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Lee Konitz's use of standards' melody in improvisation¹

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Abstract

The main goal of the following article is to examine the mechanisms through which Lee Konitz uses the melody of jazz standards in his improvisation process. Beginning with the transcription and comprehensive analysis of five improvised solos, and using the thematic analysis method, we identified melodic ideas coming from the songs on which the saxophonist builds some of his solos. Our conclusion is that Lee Konitz, besides clearly quoting the melody of jazz standards on which he improvises, also frequently uses some of its notes as target-notes, and develops melodic motifs inspired by that same melody.

Keywords

Lee Konitz; Improvisation; Jazz; Melody; Jazz Standard.

¹ This text is an English version of the article “‘An act of pure inspiration’: o papel da melodia original nos solos de Lee Konitz” (Prazeres & Pinheiro, 2016).

Introduction

In jazz improvisation, incorporating ideas and melodic motifs from the original composition highlights the significance the improviser places on the original melody as a foundational element in shaping the solo. According to saxophonist Lee Konitz (1927-2020), mentioned in *Thinking in Jazz: The Infinite Art of Improvisation* (Berliner, 1994, p. 173), this approach to improvisation is "what makes your improvisations on different tunes different", especially when the repertoire is made up of harmonic structures that are very similar to each other, as is the case with many jazz standards². Konitz thus argues that if a soloist only uses the harmonic structure of the repertoire during improvisation, and given the obvious similarities in terms of the typical harmonic movements in most jazz standards (Pineiro, 2012), there will be slight differences between improvised solos in different compositions.

Throughout his long and fruitful career, Konitz has conceptually oriented improvisation around the notion of "theme and variations", from which he has skillfully created new sonorities in jazz³. Several prominent jazz musicians, such as Thelonious Monk, Bill Evans and Lester Young, among others, use the melody of the original composition in their solos. However, Lee Konitz was one of the first to mention a method for incorporating melody into solos in a systematic way. In a 1985 interview with David Kastin, the saxophonist described his approach to improvisation as a gradual process of transformation of the composition's original melody.

² As Pineiro (2011; 2012), explains the concept of jazz *standard* can be interpreted in different ways. Following the author: "Jazz historian and composer Henry Martin (1986) defines 'standard' as 'a popular song that is well known, frequently performed, and remains in the popular repertoire for at least several years'". Peter Gammond (1991) deepens the concept of "standard", defining it as a "composition or song that has, by dint of its lasting memorability and general worth, become a regularly used item in some field of music - a jazz *standard*, for example". Although the concept of "standard" can be used in the context of other musical genres (Middleton 2003), and the literature does not seem to reflect a total consensus on its definition (Witmer 1988), it is important to state that, being *emic*, it is often used by jazz musicians, audiences and critics when they refer to "popular" compositions (in the sense that they are known by a wide group of people inside and outside the scene) and other compositions by jazz musicians known within the jazz scene. However, many of these compositions were not written by jazz musicians but have been "appropriated" by them as vehicles for musical and cultural expression. They often serve as the basic structure for jazz arrangements and improvisations (Pineiro, 2012, p. 67-69).

³ On this subject, see Hamilton (2007).

According to Konitz, in Kastin (1985): "The goal of having to unfold a completely new melody on the spot [...] can be frightening! So, I think that first and foremost, you have to adhere to the song for a much, much longer period of time. You have to find out the meaning of embellishment before going on to try to create new melodies. I believe that the security of the song itself can relieve much of the anxiety of jumping into the unknown". Konitz, therefore argues that improvisation is a continuous process rooted in the original melody, leading, through various transformations, to the creation of new melodic lines. In this interview, Lee Konitz suggests the use of trills, passing notes, appoggiaturas, among other ornamental tools, as a means of developing the original melody. In the saxophonist's words: "[...] there are many levels of this process before you get anywhere near creating new melody material" (Kastin, 1985). In this way, and according to David Kastin, Konitz's improvisational process can be characterized as follows: "The first and most important level is the song itself. It then progresses incrementally through more sophisticated stages of embellishment, gradually displacing the original theme with new ones. The process culminates in the creation of an entirely new melodic structure. Konitz calls this final level "an act of pure inspiration" (Kastin, 1985). This so-called "act of pure inspiration", then, constitutes the final level of the process of transforming the original melody, culminating in the creation of a melody that is completely different from the first (although it is inspired by it).

In order to study how the material from the original melody is treated and reused in his improvisation, we carried out a detailed analysis of Konitz's five solos on jazz standards. In analyzing the different solos, we tried to locate traces of the original melody in order to understand the practical application of the philosophy underlying the saxophonist's improvisational process.

Music analysis and Lee Konitz in literature

The field of Jazz Studies has a considerable number of works on musical analysis. The most common analytical approaches, including those found in jazz history textbooks, have predominantly taken the form of transcriptions of solos by well-known musicians. Authors such as Thomas Owens (1974), Ronald Byrnside (1975), Milton

Stewart (1979), Raymond F. Kennedy (1987), Gregory Smith (1991), Gary Potter (1992), Henry Martin (1996) and Lewis Porter (1993; 2001), among others, have used the analysis of harmonic progressions and specific melodic patterns used by musicians. For instance, Thomas Owens and Henry Martin analyzed Charlie Parker's improvisational process in detail, while Lewis Porter analyzed John Coltrane's solos. Gary Potter studied Julian "Cannonball" Adderley's improvisation process, whereas Gregory Smith focused on Bill Evans's solos and Milton Stewart on Clifford Brown's improvisations.

The work of Owens (1974) covers an extensive analysis of small melodic units from Charlie Parker's solos, which he calls "motifs"⁴. Gregory Smith's research (1991) presents a model of melodic analysis based on the premise that jazz musicians resort to formulas to apply specific concepts within certain constraints. Defending the existence of a natural balance between spontaneous and predetermined elements in improvisation, Smith argues that jazz musicians use a limited number of patterns that they alter in the form of variations, so that these constitute flexible and immediate improvisational solutions⁵. By isolating and recognizing the melodic patterns used by pianist Bill Evans on his solo on "My Romance", taken from the album *Bill Evans: The Tokyo Album*, Smith concludes that these constitute "variations" of the opening motif⁶. Author Rick DiMuzio

⁴ Owens points to the existence of around one hundred main motifs employed by the saxophonist in around two hundred and fifty solos.

⁵ Based on Parry and Lord's model of formulaic composition, Smith states: "It is crucial in the analysis of a text to identify the underlying grammatical-syntactical-metrical patterns of the formulas, since those patterns form the basis of the substitution system that is at the heart of the compositional process. As Lord stresses, the ability to compose rapidly rests not on the memorization of a stock of formulas, but on the ability to create new phrases by analogy, using the patterns established by the basic formulas" (Smith, 1991, p. 38).

⁶ Milton L. Stewart's article entitled "Some Characteristics of Clifford Brown's Improvisational Style" (1979) is another example of the interest that some scholars have devoted to aspects of the jazz musician's individual improvisation. Based on an analysis of the transcription of a solo in "A Night in Tunisia" (1954, Blue Note), the author concludes that Clifford Brown's improvisational discourse is the result of a balance between familiar and unexpected sound elements. According to Stewart, in the course of the solo, one can clearly distinguish the moments of the exposition of an initial idea, its development and conclusion, together with the adequacy of the phrasing in relation to the harmonic and melodic structures. The author concludes that Clifford Brown associates musical ideas in a chain, elaborating musical phrases that are nothing more than the development of melodic ideas previously used in the solo. According to the author: "It is perhaps the fact that Brown's structures are organized in such a way that the listener can recognize a beginning, development and conclusion along with their principal function, the prolongation of a1, that makes them understandable and appreciated by an audience" (Stewart, 1979, p. 141). Stewart adds: "By using chain association between choruses, Brown extends the concept of a continuous-thought process to his entire solo" (Stewart, 1979, p. 147).

(2001), as part of his doctorate research, also carried out an in-depth study on the role of motive development in Joe Lovano's improvisational process.

Despite his extensive career, discography and impact on the history of jazz, there is scarce literature available that offers a detailed analysis of Lee Konitz's solos, particularly with regard to his use of material from the original melody during improvisation. One of the most relevant works on the saxophonist is his biographical interview by Andy Hamilton, *Lee Konitz - Conversations on the Improviser's Art* (2007). In addition to the biographical nature of this work, the author explores some of the improvisational concepts used by Lee Konitz. Although it doesn't include any kind of musical analysis, this book contains transcriptions of the saxophonist's solos and compositions, which provides a deeper understanding of his work, particular the main concepts that guide him in music overall and improvisation specifically.

It is also important to mention the book published in 1994 with transcriptions of the saxophonist's solos by Bob Washut: *Lee Konitz Transcribed Solos for Alto Sax*. In addition to this study, which does not focus on musical analysis, there are also some transcriptions available on the internet, mostly by jazz musicians and students. With regard to studies on the concepts that shape Lee Konitz's improvisational process, we would highlight only the aforementioned interview with the saxophonist, conducted in 1985 by David Kestin, which served as the starting point for this work.

Methodology

To examine the importance Lee Konitz places on the composition's original melody within the context of improvisation, five solos from different periods of Lee Konitz's career were transcribed and analyzed. The solo in "There Will Never Be Another You" was released in 1955 on the album *Lee Konitz with Warne Marsh* (1955, Atlantic Records), whereas "Just Friends" is part of the album *Live at the Half Note* (1959, Verve Records). The solo in "Just One of Those Things" is part of Paul Motian's album, *On Broadway - vol. 3* (1993, JMT - Polydor) and the solo in "You'd Be So Nice to Come Home to" was released on the album *Jazz Nocturne* (1992, Evidence Records). From the album *Parallels* (2001, Chesky Records), we chose Konitz's solo on "How Deep Is the Ocean".

For jazz musicians, the transcription of solos is a fundamental learning tool, consisting of "precious resources of the oral tradition of improvisation" (Berliner, 1994: 11). Although it is possible to learn a solo without referring to the main instrument (for example, using the voice), this process more commonly includes instrumental performance within jazz circles. When interpreting a solo on the instrument, the focus is not only on the musical notes but also on other musical parameters such as articulation, dynamics, intensity and timbre. In this article, given that its main objective is to ascertain the relationship between the melodic ideas in the solos and the original melody of the compositions on which Lee Konitz improvises, we have primarily focused on the notes and melodic motifs.

In addition to transcription, it is also common practice in the jazz world to analyze improvised solos performed by historically prominent musicians. According to Andrew Dahlke (2003: 1): "analysis of recorded solos demystifies the act of jazz improvisation by offering insight into the artistry and thought process of master musicians". The author affirms that the process involving improvisation using the original melody of the composition or a previously improvised motif is usually called thematic improvisation. This type of improvisation occurs when there is a strong relationship between the original melody, harmony, voice leading⁷, interval structure of the tune, and the improvised discourse. During an improvisation, the original melody of the composition may take on various forms, sometimes concealed within phrases that might seem unrelated to the original melodic line (Dahlke, 2003).

In this study, Lee Konitz's solos were not only transcribed but also analyzed to identify any similarities between the original music and the improvised lines. Thematic analysis was applied during the process of analyzing the solos. Rudolph Reti (1961) suggests, based on Arnold Schoenberg's concept of thematic analysis in his 1947 essay "Brahms the Progressive"⁸, that the thematic patterns present in tonal music may have

⁷ *Voice leading* is defined as the movement that the various notes or voices of a given chord make when transitioning to another chord (Baerman, 2003).

⁸ This essay was republished in 1975 in *Style and Idea: Selected Writings of Arnold Schoenberg*.

a unifying function similar to that of the series in the context of serial music⁹. As we shall see, Lee Konitz also tries to unify improvisation and original melody in the course of his improvisational process.

It is, therefore, relevant to use this method in the analysis of Lee Konitz's solos, as our main objective is to identify the various ways the original melody is used in improvisation, without prior knowledge of how it may be applied. After identifying the notes of the original melody and their location in the solo, we proceeded to recognize and compare common melodic patterns between the improvised melody and the original. A total of 392 bars of Lee Konitz's solo were analyzed, in which we identified the use of the original melody in 243 bars.

Four main categories of improvised material inspired by the composition's melody were identified:

- Quotation of the original melody,
- Ornamentation of the original melody,
- Melodic motifs derived from the original melody, and
- Other approaches to using the original melody.

A "quotation of the original melody" was considered to be the consecutive use of three or more notes from the original melody of the work, with a roughly equivalent duration and placement in the corresponding bar. "Ornamentation of the original melody" refers to the use of a segment of the original melody with embellishments, while still maintaining the audibly identifiable presence of the original phrase. We also checked the saxophonist's use of "melodic motifs from the original melody" when he reinterprets or develops a melodic pattern from the composition's melody. Finally, we considered other ways the notes from the original melody were used, namely: as the starting point of a melodic phrase; as the endpoint or resolution of a melodic phrase; as passing notes; and as notes in the solo that occur in the downbeats, corresponding to those in the original melody of the composition.

⁹ See also Sherlaw-Johnson (1992).

Melody quote

In this section we will present the examples that best demonstrate the unequivocal use of the original melody in the analyzed solos. By including three or more notes of the original melody in the solo, while fundamentally maintaining its rhythm and location in the measure, we can see the importance that Lee Konitz gives to the original composition as an indispensable element in the construction of improvised melodic phrases. The quotations observed occur in different places in the solo, appearing as a structuring element of the improvisation process and often referring to the melody, which is the component that most distinctly defines the original composition.

In "How Deep Is the Ocean" (2001, Chesky Records), in bars 58 and 59, Konitz clearly quotes the original melody (bar 26-7). Note that in this example, as in all subsequent ones, the original melody of the composition appears in the lower pentagram, while the improvised solo is written in the upper pentagram.

The image shows a musical score for two staves in 4/4 time. The upper staff is for an improvised solo, and the lower staff is for the original melody. Chord symbols G-7, F-7, E-7b5, A7, and D-7 are placed above the upper staff. The original melody in the lower staff consists of quarter notes: G4, A4, Bb4, C5, D5, E5, F5, G5. The improvised solo in the upper staff includes a quote of the original melody's notes (G4, A4, Bb4, C5, D5, E5, F5, G5) circled and connected to the lower staff by lines. A triplet of eighth notes (G5, F5, E5) is marked with a '3' at the end of the lower staff.

Example 1: *How Deep Is The Ocean*, bar 57-59

As this quotation takes place near the end of the solo, it gives it a conclusive character. It should also be noted that at the end of the improvisation (bar 63-64) the saxophonist ends the phrase on the same note as the original melody.

Another example of this improvisational resource employed by Konitz can be observed between bars 36 and 39 and bars 43 and 47 of the solo in "Just One of Those Things" (1993, JMT - Polydor). In this case, a clear quotation of the theme's melody occurs in the B section of the solo's only chorus, functioning as a contrasting element with the rest of his solo, which bears little relation to the original piece.

Example 2. *Just One Of Those Things*, bar 36-39

Example 3. *Just One Of Those Things*, bar 43-47

The remaining bars of the solo in section B, although not a clear quotation of the melody, are variations or ornamentations of it, as we'll see below. The use of this type of improvisational material demonstrates Konitz's intention to introduce into his solo a differentiating factor from the rest of the improvisation.

Melody ornamentation

Next, we'll point out excerpts from the transcribed and analyzed solos that incorporate embellishments of the original melody and allow it to be clearly identified aurally. In "How Deep Is the Ocean" (2001, Chesky Records), the saxophonist clearly embellishes the original melody melodically and rhythmically, keeping the notes that belong to the original composition at a higher pitch (example 4, bar 25-27).

Example 4. *How Deep Is The Ocean*, bar 25-28

Another clear example of this type of resource employed by Lee Konitz can be heard in his solo in "There Will Never Be Another You" (1955, Atlantic Records) (bar 24-27 and bar 37-38). In this instance (example 5), Konitz uses the interval between A and C, present in the original melody, as the basis for the improvised phrase.

Example 5. *There Will Never Be Another You*, bar 24-27

Example 6. *There Will Never Be Another You*, bar 37-38

In the standard "Just One of Those Things" (1993, JMT/Polydor), as mentioned above, the saxophonist embellishes the melody rhythmically and melodically, between clear quotations.

Example 7. *Just One Of Those Things*, bar 40-42

Melodic motifs from the original melody

In the analyzed solos, Lee Konitz translates or develops melodic patterns from the original melody, using them as foundational ideas for constructing his improvisations.

In his solo on "How Deep Is the Ocean" (2001, Chesky Records) (bar 20-24), Konitz uses a fragment of the melody (bar 21), transposing it diatonically one degree up in bar 22. In bar 23, he repeats the same motif an octave higher, now with embellishments. At the end of this improvised phrase, Konitz uses the same motive idea, now starting on the third degree of the D-7 chord (bar 24).

Example 8. *How Deep Is The Ocean*, bar 20-24

Lee Konitz also uses this technique of motivic development inspired by the original melody in his solo in "There Will Never Be Another You" (1955, Atlantic Records), in bars 27 to 30. In this example, he uses an excerpt from the last phrase of the original melody, transposing it by descending joint degrees.

Example 9. *There Will Never Be Another You*, bar 27-30

In "Just One Of Those Things" (1993, JMT - Polydor), after using various quotations from the original melody, Lee Konitz ends the B section of the only chorus in his solo by diatonically transposing the final motive of the melody in this section (bar 48-52). The conclusion of this improvised phrase serves as a bridge between the B section and the final A of the solo, marking the last time the saxophonist explicitly refers to the original melody.

Example 10. *Just One Of Those Things*, bar 48-52

The analysis of Konitz's solo on "Just Friends" (1959, Verve) reveals the presence, in two moments, of a fragment of the melody's first motif. In bar 2, the saxophonist uses an excerpt from the melody which he later uses again and develops, as can be seen in bars 1 to 5 and 33 to 35. In bar 4, Konitz uses the motif from bar 2, now starting on the 4th beat of the bar and transposing it diatonically a perfect 4th down. In bar 34, Konitz plays the same notes as the melody, shifting them by two beats and resolving, as in the original melody, on the third degree of the G-7 chord (Bb).

Example 11. *Just Friends*, bar 1-5

Example 12. *Just Friends*, bar 33-37

In Lee Konitz's solo on "You'd Be So Nice to Come Home to" (1992, Evidence Records), the saxophonist improvises a phrase that incorporates the first motif of the original melody, ornamenting it rhythmically (bar 34-6). This rhythmic ornamentation consists of anticipating the melody by half a beat, i.e. an eighth note, thus making it syncopated.



Example 13. *You'd Be So Nice To Come Home To*, bar 34-36

Notes from the original melody

The most frequently employed improvisational technique by Lee Konitz in the analyzed solos involves incorporating notes from the melody into his improvised phrases, maintaining their original placement. We've identified notes from the original melody that are used as:

- The starting point of a melodic phrase,
- The end point or resolution of a melodic phrase,
- Passing notes,
- Notes that occur in the strong time of the bar and that correspond to those in the original melody of the composition.

In Konitz's solo on "How Deep Is the Ocean" (2001, Chesky Records), we found three examples in which the notes of the melody are used in improvised phrases. In bar 7, the saxophonist plays the note G in the 2nd beat and in the 2nd half of the 4th beat,



ending the phrase in bar 9 with the note C. This phrase (bar 6-9) has three notes that coincide with the notes of the melody and occur in the same place.

Example 14. *How Deep Is The Ocean*, bar 6-9

Next (bar 10-12), the saxophonist improvises a phrase that begins and ends with the two notes of the original melody. The fact that Lee Konitz begins and ends this improvised phrase with the notes of the melody shows his strong connection to the original theme.

Example 15. *How Deep Is The Ocean*, bar 10-12

Between bars 12 and 14, the accented notes similar to those in the composition's melody (Eb, C and Bb) give the improvised phrase a similar outline to the original phrase. On the 1st beat of bar 13, Lee Konitz plays the note Eb as a resolution to the *pickup* of the previous bar. On the 4th beat of the same bar he plays the note C, and on the 2nd beat of bar 14 he plays the note Bb.

Example 16. *How Deep Is The Ocean*, bar 12-14?

The analysis of Lee Konitz's solo on "There Will Never Be Another You" (1955, Atlantic Records) allowed us to identify three phrases in which the saxophonist refers to the notes of the original melody in contiguous downbeats, in the bars where they originally occur. In example 17, bars 10 and 11, Lee Konitz plays the notes of the original melody in five consecutive downbeats, using them as *voice leading* for the improvised

phrase. It should also be noted that the common notes between the melody of "There Will Never Be Another You" and the improvisation are anticipated by a quarter note.

Example 17 shows a melodic line in the upper staff and a bass line in the lower staff. The melody consists of eighth and quarter notes. The bass line provides harmonic support with chords: FMaj7, B \flat 7, CMaj7, A-7, and D7. A triplet of eighth notes is indicated by a '3' and arrows pointing to the notes in both staves.

Example 17. *There Will Never Be Another You*, bar 9-13

In example 18, also taken from the solo on "There Will Never Be Another You", we can see an improvised phrase where several notes coincide with the notes of the original melody. Of particular note is bar 33, in which the note C is played in the first half, resolving to the note D in the remaining downbeats. In turn, the note D resolves to the note E, which corresponds to the original melody.

Example 18 shows a melodic line in the upper staff and a bass line in the lower staff. The melody consists of eighth and quarter notes. The bass line provides harmonic support with chords: D-7, G7, CMaj7, G7, CMaj7, and B-7 \flat 5. Arrows indicate note resolutions between the two staves.

Example 18. *There Will Never Be Another You*, bar 31-35

Similar to what happens in bar 33, Konitz emphasizes the note E of the original melody in bar 51 (example 19), playing it repeatedly in every beat, and then resolving in a D, which also belongs to the tune's original melody.

Example 19 shows a melodic line in the upper staff and a bass line in the lower staff. The melody consists of quarter and eighth notes. The bass line provides harmonic support with chords: B-7 \flat 5, E7, and A-7. Arrows indicate note resolutions between the two staves.

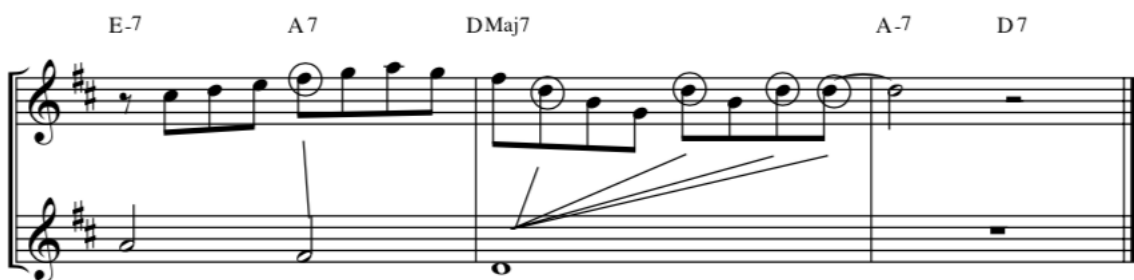
Example 19. *There Will Never Be Another You*, bar 51-53

The following example is taken from the solo on "Just One of Those Things" (1993, JMT - Polydor). In this case, the saxophonist plays the notes of the original melody on the downbeats of measure 63, accentuating the note D in measure 64 as the target note. As a result, Konitz develops, from the melodic line, a voice leading line inspired by the corresponding line of the original composition.



Example 20. *Just One Of Those Things*, bar 62-64

In Lee Konitz's solo on "Just Friends" (1959, Verve), we can see three examples of using notes from the original melody. In the phrase in example 21 (bar 62-64), the notes F# (bar 62, 3rd beat) and D (bar 63, 1st upbeat, 3rd and 4th downbeats and 4th upbeat) take us back to the original melody, serving as voice leading. In this phrase, Konitz accentuates and repeats the note D, which is also important in the tune's melody as it is the end of the original phrase.



Example 21. *Just Friends*, bar 62-64

In measures 80 to 83 we can see two examples of the use of notes from the original melody in the improvised discourse. In bar 81, the note F is repeated and accented three times and in bar 83 the note Bb is the resolution note of the improvised phrase, maintaining the same function as in the original melody.

Example 22. *Just Friends*, bar 80-83

Also in bar 118, Lee Konitz uses the notes E and D from the original melody as *voice leading*.

Example 23. *Just Friends*, bar 117-120

In "You'd Be So Nice to Come Home To" (1992, Evidence Records), the saxophonist begins his solo with a phrase that resolves on the notes F and G, which are also the final two notes of the first phrase of the original melody of this standard tune (bar 3). Then, in response to the opening phrase, Konitz uses another phrase that also resolves on the two notes of the original melody (bar 4).

Example 24. *You'd Be So Nice To Come Home To*, bar 1-5

It's important to note the Konitz's use of the notes from the original melody in the phrase of bars 26 to 33 of the same solo.

The image shows two systems of musical notation for the solo in 'You'd Be So Nice To Come Home To' (bars 26-33). The first system covers bars 26-28, with chords F#7, B-7, and B7. The second system covers bars 29-33, with chords E-7, A-7, D7, and G Maj7. Arrows and circles highlight specific notes in the saxophone line that correspond to the original melody.

Example 25. *You'd Be So Nice To Come Home To*, bar 26-33

In bar 27, the note E is accented in three consecutive upbeats, resolving in the first beat of bar 28 on the note D, just as it did originally in the melody of "You'd Be So Nice to Come Home to". In the continuation of the phrase and in the first beat of bars 29 and 30, the saxophonist plays the notes of the melody again. The second part of this improvised phrase (bar 30-33) is played in the last bars of the first chorus. It begins with an ascending phrase containing four notes from the original melody (E, G, A and B) and ends with the last three notes of the last phrase of the original melody (B, A and G).

In the third excerpt of this solo (bar 63-65), the saxophonist plays the note Bb in the first beat of bar 64 and accentuates the note A in the second and fourth upbeats, which resolves into the note G in bar 65. These notes accented by Konitz coincide with those belonging to the final phrase of the original melody.

The image shows a single system of musical notation for the solo in 'You'd Be So Nice to Come Home To' (bars 63-65). The chords are A-7, D7, and G Maj7. Arrows and circles highlight specific notes in the saxophone line that correspond to the original melody.

Example 26. *You'd Be So Nice to Come Home To*, bar 63-65

Conclusion

From the transcription and analysis of Lee Konitz's solos on jazz standards, we can understand the significance of the original melody of the compositions as a starting point for the development of his improvised discourse. We found that this use can be carried out according to different degrees of conceptual complexity, and can vary from clearly quoting the melody to developing motifs from it. We've noticed that Konitz incorporates notes from the original melody into his improvised phrases (for example in "Just One of Those Things"), sometimes using them in the same bar and beat in which they originally took place. At other times, he chooses to anticipate or delay these notes by a few beats. However, in the solos analyzed, quoting the melody is not one of the resources mostly used by Lee Konitz. This can be explained by the fact that the saxophonist's rendering of the melody generally already has a fairly free and improvised character, which brings it closer to the solo in aesthetic and conceptual terms, leading to a subsequent unification of the piece in general. In other words, we argue that, since he chooses to play the melody more freely (rhythmically and melodically), Lee Konitz doesn't quote it so often during the solo, focusing primarily on the motive development.

The notes of the original melody of the compositions on which he improvises also appear in the solos in the form of ornamentation, as passing notes serving as voice leading, or even as target notes for resolving phrases, as in "There Will Never Be Another You" and "You'd Be So Nice to Come Home to". Konitz also explores the use of motifs from the original composition, developing them and using them as a starting point for the elaboration of more complex melodic phrases that extend throughout the solo, as happens for example in "Just Friends" and "How Deep Is the Ocean".

We can conclude that, as in other solos by emblematic improvisers such as Thelonious Monk or Lester Young, the reference to the original melody is constantly present in Lee Konitz's solos in one way or another, depending on the various levels of complexification that the saxophonist intends to apply to it. The large number of notes from the original melody used as "key notes" in the improvised phrases, especially in the same bar and beat in which they originally occur, emphasizes the importance that Lee Konitz gives to the original theme as a melodic structure from which he develops his improvisational process, not limiting himself to melodically defining the tune's harmony.

As we have seen, different degrees of transformation and complexity are applied to the original melodic discourse, which reveals a strong congruence with the method described by Konitz in his interview with David Kastin (1985).

We hope that this study will contribute to advancing the discussion of Lee Konitz's improvisational process, stimulating further research on the mechanisms through which the saxophonist reuses melodic material from the original tune.

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There Will Never Be Another You

E \flat

Warren & Gordon
Solo: Lee Konitz
in "Lee Konitz with Warne Marsh"

1^o Chorus

C Maj7 B-7 \flat 5 E7

5 A-7 G-7 C7

9 F Maj7 B \flat 7 C Maj7 A-7

13 D7 D-7 G7

17 C Maj7 B-7 \flat 5 E7

21 A-7 G-7 C7

25 F Maj7 B \flat 7 C Maj7 F \sharp 7 B7

29 C Maj7 B7 E-7 A7 D-7 G7 C Maj7 G7

Lee Konitz's use of standards' melody in improvisation

2 There Will Never Be Another You - Solo: Lee Konitz "Lee Konitz With Warne Marsh"

2° Chorus

33 C Maj7 B-7^{b5} E7

37 A-7 G-7 C7

41 F Maj7 B^{b7} C Maj7 A-7

45 D7 D-7 G7

49 C Maj7 B-7^{b5} E7

53 A-7 G-7 C7

57 F Maj7 B^{b7} C Maj7 F^{#-7} B7

61 C Maj7 B7 E-7 A7 D-7 G7 C Maj7 G7 C Maj7

Just Friends

E \flat

solo transcription

J. Klenner & S. Lewis
Solo: L. Konitz in "Live at the Half Note"
transcribed by: Gonçalo Prazeres

1° Chorus

The musical score is written in E-flat major (one flat) and 4/4 time. It consists of eight staves of music, each with a measure number and a set of chords above it. The chords are: G Maj7, G-7, C7, D Maj7, F-7, B \flat 7, E-7, A7, C \sharp -7 \flat 5, F \sharp 7, F \sharp 7, B-7, E7, E7, E-7, A7, D7 \flat 13, G Maj7, G-7, C7, C7 \flat 9, D Maj7, F-7, B \flat 7, E-7, A7, C \sharp -7 \flat 5, F \sharp 7, B-7, E7, E-7, A7, D Maj7, A-7, D7. The notation includes various rhythmic values, rests, and articulations such as slurs and triplets.

Lee Konitz's use of standards' melody in improvisation

4

Just Friends - Solo Lee Konitz "Live at the Half Note"

2° Chorus

The musical score is written in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a 4/4 time signature. It consists of eight staves of music, each with a starting measure number and a set of chords above it. The chords are: G Maj7, G Maj7, G-7, C7 (measures 33-36); D Maj7, F-7, Bb7 (measures 37-40); E-7, A7, C#-7b5, F#7, B-7 (measures 41-44); E7, E-7, A7, A-7, D7 (measures 45-48); G Maj7, G-7, C7 (measures 49-52); D Maj7, F-7, Bb7 (measures 53-56); E-7, A7, C#-7b5, F#7, B-7 (measures 57-60); E7, E-7, A7, D Maj7, A-7, D7 (measures 61-64). The melody includes various rhythmic patterns, including eighth and sixteenth notes, and features several triplet markings.

33 G Maj7 G Maj7 G-7 C7

37 D Maj7 F-7 Bb7

41 E-7 A7 C#-7b5 F#7 B-7

45 E7 E-7 A7 A-7 D7

49 G Maj7 G-7 C7

53 D Maj7 F-7 Bb7

57 E-7 A7 C#-7b5 F#7 B-7

61 E7 E-7 A7 D Maj7 A-7 D7

Just Friends - Solo Lee Konitz "Live at the Half Note"

3° Chorus

65 G Maj7 G-7 C7

69 D Maj7 F-7 B^b7

73 E-7 A7 C[#]-7 F[#]7 B-7

77 E7 E-7 A7 A-7 D7

81 G Maj7 G-7 C7

85 D Maj7 F-7 B^b7

89 E-7 A7 C[#]-7^b5 F[#]7 B-7

93 E7 E-7 A7 D Maj7 A-7 D7^b13

Lee Konitz's use of standards' melody in improvisation

↑

Just Friends - Solo Lee Konitz "Live at the Half Note"

4° Chorus

97 G Maj7 G-7 C7

101 D Maj7 F-7 Bb7

105 E-7 A7 C#7b5 F#7 B-7

109 E7 E-7 A7 A-7 D7

113 G Maj7 G-7 C7

117 D Maj7 F-7 Bb7

121 E-7 A7 C#7b5 F#7 B-7

125 E7 E-7 A7 D Maj7 A-7 D7 G Maj7

Detailed description of the musical score: The score is for the 4th chorus of 'Just Friends' by Lee Konitz. It is written in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. The key signature is one sharp (F#). The score consists of eight staves of music, each with a starting measure number and a chord progression. The chords are: G Maj7, G-7, C7 (measures 97-100); D Maj7, F-7, Bb7 (measures 101-104); E-7, A7, C#7b5, F#7, B-7 (measures 105-108); E7, E-7, A7, A-7, D7 (measures 109-112); G Maj7, G-7, C7 (measures 113-116); D Maj7, F-7, Bb7 (measures 117-120); E-7, A7, C#7b5, F#7, B-7 (measures 121-124); E7, E-7, A7, D Maj7, A-7, D7, G Maj7 (measures 125-132). The melody is primarily eighth and quarter notes, with some triplet markings (indicated by a '3' over a group of notes) and a final double bar line.

You'd Be So Nice To Come Home To

E \flat

Cole Porter

Solo: Lee Konitz in "Jazz Nocturne"

1° Chorus

E-7 F \sharp -7 \flat 5 B7 E-7

6 E-7 D-7 G7 CMaj7

11 F \sharp -7 \flat 5 B7 B7 E-7

15 C \sharp -7 \flat 5 F \sharp 7 F \sharp -7 \flat 5 B7

19 E-7 F \sharp -7 \flat 5 B7 E-7 E-7

23 D-7 G7 CMaj7

27 F \sharp 7 B-7 B7 E-7

31 A-7 D7 GMaj7 F \sharp 7 B7

Lee Konitz's use of standards' melody in improvisation

2

You'd Be So Nice 'To Come Home 'To - Solo Lee Konitz "Jazz Nocturne"

2° Chorus

35 E-7 F#-7b5 B7 E-7 E-7

39 D-7 G7 CMaj7 CMaj7

43 F#-7b5 B7 B7 E-7

47 C#-7b5 F#7 F#-7b5 B7

51 E-7 F#-7b5 B7 E-7 E-7

55 D-7 G7 CMaj7 CMaj7

59 F#7 B-7 B7 E-7

63 A-7 D7 GMaj7 F#-7b5 B7 E-7

Just One Of Those Things

E \flat

Cole Porter
Solo: Lee Konitz
in Paul Motian's "On Broadway Vol.3"

D Maj7 pickup C \sharp -7 \flat 5 F \sharp 7

2

Just One Of Those Things

36 C Maj7 C#° D-7 G7

40 C Maj7 C Maj7 B-7 E7

44 A Maj7 F#-7 D#-7b5 D-Maj7

48 C#-7 D#° E-7 C#-7b5 F#7

52 B-7 C#-7 F#7

56 D7 D7 Ab7b5 G-6

60 F#-7 B7 E-7 A7

64 DMaj7 DMaj7 C#-7b5 F#7

E \flat

How Deep is the Ocean

Irving Berlin
Solo: Lee Konitz in "Parallels"

1° Chorus

Am7 Bm7 \flat 5 E7 Am7 F \sharp m7 \flat 5 B7

5 Em7 F \sharp m7 \flat 5 B7 Em7 E \flat 7 Dm7 G7

9 Gm7 C7 Cm7 F7

13 Am7 \flat 5 D7 Cm7 G7 Bm7 \flat 5 E7

17 Am7 Bm7 \flat 5 E7 Am7 F \sharp m7 \flat 5 B7

21 Em7 F \sharp m7 \flat 5 B7 Em7 E \flat 7 Dm7 G7

25 Gm7 Fm7 Em7 \flat 5 A7 Dm7 B \flat 7

29 CMaj7 E7 Am7 D7 Dm7 G7 CMaj7 Bm7 \flat 5 E7

2

How Deep is the Ocean - Solo Lee Konitz "Parallels"

2° Chorus

33 A m7 Bm7^b5 E7 A m7 F#m7^b5 B7

37 E m7 F#m7^b5 B7 E m7 E^b7 D m7 G7

41 G m7 C7 C m7 F7

45 A m7^b5 D7 C m7 G7 Bm7^b5 E7

49 A m7 B m7 E7 A m7 F#m7^b5 B7

53 E m7 F#m7^b5 B7 E m7 E^b7 D m7 G7

57 G m7 F m7 E m7^b5 A7 D m7 B^b7

61 C Maj7 E7 A m7 D7 D m7 G7 C Maj7 Bm7^b5 E7