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In addition to TNT 2 software (with its own embedded audio tracks), MP3s are also included with this book. The symbol shown to the left appears next to every song in the book and is used to identify the TNT 2 tracks and MP3s that are accessible online.

For more information on TNT 2, visit:

alfred.com/TNT2

Track 10 (Full Mix)
Track 10A (Rhythm Section Only)



CAROB POWDER

(Bebop)

1 B^bMaj7 2 1 2 3 2 3 5 1

5 E^bMaj7 1 1 5 A^b7 3 2 3 3 1 3

9 B^bMaj7 1 2 1 2 3 5 2 C7 5 4 3 4 3 2 4 1

13 Cmin7 5 F7 4 B^bMaj7 2 3 3 1 Cmin7 F7 2 B^bMaj7 3 Fine

17 C[#]min7 1 F[#]7 2 5 BMaj7 3 BMaj7 2

21 Bmin7 1 E7 1 4 AMaj7 1 AMaj7 3

25 Amin7 2 3 1 D7 2 1 2 GMaj7 3 GMaj7 2 1 2 1 3

29 Gmin7 4 C7 3 1 4 2 3 Cmin7 2 3 F7 1 D.C. al Fine

Roadmap

5 total choruses:
1 chorus of head, 1 chorus of saxophone solo, 2 choruses of piano solo, 1 chorus of head out.

Overview

“Carob Powder” is a tune with chord changes in the style of Ray Noble’s “Cherokee.” This is one of the signature chord progressions of modern jazz and particularly of bebop. Indeed, until John Coltrane came up with “Giant Steps” in 1959 (see “It Takes Big Feet” later in this book), these changes were widely considered to be the biggest test to a musician’s virtuosity. There are a couple reasons for this. One is that the tempo is usually extremely fast—you needn’t start there by any means, but these changes are fairly often played at a tempo exceeding 300 beats per minute. The other significant challenge is that the B section (bridge) of the song modulates every four measures, and into keys that are remote from the “home” key in the A section. That said, while the challenges are substantial, they are not mysterious—they just require practice!

Listening Suggestions

Charlie Parker: “Koko”

Though he also recorded “Cherokee” early in his career, the 1945 recording of “Koko” is the most prominent example of alto saxophonist Parker soloing over these changes. After a short opening melody statement alongside Dizzy Gillespie, he dives right into the changes and unleashes a stream of flowing, inventive lines that have inspired generations of beboppers since then to learn and incorporate them into their vocabulary.

Don Byas: “Cherokee”

Don Byas was one of the first major tenor saxophonists of the bebop movement and he eats up the chord changes on this performance of “Cherokee.” Particularly interesting here is that the rhythm section plays at a still-bright but fairly relaxed tempo, while, in his solo, Byas consistently plays in double-time, foreshadowing extreme tempos that would follow in the ensuing years.

Bud Powell: “Cherokee”

Many have compared Bud Powell’s impact on pianists to that of Charlie Parker on saxophonists. In any case, he was certainly “the cat” among bop pianists and this trio track with Ray Brown and Max Roach is one of his signature performances of the late 1940s. His solo lines here are authoritative both rhythmically and harmonically.

Clifford Brown/Max Roach Quintet: “Cherokee”

A year and a half before this 1955 recording, Clifford Brown recorded a powerful version of “Cherokee” with Art Blakey on drums. Here, with drummer and co-leader Roach, Brown shows otherworldly fluency as he makes this song and this tempo sound completely relaxed. The other soloists here are saxophonist Harold Land and pianist Richie Powell (Bud’s younger brother).

Improvising on “Carob Powder”

When playing a fast song like this, the options for soloing become a little more limited. There are two great ways to approach playing fast. The first is this: go slow! Starting at a slower tempo when beginning to practice allows a soloist the time needed to teach the fingers to maneuver through changes fluently. If time is not given to slow practice, playing smooth eighth-note lines will be impossible, mostly because it takes time to figure out good fingering.

Once able to play a line smoothly at a slow tempo, gradually increase the speed. Move in small increments to get the best results. The use of a metronome can be really helpful here.

Practice like this brings not only fluidity but also a level of comfort that is needed when the changes are moving fast. Just like a runner needs to be relaxed as he sprints, a pianist's fingers need to be relaxed in order to move quickly. So, remember as you practice slowly to make sure the fingers are staying limber, not tight or clenched.

Below is a passage to practice for fluidity over the A section. The altered scale (see page 74) is used over the resolving dominant 7th chords: the B \flat 7 in measure 4 and the F7 in measure 14. The altered scale gives these chords a thicker sound because it includes the \flat 9, #9, \flat 5, and #5 of those chords. With these tones, your jazz vocabulary will explode! Try it out below, starting at a slow tempo.

Measures 1–15

The musical score consists of four staves of music in 4/4 time, starting with a key signature of two flats (B \flat major). The notes and chords are as follows:

- Staff 1 (Measures 1-4):**
 - Measure 1: B \flat Maj7 chord, notes: B \flat 4, D5, F5, G5.
 - Measure 2: Fmin7 chord, notes: F4, A \flat 4, C5, D5.
 - Measure 3: B \flat 7 chord, notes: B \flat 4, D5, F5, G5.
 - Measure 4: B \flat 7 chord, notes: B \flat 4, D5, F5, G5.
- Staff 2 (Measures 5-8):**
 - Measure 5: E \flat Maj7 chord, notes: E \flat 4, G \flat 4, B \flat 4, C5.
 - Measure 6: A \flat 7 chord, notes: A \flat 4, C \flat 5, E \flat 5, F5.
 - Measure 7: A \flat 7 chord, notes: A \flat 4, C \flat 5, E \flat 5, F5.
 - Measure 8: A \flat 7 chord, notes: A \flat 4, C \flat 5, E \flat 5, F5.
- Staff 3 (Measures 9-12):**
 - Measure 9: B \flat Maj7 chord, notes: B \flat 4, D5, F5, G5.
 - Measure 10: C7 chord, notes: C4, E4, G4, B \flat 4.
 - Measure 11: C7 chord, notes: C4, E4, G4, B \flat 4.
 - Measure 12: C7 chord, notes: C4, E4, G4, B \flat 4.
- Staff 4 (Measures 13-15):**
 - Measure 13: Cmin7 chord, notes: C4, E \flat 4, G \flat 4, B \flat 4.
 - Measure 14: F7 chord, notes: F4, A \flat 4, C5, D5.
 - Measure 15: B \flat Maj7 chord, notes: B \flat 4, D5, F5, G5.

The second thing to try when playing a quick tempo is to keep things simple. This can be done by maintaining a simple melodic line or by consolidating chords. To retain rhythmic and melodic simplicity, try to keep the right-hand notes within an octave to prevent the fingers from having to cross too much (if at all).

Measures 17–19

Chords: C#min7, F#7, BMaj7

Notice in the next eight measures the line only implies motion from V to I instead of making all the notes of the ii–V–I. This simplified way of playing a ii–V–I takes the pressure off fitting a bunch of notes into a small amount of time. Plus, these lines stay in a close position, which makes it easier for the hand to move quickly.

Measures 21–28

Chords: Bmin7, E7, AMaj7, Amin7, D7, GMaj7

When the chords move even faster (as in the last four measures of the bridge), you can play the same thing in one key and then the next key. This will give continuity and symmetry even at a hectic pace.

Measures 29–32

Chords: Gmin7, C7, Cmin7, F7