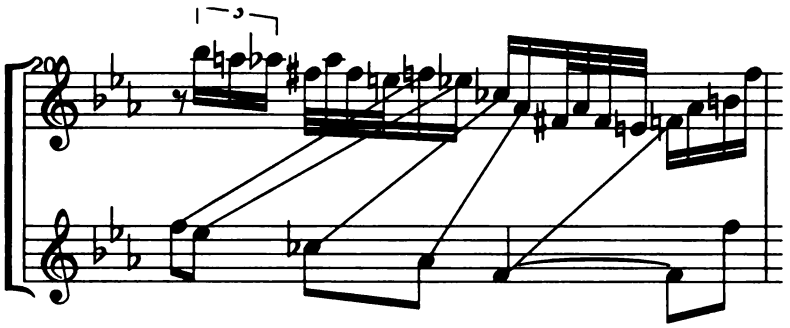
Stardust

Written in ABAC form, *Stardust* was recorded by Hawkins in 1945. Though undergirding and guide-tone lines are the most prominent improvisational features in *Stardust*, melodic fragments are used as well. Measures 4, 20, and 36 (ex. 15-17) below all make use of the same fragment.

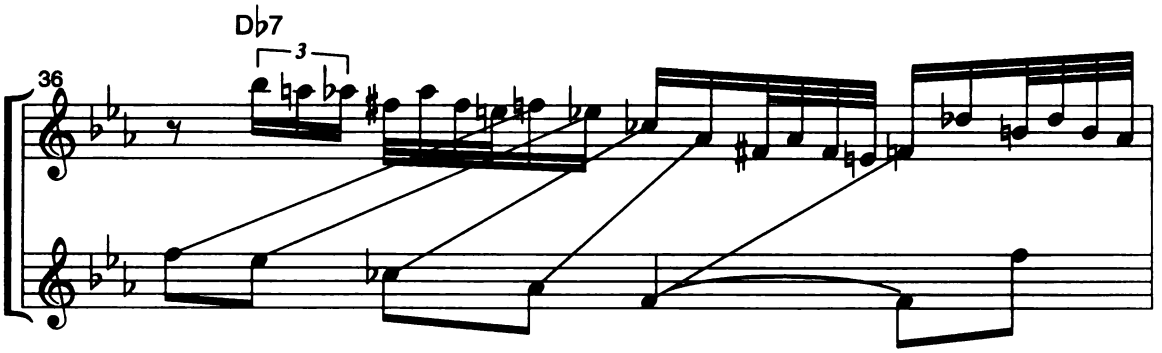
Ex. 15: M. 4



Ex. 16: M. 20

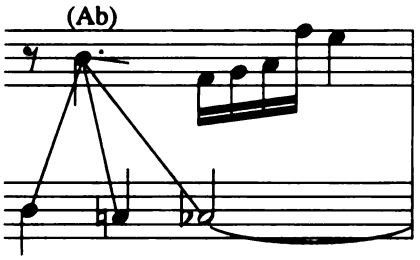


Ex. 17: M. 36



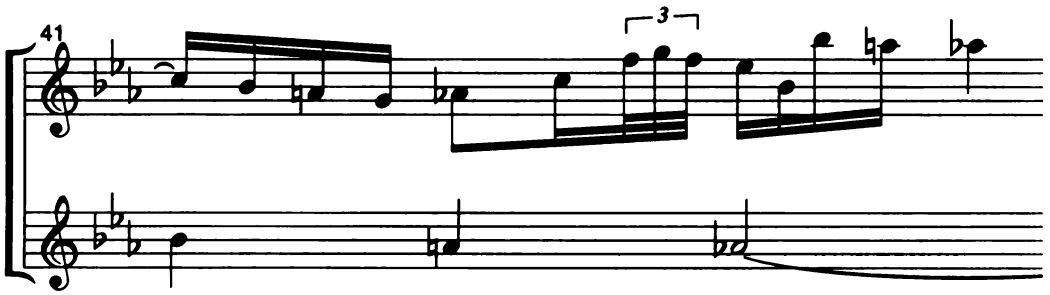
Hawkins also used melodic fragments motivically, as examples 18 and 19 show. Here he plays a descending three-note motive, Bb-Ab, in m. 25 and 41. Hawkins plays this motive in two different ways and in different registers. In the first manifestation of the motive and in a remarkable show of flexibility and humor, Hawkins plays it by bending a Bb down a whole step to Ab, indicated in parenthesis.

Ex. 18: M. 25



Note that in m. 41 (ex. 19), Hawkins plays the motive twice, but in different octaves.

Ex. 19: M. 41



II.2 Melodic Undergirding

Hawkins relied on a mixture of melodic fragments, undergirding, and guide-tone lines that was appropriate to each song. With the exception of *Rainbow Mist*, each of the solos transcribed here contains examples of melodic undergirding. In *April in Paris,* this technique is pervasive. See the score and recording for more examples of this technique.

The predominance of undergirding over fragmentation may be due to how the melody is written. Due to the number of repeated notes, the melody of *April in Paris* does not lend itself as well to producing motives or fragments that could be incorporated into an improvised line. In his work from 1932-34, Hawkins tended to derive melodic fragments from those parts of the melody containing large intervals.[17] The same applies to his work examined here. As we saw above, all of the examples were descending and were either scalar or arpeggiated, making them more easily incorporated into a line of improvisation.

April in Paris follows a 32-measure ABCA' form. After taking a complete chorus, Hawkins's solo is followed by a 20-measure solo by trumpeter Howard McGhee (not notated). The asymmetry in this solo is due to a four-measure interlude between the end of Hawkins's solo and the beginning of McGhee's solo. Hawkins then solos on the latter half of the tune, taking the C and A' sections and concluding with a cadenza.

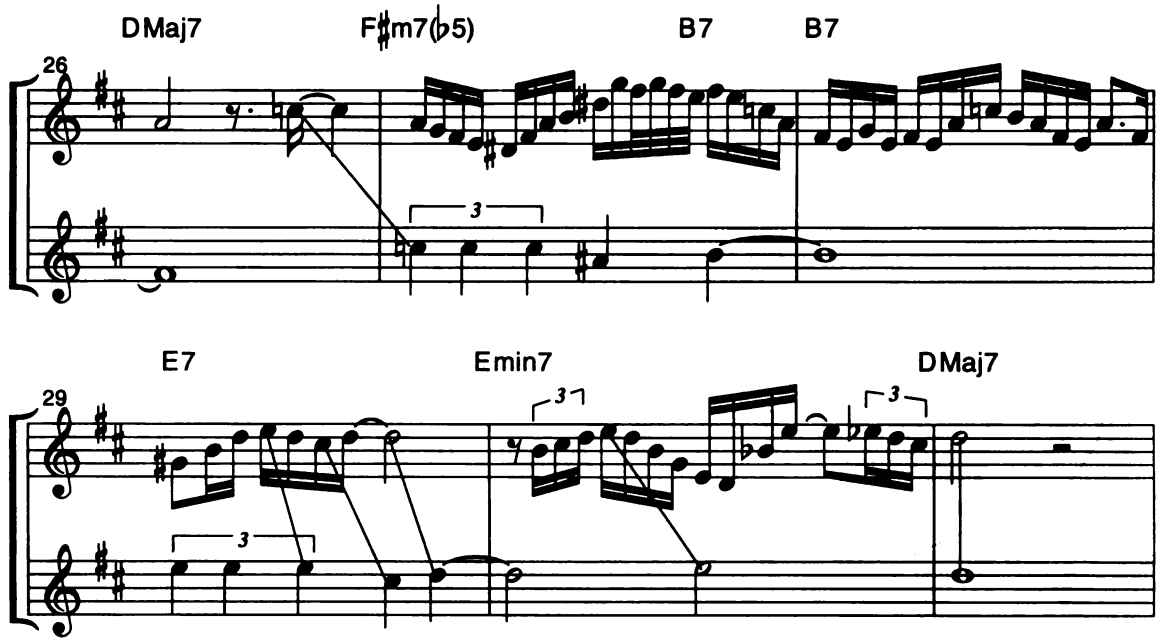
The excerpts below are taken from the last six measures of both A' sections and contain a mixture of melodic undergirding and fragmentation. Note that Hawkins emphasizes similar notes of the undergirding in each example. By doing this, he relates both halves of the solo, giving it unity. In both sections, the C-natural is anticipated

[17] Henderson, p. 182.

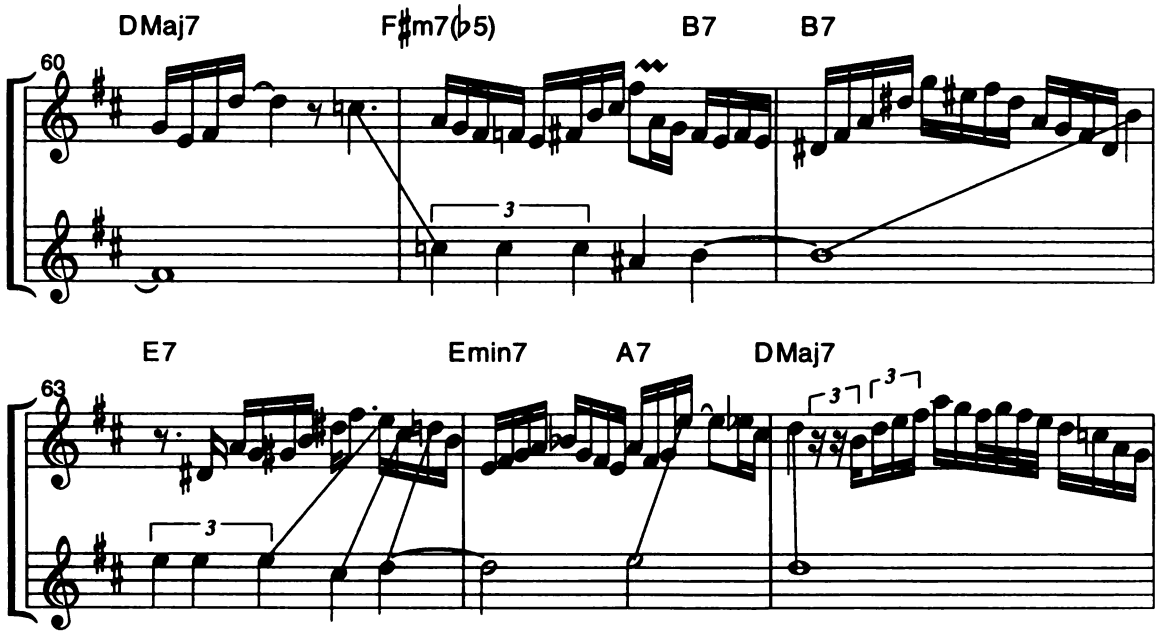
(m. 27 and 61 of the solo), and the arrivals on D-natural (m. 31 and 65) occur in the same metric position as the melody. Note that in mm. 29 and 63, the same melodic fragment (E-C#-D) is embellished, but is incorporated into two distinct phrases.

April in Paris

Ex. 20: Mm. 26-31



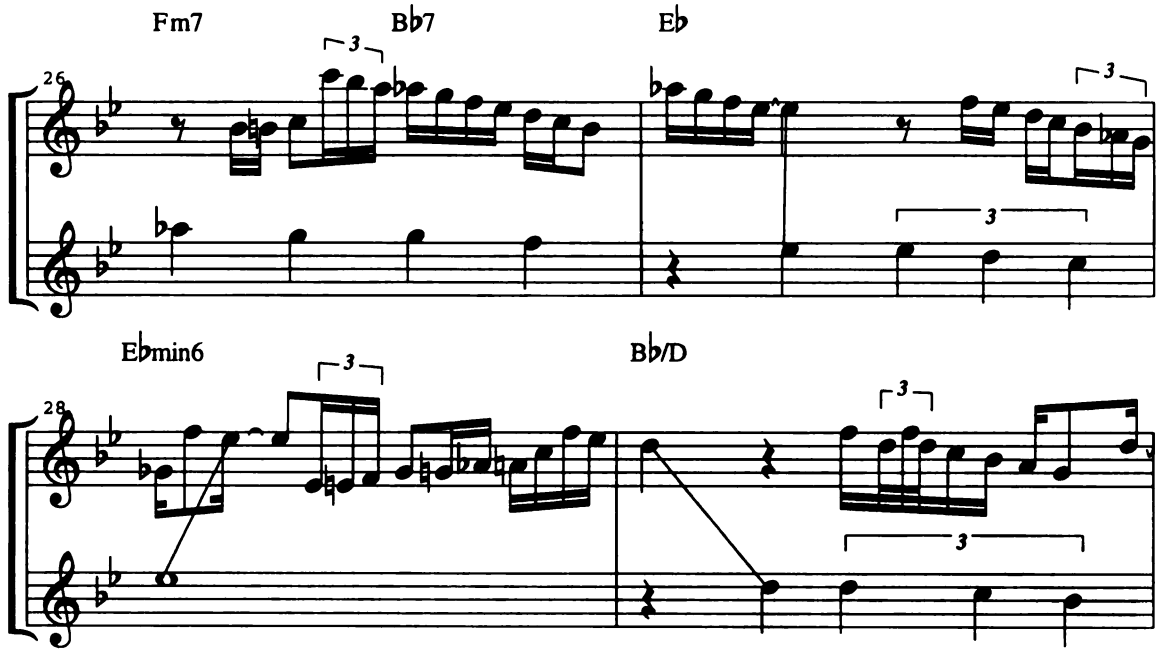
Ex. 21: Mm. 60-65



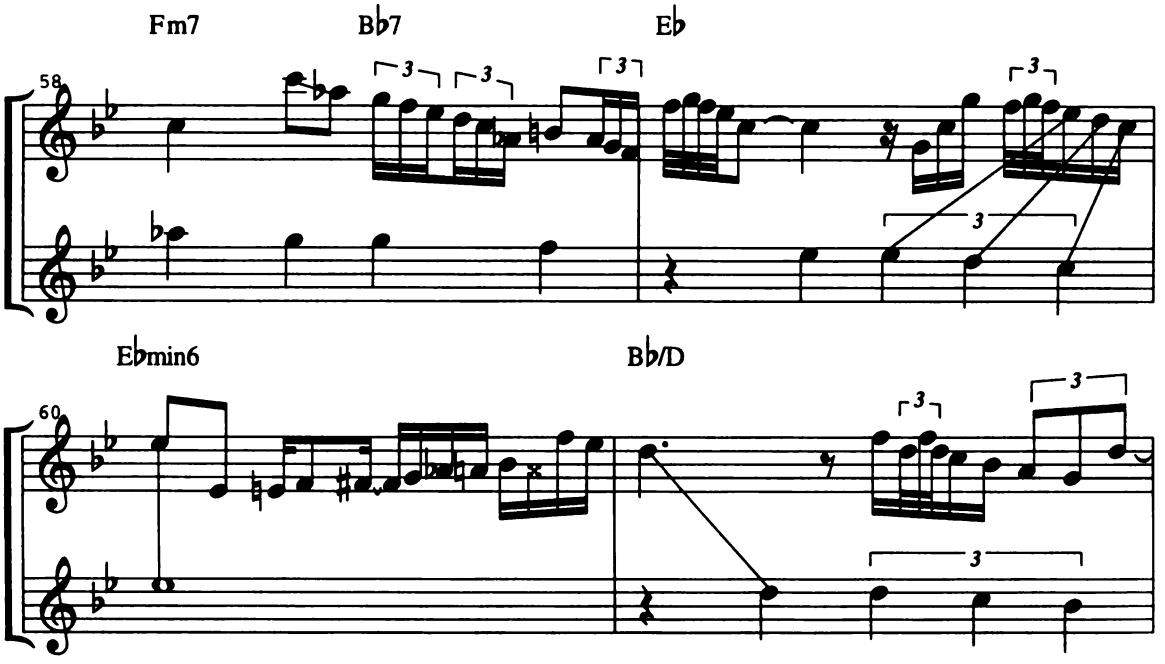
How Deep is the Ocean

The examples below are taken from *How Deep is the Ocean.* Note that the phrases ending in m. 29 and 61 each contain a D-natural. In both places, D-natural is used to anticipate the beginning of the next phrase of the melody.

Ex. 22: Mm. 26-29



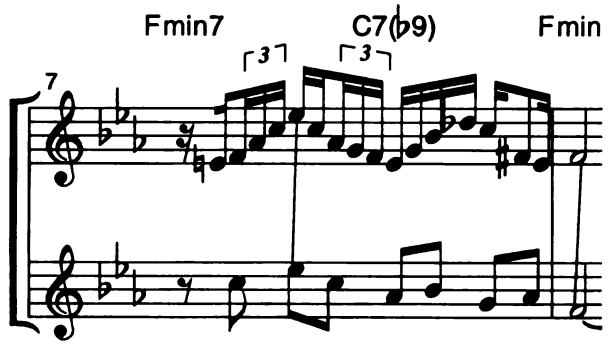
Ex. 23: Mm. 58-61



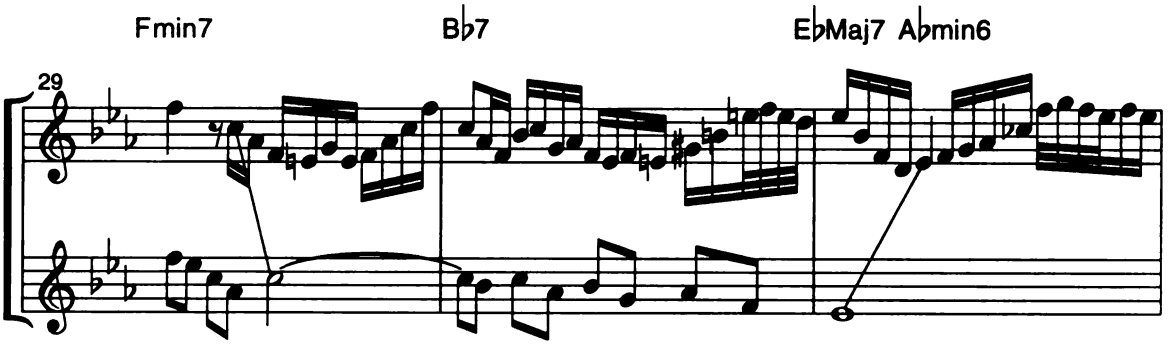
Stardust

Examples of undergirding can also be found in *Stardust*. The passages below follow a highly embellished statement of the opening theme.

Ex. 24: Mm. 7-8



Ex. 25: Mm. 29-31



II.3 Voice-Leading Embellishment

Guide-tone lines

As was mentioned earlier, the differences in the melodies may account for an absence of melodic fragmentation, and an emphasis on undergirding or guide-tone lines in some of Coleman Hawkins's improvisations.

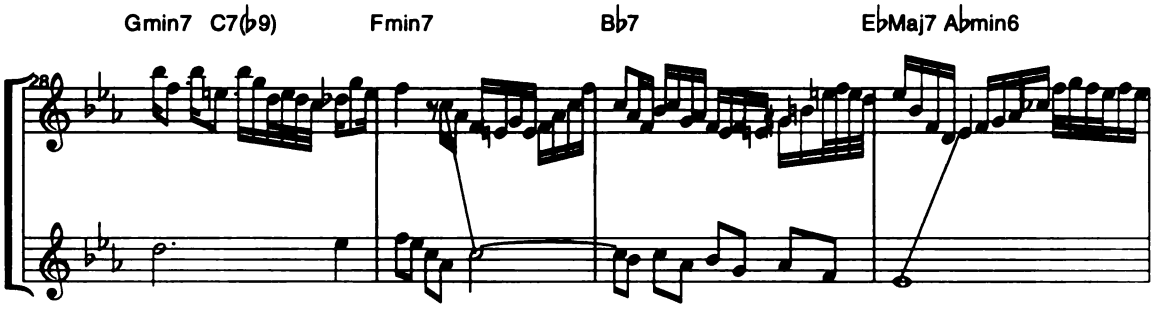
One of the ways in which Hawkins reacts to these differences is by emphasizing guide tones in his improvised lines. As was mentioned previously, guide-tone lines are

descending, stepwise melodies that arise as the result of voice-leading. Hawkins uses guide-tones in two situations: 1) in descending-fifths motion, and; 2) in expansions of local harmonies.

II.3.1 Descending Fifths

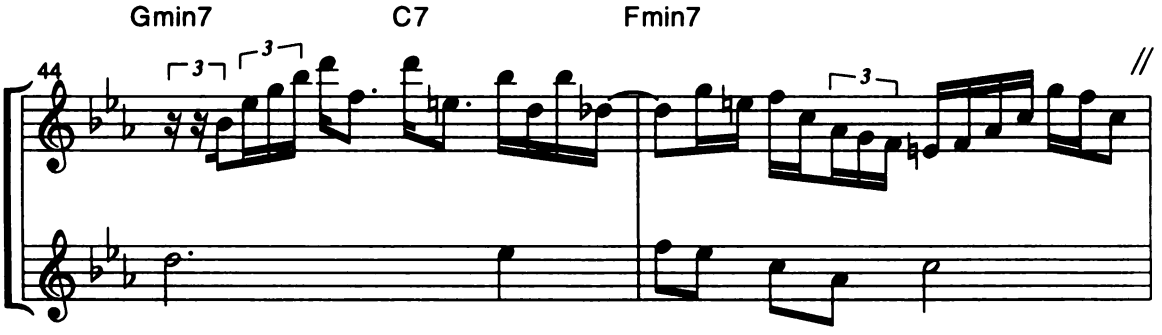
This sequence from *Stardust* (ex. 26) contains a guide-tone line that descends F-E-D-D$^{\flat}$-C-B-B$^{\flat}$, over four measures. Note the tritone substitution on beat 4 of m. 30.

Ex. 26: Mm. 28-31



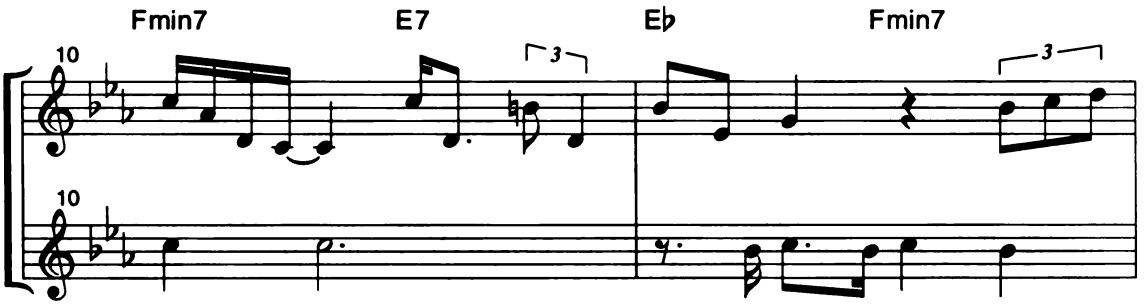
The lines in mm. 29 and 31 indicate Hawkins's reflection of the undergirding. Hawkins emphasizes the same guide-tone line later in the solo (ex. 27). It is interrupted by the cadenza in m. 46.

Ex. 27: Mm. 44-45



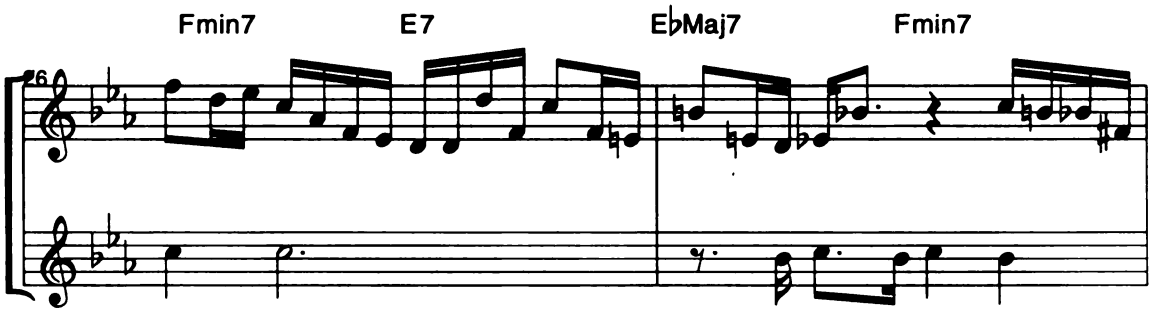
These next three examples (ex. 28-30) are taken from *Body and Soul,* and each contains a descending chromatic line—C-B-B$^{\flat}$—that arises out of a tritone substitution.

Ex. 28: Mm. 10-11



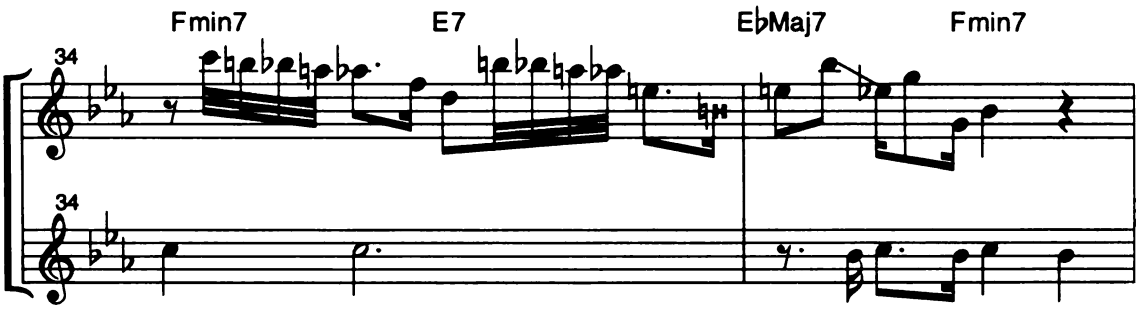
The E7 of m. 10 is a tritone substitution for the dominant—B$^{\flat}$7.

Ex. 29: Mm. 26-27



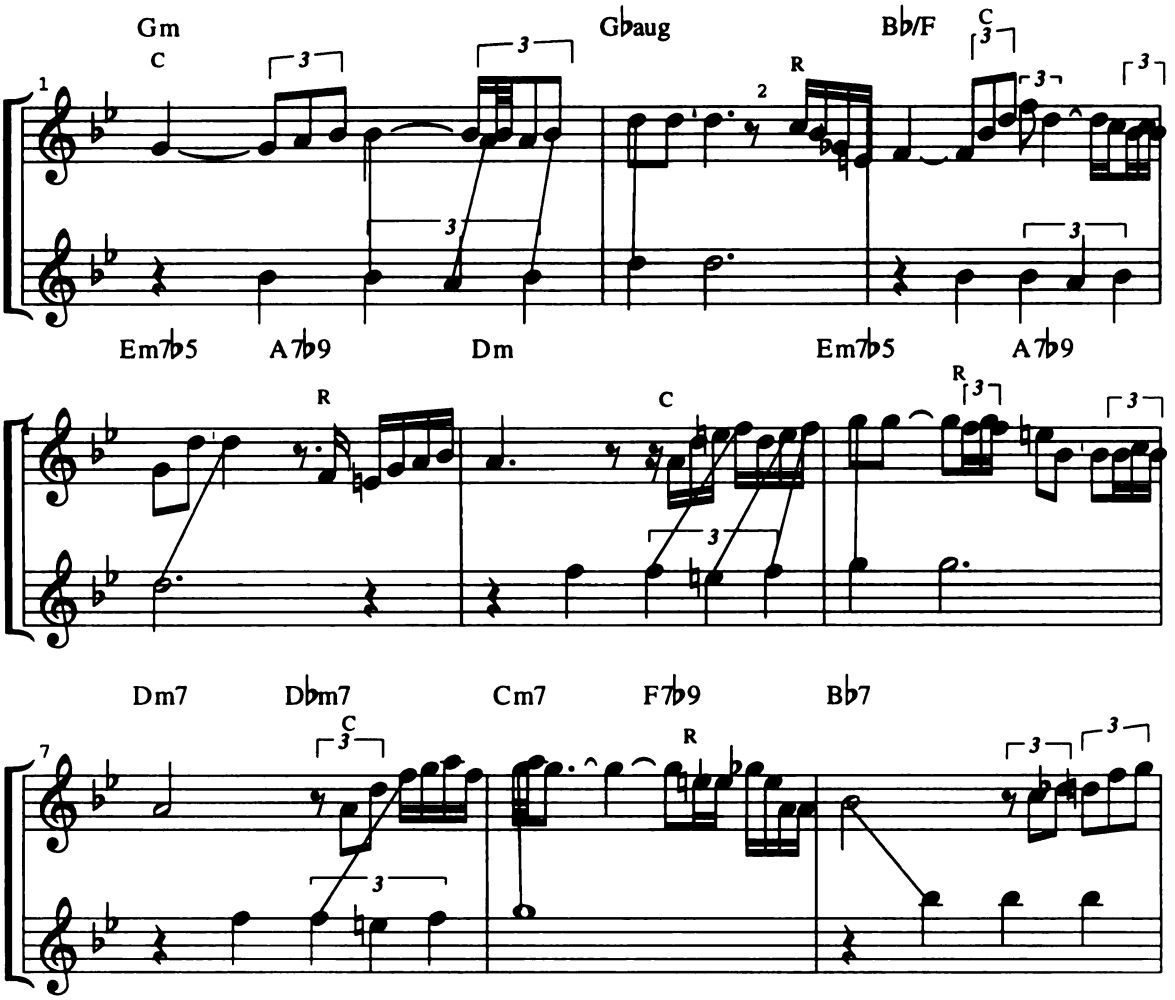
In the example above, Hawkins places the substitution on beat 1, m. 27, creating a suspension that resolves on beat 2.

Ex. 30: Mm. 34-35



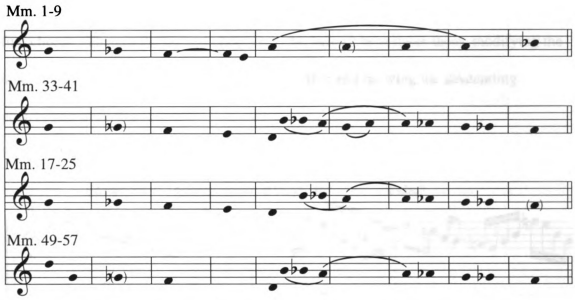
How Deep is the Ocean is written in 32-bar ABAC form. Hawkins uses guide-tone lines to organize his ideas in each of the "A" sections. The solo opens with what sounds like a call-and-response dialogue between two voices, indicated below by "C" and "R" in the example (see ex. 31). One voice embellishes the melody, indicated below with lines, the other voice responds to each melodic statement with an equally committed statement of its own. The goal notes of the small responses are played with such conviction that one cannot help but be drawn to them. In looking at all four "A" sections, it appears the goal notes of the responses are guide tones that are part of a long guide-tone line that Hawkins uses to connect two harmonic areas. The first of these areas forms a chromatic descent from G min to Em7$^{\flat}$5 (m. 1-4); the second is the chromatic descent from Dmin7 to B$^{\flat}$7 of m. 7-9. Hawkins reflects this chromatic motion by embellishing the fifth of each chord (mm. 7-9, 23-25, 39-41, 55-57). What is remarkable is that by varying the rhythm, Hawkins was able to create different lines using the same guide-tone line. The lines connecting the two staves show Hawkins's reflection of the undergirding, demonstrating that Hawkins was, on some level, aware of both melodic and harmonic elements simultaneously.

Ex. 31: Mm. 1-9



The chart below (ex. 32) is a reduction of each of the first nine measures of each "A" section of *How Deep is the Ocean.* As the chart shows, Hawkins outlines the descent of the harmony, from Gmin-G^{b}aug-B^{b}/F-to Em7^{b}5. Note from the example above that after Hawkins introduces A-natural in m. 5, his next call and response returns to A in m. 7. Although this A-natural—the leading tone—is resolved to the tonic in m. 9, the linear pattern is established for the next three A-sections. Note from the reduction below that Hawkins makes a descent from A natural to F natural, beginning in the seventh measure of the following "A" sections—m. 23, 39, and 55.

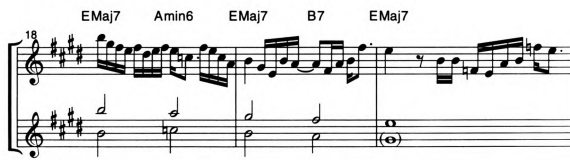
Ex. 32



II.3.2 Local Harmonic Expansions

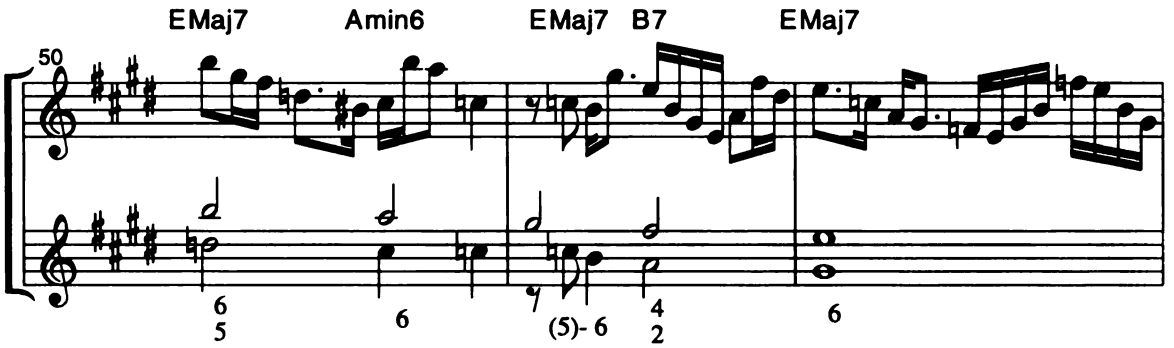
Though most of the examples of guide-tone lines are found in areas descending by fifth, Hawkins also emphasized these lines during local harmonic expansions. The best examples of this may be found in the bridges of *Body and Soul.* Here Hawkins emphasizes two guide-tone lines that counterpoint one another. These lines appear below on the bottom stave.

Ex. 33: Mm. 18-20



The G# of m. 20 (in the lower staff) indicates a conceptual resolution of the dominant 7th of the preceding measure. Hawkins introduces these guide-tone lines in the bridge of the first chorus. Then in the second chorus (ex. 34, below) he restates them, modifying the bottom voice to create a compound melody, further emphasizing the descending progression in sixths.

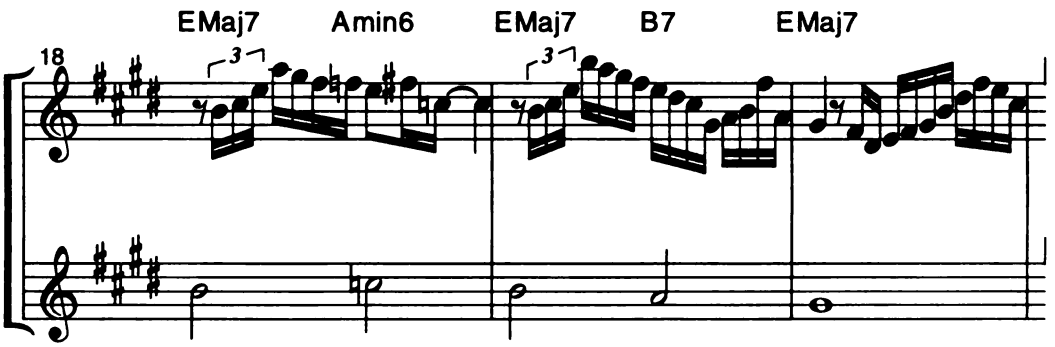
Ex. 34: Mm. 50-52



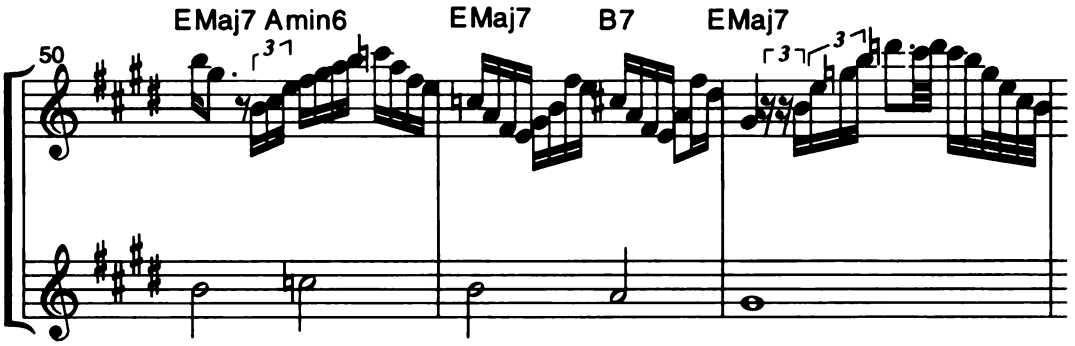
Notice that the bottom voice of this two-voice counterpoint bears a strong resemblance to the original statement in ex. 33.

Not surprisingly, *Rainbow Mist* contains this bottom line in both of its bridges.

Ex. 35: Mm. 18-20



Ex. 36: Mm. 50-52



III. Afterthought

The examples above demonstrate that Coleman Hawkins's ballads were conceived not merely as a succession of arpeggios, as is widely believed, but rather the product of broad architectural planning that employed specific techniques and strategies. To what extent were these strategies conscious or unconscious?

Thelonious Monk asked Hawkins to explain the commercial success of the 1939 *Body and Soul,* since it contained no overt references to the melody, apart from the first eight measures. People who approached Hawkins off the bandstand would tell him how much they enjoyed the recording because they could hear the melody throughout. Hawkins dismissed them by saying, "Now these are the people that don't know anything about music. I mean, these people I'm talking about, you know—the people you've got to please, you know? They hear the melody! [forcefully] Where is the melody? They didn't play no melody—ain't no melody, ain't no real melody in the whole piece!!"[18]

[18] DeVeaux, p. 100.

The extent to which Hawkins was consciously aware of these methods is, of course, impossible to know. But that is not important. What is important is that they are borne out in the examples above and in the transcriptions. The transcriptions also show Coleman Hawkins's style to be rooted firmly in melodic improvisation: perhaps to a greater extent than he himself recognized; certainly more than he cared to admit. They show that he re-used melodic fragments to help the solo refer to itself, thus creating unity in the improvisation. His use of guide-tones shows a deep awareness and understanding of harmony and counterpoint. It was through the use of rhythmic variation that he was able to reuse the same guide tones and melodic fragments, varying the improvised line just enough to avoid repetition and formula. The methods that he used were employed judiciously to develop solos of tremendous intricacy that gradually built in intensity and "told a story."

In his thesis on Coleman Hawkins, Alan Henderson writes, "Hawkins. . .does not seem to me to be especially preoccupied with harmonic relationships. It is the exploration, in a sense, of the effects of intervals on each other and on lines as a whole, which, in my opinion, endlessly fascinated Hawkins."[19] While this may have been true of Hawkins's work of 1932-34, his ballads of 1939-45 strike a balance between his use of melodic and harmonic resources. The bridges of *Body and Soul* and *Rainbow Mist*, if anything, show Hawkins's eagerness to explore harmonic relationships, in particular the slightest differences between adjacent chords, reflected through his use of guide tones.

During his five-year stint in Europe (1934-1939), Hawkins toured throughout the continent and was a featured soloist wherever he went. Hawkins was given a hero's

[19] Henderson, p. 183.

welcome in Copenhagen where 5,000 fans turned out to meet his train.[20] This level of public adulation for a black jazz musician was unheard of in the deeply segregated United States. While this sort of public display of admiration took some getting used to, so too did the concert formats. Where with the Fletcher Henderson orchestra Hawkins was a featured soloist in a dance band, in Europe he shared the stage with opera singers and other instrumentalists and in the process became a concert artist.

Due to a shortage of jazz musicians in Europe, Hawkins was accorded unprecedented creative freedom, and recordings from this period bear evidence of this. Hawkins's solos comprise the bulk of the recordings and many of them contain elaborate unaccompanied introductions and codas. These established Hawkins's credentials as a virtuoso. It was also during this time that Hawkins was given ample space to experiment with harmony. Critics charged that Hawkins's five years in Europe had "done [him] no good. The adulation of critics and public has tended to bring out the exhibitionist in him, while playing as the featured soloist with inferior orchestras accustomed him to consider himself as the star, not as a fully integrated member of the band."[21]

Undoubtedly, Hawkins's tour in Europe had an immeasurable impact on his self-confidence and growth as a soloist. Soon after his return to the United States in August 1939, Hawkins would record *Body and Soul*, which marked the beginning of a six-year period of intense recording activity that neatly coincided with the end of the swing era. During this time, Hawkins served as a mentor to a crop of young, talented musicians who became the voice of bebop. Given his stature as a soloist, Hawkins certainly was an inspiration, both professionally and musically, for Charlie Parker and others.

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[20] DeVeaux, p. 88.
[21] DeVeaux, p. 90.

Coleman Hawkins's harmonic explorations set the stage for what came to be regarded as a revolution, when bebop musicians made a definitive break with the rest of mainstream pop culture and placed their virtuosity at center stage, creating a music to be listened to, rather than for dancing and entertainment. This sensibility continues to inform how jazz is played today.

Because the legacy of bebop is so pervasive, students tend to regard it as a stepping-off point to their study of jazz. Modernism, with its obsession for innovation, has prejudiced us against examining properly the music of earlier players such as Chu Berry, Don Byas, as well as Hawkins, because in a modernist's ears they [i.e., the music of the transitional players] are assumed to be inferior to bebop and later styles. Consequently, many important players such as Hawkins have been given lip-service by scholars, but their music has not been studied as rigorously as that of Charlie Parker or John Coltrane.

Now that jazz has gained its rightful place in the academy, it is time that more attention is paid to Hawkins and other earlier players. With a renewed interest in this work, aspiring players and scholars may uncover other links between the past and present of this vibrant art form.

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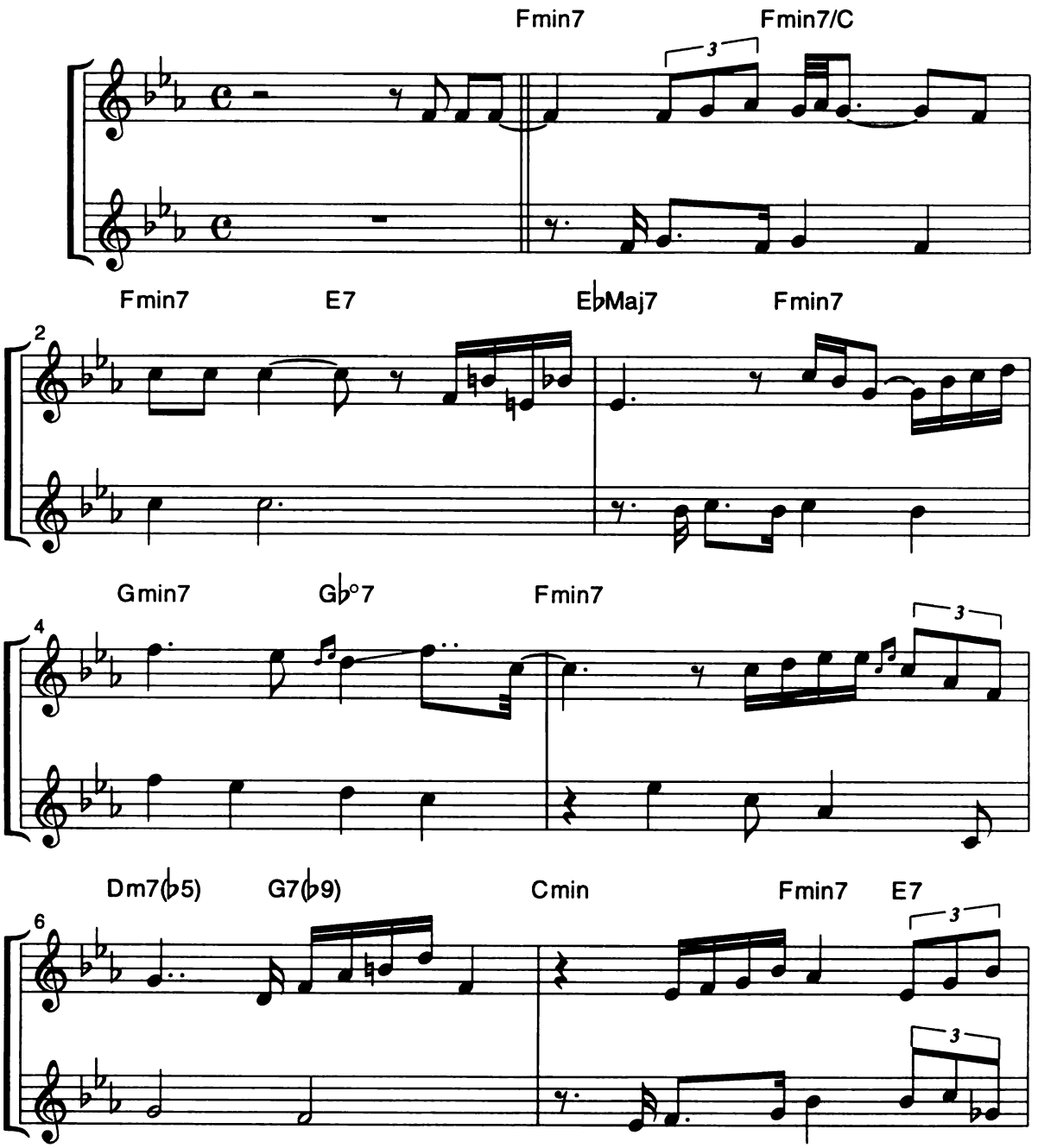
APPENDIX

Body and Soul

Music: John Green
Solo: Coleman Hawkins
Transcription: Michael Zsoldos



Music © 1930, 1947 Warner Bros., Inc.
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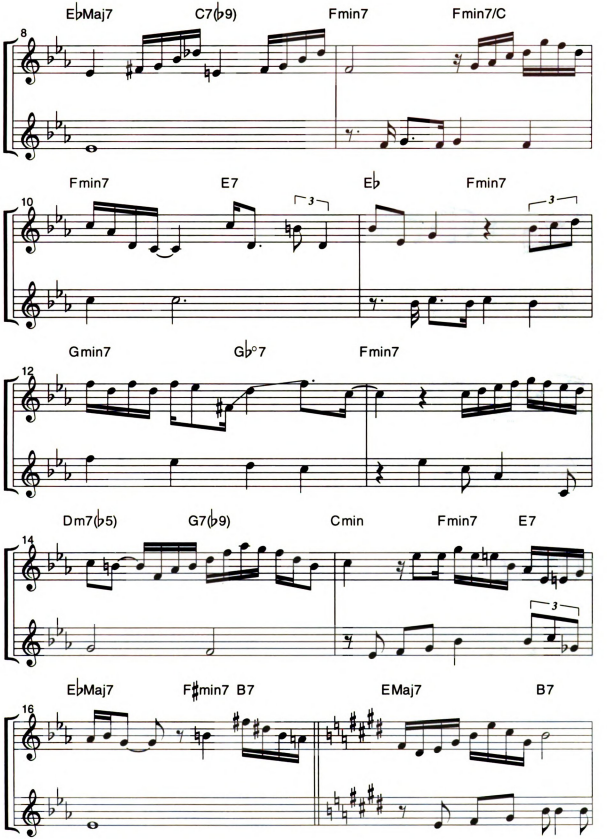
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Fmin7
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Fmin7
12
Dm7(♭5)
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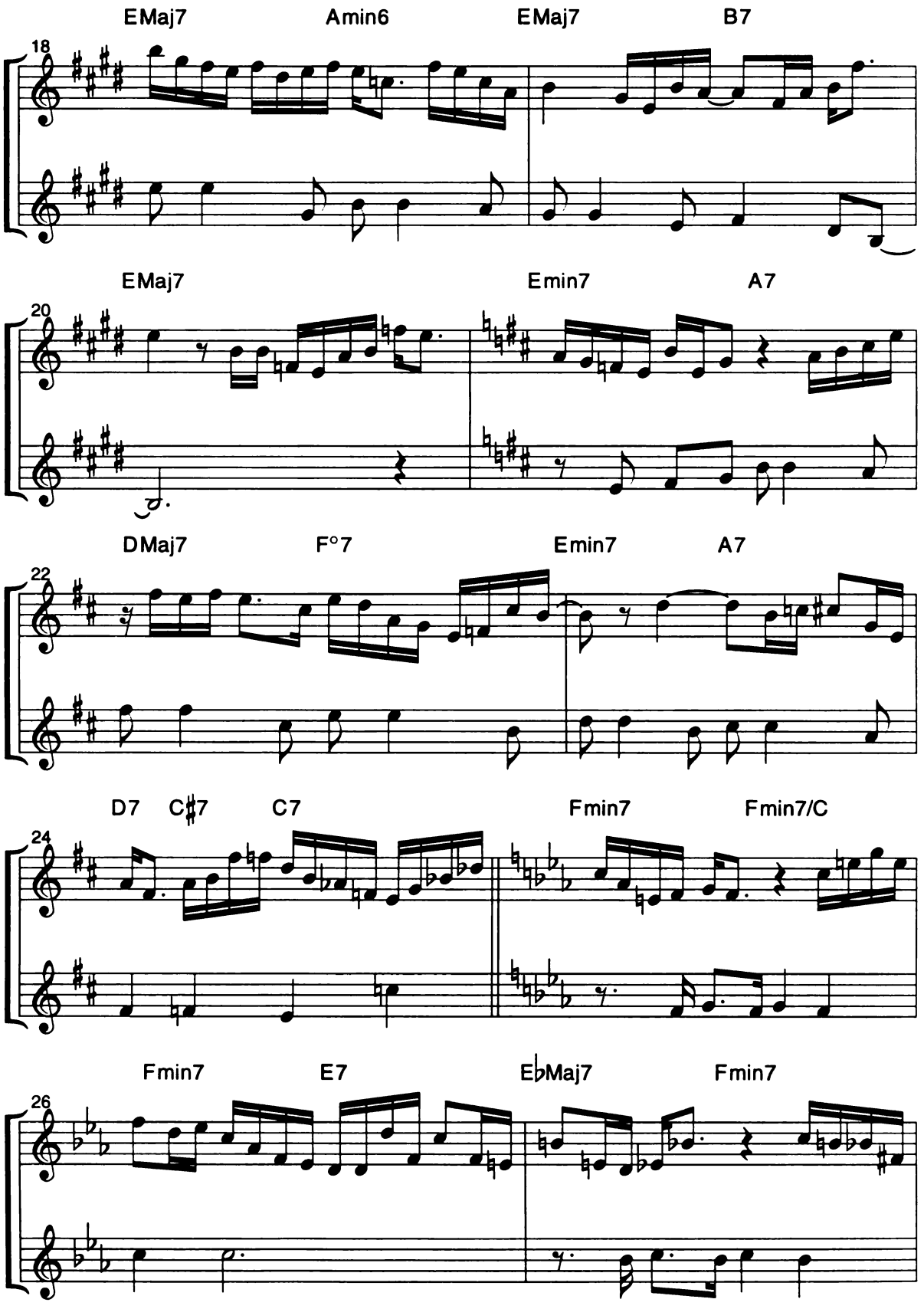
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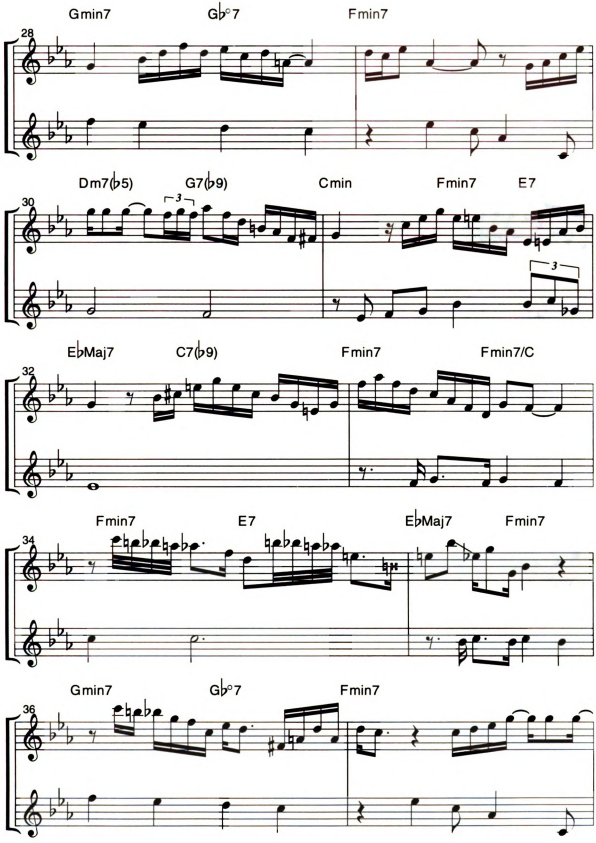
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32
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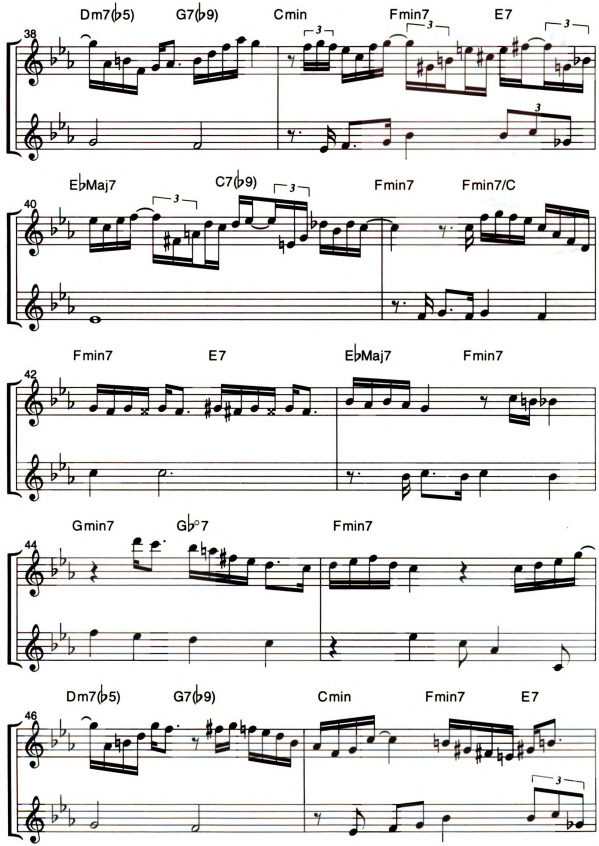
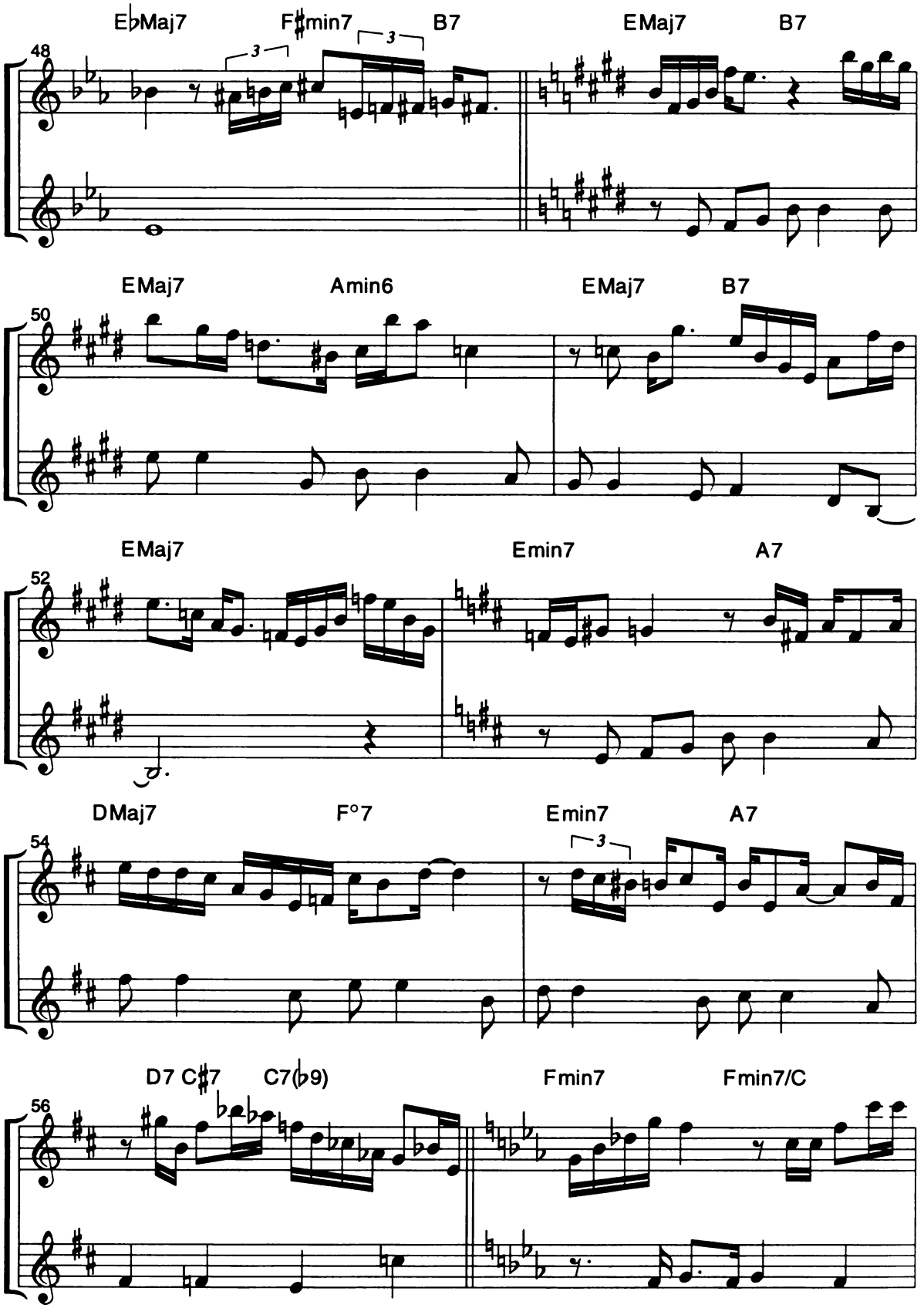
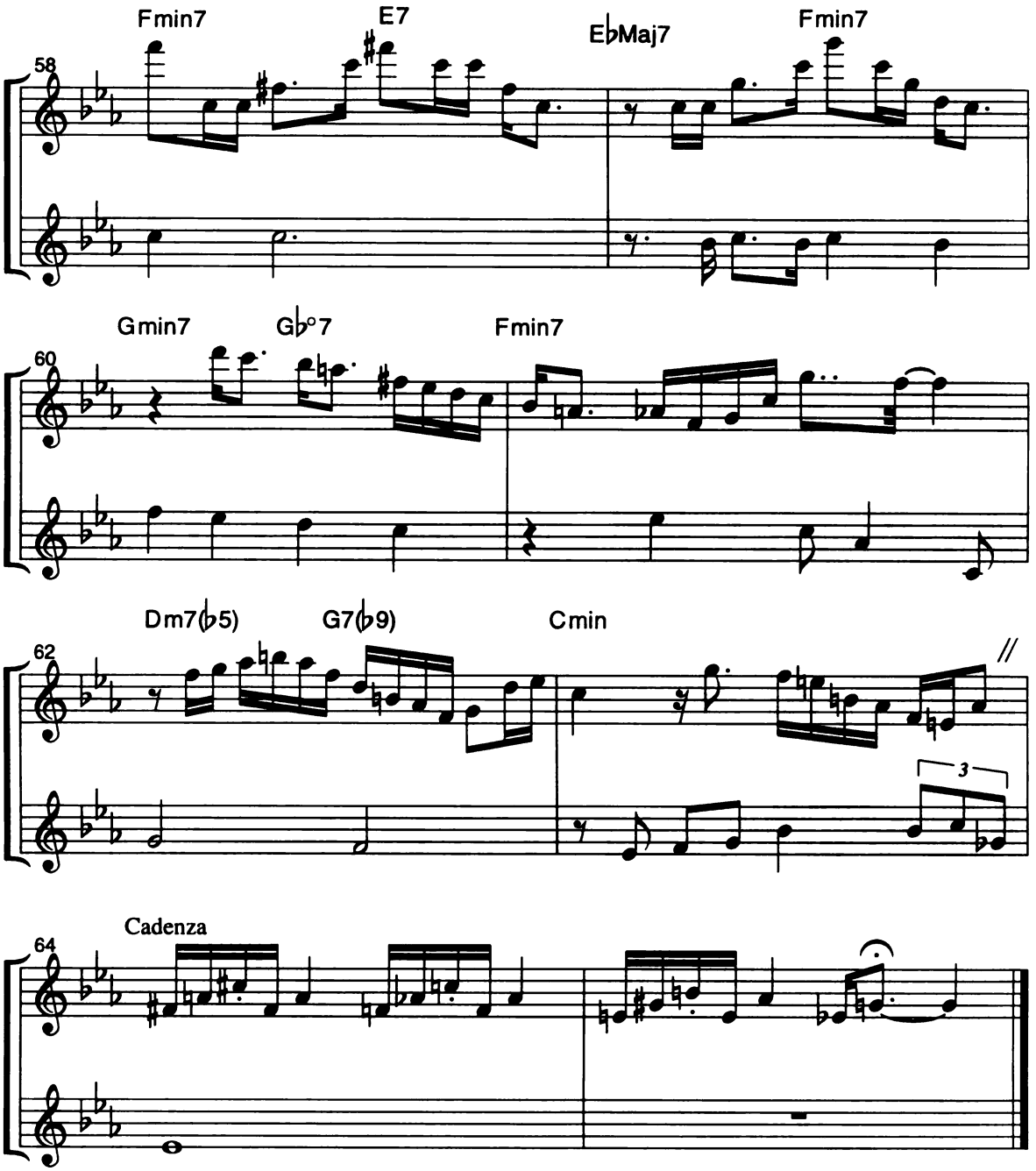
E7
EbMaj7
Fmin7
34
Gmin7
Gb°7
Fmin7
36

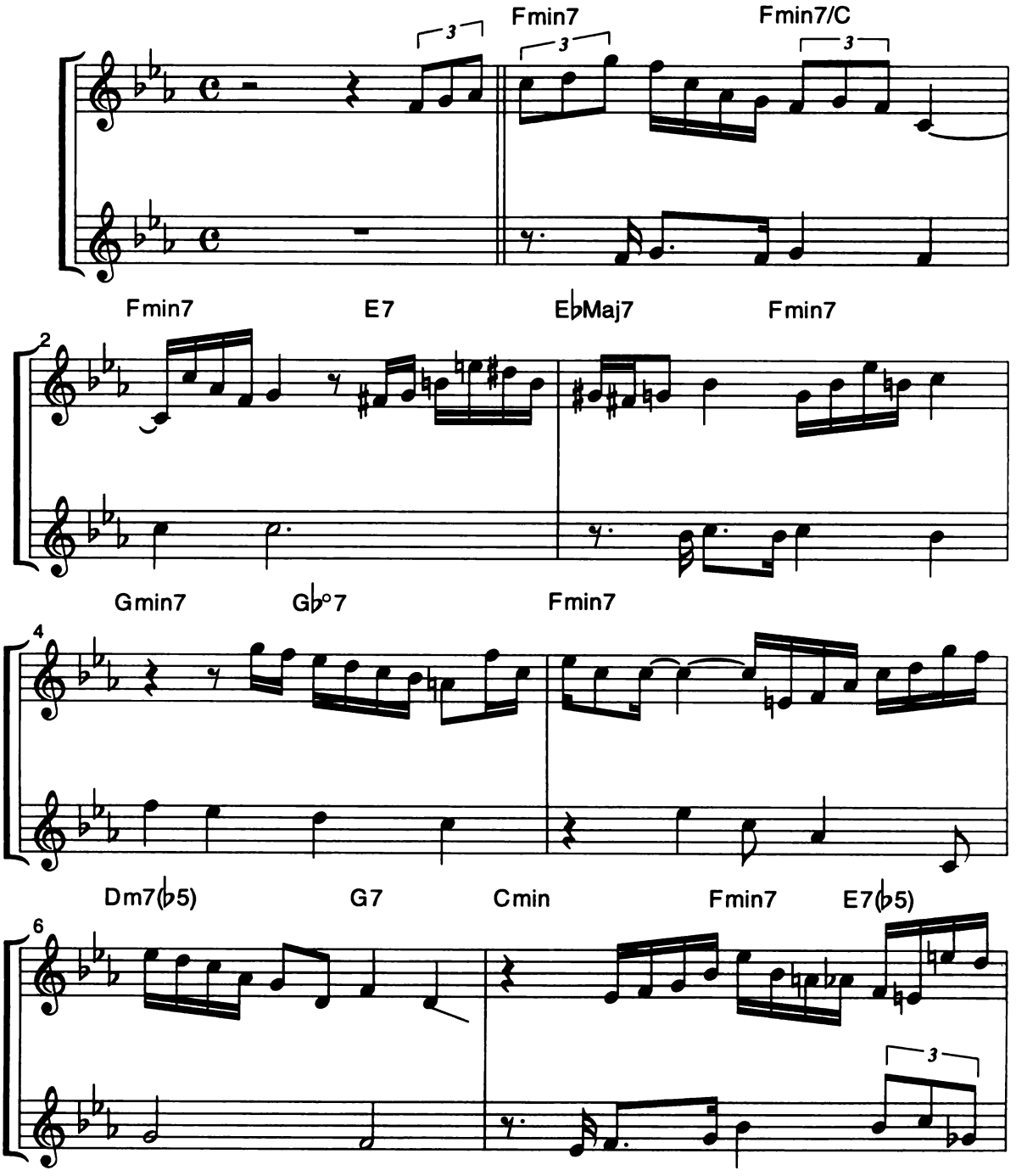

Dm7(♭5)
G7(♭9)
Cmin
Fmin7
E7
38
E♭Maj7
C7(♭9)
Fmin7
Fmin7/C
40
Fmin7
E7
E♭Maj7
Fmin7
42
Gmin7
G♭°7
Fmin7
44
Dm7(♭5)
G7(♭9)
Cmin
Fmin7
E7
46


E♭Maj7
F♯min7
B7
EMaj7
B7
48
3
3
EMaj7
Amin6
EMaj7
B7
50
EMaj7
Emin7
A7
52
DMaj7
F°7
Emin7
A7
54
3
D7
C♯7
C7(♭9)
Fmin7
Fmin7/C
56


Fmin7
E7
E♭Maj7
Fmin7
58
Gmin7
G♭°7
Fmin7
60
Dm7(♭5)
G7(♭9)
Cmin
62
3
Cadenza
64

Rainbow Mist

Solo: Coleman Hawkins
Transcription: Michael Zsoldos



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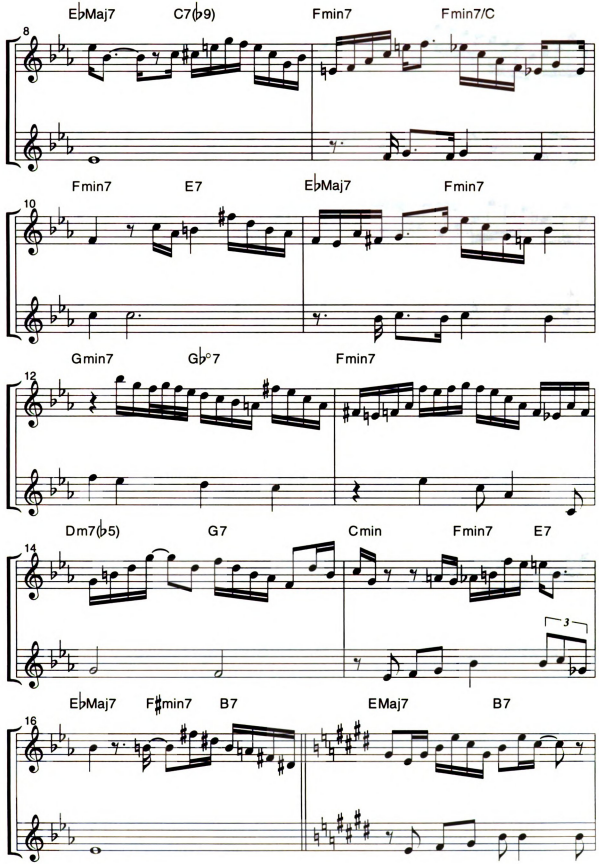
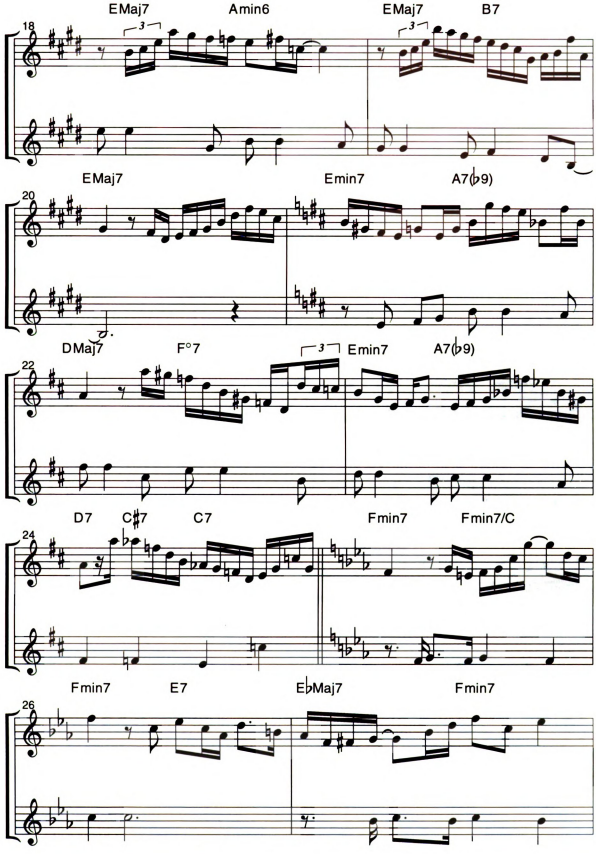
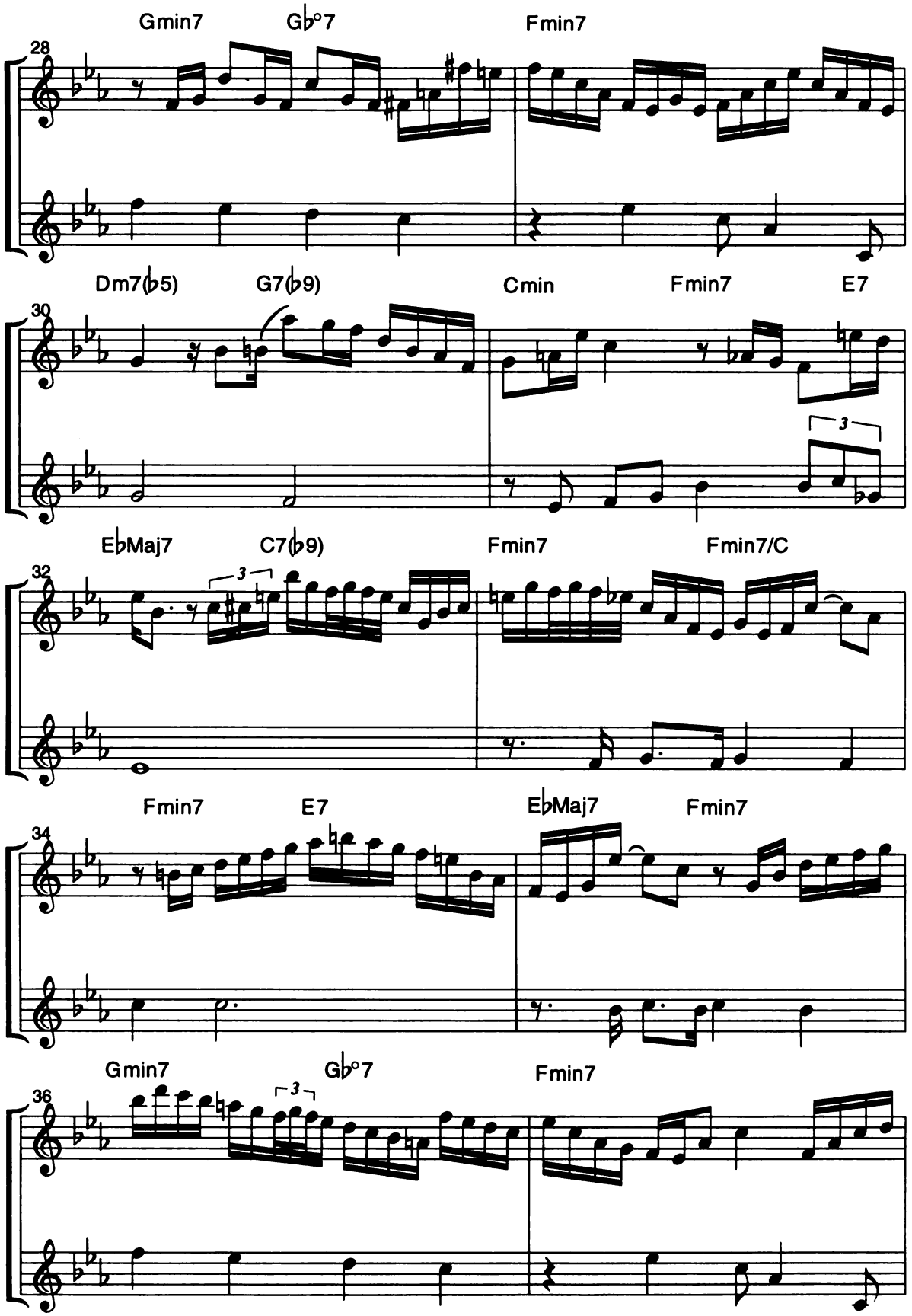
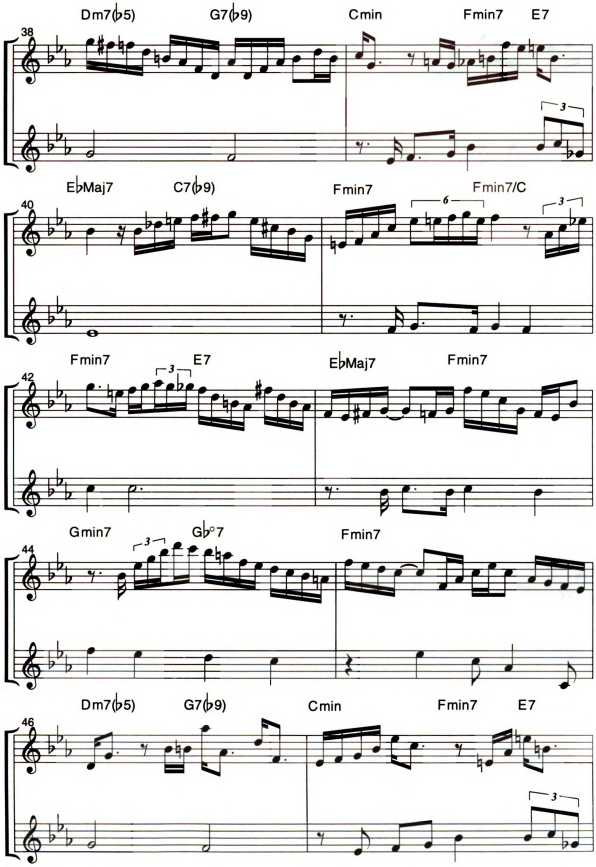
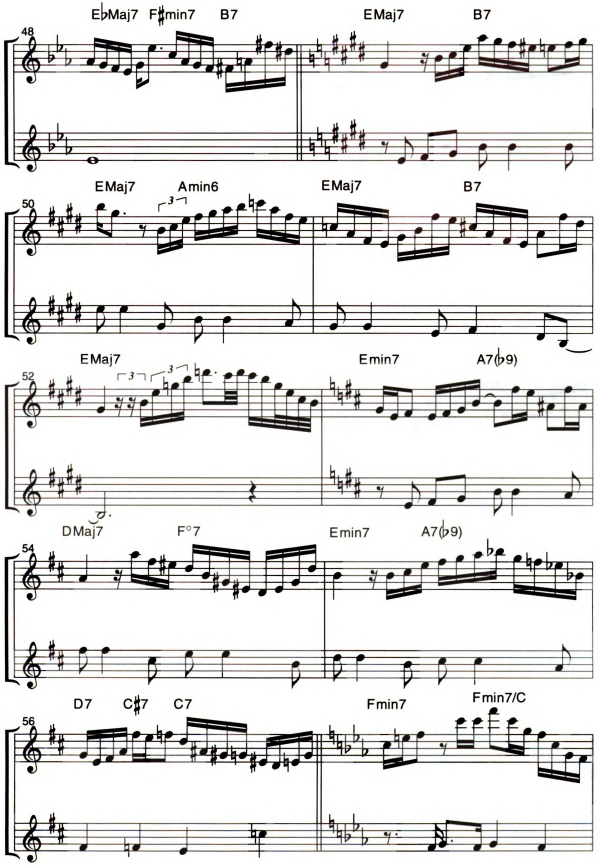
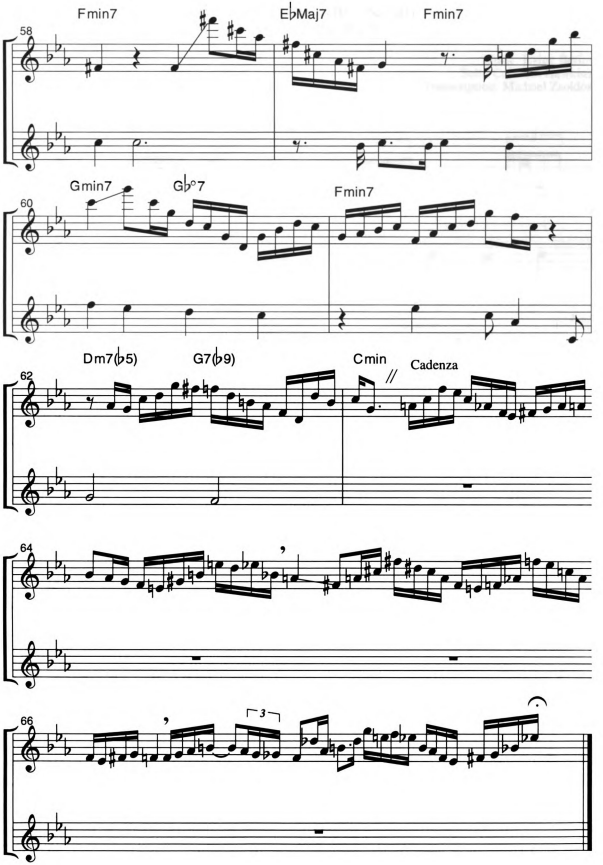

E♭Maj7
C7(♭9)
Fmin7
Fmin7/C
8
Fmin7
E7
E♭Maj7
Fmin7
10
Gmin7
G♭°7
Fmin7
12
Dm7(♭5)
G7
Cmin
Fmin7
E7
14
3
E♭Maj7
F♯min7
B7
EMaj7
B7
16


EMaj7
Amin6
EMaj7
B7
18
EMaj7
Emin7
A7(♭9)
20
DMaj7
F°7
Emin7
A7(♭9)
22
D7
C♯7
C7
Fmin7
Fmin7/C
24
Fmin7
E7
E♭Maj7
Fmin7
26


Gmin7
Gb°7
Fmin7
28
Dm7(b5)
G7(b9)
Cmin
Fmin7
E7
30
3
EbMaj7
C7(b9)
Fmin7
Fmin7/C
32
3
Fmin7
E7
EbMaj7
Fmin7
34
Gmin7
Gb°7
Fmin7
36
3

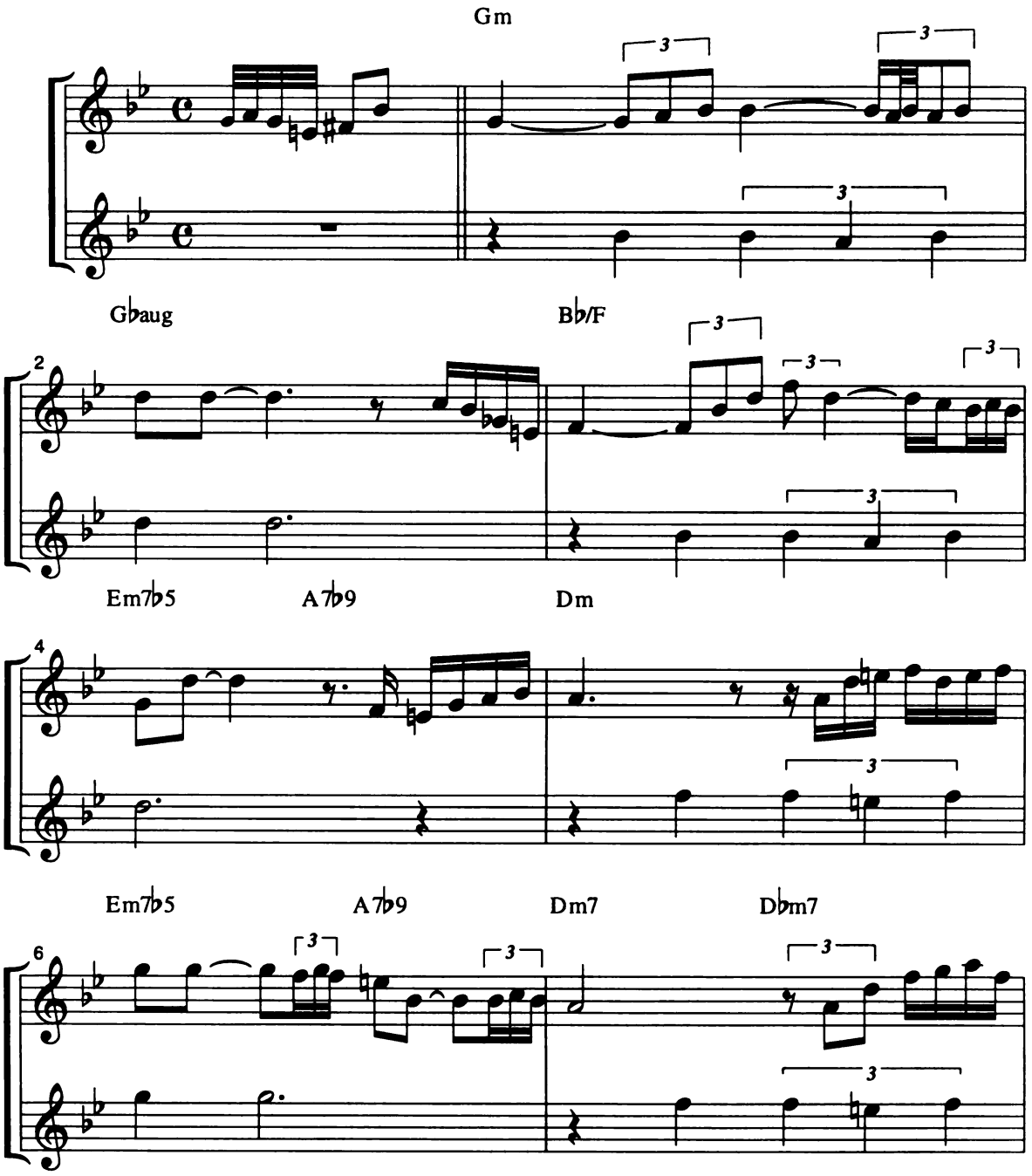

38
Dm7(♭5)
G7(♭9)
Cmin
Fmin7
E7
40
E♭Maj7
C7(♭9)
Fmin7
Fmin7/C
42
Fmin7
E7
E♭Maj7
Fmin7
44
Gmin7
G♭°7
Fmin7
46
Dm7(♭5)
G7(♭9)
Cmin
Fmin7
E7


E♭Maj7
F♯min7
B7
EMaj7
B7
48
EMaj7
Amin6
EMaj7
B7
50
EMaj7
Emin7
A7(♭9)
52
DMaj7
F°7
Emin7
A7(♭9)
54
D7
C♯7
C7
Fmin7
Fmin7/C
56


Fmin7
E♭Maj7
Fmin7
58
Gmin7
G♭°7
Fmin7
60
Dm7(♭5)
G7(♭9)
Cmin
Cadenza
62
64
3
66

How Deep is the Ocean
(How High is the Sky?)

Music: Irving Berlin
Solo: Coleman Hawkins
Transcription: Michael Zsoldos



Music © 1932 by Irving Berlin
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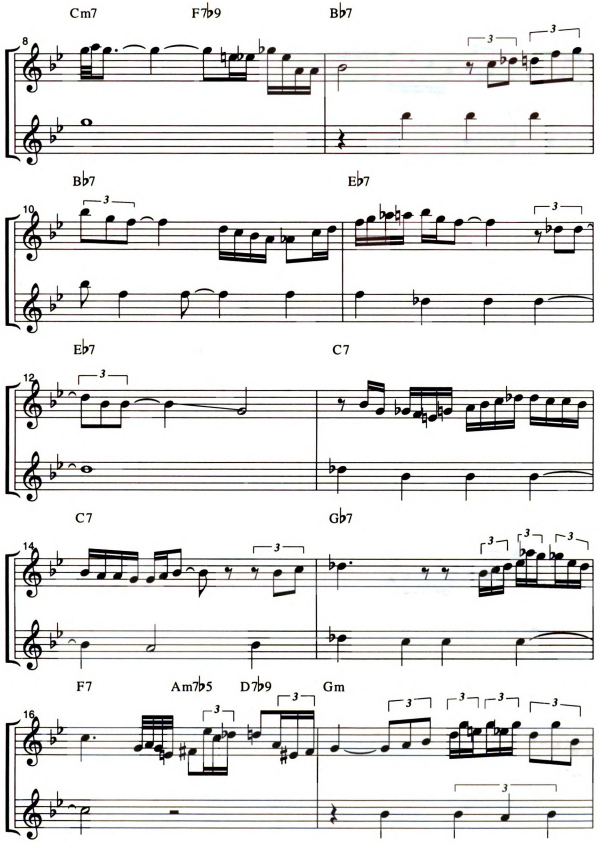
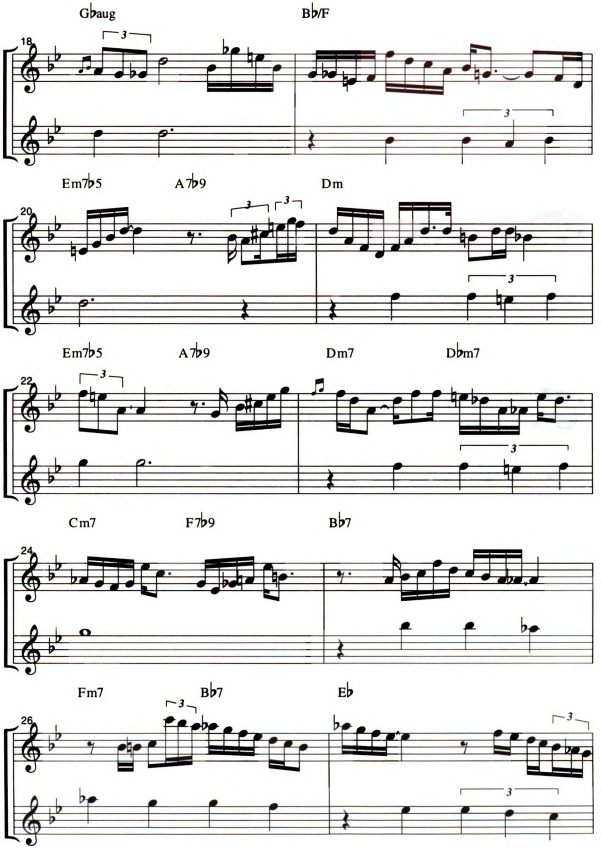
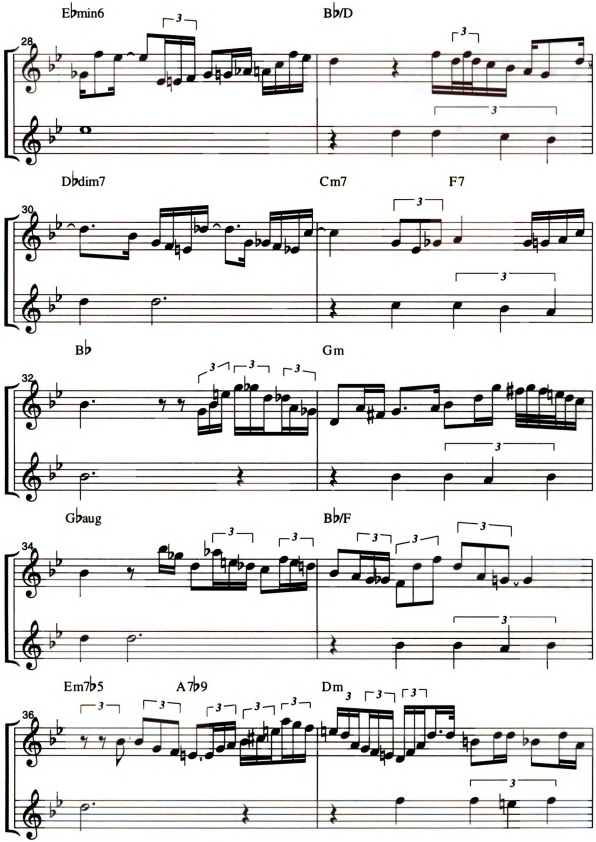
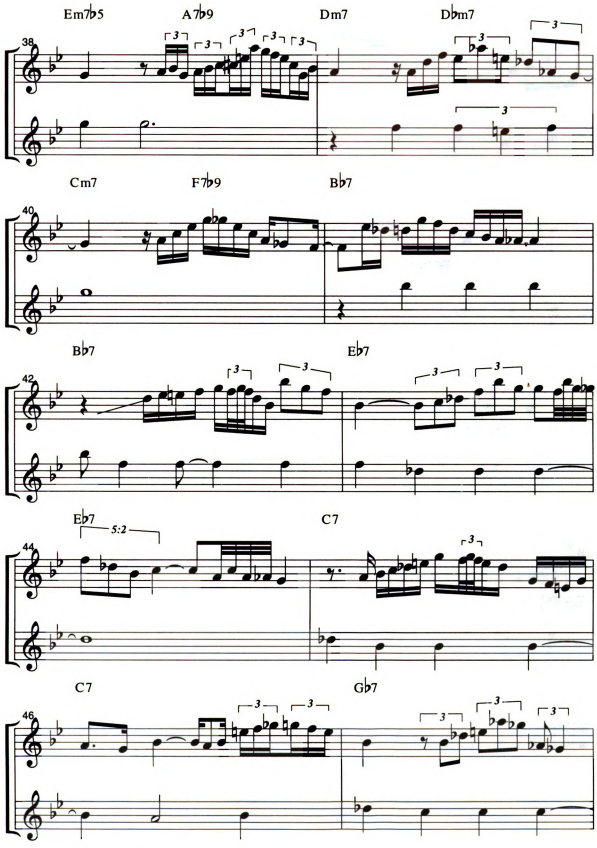
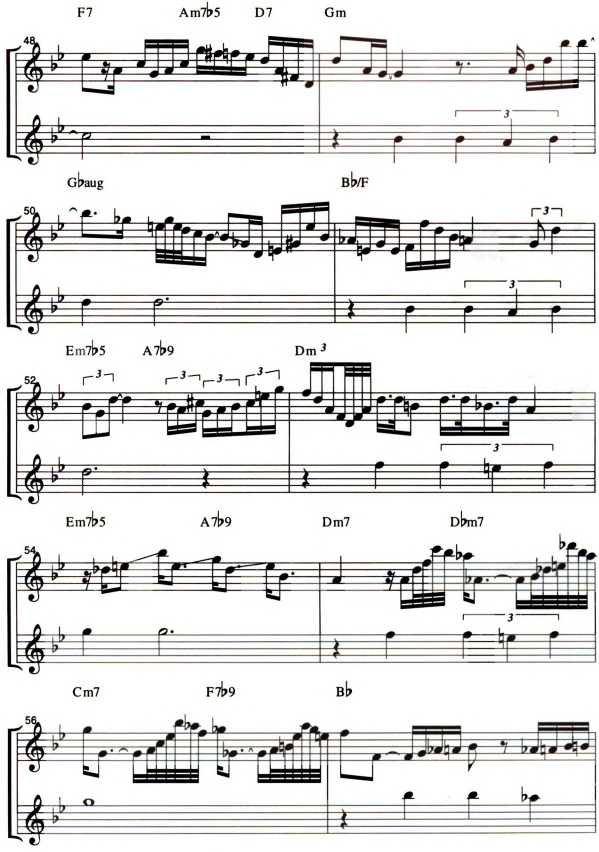
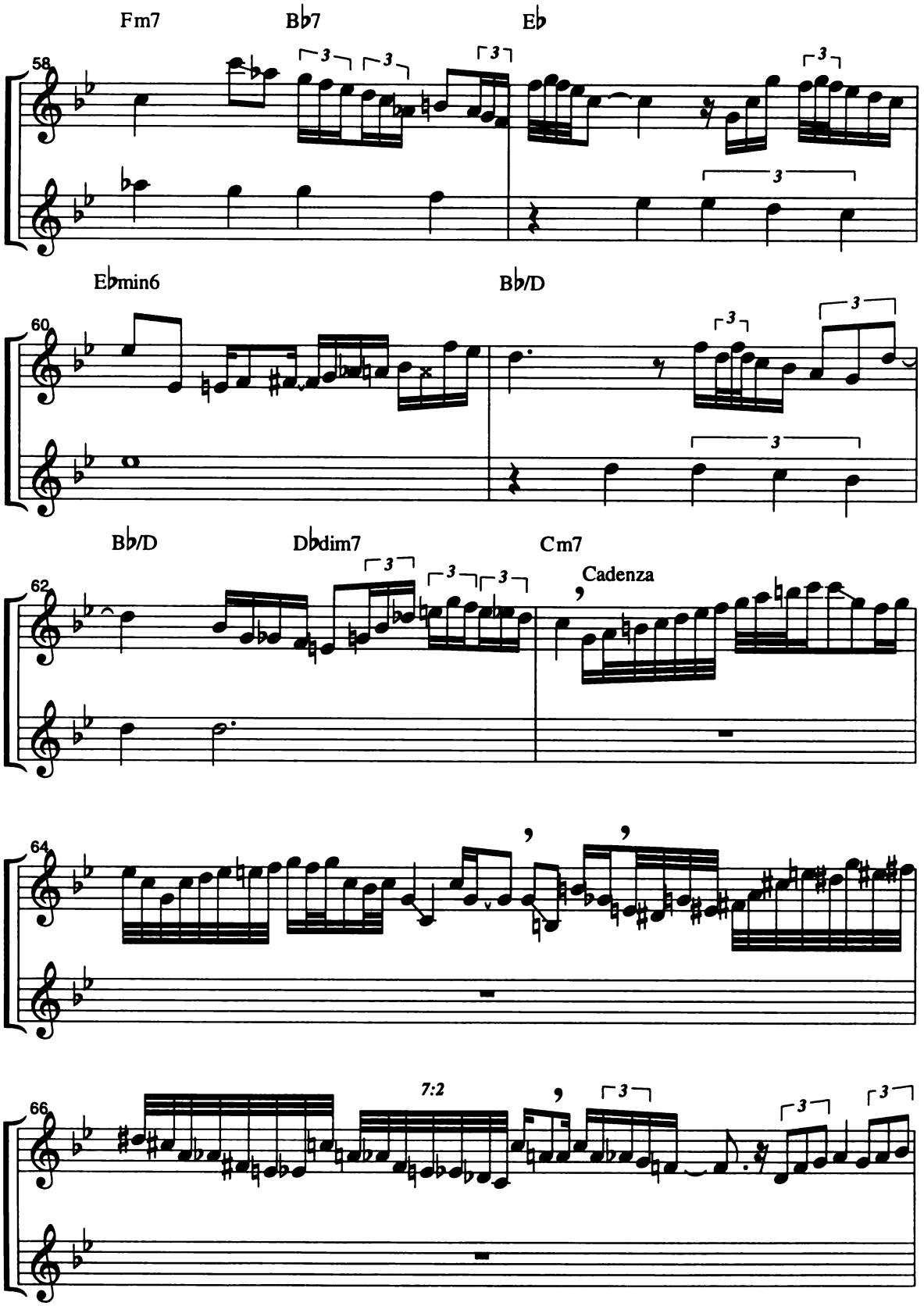

Cm7
F7♭9
B♭7
8
B♭7
E♭7
10
E♭7
C7
12
C7
G♭7
14
F7
Am7♭5
D7♭9
Gm
16

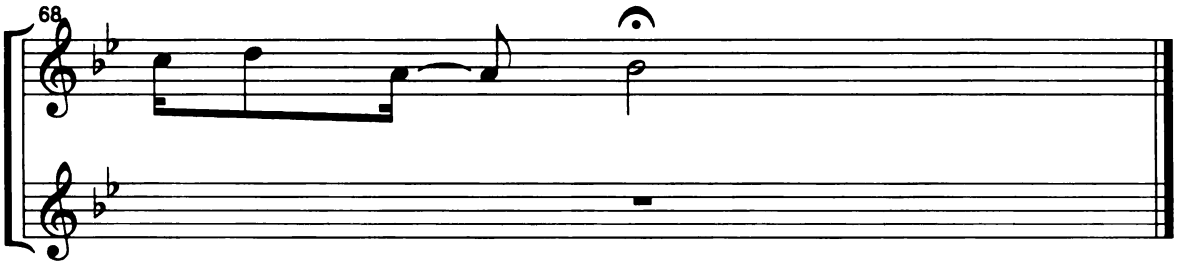

Gbaug
Bb/F
18
Em7b5
A7b9
Dm
20
Em7b5
A7b9
Dm7
Dbm7
22
Cm7
F7b9
Bb7
24
Fm7
Bb7
Eb
26


E♭min6
B♭/D
28
D♭dim7
Cm7
F7
30
B♭
Gm
32
G♭aug
B♭/F
34
Em7♭5
A7♭9
Dm
36


Em7♭5
A7♭9
Dm7
D♭m7
38
Cm7
F7♭9
B♭7
40
B♭7
E♭7
42
E♭7
5:2
C7
44
C7
G♭7
46

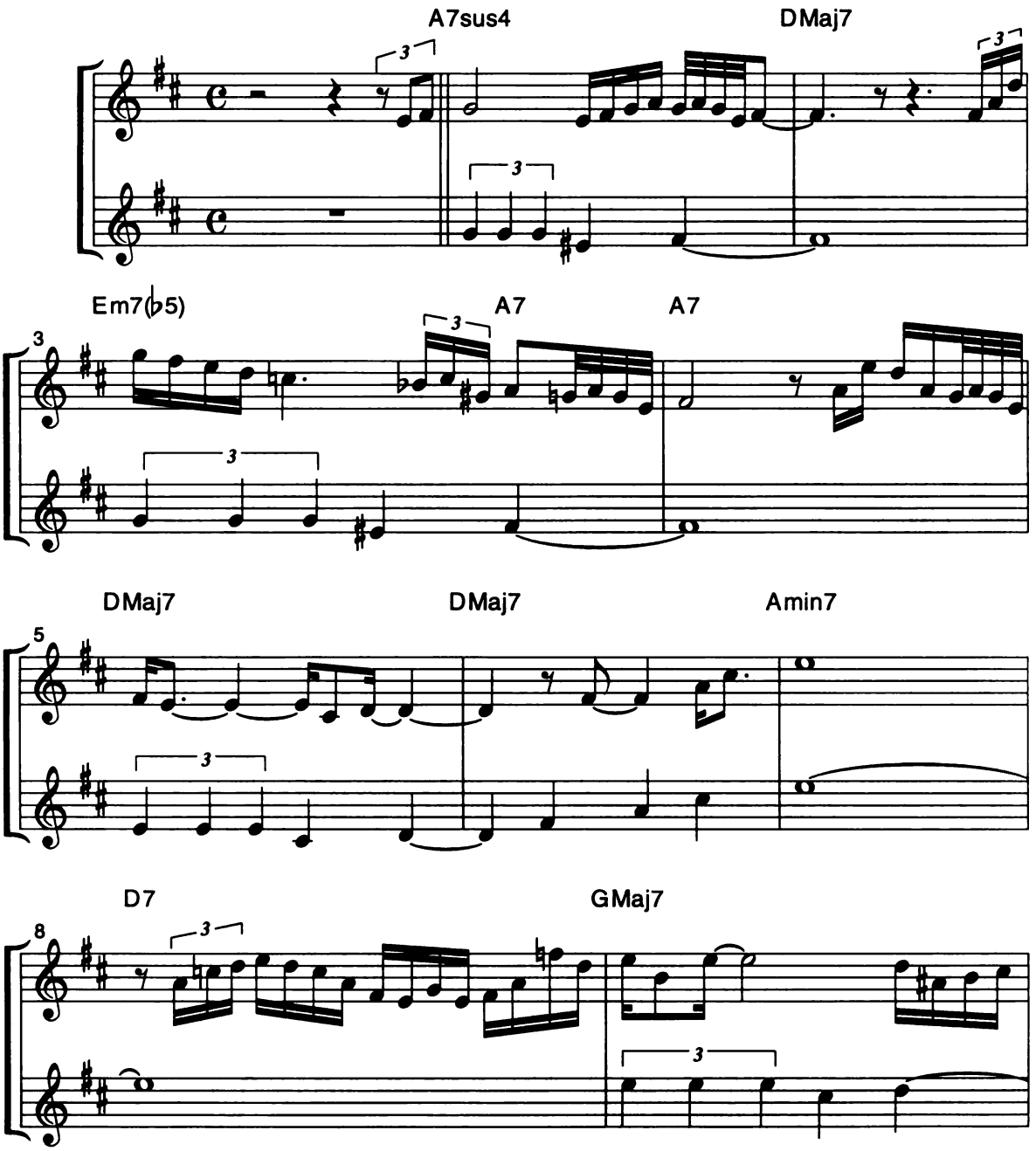

F7
Am7♭5
D7
Gm
48
G♭aug
B♭/F
50
Em7♭5
A7♭9
Dm
52
Em7♭5
A7♭9
Dm7
D♭m7
54
Cm7
F7♭9
B♭
56


Fm7
B♭7
E♭
58
3
3
3
3
3
E♭min6
B♭/D
60
3
3
3
3
B♭/D
D♭dim7
C m7
62
3
3
3
Cadenza
64
7:2
66
3
3
3


68

April in Paris

Music: Vernon Duke
Solo: Coleman Hawkins
Transcription: Michael Zsoldos



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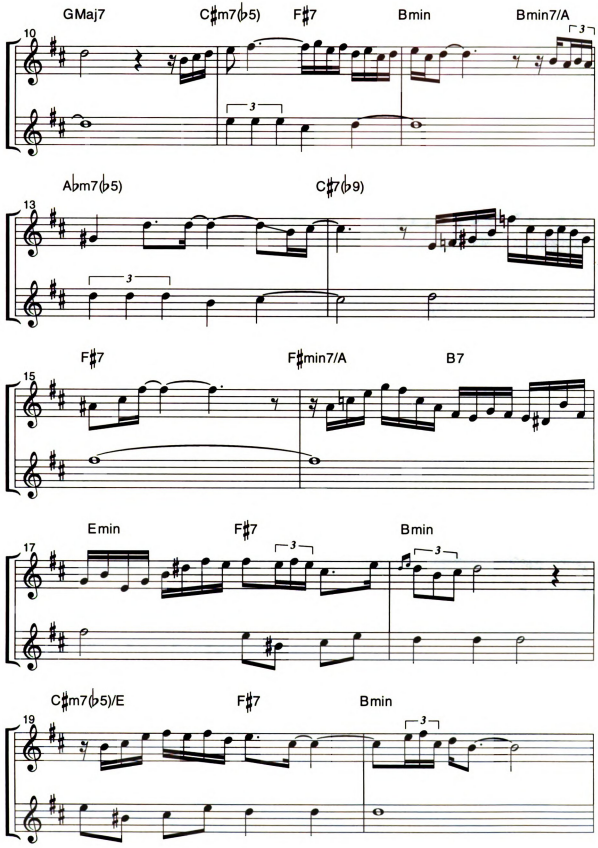
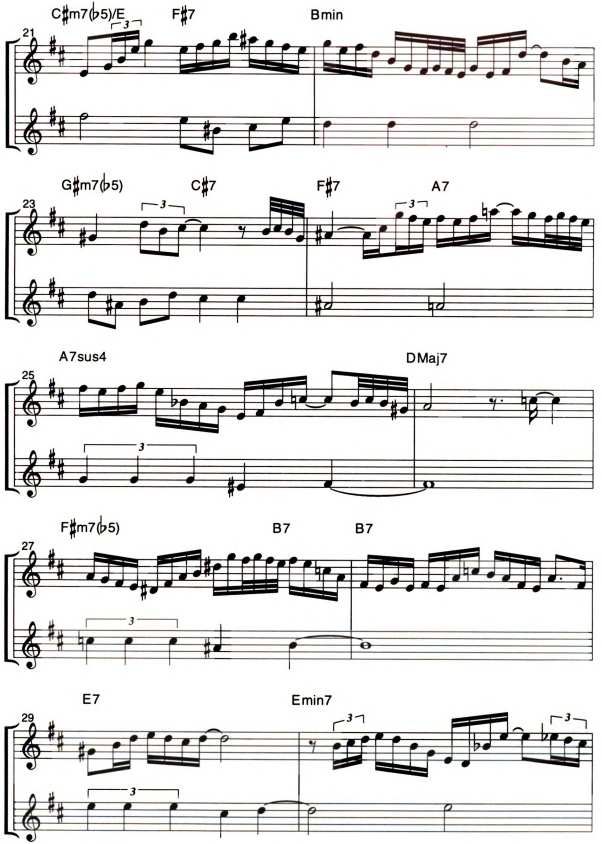
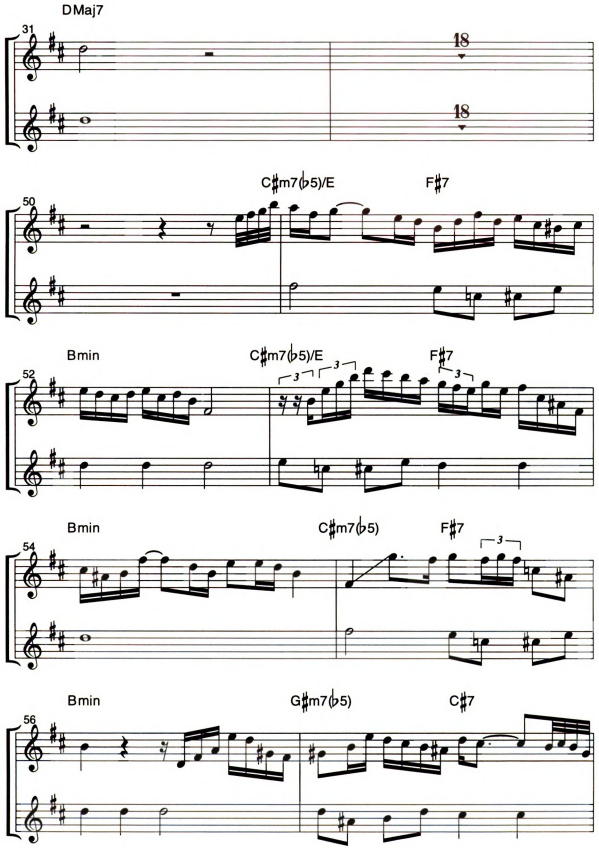
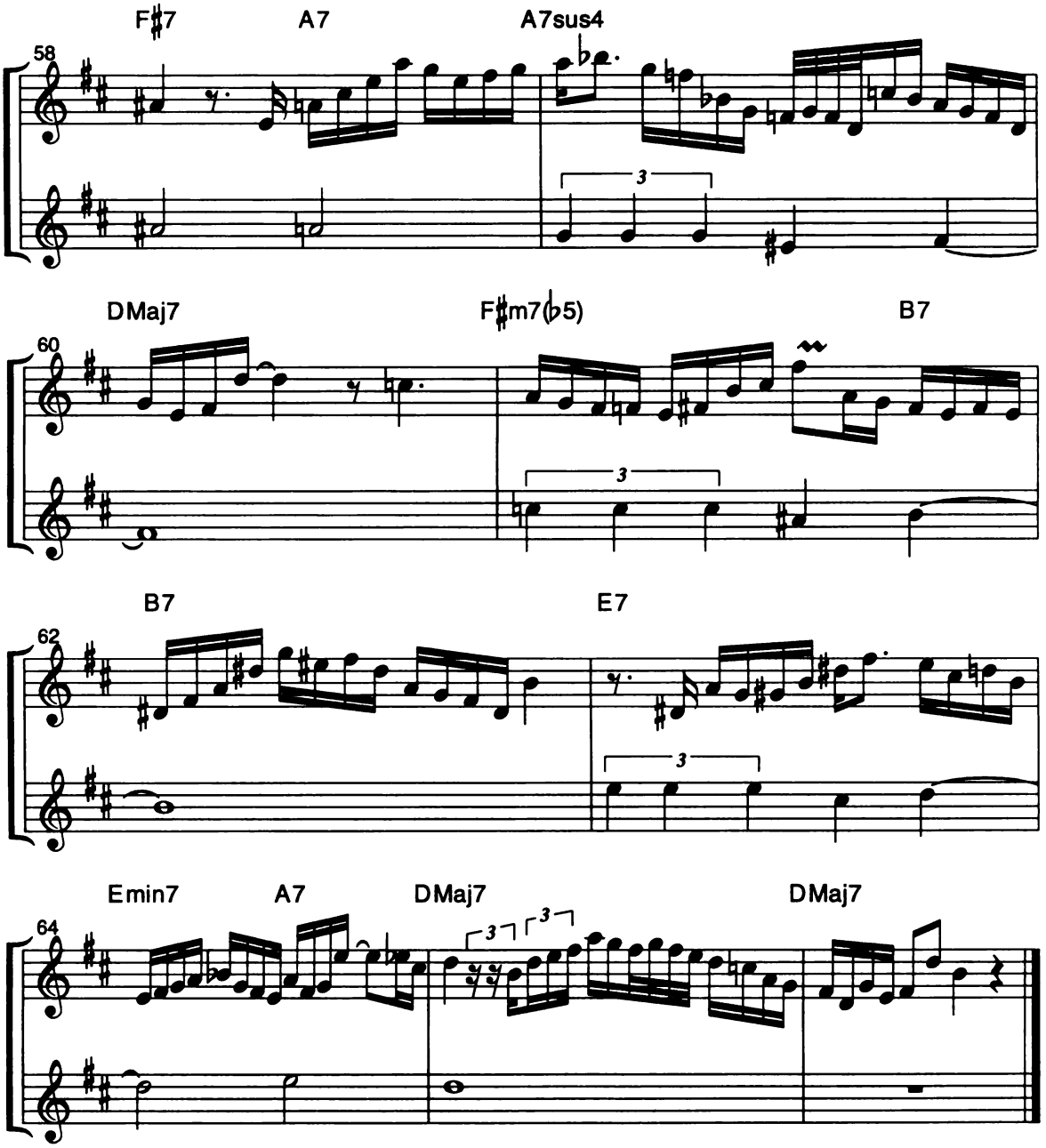

GMaj7
C♯m7(♭5)
F♯7
Bmin
Bmin7/A
10
A♭m7(♭5)
C♯7(♭9)
13
F♯7
F♯min7/A
B7
15
Emin
F♯7
Bmin
17
C♯m7(♭5)/E
F♯7
Bmin
19

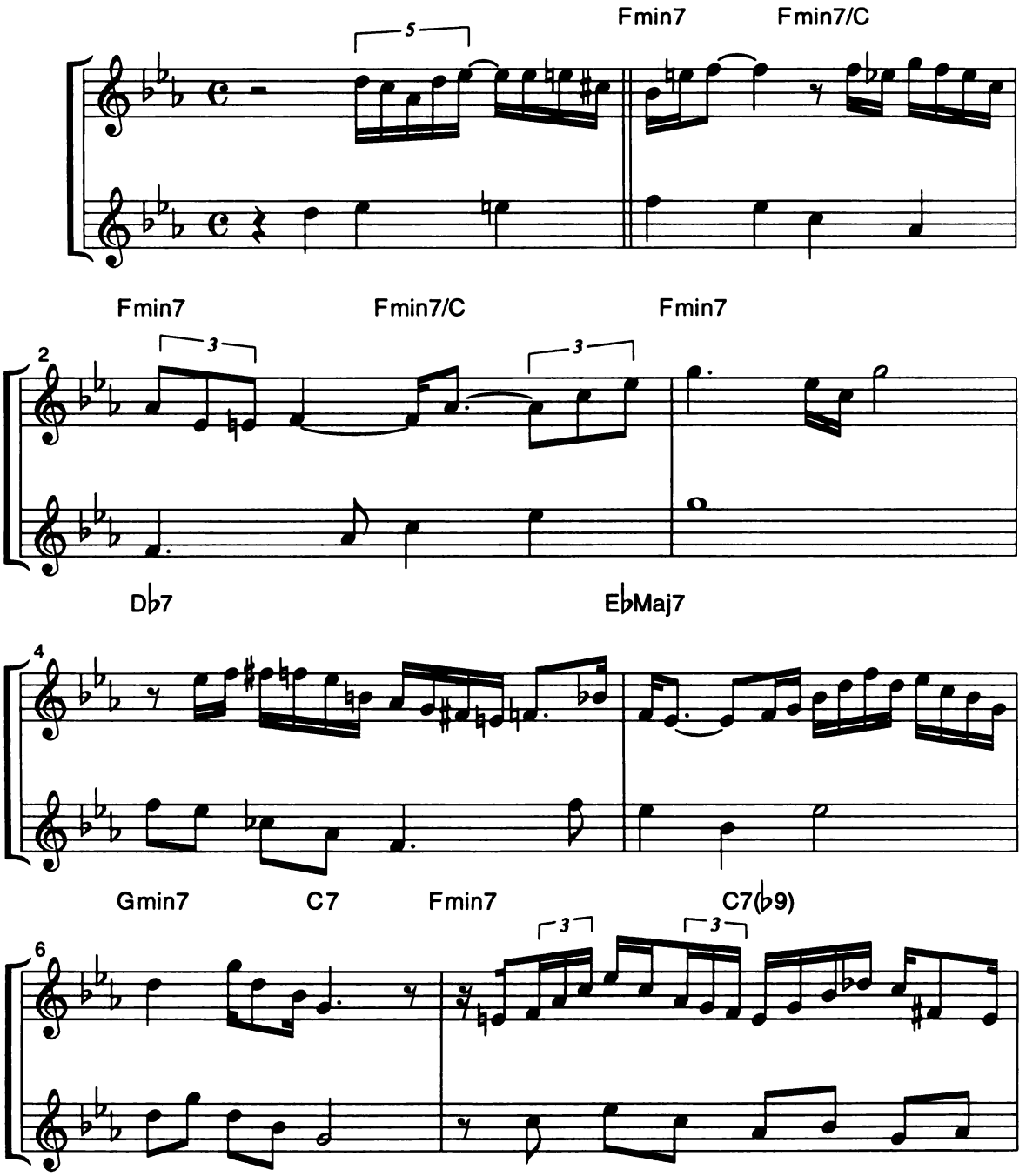

C♯m7(♭5)/E
F♯7
Bmin
21
G♯m7(♭5)
C♯7
F♯7
A7
23
A7sus4
DMaj7
25
F♯m7(♭5)
B7
B7
27
E7
Emin7
29


DMaj7
31
18
18
C♯m7(♭5)/E
F♯7
50
Bmin
C♯m7(♭5)/E
F♯7
52
3
3
3
Bmin
C♯m7(♭5)
F♯7
54
3
Bmin
G♯m7(♭5)
C♯7
56


F♯7
A7
A7sus4
58
3
DMaj7
F♯m7(♭5)
B7
60
3
B7
E7
62
3
Emin7
A7
DMaj7
DMaj7
64
3
3

Stardust

Music: Hoagy Carmichael
Solo: Coleman Hawkins
Transcription: Michael Zsoldos



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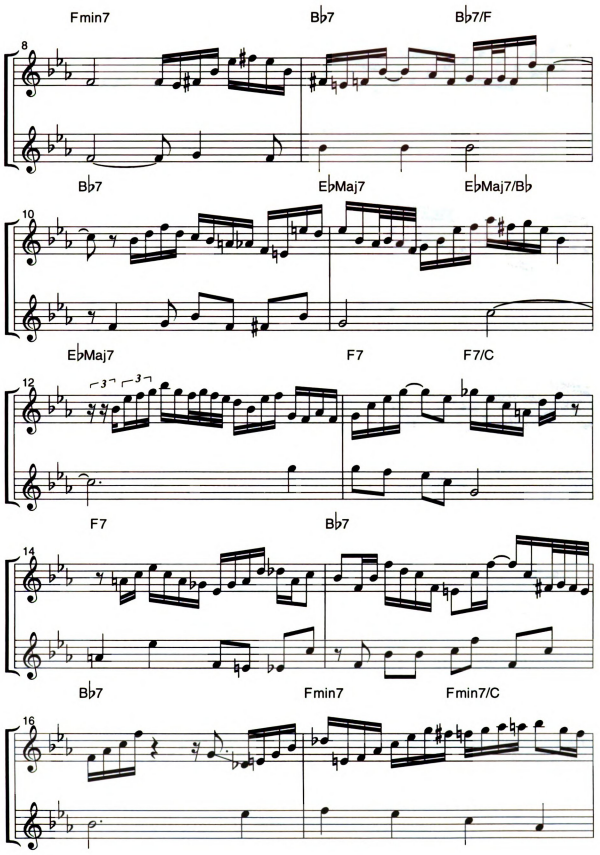
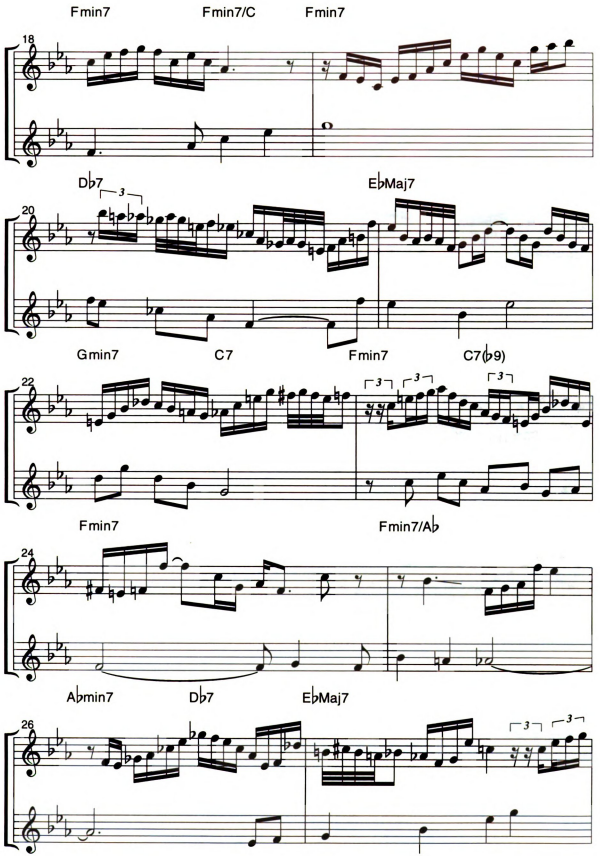
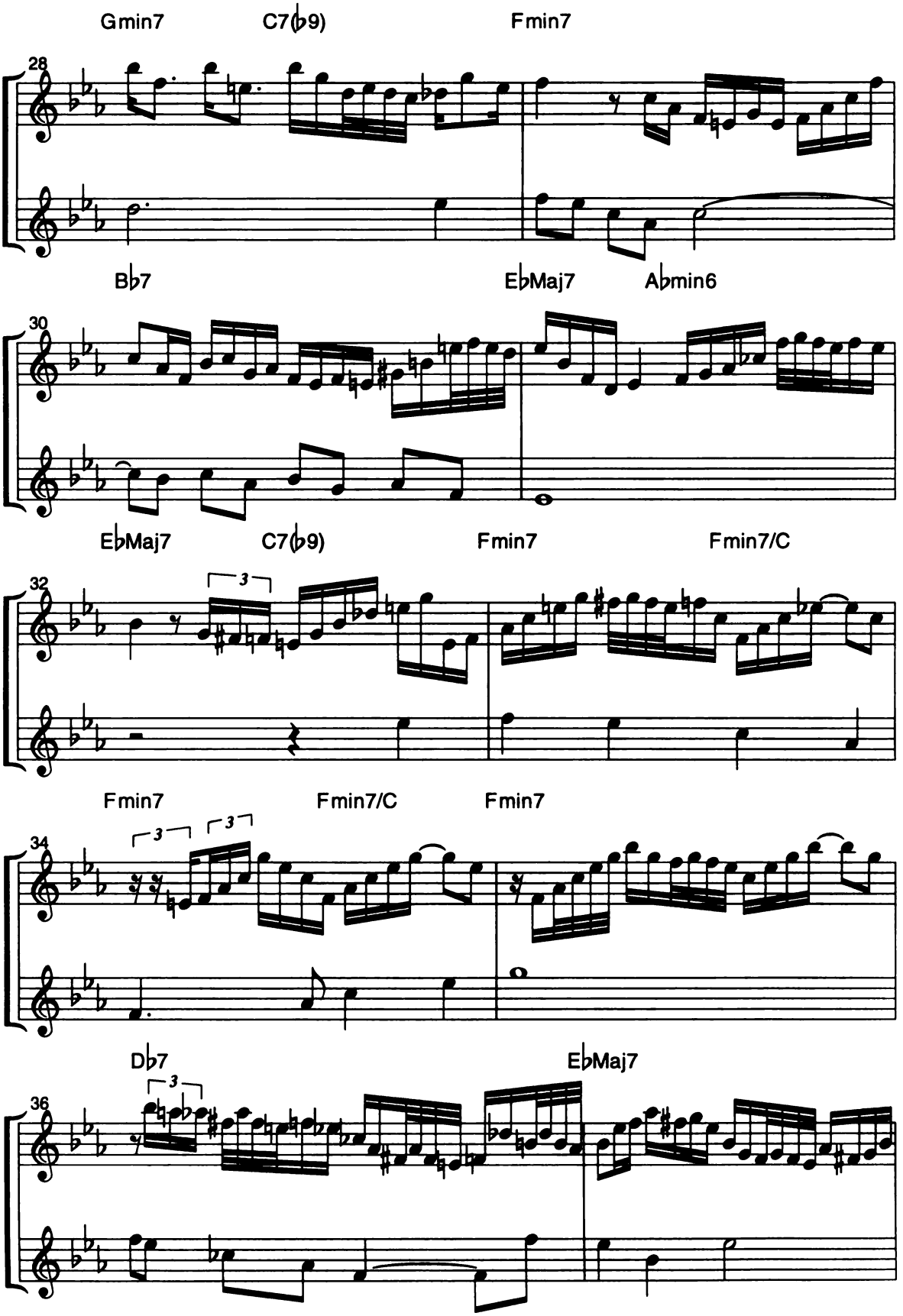
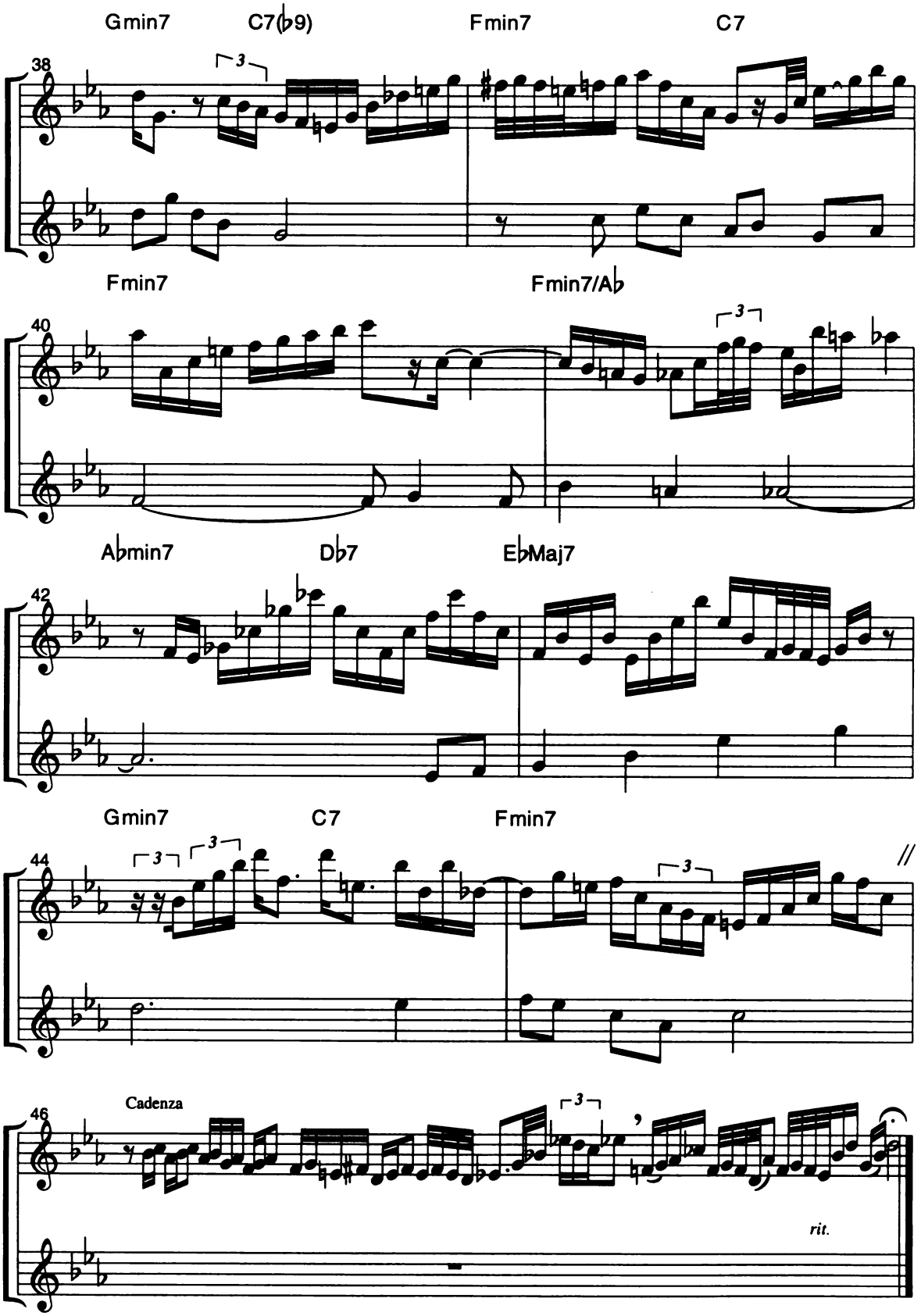

Fmin7
B♭7
B♭7/F
8
B♭7
E♭Maj7
E♭Maj7/B♭
10
E♭Maj7
F7
F7/C
12
F7
B♭7
14
B♭7
Fmin7
Fmin7/C
16


Fmin7
Fmin7/C
Fmin7
18
D♭7
3
E♭Maj7
20
Gmin7
C7
Fmin7
C7(♭9)
22
3
3
3
Fmin7
Fmin7/A♭
24
A♭min7
D♭7
E♭Maj7
26
3
3


Gmin7
C7(♭9)
Fmin7
28
B♭7
E♭Maj7
A♭min6
30
E♭Maj7
C7(♭9)
Fmin7
Fmin7/C
32
3
Fmin7
Fmin7/C
Fmin7
34
3
3
D♭7
E♭Maj7
36
3


Gmin7
C7(♭9)
Fmin7
C7
38
3
Fmin7
Fmin7/A♭
40
3
A♭min7
D♭7
E♭Maj7
42
Gmin7
C7
Fmin7
44
3
3
3
//
Cadenza
46
3
rit.

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