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NOTE: Any codas (Ⓢ) that appear will be played only once on the recording at the end of the last recorded chorus.

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INTRODUCTION

Dexter Gordon's place in the pantheon of great jazz tenor saxophonists is a solid one. He is credited by many historians with being the first tenorman to speak the language of Charlie Parker through his instrument. He was born in Los Angeles in 1923 and studied music with Lloyd Reese, whose rehearsal band also included Charles Mingus and Buddy Collette. After serving an apprenticeship with Lionel Hampton's band (1940-43) and brief stints with Fletcher Henderson and Louis Armstrong, he moved to New York to join Billy Eckstine's saxophone section. Around that time he made several small band record dates as a leader. After returning to California in 1946, he worked on both coasts for the remainder of the decade, often with fellow tenor saxophonist Wardell Gray. Two years in prison on a narcotics conviction and subsequent parole restrictions on travel sharply lowered his profile in the fifties, but following the resolution of these problems he again moved to New York in the early sixties and recorded a landmark series of albums for Blue Note, including several of the tunes on this album. In the fall of 1962 he toured Europe and subsequently moved to Denmark, making an occasional trip back to the U.S. to play and record during his long overseas residency. A recording of a live engagement at the Village Vanguard in December, 1976 ("Homecoming," on Columbia) was an unexpected best seller, and the following year he returned to the U.S. on a permanent basis. He put together a quartet that worked steadily into the early eighties. Failing health curtailed his playing by the mid-eighties, but his acting performance in Bertrand Tavernier's 1986 movie "Round Midnight" garnered him an Academy Award nomination. He died in 1990.

Gordon's style was marked by a behind-the-beat, relaxed swing, and his improvisations were liberally peppered with outrageous quotes that revealed a sense of humor. Interestingly, although his primary inspiration as a young man was Lester Young, his style bore a relationship to that of John Coltrane, and there is plenty of recorded evidence to show that at different times in their careers they influenced each other.

Like many jazzmen of his era, Gordon wrote a number of tunes as vehicles for his own performances, often based on the blues or on the chord changes of familiar popular and show tunes. Probably Gordon's best known original is ***Fried Bananas***, his line on the chords to *It Could Happen To You*. On this album you'll also find ***Boston Bernie*** (based on the chords of *All The Things You Are*) and ***Apple Jump*** (a take on the *I Got Rhythm* changes with the usual lopping off of the end tag to make it 32 bars), as well as ***Sticky Wicket***, ***Antabus*** and ***LTD*** (three blues-based compositions). The other tunes are based on original harmonies, but are firmly within the bebop tradition. The tunes all date from the sixties and seventies, when Gordon was at his artistic peak. Specially composed for this album is a Jamey Aebersold original, ***Dexology***.

Lending an unusual degree of authenticity to this album are the players. Pianist George Cables and bassist Rufus Reid were two-thirds of Gordon's working group in the late seventies, and drummer Victor Lewis made some gigs with the band. All three have extensive individual resumes, working with many of the leading names in jazz.

Phil Bailey 5/8/98



1. Fried Bananas

PLAY 7 TIMES (♩ = 176)

Musical score for "Fried Bananas" in 4/4 time, featuring a treble clef and a key signature of one flat (Bb). The score includes a main melody with various chords and a solo section.

Chords and Melody:

- Chords: EbΔ, Gø, C7+9, F-7, Aø, D7+9, AbΔ, G7+9, F7, Ab-7, Db7, F-7, Gø, C7+9, F-7, G7+9, C7, Db7, EbΔ, EbΔ, C7+9, F-7, Bb7, G7+9, EbΔ, AbΔ, G7+9, C7, F-7, Bb7, Gø, C7+9, F-7, Bb7, F-7, Bb7, Gø, C7+9.
- Melody: The main melody consists of eighth and quarter notes, often grouped in threes (trios). The solo section features a more complex melody with eighth and quarter notes.

SOLOS

1. F-7

2. D-7 G7 C-7 F7 F-7 Bb7

3. Gø C7+9 F-7 Bb7 EbΔ C7+9 F-7 Bb7

4. F-7 Bb7 Gø C7+9

Repeat over & over & fade out

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7. For Regulars Only

PLAY 6 TIMES (♩ = 168)

INTRO Eb-7 3 E-7 F-7 F#-7 F-7 E-7

2. Eb-7 D7+4 A Eb-7 3 Ab7 DbΔ Bb7 3

DbΔ Bb7 3 Eb-7 3 Ab7 F-7 1

1. DbΔ Bb7 3 2. DbΔ

F#-7 B7 E- A7

Eb- Ab7 3 Bb7 3 Eb-7 3 Ab7

DbΔ B' Bb7 Eb-7 Ab7 3

-7 F-7 F#-7 F-7 E-7 Eb-7

3 E-7 F-7 E#-7 F-7 E-7 3 Eb-7 D7+4

TO SOLOS