



Music

UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO **BOULDER**

COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION
Jonathan Saraga, DMA Jazz Studies

Exam Date: September 13-18, 2018

Committee Member: Gunther, Goode, McKee, Pann, Riis

Notes: Closed Book

Goode

You have been provided a copy of a transcription of Clifford Brown's improvised solo on "Hot House", from the recording "Live at the Bee Hive." You may annotate (mark) a copy of the solo to bring into the exam, but may not bring any other written notes.

Solos from live recordings, such as this one, give a window into the history and existence of the art of extended improvisation from an era before such solos were being documented in studio sessions. Clifford Brown used the extended format to develop musical ideas and display a variety of techniques which add coherence and interest over this longer time frame.

Citing examples from the score, discuss and detail his use of the following features:

1. Thematic Development and the Variety of Techniques Used to Achieve It
2. Rhythmic Tendencies and Contrasts
3. Phrasing Structure and Pacing
4. Melodic Construction and Intervallic Shapes
5. Harmonic Approach
6. Trumpet-Specific Instrumental Devices

In addition, find and detail other aspects of this solo which you consider to be important, and describe them with detailed analysis.

Jonathan Saraga – Goode Comp Question – Day 1

On November 7th, 1955, (interestingly I type this only one day past the 63rd anniversary of this date), drummer Max Roach, along with pianist Billy Wallace, bassist George Morrow, and Clifford Brown, and a few other cohorts played a night at the segregated club, the Bee Hive, in Chicago, Illinois. The band, which at the time was led by Roach, was auditioning for a new saxophonist, as a result of Sonny Stitt's resignation. November 7th was only one of the several dates the group played at the Bee Hive, but it was the only one which recording has survived the test of time. Fortunately, this date was persevered, as it is the last known recording of Clifford Brown, before the tragic event which took his life; may he Rest in Peace.

Live at the Bee Hive is a fan favorite among Clifford enthusiasts because it offers an incredible glimpse into the genius that he was able to generate in live performance situations. The tune at hand today is the Dizzy Gillespie/ Charlie Parker contrafact of *What is this Thing Called Love, Hot House*. As the question describes, and as I alluded to earlier, this tune features Clifford Brown's (and the entire group for that matter) demonstration of extended improvisation; an opportunity that was not yet being done in studio recording sessions.

Before I get to the nitty-gritty of what makes Brown's offering as astonishing as it is, I would like to preface my discussion by giving credit to the rhythm section for offering the date such a high level of musicianship. As we know, an extended solo is *a lot* more difficult with a band that is not sensitive to the idea of such an approach to improvisation. In my opinion, (and as supported by several examples forthcoming, Brown's journey through uncharted waters was in part made possible by the incredible intonation, clarity and listening ability of Morrow; the tasteful, well-timed, and harmonically particular comping of Wallace; and of course, the undeniably grounding pulse, and patience, and sensitivity of Roach.

Of course, with all that said, Brown, being the soloist, is at the helm of the situation, and surely it can not be denied he completely demolishes the tune; but not just with his powerful chops, astounding technique, and rich, bold tone. He also employed (some consciously, some perhaps intuitively, and some muscle memory), a wide spectrum of variety of techniques which continued to offer a means of propelling his solo forward, but also as a means of establishing landmarks in the story he was telling. Here's how he did it:

FEAUTURES

Thematic Development and the Variety of Techniques Used to Achieve It:

Throughout the course of this solo, Brown uses certain technical facilities as vehicles to support his thematic developments. They are:

-On the Brad scale, the mirroring of linear directions within phrases, or as they occur in separate phrases (example: Brown will play things going down range and then responds to them by going up range. These occurrences are supportive of the idea of themes existing as linear motion; in other words, the upward and downward contour of his lines, very often complement each other, which is a theme in itself. So, in this way, range is a technique he uses to achieve the theme of consistent and mirrored linear contour.

- There are basically two "main" rhythmic themes that occur throughout the solo, which he freely explores: sixteenth notes and eighth note triplets. At least 56% of the solo is a combination of these two musical devices.

-Sometimes, Clifford will play an idea that he likes, and then decide to develop it on the spot. In these instances he is not concerned with overall trajectory of the solo, but more so with exploring that idea and seeing where it takes him. Clifford's musical honesty is what keeps the solo intact and flowing organically, despite the tangents, if you will, that he goes on; some longer than others.

- The other aspect to Brown's seemingly infinite array of musical themes that just seem to come to him throughout the solo, is a result of his use of space, which usually occur when he concludes a phrase. Equally as important, is his willingness to start a new phrase *before* the start of the next measure or next phrase grouping of bars in the form (i.e. 87-88, 158 and the next 13 measures). In both cases, he left space, in order to *hear* the next idea; and once he did, he went with it, and took it as far as it wanted to go, naturally. Sometimes they will go for a while, and then end; at which point Clifford will choose a new theme to introduce. Other times they will morph into some other idea, which then will inspire a whole new tangent of ideas.

-Other mentions and examples of thematic development listed in the "NOTE-WORTHY OCCURENCES" section.

Rhythmic Tendencies and Contrasts:

The later 60% of the solo is basically like this: 20% sixteenth note lines, 10% intermission of relaxed and swinging thematic/motivic plaining which includes eighth note triplets, 20% eighth note triplet tangent, 10% sixteenth note closing. Prior to that we see a combination of sixteenth note lines or fragments, eighth note triplets, coupled with thematic material interwoven. So, in essence, the solo has three rhythmic components: sixteenth notes, eighth note triplets and other stuff. Here's the breakdown: 40% sixteenth notes, 37% eighth note triplets, and 23% other stuff (eighth notes, quarter notes, themes using various sporadic rhythms). Other mentions and examples of Rhythmic Tendencies listed in the "NOTE-WORTHY OCCURENCES" section.

Phrasing Structure and Pacing

Pacing wise, there are two big contributors as to why Clifford was able to play for so long. One is his incredibly strong and high-endurance chops. The other is the fact that rhythm section didn't rush him or bully him. Max pretty much plays at a *mf* volume level for the first 6 and a half choruses. Then Max starts to build energy and

some volume on the bridge of Clifford's 6th chorus. I believe Clifford picks up on this at about m. 180/181. It feels like Max and Clifford are working together to build the energy; Clifford by way of the triplet rhythm that he plains for the whole rest of that chorus pretty much. By Clifford's 8th chorus, Max is swinging hard, and he continues to do so, leading into Brown's 9th chorus. Once again, as they approach the 9th chorus, Max and Brown each contribute to the building of energy. In measure 253 Brown begins a "pedal point" extension for all intents and purposes. He is emphasizing the 5th of the 1 chord for 4 measures leading up the 9th chorus. Max picks up on this, and builds it up. Brown begins his final decent at the start of that chorus. So, mathematically, Max and Clifford both felt the peak of the solo as perhaps the 6th chorus, when Max was really swinging. The energy sustained and then climaxed at the beginning of the 9th chorus.

Clifford also employs use of extended lines and playing over the barline.
For more See rhythmic tendencies

MELODIC CONSTRUCTION AND INTERVALLIC SHAPES

Brown's melodic construction includes the following:

Scale runs: occurs during most sixteenth note lines, and eighth note triplets

Diatonic enclosures/approach tones (some examples – m. 10 into 11, 17 into 18, 120 into 121)

Chromatic enclosures/approach tones (i.e. m. 30 thru first half of 31, 88, 100 into 101, 117 into 118, 138, 170 into 171, also during the triplet tangent

Use of Altered Scale on Dominant Chords

Use of Diminished/Half Diminished Scale On Half Diminished Chords

Use of Whole Tone Scale on Dominant Chords (also used as a melodic plaining device – m. 146, 149)

Use of Ionian Scale on Major Chords (second half of 31,

Use of Ionian #4 Scale on Major Chords

Use of Harmonic Minor on the G-

Use of natural minor on the G-

Use of Natural 6th on Major Chords

Use of Natural 6th on minor chords

Use of arpeggios (49-50,

Use of Bebop Vocabulary (169, 171, usually anywhere sixteenth note lines are played, and usually anywhere eighth note triplets are played)

Use of Blues (Not necessarily the scale): 50-51,

Intervalllic Phrases (96-97)

Fanfarey Stuff (80-85), 260-264 Delayed Resolutions to Phrases

Other mentions of Melodic Construction instances listed in the "NOTE-WORTHY OCCURENCES" section.

HARMONIC APPROACH

Some of the elements from melodic construction can apply here. Brown plays inside on most chords except for a few times he uses the whole tone scale, or like in 66 and 68 where he uses augmented triads and plains them by whole step. Speaking of which, Brown does a lot of whole step plaining. He does it 65-68 for example. Clifford will also use Superimpositions over chords sometimes. Like over some of the minor two chords in a 2-5, he will imply the 5 (for example 169 and 171). Other mentions of Harmonic Approaches instances listed in the "NOTE-WORTHY OCCURENCES" section.

TRUMPET SPECIFIC INSTRUMENTAL DEVICES

The fanfare trumpet stuff. The scoops and droops. Mostly anytime a sixteenth note triplet is played. Anytime he plays scale runs in the keys of G melodic minor. This is tough category because, I've transcribed so much Clifford that, I don't really know what isn't trumpet-specific that he plays anymore. It all just sounds like Clifford, and it all sounds so natural. Other trumpet specific instances listed in the "NOTE-WORTHY OCCURENCES" section.

NOTE-WORTHY OCCURENCES

Select Musical Occurrences, Techniques, and Devices & There Percentages of Use

Note: It was difficult at times to decide whether a particular device, technique or otherwise occurrence was best labeled as aa trumpet-specific device, as a rhythmic device, harmonic approach or as a melodic construct, etc. Most of what goes on in this solo is a combination of multiple musical elements. As a result, I deemed it best to simply list all of the Musical Occurrences, Techniques, and Devices Brown employs in one group. I However, in the full analysis, do discuss the specifics of each instance of the occurrences.

The solo is a total of 289 bars. The below chart illustrates the occurrences with the bars they occur in and the amount of times they occur in said bar. Then, the total amount of occurrences, followed by the percentage of the solo that is comprised of said occurrence. Note, some occurrences will be seen in more than one category.

The following occurrences, are things that Clifford does either a regular basis, or at various times throughout the solo; in either case, I selected these particular occurrences because they are components that stand out to me. Of course these components do not exist within a vacuum and are often a direct result of Brown's overall stream of consciousness. However, they are also a result of things that he has practiced and implemented over the years he was alive, that became things he "liked" to do; things that are very much Clifford-isms, if you will.

Within the below list of occurrences will include their inclusion of the "features" prompted by Goode. They are: Thematic Development, Variety of Techniques Used to Achieve Thematic Development, Rhythmic Tendencies and Contrasts, Phrasing Structure, Pacing, Melodic Construction, Intervallic Shapes, Harmonic Approach Trumpet-Specific Devices, Other

Key:

-Occurrence

Description

x (amount of said occurrence / x (total number of potential opportunities the occurrence could have been employed)

Discussion of the inclusion of Goode prompted "features"

x% (percentage of the occurrence in ratio with the potential opportunities for the occurrence to occur

Measure Number (amount of times occurrence present within said measure), i.e. 56 (3)

SIXTEENTH NOTES

Clifford plays a lot of sixteenth notes in this solo, in various ways, with different functions attached...

-Sixteenth Note Triplet Catalyst to Sixteenth Note Line or Fragments of Sixteenth Note Lines:

A technique Clifford uses occasionally to "kick-off" a phrase of sixteenth note lines, whether it is to an extended line, or even fragments of perhaps an intended sixteenth note line. Most of his sixteenth note lines *do not* begin with this technique, however a third of them do.

It would appear that the three early occurrences (3, 6, and 8) are sequential; and might be seen as a form of motivic plaining. This occurrence qualifies as a rhythmic tendency and as a trumpet-specific technique. NOTE: I do not include bars 260-264 as I do not consider them as sixteenth note *lines*, even though that passage is mostly comprised of sixteenth notes. I discuss this particular passage later.

8 (occurrences)/27 (Total Sixteenth Note Lines or Fragments of Sixteenth Note Lines)

30% of all Sixteenth Note Lines or Fragments of Sixteenth Note Lines begin this way
4 (1), 6 (1), 8 (1), 29 (1), 268 (1), 140 (1), 269 (1), 270 (1)

-Use of Sixteenth Note Triplet within a Sixteenth Note Line

Several times within a sixteenth note run, Clifford will throw in a sixteenth note triplet as a means of ornamenting the line, and adding a little pizzazz. Clifford employs this in almost 50% percent of his sixteenth note lines. This occurrence qualifies as a rhythmic tendency and as a trumpet-specific technique.

13 (occurrences)/27 (Total Sixteenth Note Lines or Fragments of Sixteenth Note Lines)

48% of all Sixteenth Note Lines or Fragments of Sixteenth Note Lines feature this technique

10 (1), 28 (2), 101 (1), 117 (1) *attempted*, 119 (1), 120 (1), 121 (1), 126 (1), 129 (1), 131 (2), 134 (1)

-Sixteenth note triplet "trills" & sixteenth note fragments as a means to connect or introduce *non*-sixteenth note vocabulary

Another ornament, Clifford employs this device as a means of flourishing within a phrase of eighth notes, as a means of connecting quarter notes, or as a means of leading to groups of either eighth notes or quarter notes. This occurrence qualifies as a rhythmic tendency and as a trumpet-specific technique. NOTE: mm. 94-97 are not considered because in this case the sixteenth notes are being utilized as a motivic plaining device. m. 163 is not considered (it is part of a motivic development); sixteenth notes in m. 207 are not considered, they comprise a scoop, mm. 211 & 228 are not considered (it is considered a scoop, as part of a motivic collection of scoops); 238 not considered as it is a fast flurry and is not being utilized to connect or lead to other ideas.

26 instances throughout solo

aprx. 10% of the solo features this technique

11 (1), 14 (1), 21 (1), 24 (1), 25 (1), 35 (1), 41 (1), 42 (1), 43 (1), 46 (1), 56 (2), 58 (1), 60 (1), 65 (2), 67 (2), 88 (1), 92 (1), 112 (1), 115 (2), 172 (1), 179 (1), 288 (1)

-Sixteenth Note Lines or Fragments of Sixteenth Note Lines:

While not an overwhelmingly large portion of the solo is sixteenth note lines, Brown does make it a point to feature them with aggressive intent. He especially goes on a tangent mm. 116-150. The following accounts for the measures that contain entire sixteenth note lines (including the beginnings/ends of them).

4-10 (7 measures), 27-31 (5), 98-102 (5), 116-150 (35), 265-278 (14) *he "slid home, safe" in the last two measures, but they are still considered*

22% of the solo is 16th note lines

EIGHTH NOTES TRIPLETS

Clifford also plays a bunch of eighth note triplets...

-Eight Note Triplets (used as a thematic device) or as a means to connect or introduce *non*-eighth triplet vocabulary (non-thematic)

Clifford utilizes eight note triplets a good amount in this solo; sort of in the same way he uses sixteenth note lines; they are used as an intentionally declared vehicle of transport, to get him from point A (as declared), and point B (undetermined until desired or intuitive arrival). I would say that the eighth note triplet is his preferred method of transport in this solo. Noteworthy is his tangent of them that extends 46 bars straight. This is a trumpet-specific technique.

100 measures of the solo includes or features eighth note triplets

34% of the solo features eighth note triplets

m2 (2 occurrences), 12, 23 -24, 37, 45, 47, 49, 50, 53, 59-60, 73, 80--84, 90-91, 104-105, 108, 160-166, 174-177, 180-198, 205-251, 287

CHROMATIC WEAVING (ENCLOSURES.& APPROACH TONES IN LINES)

A big part of Clifford's capacity to play such extended lines at fast tempos is the combination of his incredible theoretical knowledge of harmony and of course masterful trumpet playing technique. It's obvious that he has spent thousands of hours working weaving through chord changes using both diatonic *and* chromatic means. Of course most of this category deals with his bebop vocabulary, but I thought I would point out some of the instances where he is employing chromatic weaving as a means of showing how much of of it makes it into his fast playing.

Clifford also uses the following techniques throughout the solo:

Fast Flurries or non-Metrically Precise Lines a means of getting from point A to point B (m. 36, 105, 150, 277-278)

Scoops and Bloops (including grace notes):

Upper Register Fire (mm. 74-85, 201-205, 232-233, 256-262)

-Motivic Plaining/Use of Call and Response/Question and Answer

-Sixteenth Note Triplet Catalyst to Sixteenth Note Line or Fragments of Sixteenth Note Lines: Sequence of 3 Used once over the course of a 9-measure phrase (4-12).

-Phrase from Pickup to measure 7 thru the end of 7 is a response to the phrase from the pick-up to measure 4 thru the middle of measure 6. Then Clifford repeats what he played in measure 7 in the next phrase as a means of continuing the idea and developing it: Sequence of 3 Used once over the course of a 9-measure phrase (4-12).

Finishing a Phrase with A New Idea, & then Continuing the New Idea in the Next Phrase

Finishing a Phrase, & then starting the next phrase with a new idea

-Trumpet-Specific Techniques (cumulative)

Please refer to the descriptions of individual occurrences to know if they are associated with trumpet specific techniques. This category will merely total them all up, and produce a percentage of trumpet-specific techniques in ratio to the entire solo.

INCOMPLETE

Some Characteristic Traits of This Solo:

Use of Eighth Notes- Clifford does not use eighth notes purely in the context of creating lines that are fixed eighth note lines. His eighth notes are most always leading somewhere, and are always used to connect other types of note values. They either are connecting quarter notes, leading to triplets (eighth or sixteenth), occur *as a result* of a catalyst non-eighth note in origin, or are a catalyst to a thematic or motivic plaining sequence that involves non-eighth notes. There are only a few exceptions to this in the entire solo:

-14-18 (19 eighth notes), 46-47 (13), 68-71 (

-Examples of Thematic Development or Plaining:

Clifford utilizes sixteenth notes not only within linear and melodic contexts in order to serve the material in those particular contexts, but also as a thematic device which he sequences, repeats or otherwise plains as a means of creating phrases. Here are the instances of those occurrences: NOTE: I have "drawn a line" as to what sixteenth note based passages I will include in this category, and which ones I will not; for example I have *not* included measure 5 as an example *within itself*, even though an argument can be made for the first half of the bar featuring a downward stream of sixteenth notes comprising almost an octave, followed by the second half of the bar as sort of a mirrored "answer" if you will, given that it is *also* a descending stream of sixteenth notes, starting a fourth down from the initial one, and *also* comprises an octave. I have not included this individual bar or others like it as examples of Sixteenth Notes as a vehicle for Thematic Development or Plaining *within themselves*: because I see this bar and others like it as more of an instance of line playing and instantaneous ear-based decision making/muscle memory/habitual tendencies within line construction. Bar 5, and others like it, are however utilized *within* the context of larger, more obvious thematic and motivic plain-based and developmental examples.

-Measures 4 thru 12 feature Sixteenth Note Triplets as a means of "Kicking-off" a Sixteenth Note Line. In this context, this technique is used in conjunction with other techniques (below): Used to bind a 9 measure phrase

-mm. 32-33: sixteenth note chromatic plaining (2 measures)

-mm 94 – 97: the sixteenth notes work with the eighth notes