

Assignment : No. 2, Analysis of a Jazz Solo
Transcription

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Analysis of a Jazz Solo Transcription

Introduction

The assigned material for this topic is a Clifford Brown transcription of his trumpet solo during the performance of the standard entitled "I'll Remember April", originally recorded in 1956. The solo was transcribed by David Baker and presented to us in Bb pitch, matching the transposition of the instrument it was performed on. I shall be analysing the solo at concert pitch however so that the notes sound correct if played on a keyboard instrument or other non-transposing sound source.

Before analysis can begin it is important to correct errors from the original transcription. The following pages contain the complete excerpt (entitled A) with all the significant notational and rhythmical errors highlighted. These errors have then been corrected in excerpt B, and it is excerpt B that I shall then refer to when discussing my musical analysis.

The analysis itself shall be split into two sections. The first section shall deal with improvisational devices used on this 98 bar solo, it shall be a "bar by bar" account if you like of Clifford Browns improvisational methodology. It will include a table of musical devices as an appendix to the section.

The second section will discuss the solo on much broader terms, drawing the attention to the phrasing, dynamics, tone, density, style and overall direction of the solo played by one of the most acclaimed and influential trumpet players of the era.

I'LL REMEMBER APRIL SOLO, CLIFFORD BROWN

CONCERT PITCH ANALYSIS

EXCEPT A (AREAS OF INCORRECT TRANSCRIPTION HIGHLIGHTED)

The image displays a musical score for the jazz standard "I'll Remember April" by Clifford Brown. The score is written in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a common time signature (C). The piece is divided into measures, with measure numbers 1, 4, 7, 10, 13, 16, and 19 indicated at the start of their respective lines. The score includes various chord voicings and melodic lines. Several areas of the score are annotated with text and arrows pointing to specific notes or rhythms, indicating transcription errors:

- Measure 1: Chord $G_{maj}7$ is written above the staff.
- Measure 4: An annotation "WRONG RHYTHM & NO GRACE NOTE" points to a note.
- Measure 7: An annotation "PITCH NOT DETERMINABLE" points to a note.
- Measure 10: Chords $A_{m}7$, $D7$, and $B_{m}7(b9)$ are written above the staff. An annotation "PITCH NOT DETERMINABLE" points to a note.
- Measure 13: Chords $E7$, $A_{m}7$, and $D7$ are written above the staff.
- Measure 16: Chords $G_{maj}7$ and $C_{m}7$ are written above the staff. An annotation "SHOULD BE B_{b} " points to a note.
- Measure 19: Chords $F7$, $B_{b}^{maj}7$, $B_{b}^{maj}7$, and $G7$ are written above the staff.

APRIL/EXA/2

22 C_{M7} $F7$ B_{bM7}^7

25 A_{M7} $D7$

NOTE NOT PLAYED

28 G_{M7}^7 $F\#_{M7}$

SHOULD BE C#

31 $B7$ E_{M7}^7 A_{M7} $D7$

SHOULD BE G#

SHOULD BE D#

34 G_{M7}^7

37 G_{M7}

40 A_{M7}

43 $D7$ $B_{M7}(b9)$ $E7$

46 A_{M7} $D7$ G_{M7}^7

APRIL/EXA/4

76 *G*M7 *F#*M7

SHOULD BE A TRIPLET FIGURE

79 *B*7 *E*M7 *A*M7 *D*7

82 *G*M7

85 *G*M7

88 *A*M7

SHOULD BE E_b

91 *D*7 *B*M7(b9) *E*7

NOTE IS NOT PLAYED

94 *A*M7 *D*7 *G*M7

SHOULD BE JUST 2 NOTES

97

I'LL REMEMBER APRIL SOLO, CLIFFORD BROWN

CONCERT PITCH ANALYSIS

EXCEPT B (CORRECTED TRANSCRIPTION WITH ANALYSIS)

CHORUS 1

1 **Gmaj7** ARPEGGIO **MAJOR SCALE** **CHROMATIC ENCLOSURE** **HAROLD LAND QUOTE** **3** **CH. EN.**

4 **'BLUE' NOTE ANTICIPATION OF Gm7** **Gm7 G HARMONIC MINOR BUT WITH THE OF $\flat 6$** **DIATONIC ENCLOSURE** **DI. EN.** **DI. EN.**

7 **ASCENDING PATTERN** **DI. EN.** **CHROMATIC APPROACH** **PHRYGIAN DOMINANT BEBOP**

10 **Am7** **D7 ARP.** **Bm7(b9)** **CH. AP.** **CH. AP.** **ANT #11**

13 **VOCAS** **E7** **Am7 CHROMATIC SCALE** **CH. SC.** **D7 CHROMATIC TO $\flat 9$** **DI. EN.**

16 **Gmaj7** **3** **MAJOR SCALE** **CH. EN.** **Cm7 #11** **DESCENDING MINOR PATTERN**

19 **F7 #11 DI. EN.** **Bbmaj7** **3** **CH. EN.** **Bbmaj7** **ARP.** **G7** **HAROLD LAND QUOTE** **MAJOR SCALE**

A UPPER STRUCTURE?

22 Cm7 F7 Bbmaj7
SIMILAR SHAPE TO BAR 21 WRONG NOTE BEBOP VOCAB

25 Am7 D7 CH. TO b9
CH. AP. CH. AP. DI. EN.

28 Gmaj7 F#m7
HALF / WHOLE SCALE LIKE PASSAGE
CH. EN. CH. EN.

31 B7 Ema7 Am7 D7
DIMINISHED SCALE CH. AP. CH. AP. DI. EN. DI. EN.

34 Gmaj7 G MAJOR SCALE
DI. EN.

37 Gm7 CH. SC. DI. EN.
COMMON TONE 9TH

40 MELODIC CESH Am7
CH. AP. DI. EN.

43 D7 Bm7(b9) E7 GBNF LICK
CROTCHET REPEATED NOTES

46 Am7 D7 Gmaj7
REPEATED NOTES HW DIMINISHED SCALE LYDIAN

76 **Gmaj7** **F#m7** **CH. SC.**

79 **B7** **CH. SC.** **Emaj7** **DI. EN.** **Am7** **D7** **CH. EN.**

HW DIM. SCALE **DI. EN.**

82 **Gmaj7** **LYO.** **#11 DI. EN.**

SEQUENCE BASED ON ASCENDING SIXTHS AND CHROMATIC PASSING TONES

85 **CH. SC.** **Gm7** **DI. EN.** **5 NOTE REPEATED PATTERN**

88 **...SIMPLIFIED** **Am7** **LOCRIAN MODE** **IMPLIES M7b5**

91 **D7** **Bm7(b9)** **E7** **CH. EN.**

DIM. SC. **CH. AP.** **CH. SC. FROM #11**

94 **Am7** **D7** **Gmaj7** **DI. EN.**

AEOLIAN MODE PATTERN **... REPEATED OVER TRITONE SUB**

97 **MAJOR SCALE**

Section 1

This Clifford Brown solo begins with an arpeggiated staccato pick up measure. At bar 2 a phrase is played that is one of the most interesting features of the whole solo. It is a one bar figure that contains a triplet in beat 2, it is mainly diatonic in nature and ends with a chromatic enclosure of the root. This phrase is repeated 3 times during the 1st chorus. I have named it the 'Harold Land' quote as it can also be heard twice during Harold Land's solo in "Take the A Train" found on Clifford Brown and Max Roach's "Study in Brown" Album (Emarcy Records 1955) (See Appendix A). This can be used to exemplify the use of vocab swapping evident in jazz and the inherent "organic" nature of the art form.

Harold Land Quote

A musical staff showing a sequence of notes. The first four notes are labeled 'MAJOR SCALE'. The next three notes are grouped with a bracket and a '3' above them, labeled 'HAROLD LAND QUOTE'. The final two notes are labeled 'CHROMATIC ENCLOSURE'. A box labeled 'CHORUS 1' is positioned above the 'HAROLD LAND QUOTE' section.

Bar 4 marks the beginning of a 6 bar phrase mainly based around G harmonic minor. As the harmony doesn't change until bar 5 it can be argued that the Bb 'blue' note found at bar 4 is an anticipation of the Gm harmony found at bar 6. However, at bar 7 there is an E natural that doesn't belong to the harmonic minor scale. This clever use of the 6th not only implies an alternative harmony (G melodic minor), but is also used as part of a diatonic enclosure AND at the beginning of an ascending pattern!

Use of natural 6 as part of enclosure, pattern and as alternative harmony

A musical staff showing a sequence of notes. The first two notes are labeled 'DIATONIC ENCLOSURE'. The next two notes are labeled 'DI. EN.'. The final two notes are labeled 'DI. EN.'. The first note is marked with a flat sign (b6). The notes from the second to the sixth are grouped with a bracket and labeled 'ASCENDING PATTERN'. The notes from the seventh to the eighth are grouped with a bracket and labeled 'ALTERNATIVE HARMONY'.

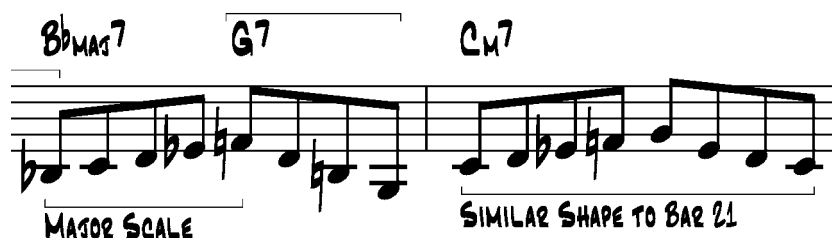
Bars 10 and 11 see various improvisational devices including chromatic approaches, another diatonic enclosure and an arpeggio. This vocab is typical of the Bebop language and there are a plethora of examples in Browns solo. A descending Phrygian Dominant bebop scale occurs during bars 13-14, this scale is derived from the 5th mode of A harmonic minor and contains the major 7th bebop passing tone. Bars 14 and 15 contain much chromatic movement, ending in a b9 reference (another piece of bebop vocab) and at bar 16 we hear the 'Harold Land' quote again, preceded by an anticipated Lydian diatonic enclosure.

Example of Phrygian Dominant Bebop descending line



At bar 18 a pattern is played based on descending minor thirds, this pattern includes the #11 based over a minor 7 chord, a very interesting sound. This Lydian approach is continued to the next bar with the use of melodic minor based Lydian Dominant harmony heard over the F7. Another 'Harold Land' quote is found at bar 20, and at 21 an ascending scale / descending arpeggio is played. This shape is copied in the following bar but intelligently adapted for to fit over Cm7.

These bars have a similar 'shape'



Bar 23 is very interesting as it contains a 'poor choice' as an E natural can be heard over the F7 chord. This major 7th over a dominant helps to spell an A major upper structure but this isn't a common upper structure. Instead of the E, Brown might have meant an Eb spelling an F7 chord or even an F, helping to spell a Lydian Augmented sound. An implied (not

exact) bebop lick is played at the end of the bar. Bar 25 marks the beginning of further chromatic and enclosure based improvisation, this time however it is broken up by some larger intervals such as the major 6th at bar 26 and the octave at 27. A Lydian figure at 28 resumes more scale like and chromatic melodic activity and at bar 31 we can find the use of the half/ whole diminished scale. Bars 32-36 are entirely diatonic ending with a G major scale.

Clifford Brown's poor choice, although it is hardly noticeable at this tempo



The 2nd half of bar 37 contains an A semibreve tied across the barline. This is a clever use of the 9th of both G major and G minor. It is also the longest note of the solo, this semibreve acts as a brief rest from a mainly 8th note based performance. A melodic CESH (Contrapuntal Elaboration of Static Harmony) is found at bar 40 in between diatonic scale activity and this is followed by a legato crotchet 2 note phrase that lasts until bar 44. A quote from "Gone but not Forgotten" can be heard at bar 45 followed by another pair of repeated notes but played in quavers this time at bar 46. Use of the Half / Whole diminished scale is evident at bar 47; this is then followed by a Lydian based motif that is developed into a repeated pattern that lasts for 3 bars. This repeated pattern contains 4 notes and is concluded by chromatic movement and a scale passage leading the listener into Gm harmony.

Lydian based repeated pattern



The next 4 note sequence can be heard at bar 54, this time the sequence is rhythmically displaced and syncopated as it descends from bar 54 to 58. At bar 60 following another HW diminished passage a long note (again tied across the bar) is played to lead the listener towards the densest part of the solo. This starts during the 2nd half of bar 61 with a phrase entirely comprising of eighth notes and triplets, it contains no longer notes or rests at all!

A 4 note rhythmically displaced descending pattern

4 NOTE RHYTHMICALLY DISPLACED SEQUENCE W. EN.

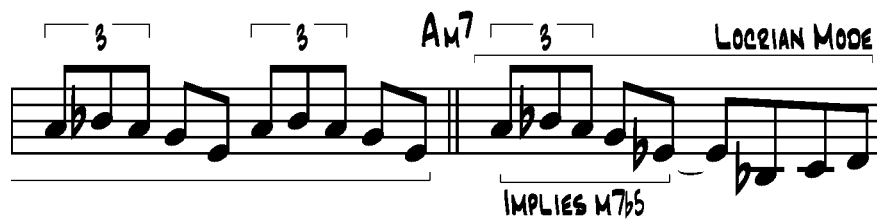
During this passage improvisational devices used include change running figures and arpeggios, 5 occurrences of enclosure (diatonic and chromatic), bebop lick vocab, chromatic approaches and scales, b9 licks, phrygian dominant harmony and Aeolian mode scale usage. A brief rest is offered at bar 73 before a smaller eighth note phrase is played. At bar 74 an anticipated D7 arpeggio is spelt followed by a descending triplet chromatic scale leading the listener into the only altered scale based bar of the entire solo at bar 75. Another use of anticipation can be found during the last beat of 75 implying G major.

D altered scale followed by an anticipation of G major

A sign that the solo is reaching its completion can be found by the 7 beat rest found at bars 76-79, this is followed by a largely descending 6 bar passage. At the end of this phrase is a sequence based on ascending 6^{ths} and chromatic passing tones. Another use of Lydian harmony at bar 84 begins a descending line that links to a 5 note repeated pattern that is played over bars 87-89. This pattern is then intelligently adapted by one

semitone to fit over half diminished harmony by lowering the E to and Eb, creating a locrian harmony.

The E natural is lowered spelling 'A Locrian' mode



A III-VI ascending scale loosely based on a Lydian dominant scale (but also using extra chromaticism) leads the listener into a syncopated Aeolian mode based phrase at bar 94. This phrase becomes a pattern when repeated at bar 95 almost copied down a semitone. This utilises a device called tritone substitution where the Ab7 harmony is implied over a D7 chord (a tritone away). The final phrase is simply an ascending and descending G major scale.

Appendix to section 1 – Improvisational Devices

Improvisational Devices and number of occurrences during Clifford Brown's solo

Chromatic Enclosure	13
Implied Blues Scale	1 phrase
Harold Land Quote	3
Diatonic Enclosure	17
Chromatic Approach	11
Ascending Pattern	1
Descending Pattern	1
Repeated Pattern	2
Phrygian Dominant / Harmonic Minor	3
Chromatic Scale	13
Lydian Enclosure	4
b9 vocab	3
Lydian Scale	4
Bebop Lick Vocab	2
CESH	1
HW Diminished Scale	4
Altered Scale	1
Anticipation	3
Ascending Sequence	1
Descending Sequence	1
Tritone Substitution	1
GBNF Lick	1
Wrong Note (but not really noticeable due to tempo)	1
Repeated Notes	2
Aeolian Mode	2
Locrian Mode	1

Section 2

This is a true bebop solo so due to many factors not limited to the vocab referred to in section 1 of this analysis. The tempo is fast at 240BPM and yet Clifford Brown chooses to fill up the bars with mainly 8th note passages. There isn't a lot of space in this solo, nor is there a huge amount of dynamic variety. Higher notes tend to be louder especially when they are at the end or beginning of a phrase such as at bar 78 and Brown utilises an even legato phrasing throughout with the exception of a few bars where he chooses to play staccato notes for effect. Examples of this can be found at bar 1 (pickup measure) and bar 48.

It seems to me that this 2-chorus solo has a structure to it, a beginning middle and end you like. The 1st chorus leaps right in with large horizontal bebop passages, there is some space, after all the solo has just begun but it really is a harmonic demonstration of the bebop language. At bar 37 there is a change however, the longer note found there suggests a more relaxed pace and this further exemplified by the use of crotchets and repeated notes found at bar 42-43 and 46. These 2 note motifs are not alone. The repeated pattern found at bar 50 and then the sequence at 54 are examples of motif-based improvisation, but this time being slightly longer at 4 notes each. Bar 61 marks the beginning of the densest section of the solo with the longest 8th note phrase covering 12 bars. The solo maintains its drive after this, but presents the listener with longer rests between the 8th note phrases relieving some of the intensity.

Interestingly enough, during the last 24 bars Brown combines the theme of each of the sections by mixing the use of Bebop vocab found in the 1st chorus with smaller sequences and patterns found at bars 82-83 and 88-89.

Conclusion

Clifford Brown is a masterful improviser. He clearly demonstrates his ability not only to weave long passages of horizontal lines through changes with absolute ease and flawless technique, but to also link musical ideas together with style and musicality. Upon listening to this solo for the first time the general sense is that the performance is relaxed, yet to play this solo at tempo would take hours of practise. Brown clearly demonstrates that even using a bop vehicle and tempo it is still possible to communicate to the listener a musicality with a distinct beginning, middle and end. Browns use of motific playing during the middle of the solo is the 'calm before the storm' and serves as a musical 'firewall' between denser torrents of notes found before and especially after. Brown cleverly surmises the solo during the final bars by combining motific and 8th note ideas, again, flawlessly woven together.

It is also interesting to note that many devices used were only used once (see appendix to section 1) There was only one ascending sequence, only one descending sequence, one GBNF, tritone substitution, altered scale, CESH, descending and ascending scale, there was even just one wrong note! On the other hand, standard bop vocab such as enclosure, chromatic approaches and bebop scales were applied to changes very liberally indeed.

It is not surprising to discover that the dominant harmony seems to be mainly diminished based using nearly no altered harmony, this obviously dates the recording, any player who played like this now would only be serving to pay homage to the past and would perhaps be firmly seated in the Marsalis camp!

So this is an excellent example of a jazz style often looked upon for inspiration by jazz students hoping to absorb the past so they can help progress the art of jazz towards the future.

TAKE THE "A" TRAIN

HAROLD LAND & CLIFFORD BROWN SOLOS
FROM STUDY IN BROWN

♩=280 HAROLD LAND SOLO (SOUNDS 8vb)

C Harold Land Quote

1

D9

Dm7

G7

5

C

A7

Dm7

G7

C

9

D9

Dm7

G7

13

C

C7

F

17

Similar Quote

D9

21

Dm7

G7

C

25

D9

Dm7

G7

29

CLIFFORD BROWN SOLO:

C

33

D9 Dm7 G7

37

C C

41

D9 Dm7 G7

45

C C7 F

49

D9

53

Dm7 G7 C

57

D9 Dm7 G7

61

C C

65

D9 Dm7 G7

69

C A7 Dm7 G7 C

73

D9 Dm7 G7

77

C C7 F

81

D9

85

Dm7 G7 C

89

D9 Dm7

93

C

97