

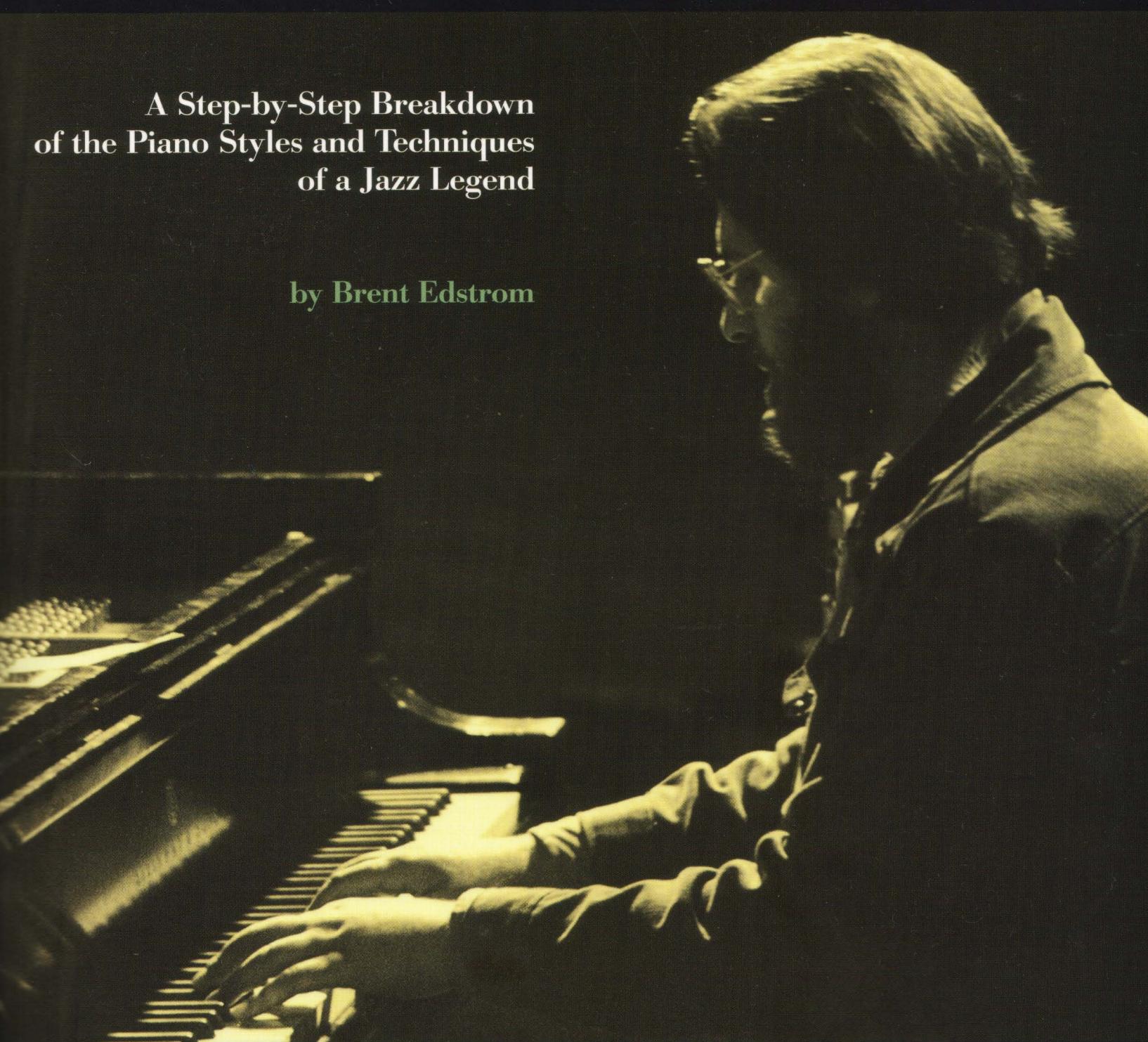
YBOARD signature licks



BILL EVANS

A Step-by-Step Breakdown
of the Piano Styles and Techniques
of a Jazz Legend

by Brent Edstrom

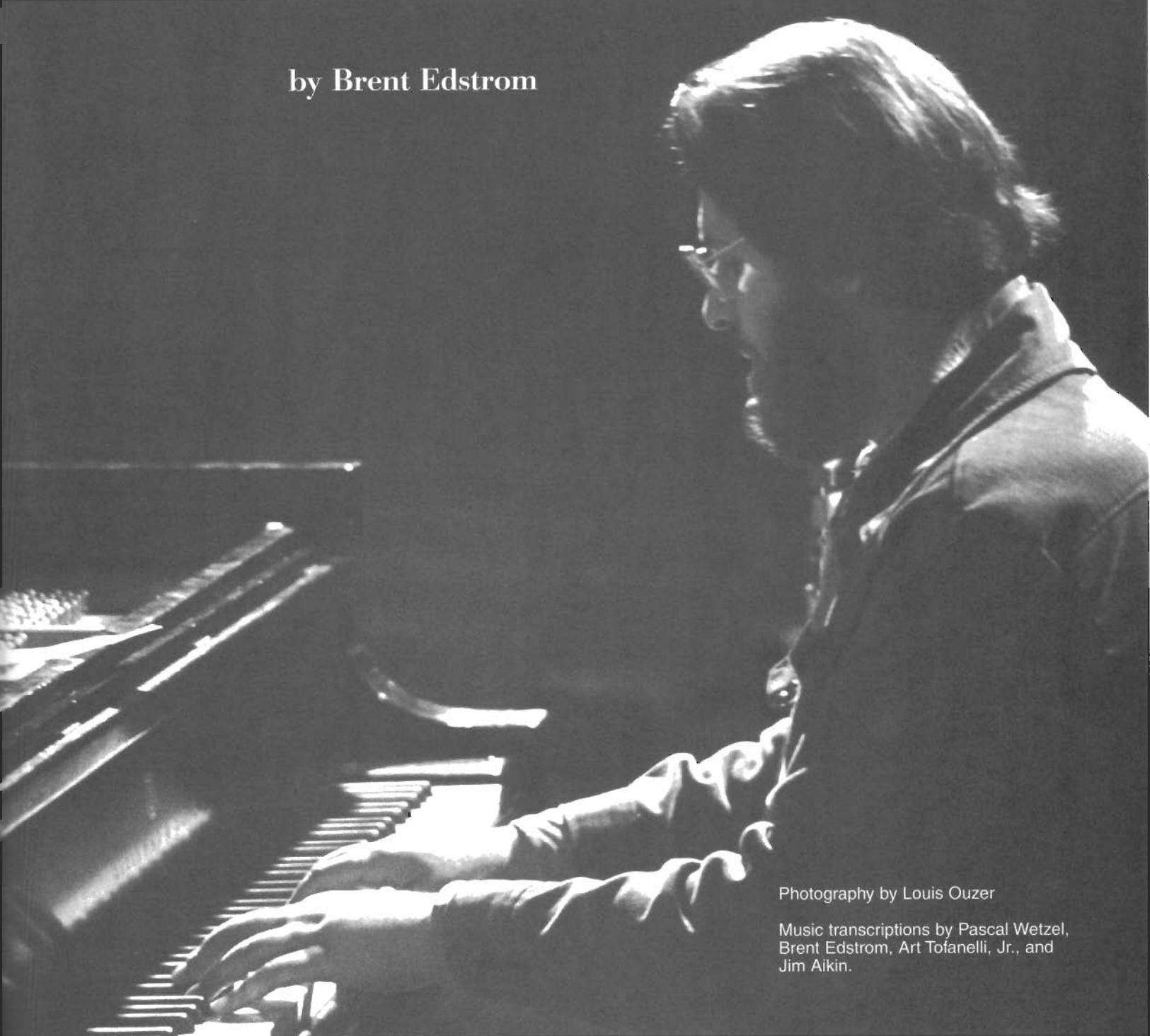


TRO

KEYBOARD *signature ticks*

BILL EVANS

by Brent Edstrom



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Music transcriptions by Pascal Wetzel,
Brent Edstrom, Art Tofanelli, Jr., and
Jim Aikin.

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INTRODUCTION

If one had to make a list of the most influential jazz pianists, there is no question that Bill Evans would rank amongst the top. His many notable contributions to jazz include his refined touch and control, remarkable lyricism, amazing voicings, and harmonic and rhythmic innovation, to name a few. In addition to his many contributions as a pianist, Evans wrote a number of well-known jazz standards, including "Waltz for Debby" and "Peri's Scope."

Bill Evans had the ability to sculpt a standard tune or original composition into a work of art. Although his style is unmistakable—you can often tell in a few bars that Evans is the pianist—his performances were always fresh and imaginative.

It is not a big stretch to think that Evans was capable of so much; he worked hard at his music. Like John Coltrane and other jazz greats, Bill Evans practiced his craft with intensity. He also immersed himself in the music of many jazz innovators. You hear so many influences in his style, including the locked hands of Milt Buckner and Nat Cole, occasional left-hand patterns reminiscent of Red Garland and Erroll Garner, a touch of stride (listen to the third section of "Turn out the Stars"), and a right hand that is, at once, a tribute to the vocabulary of Bud Powell and Lee Konitz and a glimpse into the future of jazz.

I hope you enjoy working through the book as much as I enjoyed preparing it.

—Brent Edstrom

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Brent Edstrom teaches at Whitworth College, where he coordinates the music theory and composition program. Edstrom has published numerous books with Hal Leonard Corporation, including *The Art Tatum Collection*, *Art Tatum Solo Book*, and *The Kenny Barron Collection*. He recently wrote *Making Music With Your Computer*, revised edition for EMBooks/artistpro.com and is currently working on a book on the topic of computer notation algorithms in C++. An active performer and composer, Edstrom has performed throughout the United States. His compositions and arrangements have been featured by such ensembles as the Spokane Symphony Orchestra, Spokane Jazz Orchestra, and the Eastman Jazz Ensemble.

THE RECORDING

Selections in this Signature Licks volume were recorded three ways:

- 1) As a full demo with the piano panned to the right and the rhythm section to the left; the piano parts can be panned out completely or isolated for close study.
- 2) Slow demos of notable piano excerpts.
- 3) A full mix with just bass and drums (and piano cues, where necessary).

Brent Edstrom, piano

Clipper Anderson, bass

Mark Ivester, drums

Trio selections recorded by David Lange at David Lange studios.

PERI'S SCOPE

Music by Bill Evans

As Played on *Bill Evans, Montreux II*

Figure 1—Intro, Head, and Solo

This version of “Peri’s Scope” comes from Evans’s *Montreux II* recording. The original recording is rather frenetic—the trio starts fast and gets faster—almost to the point of being too fast to play. We took our version a touch slower for teaching purposes.

One of the most striking features of the head is the cross-rhythm in measures 15–18. It is important to try to feel across the barlines in this section. Throughout the head and much of the solo chorus, Evans uses close-position voicings in the left hand. Sometimes he would leave a note out in what classical theorists would call a *chord of omission*. These structures are an unmistakable part of Evans’s piano style. It is interesting to note that, while he often uses a 9th on the ii chord (Dm7), he avoids the 9th on the iii chord. The addition of a 9th on an Em7 chord (F♯) is not found in the key. You will find that this is typical for Bill Evans—he is sensitive to the strength of the key. Chromatic chord tones are most often used in “functional” applications (i.e. a tonicizing chord such as an altered dominant or applied dominant).

One of the most important elements of the solo is the vertical approach Evans uses in many places. The solo break in measures 25–26, for example, outlines a Cmaj9 chord (the D♭ and G♯ function as chromatic passing or approach tones). In addition to chord outlines and chromatic embellishments, Evans uses some interesting upper-structure chords. A notable example occurs in measure 48: here Evans outlines a descending A♭m6 chord over the G7 altered harmony. An A♭m6, or A♭m(maj7), is found in a common chord-scale relationship: A♭ melodic minor (ascending) over G7—one of the common “altered” scales. A highlight of this solo occurs in measures 57–58, where Evans uses ascending augmented chords in the right hand. These chords (C+, D+, E+, and F♯+) come from the E whole tone scale.

- 1** Full Band
- 2** Slow Demo
meas. 53-58
- 3** Rhythm Track

Fig. 1

Intro
Medium Up tempo Swing $\text{♩} = 200$

Head

1 3 3

Dm7 G7 Em7 Am7

5 Dm7 G13 Em7 A7 Dm9 G13

8

C₆

E13 E7 E7b5

11

Dm7 G13 Em7 Am7 Dm9 G13 Gm9/C C7

15

Fmaj7 B+7 Bb+7 A+7

19

Dm7 G7 Em7 Am7 Dm7 G7 Em7b5 A7

23

Dm9 G11 C/G

Solo

27

Dm7 G7 Em7 A7alt. Dm7 G13

30 Em7 A7alt. Dm9 G13 C§

33 E7alt. Dm7 G13 Em7 A7alt.

37 Dm9 G13 Gm9/C C13 Fmaj7 B+7

41 B♭+7 A+7 Dm7 G7 Em7 A7alt.

45 Dm7 G7 Em7b5 A7 Dm9

48 G7alt. C§ Dm9 C§ A7alt.

Dm7 G7 Em7 A7alt. Dm7 G13 Em7 A7alt.

51

Dm9 G13 C⁸ E7alt.

55

Dm7 G13 Em7 A7alt.

58

Dm9 G13 Gm9/C C13 Fmaj7 B+7

61

Bb+7 A+7 Dm7 G7 Em7 A7alt.

65

Dm7 G7 Em7b5 A7 Dm9 G9

69

QUIET NOW

Music by Denny Zeitlin

As Played on *The Paris Concert Edition One*

Figure 2—Solo Excerpt

As is typical for Evans, the solo on “Quiet Now” is economical—it’s almost as if he had written this down on paper first. In this solo we glimpse his mastery of motive and development. The opening phrase leads us to a simple descending line (alternating with a pedal point) in measure 4. Note how this motive (D–D♭–C–B–A) leads to a transposed repetition in measure 5 (G–G♭–F–E–D). Evans embellishes the motive with a turn in measure 6 and returns to the melodic pedal of B to finish with a final statement (D–D♭–C–B–A). It is also interesting to note that Evans uses rhythmic displacement for each of the statements of the motive: discounting the embellishments, you will see that he places the motive on beats 1, 2, 3, and 1, respectively. Sing or play this phrase several times, and you will see Evans’s mastery at work. If you look at the remainder of the solo excerpt, it becomes clear that this simple motive is a unifying device for the solo.

Fig. 2

Solo

$\text{♩} = 73$

4
5
6

Full Band
Slow Demo
 meas. 16-24
Rhythm Track

17 E♭9 A♭maj7 D♭13

20 Bm9 Gmaj7 D♭7♯9 G♭13

Bm9 Em9 A13 Dmaj13 Gmaj7

23 8va----- loco

C13♯11 B+7 Em9 A13 C♯7b5 F♯7♯9

26 8va----- loco

Bm9 E9 F⁹ F♯m7 Bm9 Em9 A13

30 8va----- loco

Begin fade

34 Am9/D D7b9 Gmaj9 C13♯11

Fade Out

ONE FOR HELEN

Music by Bill Evans

As Played on *Bill Evans at Town Hall*

Figure 3 – Head to Bass Solo

"One for Helen" was one of the more challenging pieces to record for this volume. Although the piece is not overly fast, it is no easy task to mimic Evans's subtlety and control. Here we see his use of close-position left-hand structures as well as many chords of omission (measures 5, 8, 9, 10, 27, etc.).

As with many great jazz solos, chord tones play an important role. Note the use of descending augmented triads in measures 87–91: A \flat +, G+, G \flat +, F+, and E+. Although it is simple to play, the figure is quite effective. A similar use of descending upper structure chords can be heard in measures 81–82.

One of the most striking features of this solo is the tremendous rhythmic variety. Evans uses swing eighth \flat s, triplet eighth \flat s, and triplet quarter notes, among other rhythms. This rhythmic energy culminates in the tricky passage in measures 123–130. My best advice here is to play the passage slowly until it becomes second nature.

Evans is very specific in his approach to tonic-minor chords in this piece. Although he plays a Cm6 in the left hand for each tonic chord in the piece, he uses B \natural as an approach tone to the tonic note in the right hand *and* B \flat as a melodic tone for any chord outlines.

- 7 Full Band
- 8 Slow Demo
meas. 47–63
- 9 Rhythm Track

Fig. 3

A

Fast Swing $\text{♩} = 184$

1 Dm9 \flat 5 G+7 Cm7

5 Fm11 Bb7 Am7 \flat 5 D7alt. Gm7 \flat 5

10 C9 Fm7 Fm7/Eb D9 D7alt. G13 G+7

B

15 C11 C13 F7 B \flat 7alt. E \flat 7 \sharp 11 A \flat +7 D \flat +7 F \sharp 9

C

22 B+7 E13 A7alt. Cm9b5 G+7 Gm7b5

28 C7 Fm9 B \flat 7alt. E \flat 9 A \flat 13 G+7

A

33 Cm $\frac{5}{4}$ Solo break Dm9b5 G+7

37 Cm $\frac{5}{4}$ Fm9 B \flat 13

41 Am7b5 D7 Gm7b5 C7

45 Fm9

49 C11 C13 F9 Bb13 Eb7#9

B

53 Ab13 A+7 Db9 F#+7 B13

57 E9 A13 Ab13 G+7

C

61 Gm7b5 C7 Fm9 Bb13

65 A13 Ab13 G+7 Cm§ A13

A

69 A♭13 G+7 Cm⁹

73 Fm⁹ B♭13 Am⁷♭⁵ D7♭⁹

77 Gm⁷♭⁵ C7 Fm⁹

81 D7alt. G7♭⁵ C13 F9

B

85 B♭13 E♭⁹ A♭⁹ G+7

89 G♭13 B⁹ E+7 A+7

C

93 A♭13 G+7 Gm7♭5 C13

97 Fm9 B♭13 A13 A♭13 G+7

A

101 Cm9 A♭13 G+7

105 Cm9 Fm9 B♭13

109 Am7♭5 D7♭9 Gm7♭5 C13♭9

113 Fm9 D7♯9 G+7

117

C11 C13 Fm9 F9 B \flat 13 Eb7 \sharp 9

B

Musical score for piano, page 121, showing a melodic line and harmonic progression. The score consists of two staves. The top staff shows a melodic line with various note heads and rests, separated by vertical bar lines. The bottom staff shows harmonic chords. The harmonic progression includes A♭13, D♭9, F♯+7, B13, and E9. Measure numbers 121, 3, and 122 are indicated above the staves.

125

A+7 A♭13 C G+7

3

Musical score for piano, page 129, showing chords and bass line. The score includes five measures with labels above them: Gm7**b**5, C7**b**9, Fm9, B**b**13, and A13. The bass line consists of eighth-note patterns, and the right hand plays chords.

134

A♭13 G+7 Cm⁹ E♭9 A♭13 G+7

A

139

Cm[§]

Fm9

B♭9

Am7b5

D7**b**9 Gm7**b**5 Cl3**b**9 Fm9

144

This section shows four measures of piano music. The left hand provides harmonic support with chords like D7b9, Gm7b5, Cl3b9, and Fm9. The right hand plays melodic patterns with grace notes and sixteenth-note figures.

D7**b**9 G+7 C9 F7#9

148

This section shows four measures of piano music. The left hand provides harmonic support with chords like D7b9, G+7, C9, and F7#9. The right hand plays melodic patterns with grace notes and sixteenth-note figures.

B

Bb7 Eb9 Ab7 Db9 Gb7

153

This section shows four measures of piano music. The left hand provides harmonic support with chords like Bb7, Eb9, Ab7, Db9, and Gb7. The right hand plays melodic patterns with grace notes and sixteenth-note figures.

B13 E9 A13

157

This section shows four measures of piano music. The left hand provides harmonic support with chords like B13, E9, and A13. The right hand plays melodic patterns with grace notes and sixteenth-note figures.

C

Ab13 G7 Gm7b5 Cl3 Fm9

161

This section shows four measures of piano music. The left hand provides harmonic support with chords like Ab13, G7, Gm7b5, Cl3, and Fm9. The right hand plays melodic patterns with grace notes and sixteenth-note figures.

Bb13 A13 Ab13 G7 Cm⁹ Eb7

166

This section shows four measures of piano music. The left hand provides harmonic support with chords like Bb13, A13, Ab13, G7, Cm9, and Eb7. The right hand plays melodic patterns with grace notes and sixteenth-note figures.

RE: PERSON I KNEW

Music by Bill Evans
As played on *Moonbeams*

Figure 4—Intro

"Re: Person I Knew" has a groove somewhat reminiscent of the Ahmad Jamal trio. Although there are many interesting components of Evans's solo, one of the most interesting licks occurs in measure 65. Here, Evans uses descending scale-tone triads over Cmaj9, Gm(maj7), Gm7, and Fm7. For the Cmaj9 chord (meas. 65–66) he uses triads from the C major scale: D–B–G, C–A–F, B–G–E, A–F–D, G–E–C. Note that the chromatic tones are used as approach tones to embellish the scale-tone chords. Evans uses a similar approach in measures 67–69: a series of descending scale-tone triads preceded by a chromatic approach note. Of course, this passage also strikes the ear because of the interesting rhythm; Evans creates the effect of a cross-rhythm by grouping four adjacent tones from the triplet eighths. The effect is striking.

A similar passage can be found at measures 101–104. Although this passage sounds rather difficult, it consists simply of a series of eighth-note triplets. Art Tatum is another well-known pianist who often utilized these streams of eighth-note triplets. These types of figures tend to propel the music forward. In a sense, they sound more complicated than they really are.

Evans uses wonderful pacing on this solo. At first, we find short phrases punctuated by deliberate rests. As the solo progresses, he uses less frequent rests and more active rhythmic lines. Notice how he develops the half-step F#–G motive in measures 90–95, which leads us, over the next phrase, to the penultimate lick in measure 101.

Fig. 4

- 10** Full Band
- 11** Slow Demo meas. 65-70
- 12** Slow Demo meas. 101-105
- 13** Rhythm Track

Intro
Rubato $\text{♩} = 102$

1 Cmaj9 Gm(maj7) Gm7 Fm7

pp

7 Cm(add9) Fm7 Cm(add9) Fm(maj7) Gm(maj7)

13 Fm(maj7) Gm7 A♭maj7 D♭maj7

♩ = 160
17 Cmaj9 Gm(maj7) Gm7 Fm7

23 Cm(add9) Fm7 Cm(add9) Fm7

Gm(maj7) Fm(maj7) Gm7 A♭maj7 D♭maj7

28

Cmaj9 Gm(maj7) Gm7 Fm7

33

Cm(add9) Fm7 Cm(add9)

38

43

Fm(maj7) Gm(maj7) Fm(maj7) Gm7 Abmaj7

48

D♭maj7 Cmaj9 Gm(maj7) Gm7

53

Fm7
loco Cm(add9) Fm7

58

Cm(add9) Fm(maj7) Gm(maj7) Fm(maj7) Gm7

63

A♭maj7 D♭maj7 Cmaj9

67

Gm(maj7) Gm7 Fm7

Cm(add9) 71

Fm(maj7) 75 Gm(maj7) Fm(maj7)

Gm7 78 Abmaj7 Dbmaj7 Cmaj9

82 Gm(maj7) Gm7 Fm7

Cm(add9) 86 Fm7

Cm(add9) 90 Fm(maj7) Gm(maj7) Fm7

94 Gm7 A♭maj7 D♭maj7 Cmaj9

98 Gm(maj7) Gm7 Fm7

102 Cm(add9)

105 Fm7 Cm(add9) Fm7 Gmaj7

109 Fm(maj7) Gm7 A♭maj7 D♭maj7 Cmaj7

WALTZ FOR DEBBY

Lyric by Gene Lees

Music by Bill Evans

As Played on *Waltz for Debby*

Figure 5—Solo

This piece represents the hard-swinging side of Bill Evans. It is interesting to note that, though the head is a waltz, Evans usually played the solo chorus in common time. One feature that works so well in this solo is his marvelous development of motive. Notice how the first section (meas. 1–8) can be divided into two complementary sections, each of which sticks to a basic idea. You can follow this deliberate development of motive through much of the solo. Of course, the melody of the tune is never very far away—compare, for example, his note choice in measures 25–32 with the original melody.

I once heard a professor talk about Bill Evans's approach to rhythm as a series of rhythmic "streams." Evans has a unique way of combining various rhythmic elements such as swing eighthths, eighth-note triplets, quarter-note triplets, and even double time (meas. 57). Where most performers might use these rhythms in a solo, Evans combines them in a way that is unique. Notice the variety of rhythms in measures 52–64. These "streams" really propel the music forward.

- 14 Full Band
- 15 Slow Demo
meas. 55–62
- 16 Rhythm Track

Fig. 5

Solo

Moderately $\text{♩} = 165$

The musical score consists of three staves of piano sheet music. The top staff shows measures 1-8, starting with Fmaj7, followed by D7^{#9}, Gm9, C13 (with a 8va dynamic), Am11, D7^{#9}, Gm7 (with loco dynamic), and C13. The middle staff shows measures 5-8, starting with A+7, Dm7, Gm9, C7, Fmaj7, Dm9, Gm9, and C13. The bottom staff shows measures 9-12, starting with Fmaj7, D7^{#9}, Gm9, C13, A+7, D9, Gm9, C13, A+7, and Dm9. Performance markings include 'mf' dynamics and 'loco' (locally) for the Gm7 chord.

14 Bm7b5 E7alt. Amaj7₃ Gm9 C13

18 Fmaj9 D7 Gm7 A7 Cm7 F7 Bbmaj7 A+7

22 Dm(maj9) G9 A♭maj7 D♭maj7 Gm7 C13 Fmaj9 D7♯9

26 Gm7 C13/B♭ A+7 A♭+7 Gm9 C13/E A+7 Dm9

30 Gm7 C13 Am7 D9 Bm9b5 E7alt. Am7 F13/A

34 B♭maj7 E♭9 Dm9 G7♯11 Fmaj7/C

38 Gm9 C13 Fmaj9 F^o7 Gm9 C13 Fmaj7 D7[#]9

This section consists of four measures. The piano part features a repeating pattern of chords: Gm9, C13, Fmaj9, F^o7, Gm9, C13, Fmaj7, and D7[#]9. The bass line provides harmonic support, with notes appearing under the piano chords.

42 Gm9 C13 A+7 D9 Gm9 C13 A+7 D7[#]9

This section consists of four measures. The piano part features a repeating pattern of chords: Gm9, C13, A+7, D9, Gm9, C13, A+7, and D7[#]9. The bass line provides harmonic support, with notes appearing under the piano chords.

46 Gm9 C13 Am9 Dm9 Gm9 C13 Fmaj9 D7[#]9

This section consists of four measures. The piano part features a repeating pattern of chords: Gm9, C13, Am9, Dm9, Gm9, C13, Fmaj9, and D7[#]9. The bass line provides harmonic support, with notes appearing under the piano chords.

50 Gm9 C13 A+7 D7[#]9 Gm9 C13 A+7 Dm9

This section consists of four measures. The piano part features a repeating pattern of chords: Gm9, C13, A+7, D7[#]9, Gm9, C13, A+7, and Dm9. The bass line provides harmonic support, with notes appearing under the piano chords.

54 Bm7^{b5} E7alt. Amaj7

This section consists of four measures. The piano part features a repeating pattern of chords: Bm7^{b5}, E7alt., and Amaj7. The bass line provides harmonic support, with notes appearing under the piano chords.

57 Gm7 Gm7/C D13/A

This section consists of four measures. The piano part features a repeating pattern of chords: Gm7, Gm7/C, and D13/A. The bass line provides harmonic support, with notes appearing under the piano chords.

59 Gm9 A+7 Dm9 F13 B♭maj7 A+7

Dm6 G9 A♭maj7 D♭maj9 Gm7 C13 Fmaj7 D7♯9 Gm9 C13

A+7 D9 Gm7 C13 A7 Dm7 Gm7 C13 Am11 D9 Bm11 E9

Cmaj7 B7alt. B♭maj7 A+7 Dm9 G13

Fmaj/C G♯7/C Gm7/C D♭9/C Fmaj9/C G♯7/C

Gm7/C D♭9/C Fmaj9 D7♯9 Gm9 C9 A+7 D9

PEACE PIECE

Music by Bill Evans
As Played on *Everybody Digs Bill Evans*

Figure 6—Piano Solo

"Peace Piece" is as much a study of "legit" composition as it is jazz improvisation. It is also a testament to Bill Evans's abilities as an improviser that he could create such an amazing composition out of such simple elements.

"Peace Piece" is organized around a simple ostinato figure in the left hand. Evans does take a few liberties with the chords and rhythms of the ostinato, but these exceptions are mostly at cadence points.

The most intriguing section of "Peace Piece" occurs when he moves away from C major in measure 43. Here we hear a genius at work; Evans uses a free tonal approach that is reminiscent of some of Sergei Prokofiev's music. As with all great composers, Evans utilizes balance—the return to C major in measure 68 provides symmetry to the composition.

17

Solo Piano

Fig. 6

Piano Solo

Gently, with rubato $\text{♩} = 50$

The musical score consists of three staves of piano music. Staff 1 (top) shows a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a common time signature. Measure 1 starts with a dynamic of *pp*. The left hand plays a steady eighth-note ostinato pattern of F#-A-C-E, while the right hand is silent. Staff 2 (middle) shows a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a common time signature. Measure 6 begins with a dynamic of *p*, featuring eighth-note pairs in the right hand over the same F#-A-C-E bass line. Staff 3 (bottom) shows a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a common time signature. Measure 10 begins with a dynamic of *mp*, continuing the melodic line from staff 2.

14

p

mf

17

rall.

a tempo

20

p

6

3

ppp

p

23

rall.

a tempo

26

mf

29

pp

rall.

f

3

a tempo

3

32

grace notes simile

35

8va

simile

mp

38

8va

41

8va

loco

43

8va

mf

simile

p

simile

46

8va

mf

48 8va----- 15ma

f

loco

50 15ma----- 8va

7 *3* *6*

3

52 8va----- loco

3

mf

56 8va----- loco 9

6 *f*

7

9

58 8va-----

p

3

5

5

8va

60

3 3 3

8va

63

5 3 3 3 3 3

8va

65

3 3 3 3 3 3

8va

67

loco

3 pp 3

71

p pp mf ppp p

TIME REMEMBERED

Music by Bill Evans

As Played on *The Bill Evans Trio with Symphony Orchestra*

Figure 7—Solo

Bill Evans recorded "Time Remembered" with a symphony orchestra. Notice how he develops the descending 4th motive starting in measure 5. As with many of his solos, he uses rhythmic variation to provide interest for this simple motive.

Evans uses a vertical approach for much of this solo. One of the most interesting examples occurs in measures 13–21. Here he uses chord-tone arpeggiations to great effect. Note that he uses extensions such as 9ths, 11ths, and 13ths in this passage.

Evans takes an almost playful approach in measures 33–38. The clipped-sounding left hand works against the lyrical right-hand line in this section. His use of steady rhythmic comping brings to mind the left-hand style of Erroll Garner, who typically used four quarter-note chords in his left hand against a melody or solo line in the right hand.

- 18 Full Band
- 19 Slow Demo meas. 12-16
- 20 Rhythm Track

Fig. 7

Solo
Medium Ballad $\text{♩} = 130$

1 Bm9 Cmaj7#11 Fmaj7#11 Bm9 Am9 Dm9

6 Gm9 Ebmaj7 Abmaj7 Am9

10 Dm9 Gm9 Cm9

13 Fm11 Em11 Bm11

16

E♭m11 Am9

19 Cm11 F♯m9 Bm9

22 Gm9 E♭maj9♯11 Dm9 Cm9

26 Bm9 Cmaj9 Fmaj9 Em11

31 Am9 Dm9 Gm9 E♭maj7

34

A♭maj9 Am9 Dm9 Gm9 E♭maj9

39

A♭maj9 Em11 Bm9 Dmaj7♯11

43

E♭m9 Am9

45

Cm9 F♯m9 Bm9

48

B♭maj7 E♭maj9 Dm9 Cm9

THE OPENER

Music by Bill Evans
As Played on *I Will Say Goodbye*

Figure 8—Intro and Solo

It was a joy to work on the luscious harmonies in the first part of “The Opener.” Here we see the refined side of Bill Evans as a master of harmony and touch. I once heard his playing described as “three handed”—that is to say that he would provide melody with the right hand, bass tones with the left, and *both* hands shared in the role of harmony in the “third” part. This is even evident when looking at the transcription—Evans didn’t just play a melody over a bunch of chords; he was a master of voice leading.

Evans uses many interesting approaches in this solo, employing scale-tone triads, chord outlines, and the like. In measure 65, Evans uses a touch of blues. The passage starts with an ascending A minor pentatonic scale followed by a blue note ($E\flat$). We hear a similar hint of blues in measure 52 with his use of the *flat 3rd* ($A\flat$) and again in measure 69.

- 21** Full Band
- 22** Slow Demo meas. 49-59
- 23** Slow Demo meas. 61-65
- 24** Rhythm Track

Fig. 8

Intro Rubato $\text{♩} = 170$

5

9

13

17

a tempo

I'm gonna make you mine
I'm gonna make you mine
I'm gonna make you mine
I'm gonna make you mine

21

a tempo

I'm gonna make you mine
I'm gonna make you mine
I'm gonna make you mine
I'm gonna make you mine

25

a tempo

I'm gonna make you mine
I'm gonna make you mine
I'm gonna make you mine
I'm gonna make you mine

29

Solo break
In time $\text{♩} = 180$

mf

33

Bass and drums enter

C \natural G
C13
Bm7 \flat 5
E7 \sharp 9
Am9
G \sharp 7

36

Gm9
C13
F \natural
Bm7 \flat 5
E7 \sharp 9

39 Am9 D9 Gm9 C13 F[§]

42 Fm9 B♭13 Cmaj7 E7♯9 Am9 E7♯9

45 Am9 D9 Dm9

48 A♭m9/D♭ D♭9 C§ Bm7♭5 E7♯9 Am9 G♯7

52 Gm9 C9 F§ Bm7♭5 E7♯9

55 Am9 D9 Gm9 C13 F§

58 Fm9 B \flat 9 Cmaj7 E7 \sharp 9 Am9 D9

61 C/G Fmaj7/G G7alt. C \natural

64 D \flat 13 \sharp 11 C \flat C13 Bm7 \flat 5 E7 \sharp 9

67 Am9 G \sharp 7 Gm9 C13 F \sharp

70 Bm7 \flat 5 E7 \sharp 9 Am9 D9 Gm9 C13

73 F \sharp Fm9 B \flat 13 Cmaj7 E7 \sharp 9

76 Am9 E7[#]9 Am9 D9

This section consists of four measures. The piano left hand plays Am9, E7[#]9, Am9, and D9 chords. The right hand plays eighth-note patterns.

79 Dm9 A♭m9/D♭ D♭9 C♯

This section consists of four measures. The piano left hand plays Dm9, A♭m9/D♭, D♭9, and C♯ chords. The right hand plays eighth-note patterns.

82 Bm7♭5 E7[#]9 Am9 G♯7 Gm9 C9

This section consists of five measures. The piano left hand plays Bm7♭5, E7[#]9, Am9, G♯7, Gm9, and C9 chords. The right hand plays eighth-note patterns.

85 F♯ 8va Bm7♭5 E7[#]9 Am9 D9 loco Gm9 C13

This section consists of five measures. The piano left hand plays F♯ (8va), Bm7♭5, E7[#]9, Am9, D9 (loco), Gm9, and C13 chords. The right hand plays eighth-note patterns.

89 F♯ 3 Fm9 B♭9 Cmaj7 E7[#]9 Am9 D9

This section consists of five measures. The piano left hand plays F♯ (3), Fm9, B♭9, Cmaj7, E7[#]9, Am9, and D9 chords. The right hand plays eighth-note patterns.

93 C/G Fmaj7/G G7alt. C♯ D♭13♯11 C♯

This section consists of five measures. The piano left hand plays C/G, Fmaj7/G, G7alt., C♯, D♭13♯11, and C♯ chords. The right hand plays eighth-note patterns.

34 SKIDOO

Music by Bill Evans
As Played on *Blue in Green*

Figure 9—Intro

"34 Skidoo" is an interesting tune to play. The piece starts with a freewheeling rubato intro. The rhythmic notation on this figure is simply meant to give an approximation of Evans's introduction from the *Blue in Green* album. Bass and drums enter once Evans establishes the tempo prior to the waltz section. The B section consists of a series of chords over a bass pedal point. Although I have transcribed Evans's improvisation over the B section, you should improvise freely when you play the tune, as there is no "real" melody in this section.

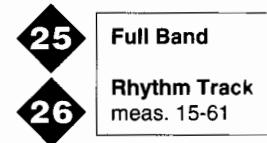


Fig. 9

Intro A
Freely

Dm/E E7 Am

Solo piano

5 Dm/E E7 Am

9 Dm/E E7 Am

13 Dm/E E7 Em(add9)

Bass and drums enter

$\text{♩} = 213$

Dm11

Cm11

Bm11**5**

E7alt.

16

3

Dm11 Cm11 Bm11**5** E7alt.

20 Am(maj7) Bbm11 Abm11 Gm7**5** C7alt. Fm

25 F#m11 F#m11/E D#m7**5** G#7alt. C#m7 Cmaj7/B*

29 B7 Em/B Cmaj7/B

*Bass plays B pedal through meas. 44.

30 B7 Em/B Cmaj7/B

34 B7 Em/B Cmaj7/B

38 B7

Em/B

41 Cmaj7/B

B7

Bm(add9)

44

Aml1

F#m7b5

C9

F9

48

Em(maj7)

Cml1

Bbm11

Am7b5

D7#9

Gm(maj7)

53

Ebm11

Dbm11

Cm7b5

F7b9

Bbm(maj7)

Piano Solo

58

Begin fade

Fade out

TURN OUT THE STARS

Lyric by Gene Lees

Music by Bill Evans

As Played on *Bill Evans at Town Hall*

Figure 10—Piano Solo

Bill Evans performed this solo piece as part of a three-part requiem in honor of his father. Evans provides an amazing breadth of emotion in his performance: poignancy, love, tenderness, reflection, anger, and sorrow. At first, I didn't understand his frenetic approach to the third section of the piece but, as I listened, I realized that I was hearing a true artistic outpouring by a man in grief.

In the first section of "Turn Out the Stars," Evans uses the "three-handed" technique discussed previously. He also utilizes chord outlining in the left hand that is found in much of the Romantic era piano music by composers such as Brahms and Chopin.

In the second section, we hear a left hand that comes out of the stride tradition. Most of the voicings in this section are typical of an earlier era during which "full-sounding" voicings such as 10ths were common. Evans alternates between fast and slow sections in much the same way that a classical composer might construct movements in a sonata.

The second slow section leads to a very difficult double-time section. It is interesting to note that he uses an almost uninterrupted series of triplets and sixteenth notes. As with the second section, Evans uses a left-hand style that is stride-like.

Perhaps the most striking part of "Turn Out the Stars" occurs in the last measure. The choice of a simple C♯ minor chord (with no extensions or alterations) is a touching contrast to the lush harmonies we hear up to that point.

27 Solo Piano

Fig. 10

Solo
Freely

1 Bm9b5 Bbm9/E Am // Dm7 G7#9 Cmaj7 Fm7 Bb7

6 Ebmaj7 Cm7 Am7 D7 Gmaj7 C#m7 F#7 Bmaj7

11 Bbm7b5 Eb7 Abm7 Bb7#5 Ebm9

16

A13sus4 A13b9 Dmaj9/A A9sus4 A13b9

This section consists of four measures. Measure 16 starts with a C major chord (A13sus4) in G clef, followed by an A major chord (A13b9) in F# minor. Measure 17 shows a D major chord (Dmaj9/A) in E major. Measure 18 features an A major chord (A9sus4) in C major. Measure 19 concludes with an A major chord (A13b9) in G major.

20 Dmaj9/A G13sus4 G13b9 Cmaj9/G G7

This section consists of four measures. Measure 20 starts with a D major chord (Dmaj9/A) in G major. Measure 21 shows a G major chord (G13sus4). Measure 22 features a G major chord (G13b9). Measure 23 concludes with a C major chord (Cmaj9/G) in G major.

24 Cmaj7/G C13 B9sus4 B+7 Em Bb9#11 A+7 Dm Ab13

This section consists of four measures. Measure 24 starts with a C major chord (Cmaj7/G) in G major. Measure 25 shows a C major chord (C13). Measure 26 features a B major chord (B9sus4). Measure 27 concludes with an A major chord (Ab13) in G major.

29 G7 Cm9 Eb9 Abmaj7 C7b9 Fm9 Fm7/Eb Dm7b5 G7

This section consists of four measures. Measure 29 starts with a G major chord (G7) in G major. Measure 30 shows a C major chord (Cm9). Measure 31 features an E major chord (Eb9). Measure 32 concludes with a G major chord (G7) in G major.

34 Cm§ Eb7 Abmaj7 G7#11 Cmaj9 Bm9b5 E+ Am

This section consists of four measures. Measure 34 starts with a C major chord (Cm§) in G major. Measure 35 shows an E major chord (Eb7). Measure 36 features an A major chord (Abmaj7). Measure 37 concludes with an A major chord (Am) in G major.

39 Ab9sus4 Ab7b9 C#m F#7 =84 Bm7b5 E7 Am7 A7

This section consists of four measures. Measure 39 starts with an A major chord (Ab9sus4) in G major. Measure 40 shows an A major chord (Ab7b9). Measure 41 features a C major chord (C#m). Measure 42 concludes with an A major chord (A7) in G major.

43 Dm7 G7 Cmaj7

45 Fm7 Bb7 Ebmaj7 Cm7 Bbm7

47 Am7 D7 Gmaj7

49 C#m7 F#7 Bmaj7

51 Bbm7b5 Eb7

53 Abm7 Abm7/Gb Fm7b5 Bb7

55 E_bm9 E_bm7/D_b Bmaj7 E_bm7/B_b

57 A13sus4 A7_{#5}⁹ Dam9/A B7_{#5}⁹ A9sus4 A13b9 Dmaj9/A G9sus4 G13

mp

62 Cmaj9/G C[#]7 G9sus4 G13b9 Cmaj9/G B9sus4 B+7 Em7 Bb7#11

Rubato

67 A+7 Dm A_b7#11 G+7 Cm7 E_b9 A_bmaj7 C7b9

72 Fm9 Dm7b5 G+7 Cm⁶ Eb^{sus4} A_bmaj7 G7_{b9}^{#11} Cmaj9

77 Bm9b5 E13 Am9 A♭9sus4 A♭7b9 C♯m7 F♯7

$\text{♩} = 120$

81 Bm7b5 E7 Am7

f

83 Dm7 G7 Cmaj7 F♯m7

85 Fm7 B♭7 E♭maj7

87 Am7 D7 Gmaj7

89 C[#]m7 F[#]7 Bmaj7

91 Bbm7b5 E^b7

93 Abm7 Fm7b5 B^b7

95 Ebm7/D^b Bmaj7 E^bm7/B^b

97 A9sus4 A7 Dmaj7/A

99 A9sus4 A7 Dmaj7/A

101 G9sus4 G7 Cmaj7/G A7

103 G9sus4 G7 Cmaj7 Rubato B+7

mf

106 Em7 Bb9#11 A+7 Dm7 Ab9#11 G7 Cm7 Eb7

111 Abmaj7 C7 Fm7 Dm7b5 G+7 Cm§ Eb7sus4

115 A♭maj7 G7 Cmaj9 Bm7♭5 E7

118 Am7 A♭7 C♯m7 F♯9

121 Bm7♭5 E7 Am7 Dm G7♯9 Cmaj9 Fm7 B♭7

126 E♭maj7 B♭7 Am7 D7 Gmaj7 C♯m7 F♯7b9 Bmaj7

131 B♭m7♭5 E♭7 A♭m7 B♭7sus4 B♭7 E♭m7

136

A13sus4 A13b9 Dmaj9/A A7sus4 A13b9 Dmaj9/A

141 G7sus4 G7b9 Cmaj9/G G7sus4 Cmaj7/G C13 B9sus4 B+7

146 Em7 Bb9#11 A+7 Dm7 Ab9#11 G+7 Cm7 Eb9

151 Abmaj7 C7b9 Fm9 Dm7b5 G+7 Cm§ Eb7sus4 Abmaj7 G7#9

156 Cmaj9 Bm9b5 E+ Am Ab9sus4 Ab7b9 C#m

rit.

pp

VERY EARLY

Music by Bill Evans
As Played on *Moonbeams*

Figure 11—Solo

“Very Early” would be a good choice for a first Bill Evans transcription. The solo begins after two complete statements of the theme. It is not too long or difficult, yet we hear all of the quintessential Evans techniques: close-position left hand, chords of omission, left- and right-hand rhythmic doubling, motivic development, and rhythmic variety.

Evans uses an active left hand for much of this solo. Note how the left doubles many of the important rhythms in the solo line. As we have seen in many of these transcriptions, Evans uses vertical chord outlines to great effect. A good example occurs in measures 35–40, where he develops an interesting arpeggiated pattern.

Measures 41–44 provided a transcribing challenge. This passage transcends the bar line! Listen to the accompanying CD or Evans’s original recording to get a clear idea of the phrasing for this passage.

- 28** Full Band
- 29** Slow Demo
meas. 32-40
- 30** Rhythm Track

Fig.11

The image shows three staves of piano sheet music for the solo part of "Very Early".

- Measure 1:** Key signature: C major (no sharps or flats). Time signature: Common time (indicated by '4'). Tempo: 132 BPM. Chords: Cmaj7, Bb9, Eb9, Ab7alt., Db9. The staff includes a treble clef and a bass clef.
- Measure 6:** Key signature: G major (one sharp). Time signature: Common time. Chords: G7, C9, Bb7alt., Dmaj9. The staff includes a treble clef and a bass clef.
- Measure 10:** Key signature: A minor (no sharps or flats). Time signature: Common time. Chords: Am9, F#m7, B13, Em9. The staff includes a treble clef and a bass clef.

14 A♭13 D♭maj13 Dm9 G13 C§

18 B♭13 E♭§ A♭7alt. D♭maj9

22 Dm9 G7alt. C§ B♭13♯11 Dmaj9 Am9

27 F♯m7 B13 Em9 A♭7alt.

31 D♭maj9 Dm9 G13 C§ B♭13

35 E♭§

A♭13

D♭maj9

Dm9

G13

This section consists of four measures. The left hand provides harmonic support with chords like A♭13, D♭maj9, and Dm9. The right hand plays melodic patterns with grace notes and eighth-note figures.

39 C§

B♭13

Dmaj9

Am9

This section consists of four measures. The left hand provides harmonic support with chords like B♭13, Dmaj9, and Am9. The right hand plays melodic patterns with grace notes and eighth-note figures.

43 F♯m7

B13

Em9

A♭13

This section consists of four measures. The left hand provides harmonic support with chords like F♯m7, B13, Em9, and A♭13. The right hand plays melodic patterns with grace notes and eighth-note figures.

47 D♭maj9

G13

Cmaj7

B♭13

This section consists of four measures. The left hand provides harmonic support with chords like D♭maj9, G13, Cmaj7, and B♭13. The right hand plays melodic patterns with grace notes and eighth-note figures.

51 E♭maj9

A♭7alt.

D♭§

G7

This section consists of four measures. The left hand provides harmonic support with chords like E♭maj9, A♭7alt., D♭§, and G7. The right hand plays melodic patterns with grace notes and eighth-note figures.

FIVE

Music by Bill Evans
As Played on *New Jazz Conceptions*

Figure 12–Section A

"Five" was especially fun to record. As you can imagine, the rhythm of the melody chorus is challenging. Fortunately, Clipper Anderson and Mark Ivester (bassist and drummer, respectively, on this Signature Licks recording) were easily up to the task. From a performance standpoint, the bridge provides the biggest challenge. Here, the drummer stays in 4/4 for eight measures while the piano and bass go through a series of 5:4 and 4:3 measures. I found it helpful to practice with a metronome (and Evans' recording, of course). If you can tap your foot *and* feel the underlying 4/4, you will have no trouble playing this piece.

In the solo section, we hear Evans as the consummate bop pianist. The chord changes are based on "I Got Rhythm." Unlike traditional "rhythm" changes, Evans uses a circle of fourths progression. In the first two A sections we have a circle progression starting on F \sharp 7: F \sharp 7–B7–E7–A7–D7–G7–C7–F7–B \flat . It is interesting to note that the last A section is different from the first. Here we have another circle progression, but in this instance, the progression is F7–B \flat 7–E \flat 7–A \flat 7–D \flat –G \flat 7–Cm7–F7–B \flat .

Evans takes advantage of the unique harmonic progression. He outlines chord tones in many sections of the solo (meas. 48, 55, 56, 57, 58, etc.). In addition to chord tones and scales, Evans uses many embellishments typical of bop solos, such as chromatic approach tones (meas. 60–61), turns (beats 1 and 2 of meas. 51), and changing tones (beat 4 of meas. 67). If you like this style of playing, I would encourage you to learn the vocabulary by practicing short melodic units in a variety of keys—rest assured that Bill Evans did the same thing!

- 31** Full Band
- 32** Slow Demo
meas. 55-62
- 33** Slow Demo
meas. 118-127
- 34** Rhythm Track

Fig. 12

A

Medium Uptempo Swing $\text{♩} = 200$

N.C.

Bass

A musical score for a single instrument, likely a woodwind or brass, featuring a treble clef, a key signature of one flat, and a time signature of 4/4. The score consists of two staves of music, with the second staff continuing the melody from the first. The notes are primarily eighth and sixteenth notes, with some quarter notes and rests.

Piano NC *

5 N.C.

A musical score page showing two staves. The top staff is for the orchestra, featuring a treble clef, a key signature of one flat, and a tempo marking of 120 BPM. It contains measures 11 and 12, which consist of complex chords and rhythmic patterns. The bottom staff is for the piano, featuring a bass clef and a key signature of one flat. It also contains measures 11 and 12, showing harmonic changes and bassline patterns.

* Bass pedals on F through meas. 12.

Musical score for piano, page 10, measures 9-10. The score consists of two staves. The top staff is in treble clef, and the bottom staff is in bass clef. Both staves are in common time and feature a key signature of one flat. Measure 9 begins with a half note in the bass, followed by a series of eighth-note chords. Measure 10 continues with eighth-note chords, with some notes tied over from the previous measure. The score includes dynamic markings such as f (fortissimo) and ff (pianissimo), and performance instructions like "3" and "2".

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13

B♭ Gm7 Cm7 F7 Dm G7 Cm7 F7 B♭ B♭/A♭

18

E♭/G E♭m/G♭ B♭/F B♭ Gm7 Cm7 F7

23

Dm7 G7 Cm7 F7 B♭ B♭/A♭ E♭/G E♭m/G♭ B♭/F

28

B
Am7**b5** D7 Gm7 A♭m7

* Drums continue to play in 4/4.

33

D♭7 Gm7 C7 F7 F♯m7

38

B7 B♭ Gm7 Cm7 F7 Dm7 G7

42

Cm7 F7 B♭ B♭/Ab Eb/G Ebm/Gb

45

B♭/F F♯7 B7

48

E7 A7 D7 G7 C7 F7

51

B♭ B♭/D Eb E°7 B♭/F

54

F#7 B7 E7 A7

57 D7 G7 C7 F7 B♭ B♭/D

60 E♭ Eº7 B♭ D7

64 G7 C7

68 F7 F7 B♭7

72 E♭7 A♭7 D♭7 G♭7 Cm7 F7 B♭ B♭/D

76 E♭ Eº7 B♭ F♯7 B7

80 E7 A7 D7 G7 C7 F7 B♭ B♭/D

84 E♭ Eº7 B♭/F F♯7 B7

88 E7 A7 D7 G7 C7 F7 B♭ B♭/D

92 E \flat E \circ 7 B \flat

Am7

96 D7 G7 A \flat m7 D7 Gm7

100 G \flat 7 F7 F7 B \flat 7

104 E \flat 7 A \flat 7 D \flat 7 G \flat 7 Cm7 F7 B \flat B \flat /D

108 E \flat E \circ 7 B \flat

111 F[#]7 B7 E7 A7 D7 G7

114 C7 F7 B_b B_b/D E_b E^o7 B_b/F

118 F[#]7 B7 E7 A7

121 D7 G7 C7 F7 B_b B_b/D

124 E_b E^o7 B_b D7

128

G7

131 C7

F7

134

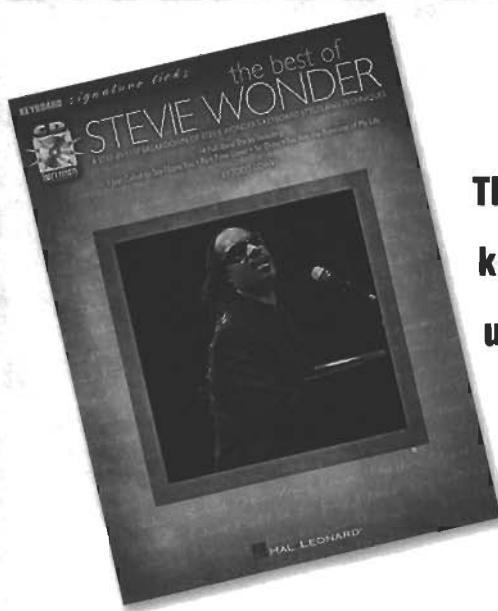
F7 Bb7 Eb7 Ab7

137 D♭7 G♭7 Cm7 F7 B♭ B♭/D

140 E♭ E°7 B♭

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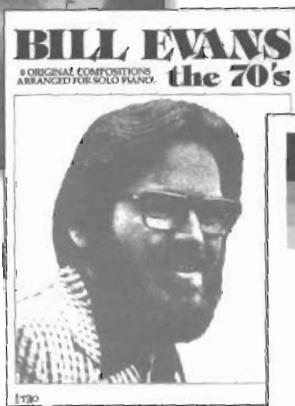
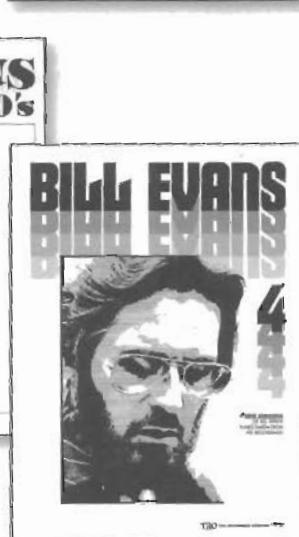
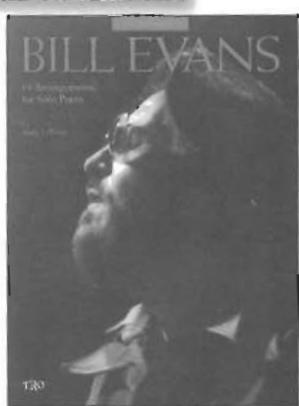
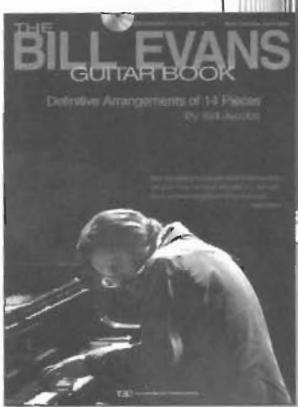
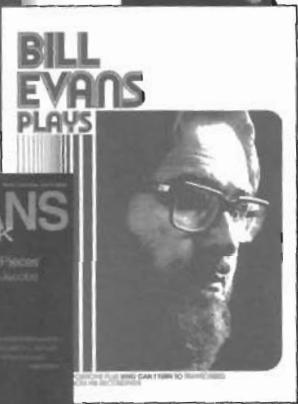
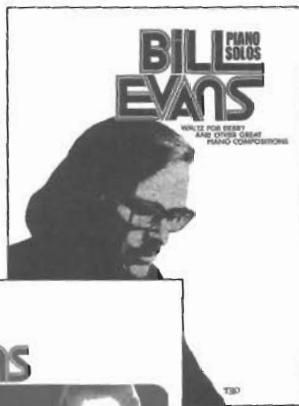
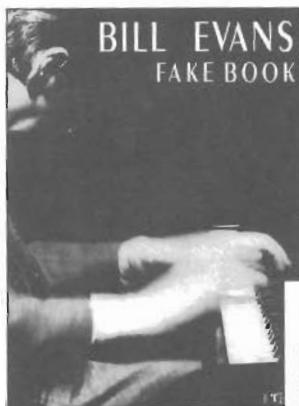
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