

THE EVOLUTION OF THE IMPROVISATIONAL VOCABULARY OF MARC JOHNSON

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This study examines the evolution of the improvisational vocabulary utilized by bassist Marc Johnson over the course of his career. Through interviews and musical analysis the study contextualizes Johnson's musical influences, considers how they shaped his development, and examines his role in the legacy of the stylistic lineage established by Scott LaFaro with the Bill Evans Trio. A survey of literature concerning Johnson, Scott LaFaro and Eddie Gomez is included, as well as a discussion of the impact of apprenticeship on Johnson's career. The study illuminates aspects of Johnson's current vocabulary and how he has synthesized influences to create a distinctive vocabulary, not derivative of Scott LaFaro or Eddie Gomez, but incorporating elements of their style in the composition of his own voice.

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

Bassist Marc Johnson has had a long and successful career that has embraced a variety of styles within the idiom of jazz. While a student at the University of North Texas (then North Texas State University) he was a student of Edward Rainbow, was the bassist with the One O’Clock Lab Band, performed with the Fort Worth Symphony, and soon after graduation joined Woody Herman’s Young Thundering Herd. His most prominent early success was as the bassist in the Bill Evans Trio. Marc was the last bass player in the group, performing from Spring 1978 until the pianist’s death in September 1980.

By the early 1960s Bill Evans had gained a great deal of visibility as the pianist with Miles Davis’s group, most notably for his contributions to Davis’s recording *Kind of Blue*, but it is with his trio recordings that he established his unique artistic vision. Evans’s trio was famous for pioneering a style of conversational interplay between its members that was considered innovative at its inception in the late 1950s:

I’m hoping the trio will grow in the direction of simultaneous improvisation rather than just one guy blowing followed by another guy blowing. If the bass player, for example, hears an idea that he wants to answer, why should he just keep playing a 4/4 background? The men I’ll work with have learned how to do the regular kind of playing, and so I think we now have the license to change it. After all, in a classical composition, you don’t hear a part remain stagnant until it becomes a solo. There are transitional development passages—a voice begins to be heard more and more and finally breaks into prominence.<sup>1</sup>

A great deal of the success of this approach was made possible by virtuoso bassist Scott LaFaro.

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<sup>1</sup> Nat Hentoff, “Introducing Bill Evans,” *The Jazz Review*, 2(9) (1959): 26-28.

With the addition of LaFaro to the trio in 1959,<sup>2</sup> Evans was able to begin to realize this more interactive concept. The function of the bass in Evans's trio evolved from a more conventional strict quarter note time keeping to playing a more active role in which time was often implied and maintained by the group but not explicitly stated. This is not to say it resembled "free jazz" of the period, in which time and harmony may or may not be in play at a given moment. The role of the bass could be more interactive, commenting on musical ideas or providing a contrapuntal line, liberating its function as a strict timekeeper.<sup>3</sup> It would be difficult to overstate the importance of Scott LaFaro to the evolution of jazz bass in general, and to the trio specifically. The stylistic conventions established by the trio became the template for the group for the rest of its tenure.

Evans was devastated when LaFaro was killed in a car accident only a few years into their relationship.<sup>4</sup> He withdrew from performing for a period of time that can be attributed to both personal and musical issues.<sup>5</sup> LaFaro's death deeply affected Evans on a very personal level. He sorely missed being able to perform with the person with whom he had formed such a close musical connection, but also found it difficult to find another bassist who was stylistically comparable.

Chuck Israels performed and recorded frequently with group from 1961-1966. Other bassists including Gary Peacock, Monty Budwig, and Neils-Henning Ørsted Pedersen recorded or performed with the trio as well, but the trio did not have a permanent bassist until Eddie

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<sup>2</sup> Helene LaFaro-Fernandez, Chuck Ralston, Jeffrey R. Campbell, and Phil Palombi. *Jade Visions: The Life and Music of Scott LaFaro* (Denton: University of North Texas Press, 2009), 102.

<sup>3</sup> Donald L. Wilner, "Interactive Jazz Improvisation in the Bill Evans Trio (1959-61): A Stylistic Study For Advanced Double Bass Performance" (DM diss., University of Miami, 1995), 68.

<sup>4</sup> LaFaro-Fernandez et al., 152.

<sup>5</sup> Peter Pettinger, *Bill Evans: How My Heart Sings* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1988), 114.

Gomez joined the group in 1966. Gomez was a virtuosic young bassist who had studied at Juilliard with Fred Zimmerman and assimilated the stylistic concepts of LaFaro and the Bill Evans Trio.<sup>6</sup>

Although Gomez was young and not as experienced as the previously mentioned bassists, Evans was impressed by his virtuosity and enthusiasm.<sup>7</sup> In Gomez, Evans finally found a bassist stylistically compatible with his vision for the trio. Gomez held the position for eleven years, from 1966-1977. By the time of Gomez's departure, the legacy of the Bill Evans Trio and LaFaro and Gomez's playing in particular represented its own distinct stylistic lineage. When Gomez left the group almost twenty years had passed since the first trio recordings with LaFaro, and there were many more players who were familiar with this style, had assimilated it to one degree or another, and could potentially be capable of filling the position.

Marc Johnson's interest in the Evans trio was encouraged by his mentor Dallas pianist Fred Crane.<sup>8</sup> While a student at North Texas State, Johnson played gigs with Crane, who was a college friend of Evans. Crane recommend Johnson to Bill Evans, and while touring with the Woody Herman Orchestra, Johnson flew to New York to sit in with Evans on a night off.<sup>9</sup> In much the same way that Eddie Gomez won the job over more experienced players, Marc Johnson prevailed over seasoned bassists who had been auditioning for the position and playing temporarily in the group. Once Johnson joined the trio, Evans expressed that he felt a kinship with Johnson that was similar to his relationship with LaFaro: "I don't compare them qualitatively so much, but characteristically, I think the last trio resembles the first trio more than

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<sup>6</sup> Pettinger, 175.

<sup>7</sup> Pettinger, 177.

<sup>8</sup> Ken Boome, personal conversation with author, Dallas, TX, Dec. 2014.

<sup>9</sup> Bob Blumenthal, Liner Notes, *Highlights From Turn Out the Stars*, Burbank: Warner Bros, 1996, compact disc.



any other trio I've had. The music is evolving and growing of itself like the first trio.”<sup>10</sup> It should be noted that although the cited interview was somewhat unstructured, and hastily conducted at the end of a performance, Evans repeatedly expressed his enthusiasm for this trio. Herb Wong recounts a conversation with Evans: “I can’t wait to get on stage because of Joe LaBarbara and Marc Johnson. I have no words for it. Just to tell you that I admire these two young guys and I’m just a very lucky person. I can’t wait to play with them.”<sup>11</sup>

It would be inaccurate to characterize Johnson’s playing as strictly derivative of LaFaro. He has, over time, developed a style uniquely his own. I argue, however, that this early interest in assimilation of the Evans trio conventions at a developmental stage in his career influenced Johnson’s playing profoundly. The result of this stylistic absorption produced an outcome distinctly different than a focus exclusively on Ray Brown with the Oscar Peterson Trio, or Israel Crosby with Ahmad Jamal might have yielded.

General information about Johnson’s tenure with the Bill Evans Trio is discussed briefly in biographies about the pianist, *Bill Evans: How My Heart Sings*<sup>12</sup> and *Everything Happens to Me*.<sup>13</sup> These works are neither musicological expositions nor do they specifically address musical aspects of the group. Only the most general profiles of Johnson appear in commercial publications *Bass Player*,<sup>14</sup> *Down Beat*,<sup>15</sup> *Jazziz*,<sup>16</sup> and the Journal of the International Society of

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<sup>10</sup> Bill Evans, *The Oslo Concerts*, Shanachie Entertainment Corp., 2007, DVD, Television Interview, Norwegian Broadcasting Company. Molde, Norway. August 9th, 1980.

<sup>11</sup> Herb Wong, Interview by Win Hinkle, *Letter from Evans*, Vol. 4, no.3, (1993).

<sup>12</sup> Peter Pettinger, *Bill Evans: How My Heart Sings* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1988).

<sup>13</sup> Keith Shadwick, *Bill Evans: Everything Happens to Me, a Musical Biography* (San Francisco: Backbeat Books, 2002).

<sup>14</sup> Anil Prasad, “Underpinning Genius,” *Bass Player* 19, no. 4 (04, 2008): 34-36, 39-40, <https://libproxy.library.unt.edu/login?url=http://search.proquest.com/docview/199943596?accountid=7113>.

<sup>15</sup> Michael Bourne, “Marc Johnson,” *Down Beat*, 53 (8) (Aug. 1986): 54.

Bassists.<sup>17</sup> A brief but excellent biography is included in John Goldsby's *The Jazz Bass Book*,<sup>18</sup> which is accompanied by a short solo transcription and analysis.

Other than *The Jazz Bass Book*, the only published transcriptions of Johnson are contained in Hal Leonard's *The Bill Evans Trio, 1979-1980*. The book includes several full score transcriptions from Johnson's time as bassist with the group. While it offers the benefit of seeing simultaneous transcription of all three instruments, it offers nothing in the way of analysis. Although Marc Johnson is listed as a co-author with Chuck Sher of *Concepts for Bass Soloing*,<sup>19</sup> the concepts explored in the book are primarily Sher's pre-composed exercises, not ideas extracted from Johnson's existing vocabulary.<sup>20</sup> Johnson demonstrates the exercises on accompanying recordings, and in some cases, elaborates on them.

Resources discussing LaFaro are slightly more abundant. A biography published by LaFaro's sister, *Jade Visions: The Life and Music of Scott LaFaro*,<sup>21</sup> contains both biographical information and some musical analysis by Jeffrey Campbell and Phil Palombi. Palombi's book *15 Solo Transcriptions from the Bill Evans Trio Recordings Sunday at the Village Vanguard and Waltz for Debby*,<sup>22</sup> while presenting little in the way of analysis, offers very detailed, mostly accurate transcriptions of LaFaro's solos on the two listed recordings. Finally, the recent Masters Thesis by Rowan Clark "An Analysis of the Bass Playing of Scott LaFaro as Part of the Bill

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<sup>16</sup> Mark Holston, "Marc Johnson and Eliane Elias: Swept Away," *Jazziz* 30, No. 3 (Spring, 2013): 127, <https://libproxy.library.unt.edu/login?url=http://search.proquest.com/docview/1325114066?accountid=7113>.

<sup>17</sup> Chris Kosky, "Also of Note," *Bass World* Vol. 30, No. 2 (2006): 62.

<sup>18</sup> John Goldsby, *The Jazz Bass Book: Technique and Tradition* (San Francisco: Backbeat Books, 2002), 132.

<sup>19</sup> Chuck Sher and Marc Johnson, *Concepts for Bass Soloing* (Petaluma: Sher Music, 1993).

<sup>20</sup> Chuck Sher, email message to author, September 30, 2014.

<sup>21</sup> LaFaro-Fernandez et al., 165.

<sup>22</sup> Phil Palombi, *15 Solo Transcriptions from the Bill Evans Trio Recordings Sunday at the Village Vanguard and Waltz for Debby* (Palombi Music, 2003).

Evans Trio: 1959-1961,”<sup>23</sup> closely analyzes four recordings by the Bill Evans Trio, offering detailed discussion of rhythm, melody, harmony, and the trio’s interaction.

These recent examinations of LaFaro and his importance in the lineage of jazz bass, while certainly welcome, highlight the need for more extensive scholarly research into this very important stylistic development. It would not be an overstatement to say that LaFaro’s stylistic innovations initiated a lineage in jazz bass distinct from what had come before.

Little scholarship currently exists examining Eddie Gomez. A brief biography of Gomez and a solo transcription of “On Green Dolphin Street” are included in Goldsby’s *The Jazz Bass Book*,<sup>24</sup> and two dissertations Gary Holgate’s “A Fragmented Parallel Stream: The Bass Lines of Eddie Gomez in the Bill Evans Trio”<sup>25</sup> and “A Comparative Analysis of Styles and Performance Practices for Three Jazz Bassists in the Composition ‘Stella by Starlight,’”<sup>26</sup> by Timothy Hauff offer brief analyses of Gomez’s playing. Holgate’s work deals exclusively with Gomez’s bass lines in the context of the Bill Evans Trio, while Hauff presents an analysis of a Gomez solo over a single piece, compared and contrasted with bassists Sam Jones and Chuck Israels on the same tune.

Marc Johnson’s association with Bill Evans represents a relatively small percentage of his career as a whole. This relationship with Evans, however, offered him greater visibility, and potential for other musical opportunities. An effective analogy could be drawn with players of the Miles Davis groups of the 1950s and 1960s. Many young and talented players’ careers were

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<sup>23</sup> Rowan Clark, “An Analysis of the Bass Playing of Scott LaFaro as Part of the Bill Evans Trio: 1959-1961” Masters diss., New Zealand School of Music, 2014.

<sup>24</sup> Goldsby, *The Jazz Bass Book*, 131-134.

<sup>25</sup> Gary Holgate, “A Fragmented Parallel Stream: The Bass Lines of Eddie Gomez in the Bill Evans Trio,” 2009.

<sup>26</sup> Timothy Andrew Hauff, “A Comparative Analysis of Styles and Performance Practices for Three Jazz Bassists in the Composition ‘Stella by Starlight,’” 1990.

set in motion by the association with Davis, including Bill Evans. Evans had recorded as a leader prior to his stint with the Miles Davis group, but his association with Davis offered him a higher visibility.

LaFaro, Gomez, and Johnson share clear stylistic similarities: predilection for the use of the full range of the instrument, the use of triplets in solos and accompaniment, very melodic solo statements, conversational interplay, and independence within the trio. Johnson has nonetheless continued to evolve over the course of his career. Elements that have become more defined include harmonic superimposition, repeated notes in unusual or asymmetric rhythmic groupings, distinct phrasing and accent placement, a wide range of rhythmic vocabulary, clarity of expressed ideas, and playing changes in a linear approach across the full range of the fingerboard.

Marc Johnson spent much of his formative period as a young bassist assimilating the conventions of the Bill Evans Trio, and Scott LaFaro in particular: “Certainly I had digested all of his music prior to auditioning, my life’s goal was to play music in that direction.”<sup>27</sup> This preparation had a profound effect on the shaping of his vocabulary over the course of his career. It also made it possible to be a candidate when the position with the trio became available. Being the bassist with the Bill Evans Trio was, of course, also an experience that had a lasting effect.

As the last permanent bassist with the Bill Evans Trio, Marc Johnson represents a direct legacy to one of the most important stylistic lineages in all of jazz. Little scholarship has been published exploring the lineage of bassists influenced by LaFaro, and almost none on Johnson specifically. I argue that he represents one of the most important links in this chain. Through a focused examination and comparison of selected musical examples, texts, and oral and written

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<sup>27</sup> Blumenthal, Liner Notes, *Highlights From Turn Out the Stars*.

interviews, this study will establish that Johnson crafted a vocabulary rooted in the lineage established by Scott LaFaro in the Bill Evans Trio. It will also show how this language has evolved and changed over the course of his career. An examination of his discography post Evans reveals a diverse and incredibly prolific output.

## CHAPTER 2

### THE IMPACT OF APPRENTICESHIP

In his book *Thinking in Jazz*,<sup>28</sup> Paul Berliner discusses at length the role mentorship historically played in jazz. Mentors can influence a variety of aspects of an artist's development from specific vocabulary acquisition, to advice about career, music, or life in general. Their role in mentorship can manifest in a variety of ways: teacher, bandleader, friend or confidant, or some combination of these.

In addition to skills gained from a mentor, the mere association with an artist inherent in an apprenticeship could provide value, as in the case of King Oliver and Louis Armstrong. While Armstrong gained a variety of musical skills from his relationship with Oliver, simply being associated with him placed Armstrong in a position to receive greater recognition both through live performances and through opportunities to make recordings. This exposure was of great importance to Armstrong's success.<sup>29</sup>

Other notable examples of exposure being beneficial, or even essential, to an artist's success can be seen in a variety of players who were members of Miles Davis's groups. It would be impossible to make a general statement about Davis's sidemen as not all were young or unknown at the time they joined his band, but it would be true to say that simply being associated with Davis had a profound effect on many of their careers.<sup>30</sup> Additionally, Art Blakey's group The Jazz Messengers provided a number of young players with exposure that

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<sup>28</sup> Paul Berliner, *Thinking in Jazz: The Infinite Art of Improvisation* (University of Chicago Press, Kindle Edition, 2009).

<sup>29</sup> Dan Morgenstern, "Louis Armstrong" In *The Oxford Companion to Jazz* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 105-106.

<sup>30</sup> Bob Belden, "Miles Davis" In *The Oxford Companion to Jazz* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 389.

helped start their careers.<sup>31</sup> The Messengers became so identified with the concept of apprenticeship it could be argued that it was the band's reason for existence.

Some apprenticeships were predicated on, or had a lasting impact on, an artists' vocabulary. Gabriel Solis's book *Thelonious Monk Quartet Featuring John Coltrane at Carnegie Hall* examines the relationship between Thelonious Monk and John Coltrane, and the influence Monk may have had on Coltrane, specifically relating to the development of his sheets of sound technique.<sup>32</sup> Solis makes the case that even though the apprenticeship with Monk was short-lived, the accommodations made by Coltrane to deal with Monk's particular vocabulary had a discernible effect on the development of his own vocabulary.

Solis also comments on the differing approaches of tenor players who were associated with Monk. He characterizes Johnny Griffin as being "relatively unchanged" by his involvement with Monk, but describes Charlie Rouse as "deeply committed to Monk's demands as a bandleader" and that he had already "absorbed Monk's language" by the time he worked with him.<sup>33</sup>

Other apprentice relationships in which vocabulary plays an important role are Lee Konitz's relationship with Lennie Tristano and Billy Strayhorn's association with Duke Ellington. Konitz benefited both from the greater exposure afforded by his performances and recordings with Tristano, and also the direct instruction received from him. His early association

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<sup>31</sup> Alan Goldsher, *Hard Bop Academy: The Sidemen of Art Blakey and the Jazz Messengers* (Milwaukee, WI: Hal Leonard, 2002).

<sup>32</sup> Gabriel Solis, *Oxford Studies in Recorded Jazz: Thelonious Monk Quartet with John Coltrane at Carnegie Hall* (Cary, NC: Oxford University Press, ProQuest ebrary, 2013), 60-61.

<sup>33</sup> Solis, 7.

with Tristano frames Konitz's career and, consequently, he is considered one of the principal figures of the "Tristano School."<sup>34</sup>

Billy Strayhorn's relationship with his mentor Duke Ellington was based almost solely on the vocabulary that was shared between them. Ellington hired Strayhorn for the very reason that he "almost instantaneously" assimilated Ellington's orchestrational style.<sup>35</sup> The common understanding is that it is difficult or nearly impossible to clearly differentiate between the two and that their individual musical contribution is indistinguishable. Although not a regular member of the performing ensemble, his association with Ellington positively affected Strayhorn's visibility as an arranger. This did not, however, help bolster his career beyond the Ellington orchestra. Unlike the Konitz/Tristano relationship, Strayhorn attempted to leave on several occasions,<sup>36</sup> but was never able to adequately establish himself as an artist independent of his relationship with Ellington.<sup>37</sup>

Many similarities can be observed between Marc Johnson's apprenticeship in the Bill Evans Trio and these mentoring relationships. Most were situations in which the integration of a distinct vocabulary was essential. His early assimilation of Bill Evans's music, coupled with an element of being in the right place at the right time, allowed Johnson to join the trio when the opportunity presented itself. The high profile of the Bill Evans Trio gig offered Johnson greater visibility, opportunities to freelance in New York,<sup>38</sup> and later, to lead his own groups.

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<sup>34</sup> Joseph Goldberg, *Encyclopedia of Music in the 20th Century* (London: Fitzroy Dearborn, 1999), 139.

<sup>35</sup> Walter van de Leur, *Something to Live For: The Music of Billy Strayhorn* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 25.

<sup>36</sup> Alyce Claerbaut and David Schlesinger, *Strayhorn: An Illustrated Life* (Chicago: Agate Publishing, 2015), 175.

<sup>37</sup> van de Leur, 99.

<sup>38</sup> Bourne, 54.



Scott LaFaro's innovations with the 1959 Bill Evans Trio became the paradigm for both the trio and the bassists who would follow. On first meeting Scott LaFaro's sister at the 2001 International Society of Bassists Convention, Marc Johnson commented, "you don't understand, I wanted to *be* Scotty."<sup>39</sup> Clearly LaFaro's playing was a defining force in the formation of his nascent vocabulary. In his characterization of LaFaro Johnson states: "It is a great artist who creates his own universe. For an improvising jazz musician, that boils down to three essential things: creating your own sound, your own sense of rhythmic feel, and your own linear or melodic vocabulary (harmony)."<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> LaFaro-Fernandez et al., 165.

<sup>40</sup> Marc Johnson, Review of "15 Solo Transcriptions from the Bill Evans Trio Recordings Sunday at the Village Vanguard and Waltz for Debby," *Bass World* 28, no.1 (2004): 54-55.

## CHAPTER 3

### STYLISTIC INFLUENCE OF SCOTT LAFARO

In his study "Interactive Jazz Improvisation in the Bill Evans Trio (1959-61): A Stylistic Study For Advanced Double Bass Performance," Donald Wilner describes LaFaro's approach as:

the realization of the advances in modern bass playing up to the time of his death. These advances were made within the areas of right hand (pizzicato) and left hand fingering, cross string, and thumb position technique, as well as conceptual designs relating to double bass soloing, jazz melodic vocabulary, rhythm section interaction, and overall function of the double bass in jazz.<sup>41</sup>

While each of these topics could be discussed in depth, I would like to focus on the melodic and rhythmic aspects of LaFaro's solo vocabulary, and its impact on Eddie Gomez and Marc Johnson. Particular attributes of LaFaro's vocabulary such as consistent use of the upper register, rapid right-hand articulation, and a focus on triplet subdivision appear repeatedly throughout his recorded output and appear in Gomez and Johnson's playing as well.

Certainly many bass virtuosos preceded Scott LaFaro. John Goldsby observes that Charles Mingus, Ray Brown, and Red Mitchell were beginning to extend the range of the bass, but LaFaro was the first to consistently utilize the whole range of the instrument during improvisation. "Other guys would hit a couple of high notes and then come down, but Scott made it part of the total plan," explained Bill Evans.<sup>42</sup> In his solo on "Nardis," LaFaro repeatedly constructs lines that utilize a large span of the fingerboard.

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<sup>41</sup> Wilner, 53

<sup>42</sup> John Bany, "The Legendary Scott LaFaro," *International Society of Bassists* Vol. XIV No.3 (Spring 1988): 48.



Example 1: “Nardis”<sup>43</sup> (1:08). Scott LaFaro solo.

LaFaro returns to this concept several times, using open strings and idiomatic shifting to cover as much fingerboard as he can.

Goldsby goes on to characterize LaFaro’s technique as “saxophone-like” due to the speed of his execution.<sup>44</sup> This velocity was a function of the adoption of a two-fingered right hand technique demonstrated to him by bassist Red Mitchell.<sup>45</sup> A single finger attack, referred to by bassist Lynn Seaton as “The Wave,”<sup>46</sup> was the principal technique in use by most bassists of the time including George Duvivier and Ray Brown. Duvivier expressed surprise upon seeing LaFaro in person because he had not seen the technique utilized on bass.<sup>47</sup> This speed, combined with emancipation from the traditional bass function, represented a distinctly different approach from conventional playing of the time.

In *Jade Visions*, Jeff Campbell and Phil Palombi comment on LaFaro’s use of articulation. Campbell notes that approaching a note by glissando was a technique that LaFaro was beginning to explore, but was relatively uncommon in other players at that time.<sup>48</sup> Palombi

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<sup>43</sup> Bill Evans, Scott LaFaro, and Paul Motian, *Explorations*, Berkeley, CA: Riverside Records, 1987, compact disc. Examples from “Nardis” were created using Todd Coolman’s, *The Bass Tradition: Past, Present Future: Biographies, 36 Transcribed Solos, Discographies* (New Albany, IN: J. Aebersold, 1985), 50-52, and Liam Noble and Chris Baron’s, *The Bill Evans Trio-Volume 1(1958-1961)* (Milwaukee, WI: Hal Leonard, 2003), 70-78 as primary source material and edited for accuracy.

<sup>44</sup> John Goldsby, “Game Changer: How Scott LaFaro Rewrote the Rules of Jazz Bass,” *Bass Player* (December 2009): 38.

<sup>45</sup> John Goldsby, “The Tradition: Red Mitchell,” *Bass Player* (1993) 4(6):74.

<sup>46</sup> Lynn Seaton, *Jazz Double Bass Workshop*, University of North Texas, 2013.

<sup>47</sup> Paul Berliner, *Thinking in Jazz: The Infinite Art of Improvisation* (University of Chicago Press, Kindle Edition, 2009), Kindle Locations 3157-3162.

<sup>48</sup> LaFaro-Fernandez et al., 189.

calls attention to the variety of different articulations LaFaro employed, even within a single phrase, sliding into or out of a note, or utilizing a hammered articulation with the left hand rather than articulation with the right.<sup>49</sup> While both Gomez and Johnson employ this legato articulation, Gomez adopts this sliding from note to note as a characteristic stylistic trait while Johnson applies the technique more strategically.<sup>50</sup>

LaFaro's articulation was a function of the setup he adopted. He used gut strings (which were the convention of the time), which generally had less sustain than contemporary steel strings, but lowered the height the strings on the fingerboard to allow greater facility, faster execution, and easier access to the upper register. Bill Evans relates in a 1966 interview with George Klabin that LaFaro's 1825 Prescott, although strung with gut strings, had an incredible amount of sustain. "I've never heard any sustaining sound in bass that could compare with Scott's."<sup>51</sup>

As bassist Steve Swallow observed, "Scott and Gary Peacock were in the vanguard of a wave of young players making fundamental changes in the approach to the bass. They were lowering their action, which allowed them the possibility of legato phrasing throughout the instrument, most significantly in the upper register."<sup>52</sup> All of these characteristics contributed to the groundbreaking nature of LaFaro's impact.

While these innovations are central to understanding the significance of LaFaro, it is valuable to view them in the context of the Bill Evans Trio. The recording of "Autumn Leaves" from *Portrait in Jazz* (1959) is one of the more cited examples of the Trio's interactive approach.

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<sup>49</sup> Ibid, 209.

<sup>50</sup> Gary Holgate, "A Fragmented Parallel Stream: The Bass Lines of Eddie Gomez in the Bill Evans Trio," 2009, 7.

<sup>51</sup> Don Friedman, Scott LaFaro, Pete LaRoca, Bill Evans, and George Klabin, *Pieces of Jade*, Resonance, 2009, compact disc.

<sup>52</sup> John Goldsby, "Game Changer: How Scott LaFaro Rewrote the Rules of Jazz Bass," 39.

An examination of the two takes recorded that day offers insight into the evolution of this process. Certain structural elements remain in both takes: a non-walking bass accompaniment after the statement of the melody, a cappella bass solo, joined later by the piano soloing simultaneously, eventually building to a straight swing feel. How each of these elements is realized differs from take to take. The group was clearly experimenting with this conversational concept, while giving themselves certain musical signposts with which to frame the piece. In discussing the dynamic of the Bill Evans Trio, Johnson offers some insight that may apply to this recording. He relates that Evans was very prescriptive in his vision of a tune's presentation with regard to number of choruses and solo order. Johnson said this allowed him to shape his own improvisation based on knowing the structure of a given tune.<sup>53</sup> Although engaged in experimentation with conversational playing, it is probable that Evans was applying the same element of structural control to this recording.

Throughout the non-walking sections LaFaro creates a bass accompaniment that functions as a counter melody, rather than just time keeping.<sup>54</sup> While "Autumn Leaves" is an exemplary representation of interaction within the Evans trio, both of LaFaro's solos are lacking elements that are defining characteristics of his vocabulary on both *Explorations* and the recordings from the Village Vanguard. His solo on the released take of "Autumn Leaves" (take 1) is, other than a few triplet embellishments, primarily eighth note-based. While extending to the upper register on occasion, he remains mostly in the middle register throughout his solo.

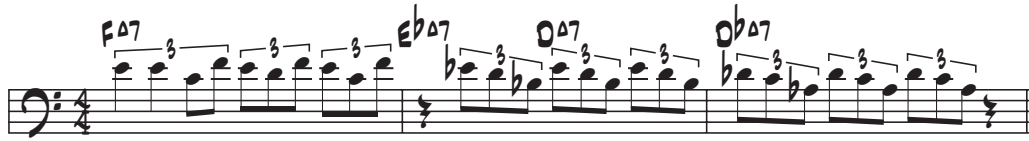
Later recordings with the trio reveal aspects of LaFaro's playing that become defining stylistic characteristics. One of the most consistently utilized elements in LaFaro's vocabulary is

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<sup>53</sup> YouTube Video, "Interview Eliane Elias and her husband Marc Johnson," video clip by *FaceCulture*, November 19, 2007, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XzXdgbpTCrE>.

<sup>54</sup> Wilner, 70-71.

his use of triplet subdivision. LaFaro uses both eighth and quarter-note triplets, often as the majority of his vocabulary, as illustrated in both takes of “Gloria’s Step” from the Village Vanguard recordings.<sup>55</sup>



Example 2: “Gloria’s Step” (take 3)<sup>56</sup> (3:42). Scott LaFaro’s use of triplet vocabulary.

He begins his solo on “Gloria’s Step” (take 2)<sup>57</sup> utilizing a triplet comprised of ascending fourths to idiomatically ascend from the open D string to the high Eb two octaves above.



Example 3: “Gloria’s Step” (take 2)<sup>58</sup> (3:01). Scott LaFaro’s use of triplet vocabulary.

He slows the rhythmic motion of the line through his use of quarter-note triplets as the line descends. John Goldsby observes that LaFaro's extensive use of quarter-note and eighth-note triplets creates a “floating” feel in his lines.<sup>59</sup> While this is true in general characterization of LaFaro’s vocabulary, he utilizes the descending quarter-note triplet in both examples with a characteristically specific contour.

<sup>55</sup> Bill Evans, Scott LaFaro, and Paul Motian, *The Complete Village Vanguard Recordings, 1961*, Berkeley, CA: Riverside Records, 2005, compact disc.

<sup>56</sup> Palombi, 17.

<sup>57</sup> Evans et al., *The Complete Village Vanguard Recordings, 1961*.

<sup>58</sup> Phil Palombi, 14. (Palombi notates the final triplet in the first bar as E, I have corrected it to F).

<sup>59</sup> Goldsby, *The Jazz Bass Book*, 109.



Example 4: “Gloria’s Step”<sup>60</sup> (take 3) (3:37). Scott LaFaro’s solo *The Complete Village Vanguard Recordings*.<sup>61</sup> “Floating” quarter-note triplet.

In examples 3 and 4 LaFaro ascends to the highest note of the phrase then rhythmically changes gears with his use of quarter-note triplets to descend. This elongation of the time feel through use of quarter-note triplets, combined with the descending melodic motion, imbues these lines with the above-mentioned “floating” quality.

In his solo on “Like Someone in Love,”<sup>62</sup> Johnson’s line employs similar motion. He ascends to the highest note in the phrase and descends by quarter-note triplet. Rather than a simple linear descent, Johnson utilizes large interval leaps interspersed with the scalar motion of the line from F to E an octave below.



Example 5: “Like Someone in Love”<sup>63</sup> (4:10). Marc Johnson’s solo.

This use of large interval leaps grouped in quarter-note triplets appears in a similar fashion in LaFaro’s third chorus on “Gloria’s Step,”<sup>64</sup>

<sup>60</sup> Palombi, 17.

<sup>61</sup> Evans et al., *The Complete Village Vanguard Recordings*, 1961.

<sup>62</sup> Bill Evans, Marc Johnson, Joe LaBarbera, *Highlights From Turn Out the Stars*, Burbank, CA: Warner Bros, 1996, compact disc.

<sup>63</sup> Examples from “Like Someone in Love” were created using Liam Noble and Chris Baron’s, *The Bill Evans trio 1979-1980* (Milwaukee, WI: Hal Leonard, 2003), 67-76 as primary source material and edited for accuracy.

<sup>64</sup> Evans et al., *The Complete Village Vanguard Recordings*, 1961, and Palombi, 15.



Example 6: “Gloria’s Step” (take 2) (4:13). LaFaro’s use of large interval leaps.

In “Like Someone in Love,” Johnson effectively combines two disparate LaFaro concepts in one musical idea, ascent to the apex of the phrase followed by the “floating” effect of descent by quarter-note triplet, and incorporation of wide-interval leaps in a scalar descent.

Wilner theorizes that LaFaro was influenced by Evans’s “fondness for triplet subdivisions,”<sup>65</sup> but bassist Putter Smith asserts that LaFaro was employing this idea well before his involvement with the trio. Smith relates that in a conversation with Don Cherry, Cherry said that on steady gigs he worked with LaFaro they would often set rhythmic parameters for themselves at the beginning of each evening. “Triplets are in,” indicated that all solos must consist solely of triplets. Conversely, rhythmic values could be excluded as well. Cherry argued that these restrictions forced them to use new ideas and not resort to practiced material.<sup>66</sup>

LaFaro, Gomez and Johnson utilize eighth-note and quarter-note triplets, but each has his own interpretation. While LaFaro often used triplets as the primary rhythmic vocabulary for a given solo, Gomez frequently employed the triplet to interject emphasis or motion to his line:



Example 7: “How My Heart Sings”<sup>67</sup> (2:04). Eddie Gomez’s solo. Ornamental use of triplet.

<sup>65</sup> Wilner, 56.

<sup>66</sup> LaFaro-Fernandez et al., 123.

<sup>67</sup> Bill Evans, Eddie Gomez, and Marty Morell, *Jazzhouse* (Berkeley, CA: Milestone, 1987).





Example 8: “You Must Believe in Spring,”<sup>68</sup> (2:26). Eddie Gomez’s solo. Ornamental use of triplet.

Johnson integrates both ornamental and continuous usages in his playing:



Example 9: “Bill’s Hit Tune,”<sup>69</sup> (1:35). Marc Johnson’s bass solo. Ascending use of ornamental triplet.



Example 10: “Bill’s Hit Tune,”<sup>70</sup> (1:42). Marc Johnson’s bass solo. Descending use of ornamental triplet.



Example 11: “Don’t Forget the Poet,”<sup>71</sup> (1:23). Marc Johnson’s bass solo. Continuous triplet usage.



Example 12: “Don’t Forget the Poet”<sup>72</sup> (1:36). Marc Johnson’s bass solo. Continuous triplet usage.

<sup>68</sup> Bill Evans, Eddie Gomez, and Eliot Zigmund, *You Must Believe in Spring*, Burbank: Warner Bros. Records. 1981, compact disc.

<sup>69</sup> Bill Evans, Marc Johnson, Joe LaBarbera, *Highlights From Turn Out the Stars*, Burbank, CA: Warner Bros, 1996, compact disc. Examples from “Bill’s Hit Tune” were created using Liam Noble and Chris Baron’s, *The Bill Evans Trio 1979-1980* (Milwaukee, WI: Hal Leonard, 2003), 8-21 as primary source material and edited for accuracy.

<sup>70</sup> Ibid.

<sup>71</sup> Enrico Pieranunzi, Joey Baron, and Marc Johnson, *Deep Down*, Soul Note, 1987, compact disc.

<sup>72</sup> Pieranunzi et al., *Deep Down*.

While triplet examples such as these are abundant in Marc Johnson’s vocabulary, he utilizes a great deal of rhythmic diversity as well. Although he often focuses on triple subdivisions within the beat, I found no instances of solos consisting primarily of triplet subdivision, as is the case in all three takes of LaFaro’s “Gloria’s Step.”

LaFaro’s use of the quarter-note triplet is not restricted to the floating application described earlier. In the same manner that he utilizes continuous eighth-note triplets in constructing a line, LaFaro also uses continuous quarter-note triplet durations as well. When creating these quarter-note triplet groupings it is common for LaFaro to repeat the first pitch of the triplet. He utilizes this motive extensively throughout his solo on “Nardis.”<sup>73</sup>



Example 13: “Nardis”<sup>74</sup> (0:56). Scott LaFaro’s solo. Quarter-note triplet.



Example 14: “Nardis”<sup>75</sup> (1:02). Scott LaFaro’s solo. Quarter-note triplet.

He reiterates the quarter-note triplet as a main motive throughout the solo, building to a central melodic phrase constructed entirely of quarter-note triplets:

<sup>73</sup> Bill Evans, Scott LaFaro, and Paul Motian, *Explorations*, Berkeley, CA: Riverside Records, 1987, compact disc. Examples from “Nardis” were created using Todd Coolman’s, *The Bass Tradition* (New Albany, IN: J. Aebersold, 1985), 50-52, and Liam Noble and Chris Baron’s, *The Bill Evans Trio-Volume 1(1958-1961)* (Milwaukee, WI: Hal Leonard, 2003), 70-78 as primary source material and edited for accuracy.

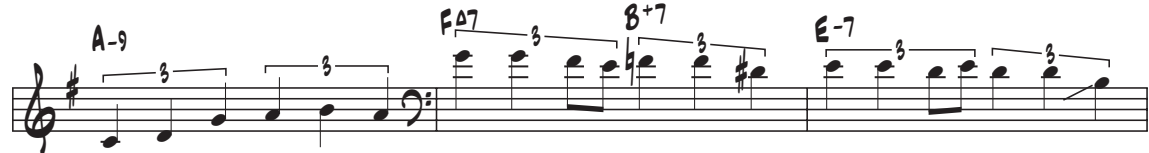
<sup>74</sup> Ibid.

<sup>75</sup> Ibid.



Example 15: “Nardis”<sup>76</sup> (1:14). Scott LaFaro solo’s, *Explorations*, 1961. Quarter-note triplet.

Similar to the “Gloria’s Step” Examples 2 and 3, LaFaro ascends to the highest note in the solo to this point and descends utilizing scalar quarter-note triplets that become repeated note quarter-note triplets with eighth subdivision on the third triplet.



Example 16: “Nardis”<sup>77</sup>(1:31). Scott LaFaro’s solo. Quarter-note triplet.

This subdivided quarter-note triplet motive reoccurs at 1:52 and 2:09.

A final triplet-related motive identified with LaFaro’s vocabulary is the subdivision of the third triplet of a quarter-note triplet. This is often preceded by the repeated quarter-note motive on the first two subdivisions utilized extensively in the previous examples.



Example 17: Subdivided triplet.

Johnson’s line on “Like Something in Love”<sup>78</sup> reveals LaFaro’s influence as well as his own preference for intervallic motion. He begins his solo with a subdivided triplet idea utilizing the repeated quarter note:

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<sup>76</sup> Ibid.  
<sup>77</sup> Ibid.  
<sup>78</sup> Bill Evans et al., *Highlights From Turn Out the Stars*, and Noble et al., *The Bill Evans Trio 1979-1980*.



Example 18: “Like Someone in Love” (3:26). Marc Johnson’s solo. Use of LaFaro subdivided quarter-note triplet.

His use of a scalar descending idea is very similar to LaFaro’s usage in his solo in “Gloria’s Step.”<sup>79</sup>



Example 19: “Gloria’s Step” (take 3) (5:17). Scott LaFaro’s solo. Subdivided quarter-note triplet.

Here we see Johnson fusing LaFaro’s vocabulary with his own. Johnson follows the triplets with an idea more identified with his vocabulary, intervallic motion:



Example 20: “Like Someone in Love” (3:29).<sup>80</sup> Marc Johnson’s solo. Intervallic motion.

Johnson continues with the intervallic motive utilizing fifths rather than fourths, creating counterpoint with his scalar descending line from F# to B.



Example 21: “Like Someone in Love” (3:44).<sup>81</sup> Marc Johnson’s solo.

Johnson then revisits the LaFaro quarter-note subdivision, utilizing LaFaro’s most common usage, a scalar application.

<sup>79</sup> Evans et al., *The Complete Village Vanguard Recordings, 1961*.

<sup>80</sup> Bill Evans et al., *Highlights From Turn Out the Stars*, and Noble et al., *The Bill Evans Trio 1979-1980*.

<sup>81</sup> Ibid.



Example 22: “Like Someone in Love” (4:34).<sup>82</sup> Marc Johnson’s solo. Scalar quarter-note triplet.

Johnson applies his own intervallic variation midway through his second chorus and again at the apex of his last chorus to ascend to the highest note in the phrase.



Example 23: “Like Someone in Love” (5:01).<sup>83</sup> Marc Johnson’s solo. Scalar quarter-note triplet.

This phrase represents an amalgam of characteristic vocabulary from LaFaro, Gomez, and Johnson: The characteristic usage of the LaFaro quarter-note triplet, Johnson’s preference for wide interval leaps, and Eddie Gomez’s propensity to slide into notes, exemplified in the pronounced slide from the penultimate note E to the final B.

An additional variation on the LaFaro quarter-note triplet Johnson employs is moving the subdivided quarter note to beat two of the triplet rather than beat three. In this example he follows the quarter-note triplet idea with an eighth-note embellishment triplet, sequencing the melodic material down by whole step.<sup>84</sup>



Example 24: “Beautiful Love”<sup>85</sup> (5:28). Marc Johnson’s solo. Variation on LaFaro subdivided triplet.

<sup>82</sup> Ibid.

<sup>83</sup> Ibid.

<sup>84</sup> John Abercrombie, *John Abercrombie/Peter Erskine/Marc Johnson*, München: ECM Records, 1986, compact disc.

<sup>85</sup> John Goldsby, *The Jazz Bass Book*, 135.

Marc Johnson's solo on "Bill's Hit Tune" from the Bill Evans Trio 1980 recording at the Village Vanguard reveals a variety of assimilated language from LaFaro, and language specific to Eddie Gomez, but also provides glimpses of elements that become characteristic of his individual voice. This is from a later recording in Johnson's tenure with the Bill Evans Trio. He had established himself in the group, and more of Eddie Gomez's vocabulary is evident in his solo vocabulary.

Two Gomez attributes generally in use throughout this solo are pronounced slides into pitches, and the more ornamental use of the triplet as a means to increase intensity of the line as shown in Examples 7: "How My Heart Sings" and Example 8: "You Must Believe in Spring." Examples 9 and 10 show Johnson's use of ornamental triplets in this solo. He returns to this device repeatedly throughout the solo at 1:53, 2:48, 3:01, 3:27, and 3:59.

While sliding into pitches was a technique used by LaFaro as well, it could be considered a defining characteristic of Gomez's vocabulary from his time with Evans and beyond.<sup>86</sup> In his choruses on "You Must Believe in Spring,"<sup>87</sup> "How My Heart Sings,"<sup>88</sup> "Falling Grace,"<sup>89</sup> and countless other recordings, this is an identifiable stylistic element of Gomez's playing. Marc Johnson never completely adopted this "slipperiness" to the degree that Gomez did, but there are distinct examples in "Bill's Hit Tune," "Like Someone in Love," and other recordings from that time period that are reminiscent of Gomez in both recorded sound and a glissando approach to pitches. Interestingly, this glissando approach seems to disappear from Johnson's playing after

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<sup>86</sup> Hauff, 37.

<sup>87</sup> Bill Evans, Eddie Gomez, and Eliot Zigmund, *You Must Believe in Spring*, Burbank, CA: Warner Bros. Records, 1981, compact disc.

<sup>88</sup> Bill Evans et al., *Jazzhouse*, LP.

<sup>89</sup> Bill Evans and Eddie Gomez, *Intuition*, Berkeley, CA: Fantasy, 1990, LP.

this period, although we can observe a slightly more refined interpretation of it on a more recent Johnson solo on “B is for Butterfly,”<sup>90</sup> from his 2012 recording *Swept Away*.<sup>91</sup>

As with the ornamental triplets, Johnson’s solo on “Bill’s Hit Tune” has numerous examples of approach from above and below by glissando:



Example 25: “Bill’s Hit Tune”<sup>92</sup> (3:09). Marc Johnson’s solo. Glissando approach from above.



Example 26: “Bill’s Hit Tune”<sup>93</sup> (1:22). Marc Johnson’s solo. Glissando approach from below.

Johnson also incorporates Gomez-like end of phrase and single note fall offs.



Example 26: “Bill’s Hit Tune”<sup>94</sup> (2:36). Marc Johnson’s solo.

Most notable in this solo are Johnson’s slides between larger intervals. Johnson utilizes wide interval leaps in a variety of ways in his improvisation, but sliding between larger intervals on the same string as he does in this solo is purely an Eddie Gomez stylistic application. A general “slipperiness” is ubiquitous throughout the solo, but this becomes quite pronounced in the slides between larger intervals:

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<sup>90</sup> See APPENDIX A.

<sup>91</sup> Marc Johnson, Eliane Elias, *Swept Away*, München: ECM Records, 2012, compact disc.

<sup>92</sup> Bill Evans et al., *Highlights From Turn Out the Stars*, and Noble et al., *The Bill Evans Trio 1979-1980*.

<sup>93</sup> Ibid.

<sup>94</sup> Ibid.



Example 28: “Bill’s Hit Tune”<sup>95</sup> (2:57). Marc Johnson's solo. Gomez-type glissando.

One final important Gomez stylistic attribute present in Johnson’s solo is his approach to phrase endings. A favored technique for Gomez is to end an idea with either a fall or vibrato on the last note in a phrase<sup>96</sup>. Examples can be heard on virtually any Gomez solo, but are especially prevalent in his solo on “How My Heart Sings.”<sup>97</sup>



Example 29: “Bill’s Hit Tune”<sup>98</sup> (3:16). Marc Johnson's solo. Gomez-type glissando and phrase fall-off.



Example 30: “Bill’s Hit Tune”<sup>99</sup> (3:28). Marc Johnson's solo. Gomez-type vibrato, phrase ending.

Near the end of Johnson’s solo he incorporates a variation of his idea from “Like Someone in Love” (Example 18).

<sup>95</sup> Ibid.

<sup>96</sup> Hauff, 38.

<sup>97</sup> Bill Evans et al., *Jazzhouse*.

<sup>98</sup> Bill Evans et al., *Highlights From Turn Out the Stars*, and Noble et al., *The Bill Evans Trio 1979-1980*.

<sup>99</sup> Ibid.





Example 31: “Bill’s Hit Tune”<sup>100</sup> (4:11). Marc Johnson’s solo. LaFaro quarter-note triplet variation.

Johnson intersperses fifths below his line descending from F to G an octave below in much the same way he used octaves in the previous example, ending the triplet groupings with a LaFaro-type subdivided quarter-note triplet.

The examples listed above illuminate the influence of Scott LaFaro and Eddie Gomez on Marc Johnson’s vocabulary. In these examples we can observe his integration of these concepts and how they form the basis for his own innovations.

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<sup>100</sup> Ibid.

## CHAPTER 4

### DEVELOPMENT OF POST-EVANS STYLISTIC ATTRIBUTES

In a relatively short period of time after playing with the Bill Evans Trio, significant development can be observed in Johnson's use of vocabulary. Whether this is an indication of actively seeking new musical experiences, or a function of tailoring his vocabulary to suit the Evans Trio gig, can only be answered by the artist. Johnson does state, however, that when offered the opportunity to function as a leader he wanted to do something completely different from the piano trio format he had become identified with.<sup>101</sup> Some of his vocabulary is clearly an extension of LaFaro/Gomez vocabulary, while other features seem less related. In general, Johnson's post-Evans vocabulary can be characterized by greater rhythmic freedom, the creation of polyrhythmic ideas through rhythmic subdivision and rhythmic accent, a more legato approach to articulation, left-hand hammer-on and pull-off techniques, extensive use of pentatonic scale language, wide interval leaps and use of double stops.

Three years after the Bill Evans Trio gig ended, guitarist John Abercrombie's trio provided a musical environment that was developmentally important for Johnson. "Things really started to gel when I joined John Abercrombie's trio with Peter Erskine in 1983. Playing with Peter and John was very liberating. Peter's time was so solid and John's playing was so labyrinthine that it served as a great playground to develop and solidify these concepts."<sup>102</sup> The group experimented with a variety of styles, sonic textures and time signatures. A live recording from 1988 features their treatment of several standard tunes associated with the Evans trio,

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<sup>101</sup> Marc Johnson, email message to author, December 30, 2014.

<sup>102</sup> Prasad.

“Alice in Wonderland,” “Beautiful Love,” and “Haunted Heart.” Johnson characterizes their approach to these pieces not as homage or a replication of the Evans trio, but as an extension.<sup>103</sup> Of particular note is their rendition of “Stella by Starlight,” which employs the Evans trio concept of implying the tune and the changes, while never explicitly stating either, similar to Evans’s renditions of “All of You”<sup>104</sup> or “How Deep is the Ocean.”<sup>105</sup> “‘Stella’ is a great example of playing the number of bars of the form but not necessarily adhering strictly to the harmonic sequence, arriving together at certain signposts like the top of the form, the bridge, etc. You sense the form enough of the time to realize there is a structure, but it’s really obscured. You even hear John speak to that after it’s over with the phrase ‘that was really bongo’.”<sup>106</sup>

I asked Abercrombie what prompted this arrangement. I was curious to discover if it had evolved over time as they were playing it on tour, or it was more spontaneous. His response was that it was completely spontaneous. Being aware of the musical background of the other two players, he knew that they shared a common understanding of interactive vocabulary, and that this approach on a standard composition would not need discussion beforehand.<sup>107</sup>

Johnson characterized the importance of this period in his development as the turning point at which was able to master being “free in the time.”

I don’t know exactly what light-bulb moment happened, but at some point, I became un-stuck in the time. It’s the feeling of being in two places at once; in the quarter note pulse and structure of the form and also free of it, to play rhythmic ideas against or in contrast to the pulse. I also became aware of a more elastic feeling in the beat. Playing with

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<sup>103</sup> Johnson, email message to author.

<sup>104</sup> Bill Evans et al., *Explorations*.

<sup>105</sup> Evans et al., *The Complete Village Vanguard Recordings, 1961*.

<sup>106</sup> Marc Johnson, email message to author, December 30, 2014. John Abercrombie’s vocal comment is heard at the conclusion of “Stella by Starlight,” *John Abercrombie/Peter Erskine/Marc Johnson*.

<sup>107</sup> John Abercrombie, personal conversation with author, Bloomington, IN 2001.

drummers Paul Motian and Peter Erskine and Joey Baron were very liberating for me. They each take such care of the pulse that I always felt comfortable to step away from the quarter note to play a contrasting idea. In this way, I learned more about rhythmic shapes and intensities playing in front and behind the beat. I love a buoyant, bouncing feel in the beat and I try to instill most everything I play with that feeling.<sup>108</sup>

Johnson's involvement with Abercrombie is characteristic of much of his post-Evans career. Initially following his tenure in Evans trio, he was sought out as a bassist known for playing the repertory of standards that made up a great deal of the Evans literature. Stan Getz, Fred Hersch, Mel Lewis, and Pat Martino were among the leaders he performed with. Through his own recordings for the ECM label, and associations with John Scofield, John Abercrombie, and Bill Frisell, Johnson established that he was capable of performing more experimental music as well. Although he had developed a vocabulary based on the LaFaro/Gomez lineage, he has continued to evolve, developing a vocabulary that is unique to him.

This "free in time" concept is often realized through the use of polyrhythm. A recurring concept in Johnson's post-Evans playing is his creation of polyrhythm through superimposition. This will often manifest as a quick "double time" idea as in his solos on "Alice in Wonderland" (Example 34), "Dansir,"<sup>109</sup> and his introduction to John Coltrane's "Resolution."<sup>110</sup>



Example 32: "Dansir" (5:35). Marc Johnson's solo. Polyrhythm.

<sup>108</sup> Marc Johnson, email message to author, December 30, 2014.

<sup>109</sup> John Abercrombie, *Class Trip*, München: ECM Records, 2004, compact disc.

<sup>110</sup> Bass Desires, Live recording, Montmatre, Copenhagen, 1988, mp3.



Example 33: “Resolution” (2:10). Marc Johnson’s solo. Polyrhythm.

This type of polyrhythmic idea occurs repeatedly in Johnson’s vocabulary. The similarity between the two examples above offers some insight into Johnson’s methodology. The overarching meter of both pieces could generally be considered 4/4, but for ease of notation I’ve elected to notate the examples in 12/8. Johnson creates a triple subdivision of the beat that he then groups in repeated pitches of twos. There does not seem to be a consistent pattern governing the placement of the repeated pitches. The extreme speed at which the excerpts are executed influences the fingering and articulation.

In looking for a connection to LaFaro’s influence on Marc Johnson, it seemed reasonable that the use of triple subdivision as a basis for much of Johnson’s linear vocabulary can be likened to LaFaro’s use of triplet subdivision. Johnson supplied a more nuanced explanation.

I got into listening to some African music and played around a bit with triple meters and super-imposing 2 or 4 against 3. My work with Bill Evans was already informed by playing around with implied time. When we were in 3/4 we were implying 4/4 and vice versa. One night John Abercrombie was in the club listening and he came up to me after the set and said, “I loved it”. I didn’t know where (beat) one was the whole night.<sup>111</sup>

Bassist Lynn Seaton observed that these examples reminded him of recordings he owned of music from Burundi.<sup>112</sup> While not specific about the music that influenced him, Johnson’s inclusion of his composition “Batuki Burundi” on the album *Right Brain Patrol*<sup>113</sup> may bolster Seaton’s argument.

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<sup>111</sup> Marc Johnson, email message to author, December 30, 2014.

<sup>112</sup> “Bees” and “Take Me Back to Mabayi” from Giuseppe Coter, *Music From the Heart of Africa: Burundi*, Nonesuch Records, 1974, LP.

<sup>113</sup> Marc Johnson, *Right Brain Patrol*, München: JMT Productions, 1993, compact disc.

Another distinctive element of Johnson’s vocabulary is his use of left and right hand articulation. He builds on the LaFaro eighth-note triplet run, but utilizes left hand hammered and pulled articulation and groupings of two triplets or setting off a grouping of three to give a polyrhythmic effect.



Example 34: “Alice in Wonderland”<sup>114</sup> (1:52). Marc Johnson’s solo.

In his solo on “Beautiful Love,”<sup>115</sup> Johnson uses the hammered triplet technique in a slightly more conventional fashion, articulating just the initial triplet with his right hand and the remaining two with his left:



Example 35: “Beautiful Love”<sup>116</sup> (4:44). Marc Johnson solo’s, Hammered articulation.

He finishes the phrase with a different grouping: a single articulated eighth note triplet followed by five slurred triplets, resolving to the F quarter note. While this phrasing is compelling, when viewed in the context of the geography of the bass and the speed of execution, we can reasonably assume that Johnson utilizes an open G string on the downbeat of the second bar to shift to the A

<sup>114</sup> Abercrombie, *John Abercrombie/Peter Erskine/Marc Johnson*.

<sup>115</sup> Abercrombie, *John Abercrombie/Peter Erskine/Marc Johnson*.

<sup>116</sup> Goldsby, *The Jazz Bass Book*, 135.

on the D string, allowing him to pivot through the remainder of the phrase in one extended position.

Similarly, articulation is influenced by the shifts up and down the fingerboard:



Example 36: “Don’t Forget the Poet”<sup>117</sup> (1:36). Marc Johnson’s solo. Roman numeral indicates anticipated string utilization.

Johnson offers some insight to his methodology: “At some point in the 1980s, I realized that I wanted a more legato sound in the lines I was playing. I worked for a while with different fingering techniques to slur, hammer-on and slide the left hand from note to note so as not to pluck every note with the right hand.”<sup>118</sup>

Yet another characteristic of Johnson’s post Bill Evans Trio vocabulary is extensive use of the pentatonic scale, both improvisationally and compositionally. His tune “Samurai Hee-Haw,”<sup>119</sup> from *Bass Desires*, consists almost exclusively of pentatonic scale use:



Example 37: “Samurai Hee-Haw” (1:05). Melody.



Example 38: “Samurai Hee-Haw”<sup>120</sup> (3:40). Interlude.

<sup>117</sup> Pieranunzi et al., *Deep Down*.

<sup>118</sup> Marc Johnson, email message to author, December 30, 2014.

<sup>119</sup> Marc Johnson, Bill Frisell, John Scofield, and Peter Erskine, *Bass Desires*, München: ECM Records, 1986, LP.

Although pentatonic vocabulary was not something that Johnson appropriated from Scott LaFaro, his influence is not totally absent and becomes apparent on closer examination. Johnson explains that after he had been playing this piece for a period of time he realized that the 5-bar formal structure was similar to LaFaro's "Gloria's Step" and the interval content was based on another LaFaro composition "Jade Visions."<sup>121</sup>

This example reinforces the above discussion, demonstrating Johnson's use of polyrhythm and rhythmic super-imposition. As in the example of "Alice in Wonderland" above, Johnson manipulates the eighth-note groupings to create a shifting feeling between a duple 4/4 feel and a triple 12/8 feel.

Another compositional example of pentatonic scale use is Johnson's tune "Right Brain Patrol."<sup>122</sup>



Example 39: "Right Brain Patrol" (0:05). Unison melody.

Again Johnson uses a primarily pentatonic scale melody, combined with idiomatic bass and guitar string crossings and a duple polyrhythmic superimposition. Later in the tune he also utilizes primarily pentatonic scale ideas in his bass accompaniment figures behind the guitar solo.



Example 40: "Right Brain Patrol"<sup>123</sup> (4:01). Accompanying figure behind guitar solo.

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<sup>120</sup> Johnson et al., *Bass Desires*.

<sup>121</sup> LaFaro-Fernandez et al, 166, and Evans et al., *The Complete Village Vanguard Recordings, 1961*.

<sup>122</sup> Marc Johnson, *Right Brain Patrol*, München: JMT Productions, 1993, compact disc.

<sup>123</sup> Ibid.



Johnson also makes extensive use of pentatonic ideas in his improvisation. His entire solo chorus on “B is for Butterfly”<sup>124</sup> is primarily (though not exclusively) comprised of the F major pentatonic scale with frequent Bb passing tones.<sup>125</sup> Here Johnson uses an isolated Ab pentatonic motive to interject rhythmic variety to his line and allude to upper extensions of the chord:



Example 41: “Don’t Forget the Poet”<sup>126</sup> (2:02). Marc Johnson’s solo.

On his solo on “Alice in Wonderland,”<sup>127</sup> Johnson utilizes one pentatonic scale sound to generalize over the A section of the tune:



Example 42: “Alice in Wonderland” (2:08). Marc Johnson’s solo.

<sup>124</sup> Marc Johnson, Eliane Elias, *Swept Away*, München: ECM Records, 2012, compact disc.

<sup>125</sup> See APPENDIX A.

<sup>126</sup> Enrico Pieranunzi, Joey Baron, and Marc Johnson, *Deep Down*, Soul Note, 1987, compact disc.

<sup>127</sup> Abercrombie, *John Abercrombie/Peter Erskine/Marc Johnson*.

Example 33 listed above shows the beginning phrase of the solo chorus. After a static held G between the two phrases, Johnson continues by employing the same G major pentatonic scale to create a contrasting, more melodic idea than his frenetic polyrhythmic opening. He seems to be striving to cover maximum distance over the fingerboard, utilizing the pentatonic scale and idiomatic open string ideas to facilitate this, much like LaFaro on “Nardis” (Ex.1). Johnson rapidly covers a great deal of distance over the fingerboard, from the lowest E to a high B in thumb position. While LaFaro might have approached this by scale (or more likely arpeggio), Johnson creates a skipping effect by changing the direction of his line through use of open strings or notes that are in close proximity on adjacent strings. All of the slurred articulations are examples of hammered articulation utilizing an open string, except the last A-B, which is closed.

As established in previous examples (“Alice in Wonderland” Example 42, “Beautiful Love” Example 24, “Bill’s Hit Tune” Examples 28 and 31, and “Like Someone in Love” Examples 5, 20, 21, 23) Johnson maintains a propensity for wide interval leaps in his lines. Here he employs the concept over “Stella by Starlight.”

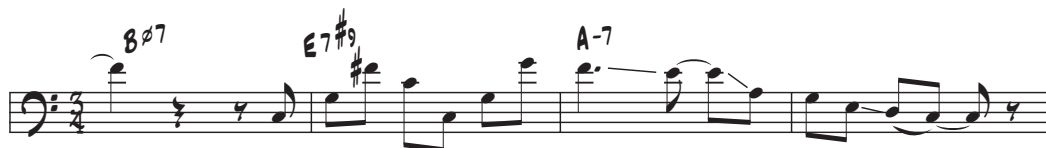


Example 43: “Stella by Starlight”<sup>128</sup> (5:03). Marc Johnson’s solo, wide interval leaps.

Like “Alice in Wonderland,” Johnson’s usage is bass idiomatic, employing open strings or open strings in combination with adjacent positions on the fingerboard to permit rapid execution. A similar idea appears at the end on Johnson’s first chorus on “Alice in Wonderland.”

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<sup>128</sup> Ibid.



Example 44: “Alice in Wonderland”<sup>129</sup> (3:38). Marc Johnson’s solo, wide interval leaps.

The idea incorporates a particularly Gomez-like articulation, sliding from the F to the E and the E to the D, ending with an on the string pulled off articulation to arrive on the final C. This wide interval leap usage can be viewed as an evolution of both Johnson’s playing on the listed examples, and of Scott LaFaro’s implementation (“Gloria’s Step” (Example 6) and “Nardis” (Example 1)).

One final characteristic of Johnson’s post-Evans playing is his frequent use of double-stops. He uses them compositionally in his pieces “Samurai Hee-Haw,”<sup>130</sup> “Log O’Rhythm,”<sup>131</sup> and “Ton sur ton.”<sup>132</sup>



Example 45: “Samurai Hee-Haw” (0:00). Marc Johnson’s bassline, double-stops.

He also uses double-stops improvisationally in his improvised duet with Peter Erskine “Tuesday Afternoon,”<sup>133</sup> and to harmonize the folk song “Shenandoah.”<sup>134</sup> Johnson’s treatment of “Shenandoah” might owe more to Charlie Haden than to Scott LaFaro, but LaFaro’s “Jade Visions” is certainly the template for Johnson’s “Samurai Hee-Haw.”

<sup>129</sup> Ibid.

<sup>130</sup> Johnson et al., *Bass Desires*.

<sup>131</sup> Johnson, *Right Brain Patrol*.

<sup>132</sup> Marc Johnson, Joe Lovano, John Scofield, Eliane Elias, Joey Baron, and Alain Mallet, *Shades of Jade* (ECM, 2005).

<sup>133</sup> John Abercrombie, Marc Johnson, Peter Erskine, and John Surman, *November* (ECM, 1993).

<sup>134</sup> Johnson, *Swept Away*.



Example 46: “Jade Visions”<sup>135</sup> (take 2) (0:00). Scott LaFaro’s bassline, double-stops.

Johnson’s playing in the last decade can be characterized as more focused in its presentation. There is a general trend toward less density of notes and ideas, and greater focus on motivic development. He frequently abstains from soloing on his own recordings in an effort to “play what needs to be played.”<sup>136</sup> “I’ve done an enormous amount of personal editing over the years, so I feel like when I’m coming to the music now, it’s more refined and more mature.”<sup>137</sup> This is not to say his current vocabulary is completely devoid of virtuosity. His recordings with the Enrico Pieranunzi trio and others display his characteristically technical playing.

Over the course of his career bassist Marc Johnson has performed with a range of artists encompassing a diversity of musical styles. He has evolved a vocabulary that, while unique to him, is clearly rooted in the lineage established by Scott LaFaro and the Bill Evans Trio. In his tenure as bassist with the trio, elements of the playing of LaFaro and his immediate predecessor Eddie Gomez are clearly identifiable in his playing. Over time, however, he has evolved a vocabulary that, while grounded in the LaFaro lineage, is distinctively his own.

Johnson’s early apprenticeship in Bill Evans’s group provided him with greater exposure and nurtured his development at a crucial point in his career. His ability to enter into this situation was predicated on his early interest in and assimilation of the LaFaro/Bill Evans Trio vocabulary. His narrative of apprenticeship with a major jazz artist shares much in common with

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<sup>135</sup> Bill Evans et al., *The Complete Village Vanguard Recordings, 1961*.

<sup>136</sup> Prasad.

<sup>137</sup> Interview-Elias and Marc Johnson.

Louis Armstrong, Billy Strayhorn, Lee Konitz, and others in which a shared or acquired vocabulary with the artist/mentor played an important role.

Johnson was able to successfully move beyond identification with Evans to become a leader of his own groups and a sideman for artists who would be considered well outside the Bill Evans Trio lineage. Over the course of his career he has broadened his scope to include composition as a focus and a distillation of ideas to play “with the clearest intention possible.”<sup>138</sup>

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<sup>138</sup> Prasad.

APPENDIX A

*B IS FOR BUTTERFLY*

MARC JOHNSON'S TRANSCRIBED  
SOLO

# B IS FOR BUTTERFLY

ÉLIANE ÉLIAS/MARC JOHNSON  
"SWEEP AWAY" (2012)  
ECM 2794574

ÉLIANE ÉLIAS  
TRANSCRIBED BY JACK HELSLEY

The musical score is written in 4/4 time and consists of nine staves. The first eight staves are in bass clef, and the ninth staff is in treble clef. The key signature has one flat (B-flat). The score includes various chords and melodic lines:

- Staff 1: Bass clef, measures 1-4. Chords:  $Bb \Delta 7 \# 11$ ,  $D-9$ ,  $Bb \Delta 7 \# 11$ ,  $D-9$ .
- Staff 2: Bass clef, measures 5-8. Chords:  $Bb \Delta 7 \# 11$ ,  $D-9$ ,  $G 7 6 9 5 4$ ,  $G 7$ ,  $C 7 6 9 5 4$ ,  $F 7$ .
- Staff 3: Bass clef, measures 9-12. Chords:  $Bb \Delta 7 \# 11$ ,  $D-9$ ,  $Bb \Delta 7 \# 11$ ,  $D-9$ .
- Staff 4: Bass clef, measures 13-16. Chords:  $Bb \Delta 7 \# 11$ ,  $D-9$ ,  $G 7 6 9 5 4$ ,  $G 7$ .
- Staff 5: Bass clef, measures 17-20. Chords:  $C 7 6 9 5 4$ ,  $F 7$ ,  $Bb \Delta 7 \# 11$ ,  $D-9$ .
- Staff 6: Bass clef, measures 21-24. Chords:  $Bb \Delta 7 \# 11$ ,  $D-9$ ,  $Bb \Delta 7 \# 11$ .
- Staff 7: Bass clef, measures 25-28. Chords:  $D-9$ ,  $G 7 6 9 5 4$ ,  $G 7$ ,  $C 7 6 9 5 4$ ,  $F 7$ .
- Staff 8: Treble clef, measures 29-32. Chords:  $Bb \Delta 7 \# 11$ ,  $D-9$ ,  $Bb \Delta 7 \# 11$ ,  $D-9$ .

2

B IS FOR BUTTERFLY

The musical score consists of eight staves of music in treble clef, 7/8 time. The key signature has one flat (B-flat). The notes are as follows:

- Staff 1 (measures 29-32):  $Bb \Delta 7 \# 11$ ,  $D-9$ ,  $G7sus4$ ,  $G7$ ,  $C7sus4$ ,  $F7$
- Staff 2 (measures 33-36):  $Bb \Delta 7 \# 11$ ,  $D-9$ ,  $Bb \Delta 7 \# 11$ ,  $D-9$
- Staff 3 (measures 37-40):  $Bb \Delta 7 \# 11$ ,  $D-9$ ,  $G7sus4$ ,  $G7$ ,  $C7sus4$ ,  $F7$
- Staff 4 (measures 41-43):  $Bb \Delta 7 \# 11$ ,  $D-9$ ,  $Bb \Delta 7 \# 11$
- Staff 5 (measures 44-46):  $D-9$ ,  $Bb \Delta 7 \# 11$ ,  $D-9$
- Staff 6 (measures 47-50):  $G7sus4$ ,  $G7$ ,  $C7sus4$ ,  $F7$ ,  $Bb \Delta 7 \# 11$
- Staff 7 (measures 51-53):  $D-9$ ,  $Bb \Delta 7 \# 11$ ,  $D-9$  (with a triplet of notes)
- Staff 8 (measures 54-57):  $Bb \Delta 7 \# 11$ ,  $D-9$ ,  $G7sus4$ ,  $G7$ ,  $C7sus4$ ,  $F7$



B IS FOR BUTTERFLY

3

57  $Bb \Delta 7\#11$   $D-9$   $Bb \Delta 7\#11$

Musical staff 57-59: Treble clef, 4/4 time. Measures 57-59. Chords:  $Bb \Delta 7\#11$  (measures 57-58),  $D-9$  (measure 58),  $Bb \Delta 7\#11$  (measures 59-60).

60  $D-9$   $Bb \Delta 7\#11$   $D-9$   $G7\#9\#4$   $G7$

Musical staff 60-63: Treble clef, 4/4 time. Measures 60-63. Chords:  $D-9$  (measures 60-61),  $Bb \Delta 7\#11$  (measures 61-62),  $D-9$  (measures 62-63),  $G7\#9\#4$  (measures 63-64),  $G7$  (measures 64-65).

64  $C7\#9\#4$   $F7$   $Bb$   $F/A$   $G-7$   $F$

Musical staff 64-66: Treble clef, 4/4 time. Measures 64-66. Chords:  $C7\#9\#4$  (measures 64-65),  $F7$  (measures 65-66),  $Bb$  (measures 66-67),  $F/A$  (measures 67-68),  $G-7$  (measures 68-69),  $F$  (measures 69-70).

67  $Bb$   $F/A$   $G-7$   $F$   $Bb$   $F/A$   $G-7$   $F$

Musical staff 67-71: Treble clef, 4/4 time. Measures 67-71. Chords:  $Bb$  (measures 67-68),  $F/A$  (measures 68-69),  $G-7$  (measures 69-70),  $F$  (measures 70-71),  $Bb$  (measures 71-72),  $F/A$  (measures 72-73),  $G-7$  (measures 73-74),  $F$  (measures 74-75).

72  $Bb$   $F/A$   $G-7$   $F$   $Bb$   $F/A$

Musical staff 72-76: Treble clef, 4/4 time. Measures 72-76. Chords:  $Bb$  (measures 72-73),  $F/A$  (measures 73-74),  $G-7$  (measures 74-75),  $F$  (measures 75-76),  $Bb$  (measures 76-77),  $F/A$  (measures 77-78).

74  $G-7$   $F$   $Bb$   $F/A$   $G-7$   $F$

Musical staff 74-78: Treble clef, 4/4 time. Measures 74-78. Chords:  $G-7$  (measures 74-75),  $F$  (measures 75-76),  $Bb$  (measures 76-77),  $F/A$  (measures 77-78),  $G-7$  (measures 78-79),  $F$  (measures 79-80).

77  $Bb$   $F/A$   $G-7$   $F$   $Bb$   $F/A$

Musical staff 77-81: Treble clef, 4/4 time. Measures 77-81. Chords:  $Bb$  (measures 77-78),  $F/A$  (measures 78-79),  $G-7$  (measures 79-80),  $F$  (measures 80-81),  $Bb$  (measures 81-82),  $F/A$  (measures 82-83).

80  $G-7$   $F$   $Bb$   $F/A$   $G-7$   $F$

Musical staff 80-84: Treble clef, 4/4 time. Measures 80-84. Chords:  $G-7$  (measures 80-81),  $F$  (measures 81-82),  $Bb$  (measures 82-83),  $F/A$  (measures 83-84),  $G-7$  (measures 84-85),  $F$  (measures 85-86).

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B IS FOR BUTTERFLY

The musical score consists of three staves. The first staff is in treble clef and contains measures 35-38. The second staff is in bass clef and contains measures 36-39. The third staff is also in bass clef and contains measure 39. Chord symbols are placed above the notes: Bb, F/A, G-7, F, Bb, F/A in the first staff; G-7, F, Bb, F/A, G-7, F in the second staff; and no chord symbols in the third staff. The key signature has one flat (Bb).

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36

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APPENDIX B  
SELECTED DISCOGRAPHY

Eddie Gomez

Steps Ahead, *Steps Ahead* (Elektra/Musician 960168-1)

Michael Brecker (ts), Mike Mainieri (vib), Eliane Elias (p), Eddie Gomez (b), Peter Erskine (d).

New York, 1983

Bill Evans Trio, *You Must Believe in Spring* (Warner Bros. Records-3504)

Bill Evans (p), Eddie Gomez (b), Elliot Zigmund (d).

Hollywood, CA., August 1977.

Bill Evans and Eddie Gomez, *Intuition* (Fantasy F9475)

Bill Evans (p,el-p), Eddie Gomez (b).

Berkeley, CA, November 7-10, 1974.

Bill Evans Trio, *Jazzhouse* (Milestone M-9151)

Bill Evans (p), Eddie Gomez (b), Marty Morell (d).

Jazzhus Montmarte, Copenhagen, Denmark, November 24, 1969.

Marc Johnson

Marc Johnson, *Swept Away* (ECM 2168)

Joe Lovano (ts-1), Eliane Elias (p), Marc Johnson (b), Joey Baron (d).

New York, February 2010.

John Abercrombie Quartet, *The Third Quartet* (ECM 1993)

John Abercrombie (g), Mark Feldman (vln), Marc Johnson (b), Joey Baron (d).

New York, June 2006.

Marc Johnson, *Shades of Jade* (ECM 1894)

Joe Lovano (ts), Eliane Elias (p), Alain Mallet (org), John Scofield (g), Marc Johnson (b), Joey Baron (d).

New York 2004.

Enrico Pieranunzi, *As Never Before* (CamJazz 5028)

Kenny Wheeler (tp,flhrn), Enrico Pieranunzi (p), Marc Johnson (b), Joey Baron (d).

Ludwigsburg, Germany, November 30 & December 1, 2004.

John Abercrombie Quartet, *Class Trip* (ECM 1846)

John Abercrombie (g), Mark Feldman (vln), Marc Johnson (b), Joey Baron (d).

New York, February 2003.

Dino Saluzzi, *Cité de la Musique* (ECM 1616)  
Dino Saluzzi (bandoneon), Jose Maria Saluzzi (g), Marc Johnson (b).  
Oslo, Norway, June 1996.

Marc Johnson, *Magic Labyrinth* (JMT 697124058-2)  
Wolfgang Muthspiel (g,el-g,g-synt), Marc Johnson (b), Arto Tunçboyacı (perc,d,vcl).  
Ludwigsburg, Germany, June 1994.

Lyle Mays, *The Ludwigsburg Concert* (SWR Jazzhaus JAH453)  
Lyle Mays (p) Bob Sheppard (sax) Marc Johnson (b) Mark Walker (d).  
Ludwigsburg, Germany, 1993

John Abercrombie Quartet, *November* (ECM 1502)  
John Abercrombie (g), Marc Johnson (b), Peter Erskine (d) John Surman (sop,bar,b-cl).  
Oslo, Norway, November 1992.

Marc Johnson, *Right Brain Patrol* (JMT 849153-2)  
Ben Monder (g,el-g), Marc Johnson (b), Arto Tunçboyacı (perc,voice).  
New York, 1991.

Jim McNeely, *East Coast Blow Out* (Lipstick Records LIP8907)  
Jim McNeely Feat. Marc Johnson/John Scofield/Adam Nussbaum & WDR Big Band  
Andy Haderer, Rob Bruynen, Klaus Osterloh, Rick Kiefer, Rudiger Baldauf (tp); David Horler,  
Henning Berg, Bernt Laukamp, Roy Deuwall (tb); Heiner Wiberny, Harald Rosenstein, Olivier  
Peters, Rolf Romer, Paul Peucker (reeds); Jim McNeely (p) Rainer Bruninghaus (keyboards),  
John Scofield, Paul Shigihara (g) Marc Johnson (b) Adam Nussbaum (d).  
Cologne, Germany, September 1989.

Marc Johnson, *2 X 4* (EmArcy 842233-2)  
Marc Johnson (b) duets with: Toots Thielemans (harmonica-1), Gary Burton (vib-3),  
Makoto Ozone (p-2), Lucy Crane (vcl-4).  
New York, April 17 & 18, 1989.

John Abercrombie, *John Abercrombie/Marc Johnson/Peter Erskine* (ECM 1390)  
John Abercrombie (g,g-synt), Marc Johnson (b), Peter Erskine (d).  
Live at the Nightstage, Boston, MA, April 21, 1988.

Enrico Pieranunzi, *Deep Down* (Soul Note 121121-2)  
Enrico Pieranunzi (p) Joey Baron (d) Marc Johnson (b)  
Milan, February 26 & 27, 1986.

Marc Johnson, *Bass Desires* (ECM 1299)  
Bill Frisell (g,g-synt), John Scofield (g), Marc Johnson (b), Peter Erskine (d).  
New York, May 1985.

Bill Evans, *The Artist's Choice: Highlights from the Final Village Vanguard Recordings* (Warner Bros. 9-46425-2)

Bill Evans (p), Marc Johnson (b), Joe LaBarbera (d).  
New York, June 4, 1980.

Bill Evans, *The Paris Concert: Edition Two* (Blue Note 28672-2)

Bill Evans (p), Marc Johnson (b), Joe LaBarbera (d).  
Paris, France, November 26, 1979.

Bill Evans, *The Paris Concert: Edition One* (Blue Note 7243-5)

Bill Evans (p), Marc Johnson (b), Joe LaBarbera (d).  
Paris, France, November 26, 1979.

Scott LaFaro

Bill Evans Trio, *The Complete Village Vanguard Recordings, 1961* (Riverside 3RCD-4443-2)

Bill Evans (p), Scott LaFaro (b), Paul Motion (d).  
New York, June 25, 1961.

Bill Evans Trio, *Explorations* (Riverside RCD-5712-2)

Bill Evans (p), Scott LaFaro (b), Paul Motion (d).  
New York, February 2, 1961.

Bill Evans Trio, *Portrait in Jazz* (Riverside RLP 12-315)

Bill Evans (p), Scott LaFaro (b), Paul Motion (d).  
New York, December 28, 1959.

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Evans, Bill, and Eddie Gomez. *Intuition*. Berkeley, CA: Berkeley, CA: Fantasy, 1990, LP.

Evans, Bill, Eddie Gomez, and Eliot Zigmund. *You Must Believe in Spring*. Burbank, CA: Warner Bros. Records, 1981, compact disc.

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